



Case Study

The Royal British Legion Poppy Factory



Most people know that the poppy is the national emblem of remembrance for those men and women who gave their lives defending the principles of freedom for which our country stands, but where do all the poppies and wreaths come from, and how did it all begin?

The Royal British Legion Poppy Factory was founded in 1922 in the aftermath of the First World War. They took over an old shirt collar factory off the Old Kent Road and initially employed five disabled men.

Soon the number of men employed had grown and it became necessary to find larger premises. An old brewery in Richmond was purchased and converted into the factory. In just over ten years, the factory had grown from five men to some 300 disabled ex-servicemen.

Working in conjunction with Paul Raymen of Bradbrook Consulting, and Bill Kay the poppy factory's operation manager, **Cemplas Waterproofing and Concrete Repairs Limited** were appointed as the principle contractor to carry out extensive Concrete repairs to the external buildings columns, and the application of protective coatings to the building's façade.

Following a survey and investigation by Cemplas, the front external face of the columns were removed, and the exposed steel beams were cleaned to remove the extensive corrosion that had built up over the years.

Additional steel reinforcement was fixed to the cleaned steel beam and brickwork

using Hilti shot fired steel fixings and Hilti Hit Resin HY100. Pull off tests were undertaken to ensure they achieved the desired bond strength.

One of the contract conditions was the columns had to be repaired to match exactly the same as the columns removed. To ensure this, shutters were cut and formed on site, and Sika Armocrete poured into the prepared shutter.

On removal of the shuttering, any defects were bagged in using Sika Monotop 620.

On completion of the remedial repairs, one coat of Sikagard 552W was applied to the new columns, and a further two coats of Sikagard 550W was applied to the entire elevation to provide a protective, and decorative anti-carbonation finish.

Today the Factory receives some 6000 visitors each year, and Cemplas are immensely proud to have played a part in prolonging the life of this structure helping to ensure the Legion continue to manufacture poppies for many years to come, and provide assistance to the ex-servicemen and servicewomen who served their country, and to remember and pay homage to those who gave their lives.

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