

Vitrulan's Aqua Plus Pigment wall covering gives the new-look Ramada Manchester Piccadilly Hotel smart protection

A leading wall covering made from woven glass threads rather than paper is the Ramada Manchester Piccadilly hotel's secret weapon against wear and tear after it passed a toughness test during the building's £18m refurbishment.

The hotel, which overlooks the Piccadilly Gardens in the heart of the city, has just undergone an extensive refit, which saw every one of its 280 rooms, plus conference rooms, its Arts Brasserie, corridors and reception area, redecorated over an 18 month period.

Midway through the redecoration of the rooms and corridors, however, decorator Wayne Mitchell discovered that the original wall covering it was using was slowing the process down.

"Because other contractors were coming in and out of the completed rooms, the wall covering was getting damaged by ladders and equipment," said Wayne.

"I was often coming across snags in the surface, which we then had to strip down and redo."

In response, Wayne switched to a product called Aqua Plus Pigment, which is made by Vitrulan, a German-based company and the foremost manufacturer of glass wall coverings in Europe.

"It didn't snag or tear at all," said Wayne. "And apart from the fact that its strength and durability meant that we no longer had to re-do our work, we found that we were finishing the rooms much quicker."

Aqua Plus Pigment is one of a number of products in the Vitrulan range, all of which use glass's inherent properties to their advantage and offer an unrivalled range of benefits when used in conjunction with suitable paints and adhesives.

When it is being applied, it stays firmly in shape even when in contact with wet paste, making it easy to slide over the wall when butting up the edges together.

It arrives with adhesive already applied, meaning that the decorator only has to apply water to the back of the fabric.

It also has a layer of paint applied during the manufacturing process, so a whole stage of the redecoration is missed out, cutting down on time and money and making subsequent layers of paint easier to apply.

"With Vitrulan, we weren't forever mixing paste," said Wayne. "And, obviously, we didn't need to buy any either."

"It also gave a much better, more even finish than the other product we'd used, and a much better paint application, which probably saved us five litres of paint in each room."

Of longer-term interest to the hotel, not only does the flexible fabric cover a multitude of sins on uneven walls, it strengthens the surface it is applied to and prevents cracks – an unavoidable pitfall with all buildings - from appearing.

It also acts as a shield, meaning it will withstand the kind of accidental damage that will leave gouges in painted plaster work.

Unlike traditional wall coverings, which have a standard maintenance cycle of two or three years, Glass Déco Fabrics have been proven to last for 20 years without any need for refurbishment, save for the occasional coat of paint.

This long term reliability is allied with long-term safety. No softeners or harmful chemicals are used in the production of Glass Déco Fabrics, and Vitrulan's products have been given an Oeko-Tex

100 Standard, a textile safety standard which it shares with baby's clothing.

Stephen Beech, general manager at Ramada Manchester Piccadilly, said: "We are delighted with the new fresh and contemporary decoration of this iconic hotel.

"The Vitrulan wall covering is both pleasing to look at as well as proving to be hard-wearing, which is ideal for a city centre hotel."

Chris Sheppard, UK sales manager for Vitrulan, said: "We are not surprised that the Aqua Plus Pigment 633 proved to be up to the job at the Ramada Manchester Piccadilly.

"It has been developed to offer robust performance while giving a smooth finish and we are confident that where the walls in the hotel are covered in Vitrulan, they will remain in the kind of flawless condition you would expect to find at a three star hotel."



