

ROYAL ALBERT HALL (LONDON)

FABRICATION AND INSTALLATION OF BESPOKE HERITAGE CAST IRON RAINWATER HOPPERS AND PIPEWORK TO DRUM

The Royal Albert Hall (RAH) is an Iconic Grade I Listed Building situated opposite the Albert Memorial, Kensington Gore on the West side of the City.

Refurbishment works were contracted out to Sir Robert McAlpine Special Projects (SRM) who, after a robust tendering procedure, selected Gutterworks Limited as their preferred Sub-Contractor to carry out the replacement of the 150 year old Hopper & pipe configuration at 30 points around the 'Drum', above the famous "Triumph of Arts and Sciences" Mosaic Frieze.

Gutterworks worked closely with Alumasc Water Management Services (AWMS), their preferred supplier, collaborating with them from tender stage to completion, ensuring a successful project.

The works involved pre-start meetings to ensure good communications, implementation of a first class Health & Safety plan and production of bespoke replicated Cast iron rainwater goods to, not only match the original features, but to deliver an enhanced product, overcoming original shortcomings in functionality & design.



(Image) Hopper heads removed & kept by RAH (Note: Hopper bottom left with laser markings for casting)

The pipe drops, consist of five parts, of which the upper two sections required special casting. So, we removed one complete drop initially in order to carry out a laser survey, which would be used to construct two Foundry Cast Moulds. Following this and successful casting, the samples were delivered by Alumasc on time, modified to suit internal structural changes and installed by the Gutterworks Team. The installation was then approved by the Building Conservationists & English Heritage and parts were ordered for the remaining twenty nine Pipe drops.



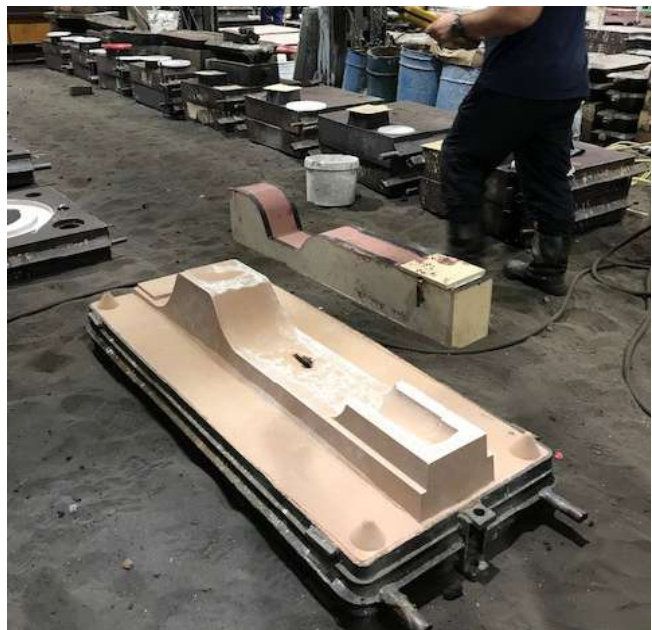
(Image) Old Rail sections with Laser markings



(Image) Initial Cast sections for analysis and approval



(Image) Sand Cast Mould for Rail section – front



(Image) Sand Cast Mould for Rail section - rear

The Main installation issues involved winching the upper cast sections carefully into place to avoid damage to the brickwork or terracotta. The lower of the two upper sections had been adapted to allow it to sit into a newly lead lined recess (the original design sat on an internal rail but allowed water ingress which caused internal damage). The 'seat' had to be packed to account for slight differences in levels, to give a uniform appearance.





(Image) Sand Cast Moulded sections installed



(Image) Pipe drop number thirty installed

The end result was worth the effort and Gutterworks can be rightly proud of their part in maintaining the heritage of the Nation.

