



SIKA AT WORK

ST LAURENCE'S CHURCH, SLOUGH

Sarnafil®



LEAD THIEVES BEATEN BY SIKA SARNAFIL



PROJECT REQUIREMENT

When St Laurence's Church in Slough was robbed of the original lead lining from its roof valley gutter, its church warden was determined to find an alternative rather than replace the metal and risk thieves striking again.

The 12th century church in the parish of Upton-cum-Chalvery is the oldest building in the borough, and is protected by a Grade I-listing. As such, it came as no surprise to warden Allan James – who is responsible for three churches in the parish – when insurers told him the roof would have to be replaced with the original metal to the tune of £12,000. With the church targeted by thieves, security was a key concern, while the budget was also an issue, as the church received an insurance payment of just £4,000 to cover repair work.

SIKA SARNAFIL SOLUTION

Church warden Allan James had, fortunately, heard about Sarnafil single ply roofing systems, which are proving a popular alternative for buildings affected by metal theft.

The systems mimic the look of lead and copper roofs, and the high-performance waterproof membranes were therefore a suitable choice for the 12th century church. Allan recognised that, as the gutter is hidden from public view, replacing the original lead was not a viable option, as the thieves would only return. This, as well as the reduction in cost using Sarnafil's Lead Grey membrane would offer, convinced Allan to lobby for its use.

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The local police – who say there are seven metal thefts reported per day in Berkshire – supported Allan's proposal, and he was able to persuade council and planning authorities to specify single ply. Sarnafil registered contractor Owlsworth Roofing, based in Henley-on-Thames, was tasked with installing the stretch of narrow guttering to the historic church.

Sarnafil was the ideal replacement, as its flexibility and welded nature meant it was relatively easy for the contractor to fit the membrane between two pitched tile roofs on either side. The job was completed within a week, which meant that the Owlsworth team was able to protect the church from water ingress while working. The downpipe rainwater hopper damaged by the thieves was also replaced.

Both the Owlsworth team and Allan were delighted with the finished result. Allan believes that Sika Sarnafil is the best alternative, citing the very professional workmanship and the inability to distinguish between metal and Sarnafil, thanks to its lead grey colour, as his main reasons. He also dismissed the suggestion of using aluminium or stainless steel as an alternative, as Sika Sarnafil does not make so much noise during rainfall.

The project has proved a success, as the church has not only saved around £3,000 by using Sarnafil, but is also protected by a 10-year guarantee, reassuring them of the reliability and long life of the product. Most importantly, the new installation will not appeal to local criminals, a key concern for the site.

PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

Contractor: Owlsworth Roofing

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