

Tate Britain - Case Study

Situated on Millbank in London, Tate Britain is a tourist hotspot dedicated to the finest British art dating back to the 16th century.

The site originally housed the Millbank prison which was the main departure point for criminals being sent to Australia. Following the demolition of the prison, the National Gallery of British Art (Tate Britain as of 2000) was opened in 1897 by Sir Henry Tate, making it the first of the four Tate galleries.

The building has gone through numerous renovations since its 19th century opening. In 1987, the Clore gallery was opened and went on to win a Royal Institute of Architects award the following year. More recently in 2006, Caruso St. John architects began a long term development and renovation project which aimed to create nine new galleries. The redevelopment featured a number of different renovations spanning seven years, whereby Allgood were chosen to supply an Ironmongery and an access control solution in the new galleries.

Working on such a prestigious project, it was evident that aesthetics were of paramount importance. The architect desired a unique finish on items, so Allgood worked closely to produce a shot peened finish on some of the stainless steel furniture. To create a clean aesthetic on doors which required push plates and signage, Allgood created an all in one solution by shot peening stainless steel plates, blanking off areas to create contrasting areas for signage to be screen printed within.

Many doors within the gallery space were of traditional arched design which caused a challenge on fire doors with self-closing requirements. Allgood's solution to this issue was to specify floor springs combined with projection hinges to provide a specification that would self-close in conjunction with the door geometry. Furthermore, to minimise the aesthetic impact of the floor springs, bespoke tile trays with access holes were created to conceal the floor springs whilst providing easy access for floor spring adjustment. This provided an aesthetically pleasing solution for a very technical application.

Having previously worked with the museum on their Manton shop, Allgood were well prepared for this project and the existing relationship enabled a smooth operation that was completed on time and within budget.

