

Whitechapel, London



Spitalfields, Whitechapel

An impressive place in Britain's history

With a heritage stretching back to Roman times, Spitalfields boasts an impressive place in Britain's history, as the former home to one of the country's largest extra-mural cemeteries and the location for one of the biggest medieval hospitals in England. Four hundred years later it became home to the now internationally famous Spitalfields market and infamously the stalking ground for Jack the Ripper.

Alongside its historic significance, east London also has a rich and proud architectural heritage with some of the City's most notable and lauded buildings found in the area. Such is its significance, a collection of architects, builders and other construction professionals formed the Spitalfield Trust in the 1970s with the aim of preserving the area's architectural gems for generations to come.

One of London's most historic areas, Whitechapel, has undergone sympathetic restoration using Sandtoft's handmade range of clay roof tiles.

Preserving heritage

In 2007, the Trust acquired a number of dilapidated terraced Georgian properties on Turner and Varden Street in Whitechapel. Originally built between 1811 and 1814, they had been derelict for more than 15 years. In keeping with the Trust's wider aims of restoring and preserving architectural heritage they set about returning the properties to their former glory.

A key part of this process was the use of products sympathetic to the age and vernacular aesthetic of the original buildings. To ensure the finished houses resembled their original 19th Century design and appearance as closely as possible, the Trust was keen to use a mix of old and new materials including traditional handmade clay pantiles and plain tiles.

Quality and tradition

Sandtoft's Greenwood pantile and the cross cambered Goxhill plain tile were chosen to complement the original architecture of the Georgian houses and reflect the original materials that would have been used in the early 1800s. Both of these clay tiles are handmade by Sandtoft's heritage experts in much the same way as clay tiles would have been a hundred years ago from the alluvial plains of the river Humber.

Each craftsman has his own style which makes each tile slightly different and gives the roof a very traditional look. To produce the Goxhill, coloured sand is worked into the tile by hand before it is carefully moulded onto a drying support before firing. To ensure consistency, a tunnel kiln fires all the tiles at a constant and precise temperature, whilst maximising heat recovery and energy efficiency.

Former glory

Tim Whittaker from the Spitalfield Trust said: "We had experience of using the Goxhill tile on other projects in the area, so were already aware of its quality and aesthetic appeal. It made sense for us to use this product again and other tiles in Sandtoft's portfolio.

"These are houses with historical importance, heritage and architectural charm – all qualities which we were keen to preserve on the exterior of the development including the roof. The Greenwood and Goxhill have helped us to achieve this aim, breathing new life into the buildings. We are very proud of the rejuvenated properties which genuinely enhance the spirit of the neighbourhood."



Sandtoft's Greenwood pantile and Goxhill plain tile

Product samples are available upon request.

Product colours shown are as accurate as the printing process will allow.



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