



**Project:**

## The Kelpies Visitor Centre

**Location:**

Falkirk

**Architect:**

Nicoll Russell Architects

**Flooring Material:**

Allura, Nuway, Coral and Step

**Design Reference:**

Allura Stone grigio concrete s62415, charcoal concrete s62418, natural concrete s62416, Surestep Star mercury 176952



## Forbo reflects the world's largest equine sculptures' contemporary design

Soaring 30 metres into The Helix Park skyline in Falkirk, The Kelpies can be admired all year round from the contemporary visitor centre, designed by architects Nicoll Russell Studios. Using Forbo Flooring Systems' Allura Stone range, the architects were able to create a welcoming interior, while reflecting the abstract designs of the world's largest equine sculptures – which helped the project win the 2016 Fly Forbo competition.

In early 2012, Nicoll Russell Studios won an architectural competition to design The Kelpies' visitor centre and after working closely with its client, a design scheme was developed and agreed. Euan McCallum, Senior Associate at Nicoll Russell Studios, said: From the beginning of the project, we had a lot of discussions with the client to develop a modern, yet practical design. When it came to specifying a floor covering for the centre, we initially contemplated having an exposed concrete finish, which would reflect the industrial connotations of The Kelpies.

"However, the client was concerned that the concrete may feel too hard beneath the visitors' feet and potentially be unwelcoming. As such, we contacted Forbo for its help as we were aware of its Luxury Vinyl Tile (LVT) Allura Stone range, which offers an appearance similar to polished concrete but without the associated drawbacks."

Throughout the main area of the visitor centre, Forbo's Allura Stone range was installed in three different colourways; Grigio concrete, Charcoal concrete and Natural concrete. They were laid in a pattern that empathised with the external paving and echoed the designs of the stainless steel cladding panels on The Kelpies.

The modern aesthetics of stone are realised within Forbo's Allura Stone

range, allowing designers to create the natural effect without the associated high costs.

Euan continued: "In the visitor orientation section of the centre, we decided to only install Natural Concrete from the Allura Stone range, to create the impression of a smooth concrete floor and to avoid drawing attention away from the exhibition. In the back of house areas, such as the kitchens and staff rooms, we installed Forbo's Surestep safety flooring to protect employees from unnecessary slips and trips."

Forbo's advances in technology see revolutionary STEP safety crystals embedded throughout the wearlayer of the Surestep range, providing a fully slip resistant solution. The entire collection meets with the prevalent UK slip standards; wet Pendulum test >36 and >20 surface roughness, as well as EN1385 for sustainable slip resistance.

Additionally, as an effective entrance flooring system can stop up to 94% of dirt and moisture being walked into a building, Nicoll Russell Studios installed Forbo's Nuway system, with Coral anthracite inserts, to help the client maintain the interior floor covering easily.

Euan concluded: "Throughout the entire project, Laura Birrell, the Business Area Manager – Commercial sector at Forbo, was very helpful and patient – in fact, she must have brought us a sample of nearly every product in the entire Forbo range to help our client make a decision. Forbo not only helped us with the product selection, they also provided us with technical assistance and gave us a fully detailed specification for laying the materials on the substrate. Overall, both ourselves and the client are very pleased with the finished project, which opened successfully in October 2015, and the help we received from Forbo."



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