Revitalising with cladding

In this case study, read about how Cedral fibre cement cladding helped to transform a tired bungalow into a stunning family home with skilled carpenter and Cedral Select Professional installer Ryan Gooch completing the project that demonstrates how the creative use of cladding can completely change the character and aesthetic of a house.

This remarkable development in Colchester saw the budding entrepreneur buy a derelict bungalow out of probate, turning what was an unloved, three bedroomed shell into a stunning five bedroomed family house.

Ryan explains: "Having been left for a few years to deteriorate, there was a lot of internal damage and degradation, especially on the inside of the property. Hence, I decided to keep the basic, solid structure of the property and simply build upwards, reusing as much of the original materials as possible."

External envelope

When it came to the external envelope of the new building, Ryan was adamant about the use of Cedral fibre cement cladding - in this case Lap which offers a woodgrain finish in a light green colour. "I really liked this fresh, optimistic colour," said Ryan, "which worked really well next to the sand-coloured rendering we used on some external sections of the house.

"As this was my first development, under the RG Carpentry name, I wanted to achieve the highest quality finish in every area – including the façade. There are other fibre cement brands on the market, but for me this is simply the best product around. I like the colour finish, the thickness and rigidity of the boards and also the denser quality of the planks compared to some other brands. This higher quality means fewer spoilt cuts on site, as well as a better end result."

As a Cedral Select Professional installer, Ryan also appreciates the access to technical experts about the product as well as the sale and installation support provided. "I was delighted to receive a set of Gecko clamps earlier this year from Cedral, which were wider than others I've got – which makes solo installation that little bit easier!"

In all, Ryan installed circa. 150m² of Cedral cladding to complete the six-month build.

Installation advice

Without doubt, the most important aspect of any façade installation is the preparation, advice that Ryan is keen to support. He said: "Getting the battening right from the very start is absolutely critical. If things are just a couple of millimetres out at the beginning, then this error with simply exacerbate when you start installing the boards. For this reason, I always use a laser and set out the battens perfectly. I've seen people not using lasers, which puts things marginally out. And while it's not obvious to the eye, it's not level. Everything needs to be exact, or you'll pay for it in the end."

Getting the right breather membranes fitted and batten widths are other vital aspects that can often be overlooked, according to Ryan, who has attended several technical workshops provided by Cedral. He continued: "In my opinion, too many jobbing contractors treat every cladding product the same, without paying due respect to the manufacturer's specification with regards to installation and airflow. For Cedral, 38mm vertical battens are recommended to achieve optimum airflow behind the cladding."

The transformation to the old bungalow is remarkable – and Ryan is delighted with the finished project. Within just weeks of the completion of the house, a family buyer has acquired the property – Ryan's first foray into development.

Having sold for well above the average property price in the area, the house is testament to the focus placed on quality fittings and finished throughout. Ryan's vision and hard work has certainly paid off. "I've really enjoyed working on this project, the success of which is also down to the various other contractors I've worked with on this job. It goes without saying that the use of a top quality cladding brand such as Cedral has also given the house huge 'kerb appeal' which has helped to market the property so effectively." rci

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