

22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025

## **Bristol Royal Infirmary specify Gerflor and Gradus for much-needed Healthcare corridor refurbishment.**

The Bristol Royal Infirmary was founded by public subscription in 1735, making it one of the oldest infirmaries in the United Kingdom. When it was in dire need of an urgent renovation for one of its busiest corridors, Gerflor the International flooring expert supplied their highly specialised Mipolam Affinity flooring, alongside Gradus for their world class SureProtect Endure Wall Cladding system in the King Edward Building at the Bristol Royal Infirmary. The End User was able to benefit from a complete solution, reducing time and cost as part of its specification process.

Bristol Royal Infirmary (BRI) is a large teaching hospital in the centre of Bristol, England. It has links with the nearby University of Bristol and the Faculty of Health and Social Care at the University of the West of England, also in Bristol. The BRI is one of nine hospitals operated by the University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust.

Most healthcare facilities including the Bristol Royal Infirmary see the importance of hardwearing interior finishes and how crucial they are when it comes to the overall building specification. The movement of items such as beds, trolleys, wheelchairs, and heavy medical equipment is a twenty-four-hour operation, therefore any floorings and wall protection products installed needed to withstand the daily rigours of a demanding hospital environment.

This is where the world class Mipolam Affinity collection exceeded the expectations of the Healthcare End User, in its outstanding performance when it comes to durability and easy low-cost maintenance. The Mipolam Affinity range was specified thanks to its 100% pure PVC construction which is a pressed and calendered homogeneous vinyl floorcovering, Its' single layer of PVC delivers numerous benefits including: a remarkably high abrasion resistance, and it is also lighter, more flexible, and less brittle. It is also suitable for hot welding and ideal for creating seamless finishes, making it a widely popular choice for hardworking hospitals, laboratories, and cleanroom environments. The Mipolam Affinity range also comes with a unique and revolutionary surface treatment called Evercare™, that delivers an unrivalled level of chemical and stain resistance. In choosing Gerflor's Mipolam Affinity the crucial element of high traffic, was successfully addressed, which was a high priority on the client's specification agenda.

The refurbishment project would also benefit from the specification and installation of the Gradus Wall Protection system, comprising of the SureProtect Endure Wall Cladding and PVC-u SHR40P Handrails, alongside the High Impact Corner Guards, which provided an ideal protective solution for the busy healthcare environment.

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Chris Pursey, Gerflor Key Account Healthcare Manager - Flooring commented on the project by saying, "The Estates team at University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust (UHBW) and their contractor Sisk approached Gerflor for a complete flooring and wall protection specification for this highly busy service corridor. The existing wall and floor finishes were extremely worn and damaged and they wanted to quickly and efficiently improve the appearance of the space by introducing some lighter colours. Specifying Gerflor's Mipolam Affinity from the fifty colours available to choose from and the Gradus wall protection system was the ideal fast track choice."

In order to meet the specific requirements of the different areas of hospitals, Gerflor offer products that provide unparalleled resistance to foot, wheeled, heavy loading traffic with particularly durable flooring that is exceptionally hygienic thanks to the antibacterial and antiviral properties of their specialised ranges.

Chris Pursey explained that the trust had used Gerflor flooring and Gradus wall protection on previous projects and they wanted to use a single business that could provide a complete and holistic flooring and wall protection specification. The area has varying floor levels with ramps, so handrails were specified alongside wall protection sheets for additional safety. Mipolam Affinity flooring was chosen in two colours, with a darker grey used as a border to assist with wayfinding.

Ian Cartwright, Gradus Specification Area Sales Manager – Wall Protection, commented, "When we first visited this corridor, there was excessive damage to the walls, caused mainly by trolleys and wheelchairs. The site team had been making good the walls for a number of years, but long term this could not be sustained. As a combined business, Gerflor and Gradus were offered the opportunity to improve and renovate the healthcare corridor for both the flooring and walls, to propose some innovations that would deliver the required protection for the facility and ensure that any recommendations would also offer tangible cost savings for the client. By doing both together, it enabled Gerflor and Gradus to offer a complete and holistic surface protection solution that was not only aesthetically pleasing but would also deliver the technical performance required for the building, this included specifying the colour contrasts that would meet all the Approved Document M regulations for Light Reflectance Values (LRV's). It was decided to match the SureProtect Endure wall cladding to the main colour of the walls and then use a contrasting colour for both the handrails and corner guards to meet the required guidelines."

Representing the Bristol Royal Infirmary (BRI) hospital, Nicholas Marsh, the Estates Officer for Capital, and PLACE Projects commented, "We needed a project where Gerflor and Gradus could provide a complete solution for the busy corridor in the King Edward building within the hospital. This corridor was identified as requiring complete renovation by the surveyors."

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On specification choices, Nicholas Marsh noted that they had problems ordering flooring from other companies due to the lead time, as the materials needed to be shipped in from abroad. Gerflor was recommended to them by their floor layer, together with a number of meetings taking place with the Gerflor representative Chris Pursey.

The area in question is one of the thoroughfares to the Hospital so there were issues with safe access and times for laying. Gerflor were able to supply the ideal solution that could be delivered in a timely manner.

The UK arm for the international construction and civil engineering company Sisk based in Bristol, would be tasked with delivering the installation element for the King Edward corridor project. The need for a high-quality install would be paramount as it would be providing a 'showcase' opportunity for the Gerflor and Gradus products.

Delivering excellence in the UK for almost 40 years with a proud record of leadership in the construction industry in Ireland and €1.5bn annual turnover, Sisk have the track record, scale, and capacity to successfully undertake large, complex, multidisciplinary programmes.

Mark Smith, Operations Manager at Sisk commented, "The project came about with a PLACE Visit which is patient-led and care in the environment. They identified that the corridor was requiring urgent refurbishment. The project had been in the pipeline for a few years but had got curtailed due to COVID and available funds."

The timescales and fitting for the project would be on a very short lead time with Mark Smith outlining that they completed the installation in only one week for the Gerflor flooring and a further week for the Gradus wall protection and handrails, with two fitters utilised for each of the products specified. Mark Smith also explained that the Gerflor and Gradus products installed had recently been approved by the Trust and this renovation project was an ideal opportunity to showcase these world class innovations. The flooring and wall cladding installation and fitting went smoothly with no problems. This was particularly essential as Sisk were working in a 'live' hospital environment.

Making further comment Mark Smith summed up Sisk's involvement by saying, "We had absolutely no issues with the Gerflor or Gradus products. The client is extremely pleased with the final result. Gerflor and Gradus are now the approved flooring and wall protection supplier for the Trust, with extensive works producing brochures and swatches to ensure the colours are suitable for the Healthcare environment."

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Ian Cartwright finally commented, “Being part of this project from start to finish was immensely rewarding. To see the difference, with the before and after images, demonstrates what can be done in a cost-effective way when using one supplier, who have both the products and experience, to enhance the buildings appearance, its longevity, and its overall performance.”

In conclusion Chris Pursey said, “The new Mipolam Affinity flooring is a big improvement on the old safety flooring that was previously installed and the replacement flooring from Gerflor is far easier to clean and maintain. The University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust. have recently chosen Gerflor and Gradus as their go to supplier for floors, walls, and accessories, which means that we can now supply the complete solution that they are seeking.”

When it comes to hospital floor coverings and wall protection in hospital environments, both Gerflor and Gradus have a continued commitment to product innovation, and this is paramount to their success in hospitals worldwide. The demands of the clinical environment in terms of infection control, hygiene, maintenance, and performance have pushed Gerflor and Gradus to create a comprehensive range of solutions for key areas in any hospital environment.

Nicholas Marsh ended by saying, “The Gerflor and Gradus products are performing exceptionally well and have been installed now for over six months. The new flooring and wall protection solutions have significantly upgraded the look and feel of the facility, and we would definitely specify Gerflor and Gradus again as their products are of a high quality.”

The Gerflor and Gradus healthcare ranges are ideal for use in a wide variety of applications across a healthcare facility. Products can be combined to provide a complete package that balances performance, aesthetics and cost, alongside environmentally responsible manufacturing processes.

### **Supporting Information**

#### **Overview of Gerflor and Gradus and products installed.**

##### **Gerflor Company Overview**

Gerflor is a manufacturer of comprehensive contract interior flooring solutions, including vinyl, linoleum, carpets, and rubber. Gerflor innovations help to create attractive and functional environments, as well as enhance and protect a vast range of healthcare settings and interiors. Gerflor solutions are proven to enhance the longevity of a building whilst reducing long term maintenance costs. Gerflor works in partnership with the healthcare sector to ensure buildings are safe and accessible for all users.

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**Gerflor products overview specified for Bristol Royal Infirmary.**

Mipolam Affinity is a vinyl flooring homogeneous pressed in 2m sheets, with a thickness of 2mm and a weight of 2800g. The non-directional design with colour throughout the thickness is available in 50 references presenting a contrasted designed & a matt finish. This flooring is recommended for collective buildings making skirtings easier, as well as angles and welding.

Mipolam Affinity is equipped with Evercare™, patented surface treatment obtained by UV laser cross-linking offering the best chemical resistance to the main products used in healthcare environment as betadine, eosin, hydro alcoholic solutions, making the maintenance easy and the floor long lasting. This treatment avoids applying any acrylic emulsion throughout the lifetime of the product.

It is free of formaldehyde, heavy metals and CMR 1 & 2 or vPvB (very persistent and very bio-accumulative) or PBT (persistent, bio-accumulative and toxic) and is REACH compliant. It is 100% phthalates free and recyclable.

Its VOC emissions after 28 days (ISO 16000-6) are below detection levels (<10 µg / m<sup>3</sup>) and this product is classified A + (the best class).

A co-ordinated approach to design across the range delivers fifty fantastic colours in Mipolam Affinity, ten striking colours in Mipolam Affinity EL7 and six stunning colour choices in Mipolam Elegance EL5.

**Gradus Company Overview**

Gradus is a manufacturer of comprehensive contract interior solutions, including stair edgings, floor trims, barrier matting, lighting, and wall protection. Gradus innovations help to create attractive and functional environments, as well as enhancing and protecting a large selection of healthcare interiors. Gradus solutions are proven to enhance the longevity of a building whilst reducing long term maintenance costs. Gradus works in partnership with the healthcare sector to ensure buildings are safe and accessible for all users.

**Gradus products overview specified for Bristol Royal Infirmary.**

SureProtect Endure from Gradus is a versatile protective wall cladding available in 35 standard colours, designed to work as a stand-alone product or with Gradus' PVC-u wall protection profiles for a complete solution. It provides a durable layer suitable for various environments, including education, healthcare, retail, and hospitality. SureProtect Endure can be used in sheet form for full wall coverage, cut into rub rails or kickplates, or thermoformed into bespoke profiles like corner guards, column guards, or door edge and frame protectors.

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Gradus High Impact PVC-u corner guards are designed to protect vulnerable building areas from damage caused by wheeled and pedestrian traffic, reducing maintenance costs and maintaining interior appearances. They consist of an aluminium or PVC-u retainer, PVC-u cover, and finishing caps. The aluminium retainer offers reinforced defence against high impact damage, while the through-coloured, textured PVC-u covers conceal impact and abrasion effects and are easily replaceable. Available in three sizes, six standard heights, and 33 colours, these corner guards can be combined with other Gradus protection products for a complete solution.

The SHR40P handrail features an aluminium retainer, PVC-u cover, anodised aluminium brackets, and PVC-u accessories, including returns, corners, variable angles, and end stops, all with black reveals in an anti-bacterial finish for smooth joints. Available in 32 colours, the through-coloured PVC-u covers and accessories conceal impact and abrasion effects.

The 40mm diameter handrail offers a comfortable grip, complying with HBN 00-04, HBN 00-10, BS 8300-2:2018, and Building Regulations 2010. Handrails should be easily identifiable and selected in a colour with a Light Reflectance Value (LRV) 30 points different from the surrounding surface, all Gradus handrail colours measured for suitable visual contrast.

Learn more about Gerflor solutions, ask for a free sample or contact us to speak to a specialist today by calling 01625 428 922, emailing [contractuk@gerflor.com](mailto:contractuk@gerflor.com), or visiting [gerflor.co.uk](http://gerflor.co.uk) for the latest flooring innovations.

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