

REBUILT.

A.D. 1875.



Case study  
Mercure Hotel, Brighton  
rear archway  
refurbishment

The grade 2 listed Mercure Brighton Hotel was built in 1864 and is a landmark building situated on Brighton's busy seafront.

Directly overlooking the beach, the building is constantly subject to the full force of the prevailing south westerly weather patterns. It's important for the hotel's high quality brand and image that the exterior is well maintained.

The hotel is busy all year round with tourists and business functions, alongside weddings and conferences – so it's crucial that any renovations do not disrupt the day to day activities of the hotel.

### The project

**Duration: 5 weeks**  
**December-february 2014**

#### Works included:

- Replacement of rainwater downpipes
- Replacing leading on roof at fifth floor level
- Replacing patent glazed screen at sixth floor level
- Cleaning and renovating a listed archway with ornate stucco work

### Challenges

The Mercure hotel is a busy hotel and it was essential that 'business as usual' was maintained throughout the refurbishments. We organised our activities around the hotel's schedule while also ensuring that disruption was kept to a minimum for nearby residential properties.

#### Listed ornate archway

The listed ornate archway has not been painted for some time – partly because of the difficulties with access and the challenges of the detailed repairs required. The archway renovation team were also working in close proximity to residents' houses either side of the small mews. We needed to gain high level access without encroaching or blocking the fire escapes. The existing substrate, had to be thoroughly cleaned, raking out cracks and joints and removing loose render before repair work could begin. The existing paint finishes and colours were matched and we secured approval from the local conservation officer before proceeding.

#### High level access to roofs

This work was carried out in one of our worst winters, with high winds and rain regularly interrupting activities. We scheduled cherry pickers around 'windows' in the weather to optimise their use and reduce the risk of cancellation fees.

### Solutions

The site supervisor discussed the approach agreed with the conservation officer with all stakeholders.

Neighbouring properties and the mews residents were consulted about the scheduled works and the site supervisor made regular checks to make sure the mews residents were happy with the progress and care taken to mitigate disruption.

We repaired all cracks/spalls using a proprietary cement-based external grade render repair system. We patch-painted a small area to match the existing finish. Once approved by the conservation officer, we applied one mist and two full coats of water based, high performance matt finish masonry coating that carries BBA certification.

We obtained all the necessary licenses to carry out the work and regularly liaised with the local conservation officer, hotel management and nearby residents throughout the works.

Below: The challenge of access at a busy hotel... We used a cherry picker with an extremely long reach to work on the fifth and sixth floor repairs to the lead roofing and cracked window pane.

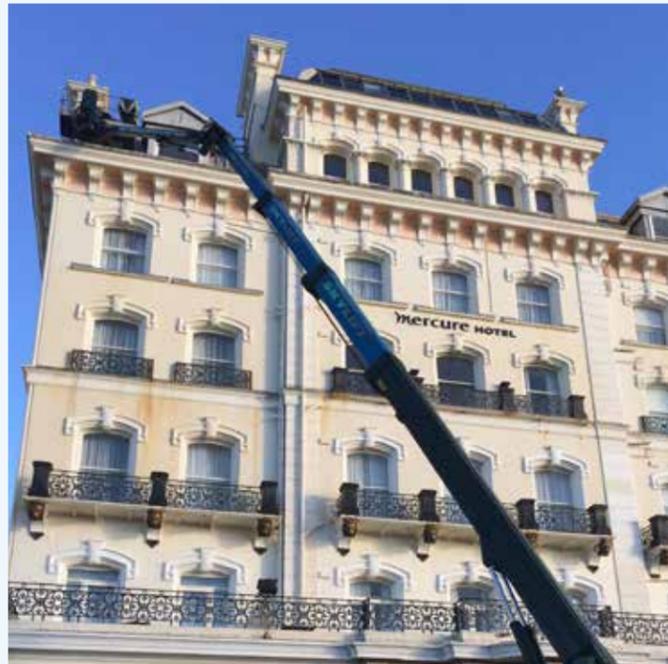
We rescheduled the cherry picker to avoid working in high winds which were forecast for the day when these works were planned.

Below: Areas around the fire exits were cleaned and the doors refurbished and painted inside and out.

Bottom: Some of the stonework required substantial repairs involving the removal and replacement of large chunks of masonry.

Below: The listed archway is located in a small mews to the rear of the building. The scaffolding was designed to allow 24 hour access under the archway, while allowing our team to access the underside of the arch. It was also imperative that fire exits remained clear and operational.

Right and below right: The repairs were extensive, but the results were worth all the effort!



Below: All works were carried out by qualified operatives. Site inductions, prior to works starting included comprehensive risk assessments and outlining the challenges of working in a 'live' hotel.

The project supervisor made regular spotchecks on site (at least every 2 days) to ensure all health and safety and client concerns were being met.



Above: Our masonry refurbishment team were required to undertake delicate repairs in difficult to access areas.

Left: Escape routes were kept operational throughout the scheduled works.



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