

Claypaint breathes new life into Fota House

Products - Claypaint.

Project - Irish Heritage Trust Fota House in Cork

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A landmark restoration by the Irish Heritage Trust has saved the fascinating Fota House, a gem of neo-classical architecture nestling on an island in Cork Harbour.



One of the most significant challenges was the conservation of the lime plaster walls which had been damaged by damp over many years.

A new heating system helped the drying out process and the specification of paint was vital to ensure that moisture could escape from the thick, stone walls during the restoration and on an ongoing basis.

David Higgins, Director of heritage contractor Queenstown Restoration, said: "We used Claypaint for another historic building with very damp walls. Normally, damp can lead to paint becoming powdery and flaking but the Claypaint remained stable during the drying out process. We had no hesitation in recommending it for Fota House."

Conservation architects John O'Connell Architects Ltd conducted further research into Claypaint and discovered that its properties make it ideal for use on historic buildings.

Project architect Audrey Farrell said: "It is important for walls to be able to breathe. If water gets trapped inside by impervious materials or finishes such as non-breathable paints, it can cause issues within the wall and lead to plaster failure and/or paint to peel off."

Following the restoration, Audrey added: "Fota House required extensive repairs to its lime plaster

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walls and ceilings. By using interior lime plaster with breathable Claypaint, we facilitated the evaporation of residual moisture from within the walls. The paint remained stable throughout this process; it did not flake or discolour.”

Claypaint is extremely breathable because it combines natural ingredients with advanced technology to maximise performance. It is also very environmentally friendly, being accredited to the strict standards of the EU Ecolabel.

Irish Heritage Trust Chief Executive Kevin Baird said: “We were delighted with Earthborn’s Claypaint. As well as being breathable, it provides a welcoming, authentic appearance and the natural pigments used in its manufacture ensure that the colours are historically accurate.”

The Claypaint shades selected for Fota House include Birdwatchers Green, Lemony and Marbles from Earthborn’s existing colour collection. Customised shades were also blended to match existing paintwork in parts of the building. The Claypaint was supplied by Earthborn’s national distributor for Ireland, Stoneware Studios.

The €4.5 million restoration programme included making safe and restoring the upper floor of the house so that visitors can view upstairs for the first time in many years. Fota houses an 18th Century landscape painting collection which has been described as the most significant of its kind outside the National Gallery of Ireland.

The four year restoration project was completed in 2012 and the Irish Heritage Trust is proud that this architectural masterpiece and treasure house of art can now be enjoyed and celebrated by everyone.

For more information about Fota House visit www.fotahouse.com

For more information about Earthborn paints visit www.earthbornpaints.co.uk or www.stonewarestudios.com

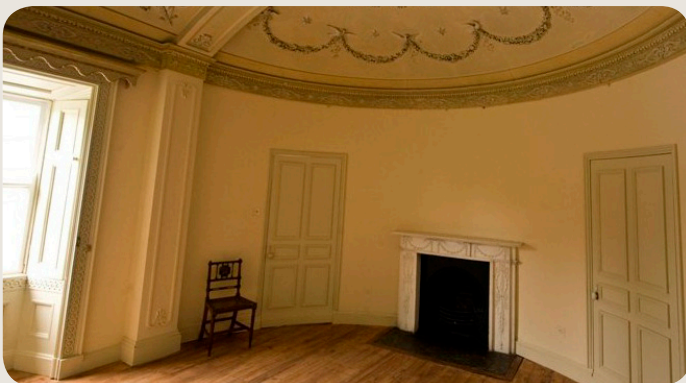
Front page - Natural light floods the second staircase at Fota House. A bespoke shade of green Claypaint was specified for the walls.

This page (top left) - The curved walls of the Boudoir glow in Arbouet Claypaint.

This page (bottom left) - Azur Claypaint gives a fresh look to the Bow Bedroom.

This page (below) - Bedroom F12 features the classic Birdwatcher’s Green.

Photos: courtesy, Irish Heritage Trust



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