

News

Ecocel praises Cork City Council's cellulose approval



Cork City Council has added cellulose to its list of approved insulation products for its social housing attic upgrades.

The council has updated its specification for insulating attics at ceiling level to include a minimum depth of 300mm of either certain specifications of loft roll insulation or recycled newspaper-based cellulose fibre to BS5803 Part 5 1985. The decision on which product to use in any given installation will be made by Cork City Council.

The move was welcomed by Cork-based cellulose manufacturer John Egan of Ecocel.

"It's great that people in Cork now have the option to bring down their carbon footprint and improve their indoor air quality," he said, adding that the hygroscopic nature of cellulose means it can take in and release moisture, thus allowing it to last the lifespan of the building.

"Our insulation, when installed in Ireland, is carbon negative. It sequesters carbon – and it lasts the lifespan of the building. Generally, the highest CO₂ in all building materials is transport. We're the only indigenous insulation manufacturer who source our own materials in Ireland."

Egan called on all local authorities to follow

Cork's lead, and in so doing exceed the capacity of Ecocel's Cork factory. "We wouldn't consider expanding the plant in that case. We would open a plant in Dublin, to reduce transport emissions – both for the paper, and the insulation."

The company is in the very final stages of securing a revised Irish Agrément certificate to include open-blown cellulose for attics and injection for timber frame walls and sloping ceilings, along with a CE marking.

(Above) Ecocel director John Egan at the company's Cork City-based manufacturing plant

Smet launches new screed ideal for low energy houses

Smet have announced the launch of a new floor screed that can be installed in significantly reduced thicknesses, allowing for the use of extra floor insulation. The screed is also designed to compliment underfloor heating systems, and to respond quickly to changes in room temperature. Sopro Rapidur FE 678 is a rapid-set, self-levelling screed, walkable within three hours and ready for tiling in 24 hours. The dry screed can be finished with the usual plethora of floor coverings but, uniquely, this screed allows the contractor the option to leave in its natural state and grind and polish it to a contemporary finish. This creates a compact, visually appealing 'terrazzo-style' floor finish. The polishing process smooths the surface, revealing the inherent aggregate. This organic look is of great appeal to most clients who want the polished effect.

Joris Smet, director of Smet Building Products Ltd, said: "It's not often we see a game-changer in this long-established industry. However, our German manufacturing partner, Sopro have really done it this time. The unique properties of this pumpable, rapid-set screed really sets it apart. Particularly useful for thin underfloor heating systems, fast-track and tightly scheduled screed laying, the product offers

the option of final polishing to a contemporary, visually appealing terrazzo-style surface."

Rapidur FE 678 has minimum shrinkage and therefore does not curl, it fully encapsulates the underfloor heating pipes, has a high thermal conductivity and can be installed in significantly reduced thicknesses. This allows thicker insulation to be used under the screed, resulting in better thermal insulating values or U-values. This means the screed gains heat rapidly and transports heat to the surface of the screed and into the air, resulting in an efficient response in room temperature changes.

Smet said thin floating self-levelling screed is more energy efficient, responding quickly to changes in room temperatures. "Traditional thick screeds cannot respond as efficiently to, for example, solar gain in the afternoon or when a fireplace is lit in the winter," said Smet, adding that this ineffective response (heating/cooling) often leads to a room being too hot or too cold, a problem eliminated by application of Rapidur FE 678.

Rapidur FE 678 self-levelling screed is a polymer-modified, ready-to-use dry mix for production of rapid-set screeds allowing early

flooring installation. It's suitable for heated screeds, bonded screeds and unbonded screeds (on a separating or insulation layer). It can be used as a base for all types of floor covering, and it's particularly suitable for a wide range of thin-coat heating systems.

(Below) Sopro Rapidur FE 678, an innovative floor screed that lends itself towards a polished finish, available in Ireland via Smet

