

# Tiling onto Balconies

Very often balconies that are to be tiled are not built as such during the original construction. Balconies can often be built onto garage roofs or other overhangs which have an existing surface. These surfaces were more than likely designed as ceiling to the room below rather than as floors.

As ceilings are generally self supporting rather than having a requirement to support traffic, they tend to not be rigid, and are thus directly unsuitable to receive tiling. Pooling and

running off of rainwater uncontrolled can quickly become a case for failure. A number of manufacturers now produce complete balcony drainage systems. For further information on the Watec®Fin balcony drainage system call 020 8778 9000.

If they are existing external surfaces they may also be finished in external roofing grade asphalt which is also unsuitable to receive tiling as it designed to remain deformable. For further information on fixing to asphalt externally please consult B5385 Part 3: clause 14.5. As a rule of thumb, unless they are of concrete construction balconies are not suitable for tiling. The

tiles chosen are often large format dark tiles which will exhibit large thermal movements which will exaggerate any possible damaging effects.

If balconies constructed of timber are required to be tiled they should be made rigid by covering with material such as a cement sand screed, this will require the joists to be rebraced to bring them up to the quality of flooring grade supports and then a reinforced decoupling matting system such as Watec®3E can be used.

Call 020 8778 9000 for more information. But as previously stated balconies of this type of construction are not generally suitable for tiling.

If a balcony is being built into a new construction, the surface to be tiled should be either concrete or a cement sand screed.

Falls should be formed in the substrate to ensure puddling of water does not occur. These falls should never be formed in the adhesive layer, but always at the design stage in the substrate.

## Adhesives

Recommended adhesives: **Bis-Flex**, **Bis-Xtra**, **Vitri-Flow** or **Vitri-Rapid**, **Thin and Thick**

**Bed Adhesive** incorporating **Flexibond** on concrete substrates.

For any other substrate please call the Biscem Technical Helpline on 01924 362081 or email: [biscem.info@rnc.co.uk](mailto:biscem.info@rnc.co.uk)

## Grouting

**Vitri-Grouts**, **Speed-E-Poxy** or **Wide Joint Grouts** incorporating **Biscem Grout Additive**.

## Movement Joints

Any movement joints visible in the screed should be followed through the tiling to the surface. Failure to do this may result in excessive movements within the structure being transferred to the tiles with the likelihood of resultant failure of the system. Owing to the complexity of this subject please refer to Technical Bulletin TB4.



Smaller, lighter coloured tiles will have a greater chance of proving successful in balcony situations owing to the reduced heat absorption and greater facility to allow movement than a darker, larger format equivalent.