

## Blockley Brick Manufacturer uses Marmox Boards to Speed Production Cycle

One of the country's oldest established brickworks, located in an idyllic Cotswold village, has updated its production facilities saving not only time and money but significant amounts of energy – thanks to the use of Marmox Multiboard for the refurbishment of its drying chambers. Ten separate drying kilns have now been upgraded at Northcot Brick's premises in Blockley, Gloucestershire, with two different thicknesses of the high performance, moisture resisting insulation boards having been employed to infill their walls and roofs. Soon to celebrate its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the handmade brick specialist not only uses its own locally quarried clay, but prides itself on providing specifiers with an environmentally responsible and sustainable product range, continuously striving to improve productivity as well as reduce use of energy. As a consequence, Northcot's Maintenance Manager, Tim Nicklin, sought an alternative to the use of metal panels with a rock mineral wool core for the chambers' roofs and walls as they typically lasted little more than a year.



While Marmox Multiboards are typically utilised in building work as a floating floor beneath tiles and other finishes or as the lining to shower rooms and other wet environments, Northcot identified their rugged long life potential as potentially offering a solution to its persistent problems. Tim Nicklin explained: "The drying chambers are some 2.7 metres tall to the roof and vary in width up to 6.5 metres depending on the design, but had all caused us something of a maintenance headache. Our works manager discovered the Marmox Multiboards online and the switch to their use has allowed us to operate the driers in a more controlled environment."

Marmox Multiboards are manufactured from extruded polystyrene or XPS and offer a range of positive physical characteristics in addition to being fully waterproof. They are both light to handle and easy to cut, while still being able to sustain substantial loadings if required. In the work at the Blockley brickworks, Northcot's engineers used some 420 X 30mm thick boards for the walls and doors of the drying kilns and 350 X 60mm thick boards into the steel angle framework for the roof, which forms the floor above and has to be traversed by operatives, the 60 mm boards were finished with a thin screed. Thanks to their stability and resistance to the aggressive chemical atmosphere created by the gases emitted from the drying bricks, the Multiboards are proving to offer a greatly extended working life compared to the old rock mineral wool based panels. Even more importantly, they are making it far easier to control humidity levels during the drying process and to maintain the required temperature. The overall temperature has been reduced by five degrees to 75° C and the total drying period by a whole day while they can be switched off at weekends without affecting the cycle, leading to an overall 25% reduction in energy costs.

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