

# Fire & Water resistance see Magply picked to play vital role for Bath, Rugby

*The Recreation Ground in Bath is one of the crucibles of English rugby, famous long before the professional era and still a venue other Premiership and European sides frequently find presents a challenge they cannot meet. It is also a location that posed specific physical and technical questions for the materials used in building the new West Stand, which Magply met in full.*

The new Gem Stand sponsored by brewery Bath Ales, backs onto the River Avon which is prone to periodic flooding, while the project architects, Arena 1865 also had to take several other design criteria into consideration. These included the provision of fire protection to help safeguard the 4,500 spectators the steel framed structure can accommodate, while rigidity, all round durability and ease of installation were all important.

Project Architect, Simon Pugh-Jones outlined the long term ambitions for the ground as a resource to serve the people of Bath rather than just the rugby club, as well as the way Magply aligned with the demands of the most recent building project. He commented: "The Recreation Ground is the spiritual home of Bath Rugby, but the game has grown and the facilities no longer match all the needs. Our long term objective is to redevelop the ground and a year ago we embarked on a planning process to give certainty over the next four years while the bigger plan is considered and this involved building a new 'temporary' West Stand. This sits on the massive old base of the stand rebuilt after World War Two, with spreader plates to carry the steel frame. Unfortunately, however, the Rec is prone to flooding rapidly to a depth of a metre or more and therefore the building has to be resilient.

Also safety requirements have been increased over the years and the new West Stand gives us better facilities including more toilets, more bars and better access and egress in an emergency. We looked

at a full range of board solutions including high performance gypsum and recycled plastic, but when we got into the science and the costings, it soon became clear the only board which ticked all the boxes was Magply. If there is a flood we will be able to quickly wash it down and repaint it, while it will continue to offer full fire resistance. We didn't need specialist installers and although some of those unfamiliar were sceptical to begin with, they soon found it easy to work with in achieving a neat fit, which also included some fireboarding applications." Simon summed up saying: "We are incredibly proud of what we have achieved with this project and the product gave us exactly what we wanted. As a club Bath is all about elite performance, constantly pushing forward and Magply fits with that ethos."

In total some 2000 square metres of the Magply 1200 x 2400 x 9 mm boards were consumed in fitting out the main passageway beneath the Gem Stand where supporters can access various concession stands as well as the other facilities. Available from distributors nationwide, Magply continues to grow in popularity with consultants and contractors as well as manufacturers of fire doors, bathroom pods, custodial buildings, park homes and other modular buildings. Ultimately, it offers a long maintenance free life and peace of mind for the building specifier in respect of the ever present danger of fire to life and property.

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