

Dairy Cottage at Haigh Hall Wigan, Grade 2 Listed building Total restoration of a Victorian Encaustic & Geometric tiled floor.

A contract with a difference usually we have to contend with areas of damage, usually a central heating pipe installation cut's through these beautiful tiled floors with little regard for the damage caused.

Over the last 39 years I have had to lift or recover whole tiled floors only 7 times, the contract here at Dairy Cottage meant that the whole tiled floor had to be lifted a huge amount of it had already fallen into the cellar below and although we recovered more from the floor, we still had to root amongst the debris to get the dropped floor tiles. The rest were recovered using large boards to displace our weight and that took a considerable amount of time.



Dairy Cottage showing substantial damage.

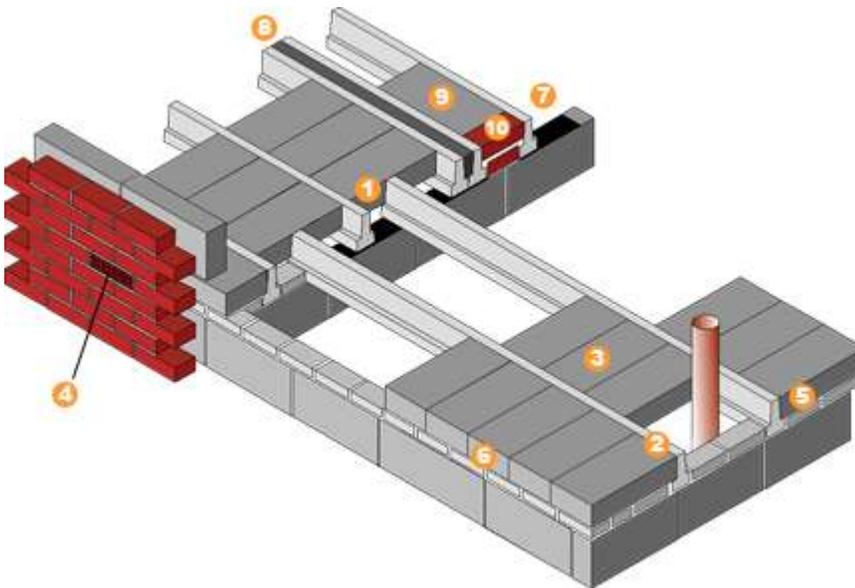
Top right hand corner of the picture shows a circular plate, there were a number of these fitted into the floor, we never found what they were for or the reason behind them, and they were badly corroded so they didn't get re-fitted into the completed floor.

P2.

This contract was bedevilled with problems from the main contractor who repeatedly damaged screeds that we had laid or caused other problems with access etc. The clients had bought this listed building but hadn't a clue as to what that meant. They constantly complained about the various specialists putting the building back together using original colour templates etc! They wanted to choose their own colours and fittings!! I was asked to put different tiles down as they didn't like the original colours.

To restore this particular floor the original floor was removed and new floor support system was fitted = a concrete beam & block floor.

### Beam and Block Typical Details



#### Key

1. Staggered of shared bearing on internal wall
2. Block omitted to accommodate services
3. Standard infill blocks
4. Void ventilator
5. End bearing with slip bricks
6. Edge bearing with slip bricks
7. Damp proof course. It is sound building practice to lay litecast floor joists on a DPC in ground floor situations
8. Multiple beams in order to carry line loads or increased loadings
9. Row with infill block laid 215mm dimension between floor joists
10. End bearing with block infill

Above is a standard layout we modified the beam & block so that the floor didn't have gaps. After laying the beam & block we installed a glass-fibre rich screed and when that had cured an overlay of a latex self-levelling compound this achieved a near perfect flat floor which is preferable when laying any type of tile.

P3.

This contract took longer to prepare than lay as apart from removing all the tiles from the duff screed and then making a new floor, each tile then needed to be cleaned = the backs & sides of adhered mortar this is a time consuming invisible job at the best of times but in this instance as the average tile was only 2 inches – 50 mm and in total more that 28,000 had to be cleaned then the disparity between laying the floor and prepping to get to that point can be understood.

It took 18 days with 3 people to clean & prep the tiles and sort them out into sizes /colour/shapes.



Floor installation underway.

Because of the size of the huge border setting out also took some time and we had to re-introduce a slight kick in the border which was present in the original floor!

It would have been easier to set it perfectly square but we have in the past had to re-introduce a quirk of the original floor, unless I'm told to do that I would naturally lay the floor as square as possible.



Dairy Cottage floor nearing completion.

P5.

Although only a few of the original tiles had broken and we had removed 6 discs of metal out of this floor we ended up with some tiles over! We didn't install the floor until the walls had been plastered I assume it had been filled out a couple of inches more.



Completed floor at Dairy Cottage Haigh Hall Grade 2 listed building.

The floor was fixed with BAL flex adhesive and grouted with a flexible grout also by BAL.

After a few days to allow the floor to set properly we cleaned the tiles 6 times with at first a mild alkaline cleaner then a natural acidic cleaner = Seville orange from Selden research, after that it was cleaned twice with a PH neutral cleaner after which just clean hot water. We used a Numatic 200 rpm Scrubbing machine.

Sealing took place 2 days later and we coated the floor with 4 coats of British Nova sealer.

This floor ranks amongst the hardest I have completed and I'm satisfied that few other people could have achieved such a result in the same timescale.