

Kirton -In - Lindsey Town Hall.

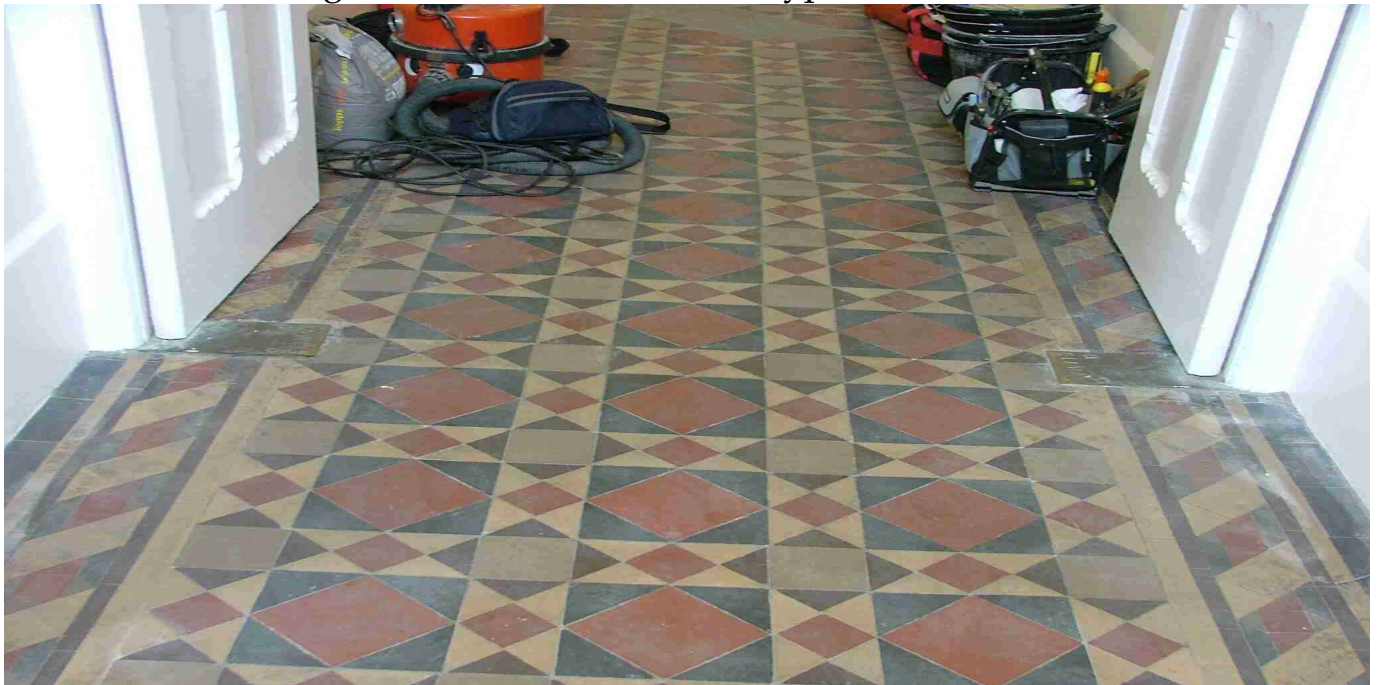
Restoration of a Grade 2 listed building Victorian Geometric tiled floor.

This contract was too restore an original late 18th century Victorian Geometric tiled floor and to add an extension floor that complemented the original tiling but did not slavishly copy the original design.

I decided to use the same colour template and close design but changed the look of the main field and border. This can clearly be seen in the contract portfolio.

The original floor had lost a few patches of tiles which had been in-filled with almost neat cement mortar.

The tiled floor had also been covered a few times in a dwell-on sealer usually water-based although there are traces of other types of sealer.



Kirton TH floor before restoration.

Victorian tiled floors are very porous and as a result look good whilst wet and when they dry the above look is typical= drab and almost dusty looking.

P2.

The damaged tiles & patches are removed using an Exakt saw to first cut around the tile or the perimeter of the patch, this de-couples that tile or patch from the main floor and the cut extends into the screed below, this prevents any disturbance or percussive damage from either a hammer & chisel or other tools being transmitted to the main body of tile.



Cement mortar patches.



Cut out patches using an Exakt saw fitted with diamond blades.

P3.

The screed is now ground down with a Fein Supercut tool with rasp attachments and possibly using an Arbortech power chisel for fiddly areas where use of a hammer & chisel might cause the adjoining tiles to lift.

Once the underlying screed has been removed to a depth to allow a bed of adhesive and a replacement tiles then tiles will be cut from re-claimed tiles or a new close match tile.

These tiles will be beaten into place using an oak board & rubber mallet.



Patches re-tiled & grouted.

There were small sections like this all over the main floor I used both original re-claimed tiles and new repro tiles that matched as close as possible.

Once the original floor had been restored the extension floor was started, the original floor had a returned border signifying the end of a corridor, and because the floor was listed unless a very good reason could be given then the original tiles were to be left as is.

I decided to use a technique I have used before and that is to put a bridging threshold in. this is a new section of tile which complements both the old floor and the new section of floor and has elements of both in design & colour.

It also helps in re-setting the new floor as usually the new extension will not be square against the original building as in this case.



End of Original tiles, top of picture show's new un-tiled section.

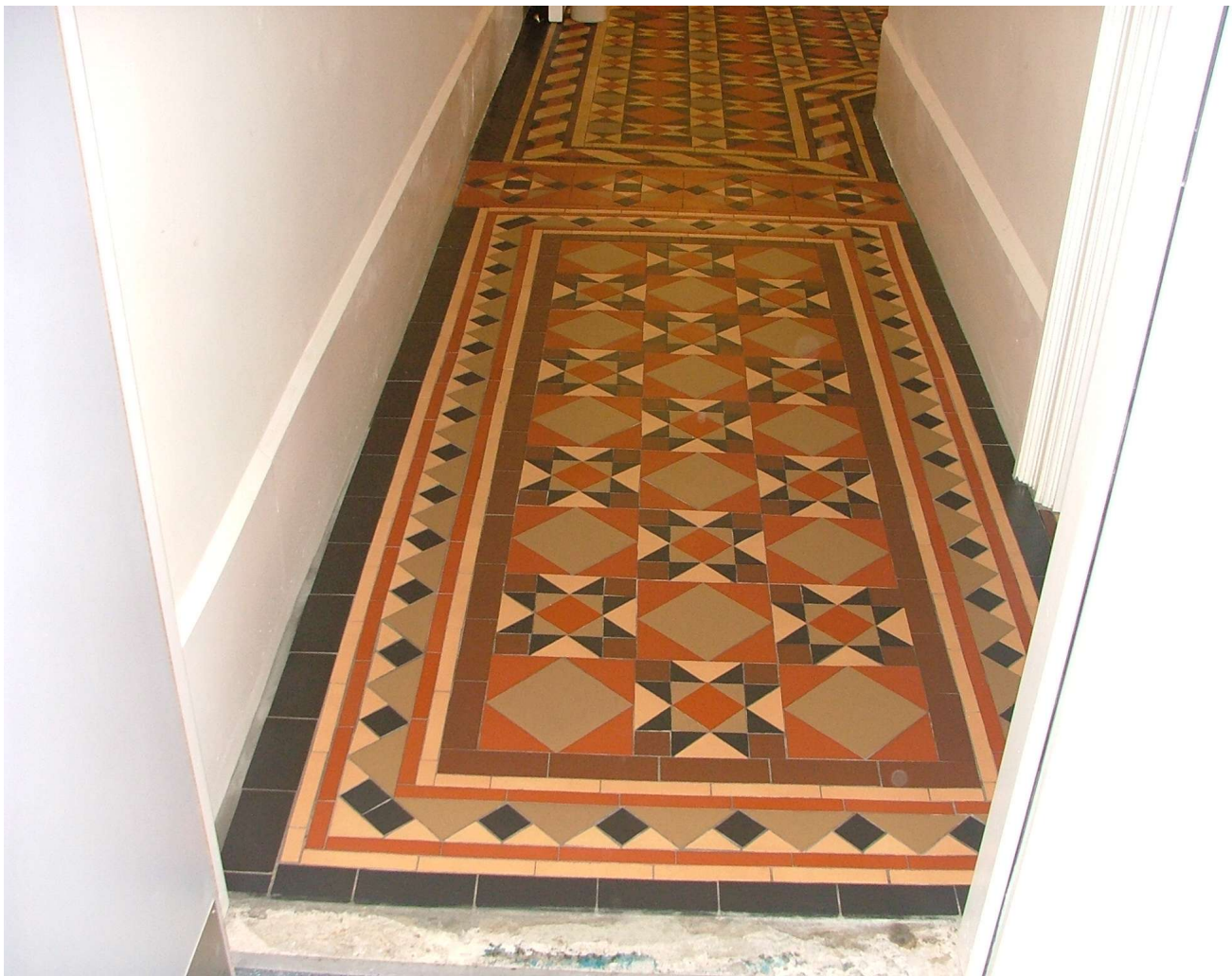
The edge of the original tiles are tidied up using a Fein Supercut with diamond blade attachment, this is so the new tiles can be butted up.



New section ready for levelling prior to tiling.



New bridging section of tiles and part of the new extension tiling.



New tiled section.

This new section uses the same colour-way but in a different set out use of an internal variable so that the pattern followed the same main field as the original was necessary that is the 6x2 inch brown tile strip on the inside of the border tiles before the main tiled pattern starts.

This is a way of setting the width of the main field pattern so that symmetry is attained.

It is also a handy way of not having too big a variable against the wall or skirting next to the first run of border tiles.

P7.

The tiles for the new section are Craven Dunnill tiles of Jackfield and all the geometric shaped tiles e.g. triangles etc are cut from 6x6 inch tiles.

The tiles were cut on site and cut using 2 different wet cut saws, largely because the cutting was repetitive for tile sizes such as 6x1 inch and so on so the tile saws were set for long runs of one size and switched between when the temperature cut off switch engaged.

Just short of 2,000 cuts were executed to achieve this traditional looking geometric tiled floor.

Also as it is listed particular care has to be taken that the new floor blends and does not jar with the original floor. The brief in this contract was too show that an extension had been added and that is to be reflected in the tiled floor but also that the new floor have its own identity and not slavishly copy the original.

I am happy that this brief has been achieved if not exceeded! The clients are very happy with the outcome and I was almost embarrassed with the praise given to me.



Original floor section showing how grubby it had become with dirt and sealer build-up

P8.



Same end section with dirt removed- slight rusting stains which can be common on floors laid over dirt.

The main floor and the new section were cleaned together (although the new section was obviously clean) this helps blend the floors as the new floor being slightly porous absorbs some of the dirt from the old floor as I deliberately go over the new floor and carry the dirty water etc over to the new section.

The floor is cleaned with a low rpm scrubber approx 200 rpm this ensures the tiles get cleaned but at a rate that is safe, a high speed heavy cleaner could dislodge some of the tiles.

A mild alkaline cleaner is used first neat rather than diluted as this type of floor will be ingrained with the dirt of 100 years + it is pointless to be too gentle with dirt that long established.

A polish stripper neat is used next, then the floor is allowed to dry for approx an hour (natural lunch break) the original floor was then checked for paint splashes and any other stains like varnish seal etc.

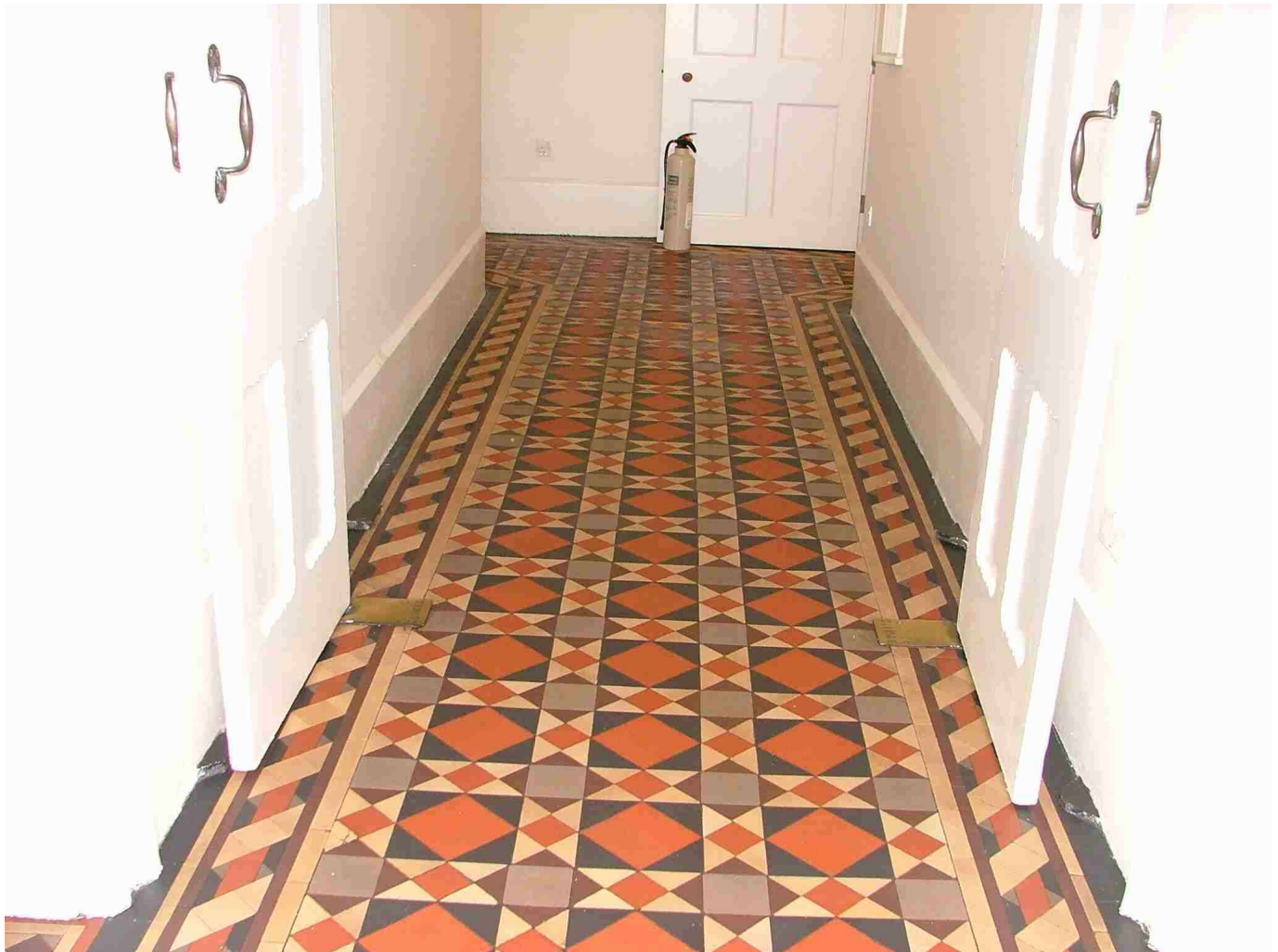
These are removed manually with a long handled paint scraper with a sharp razor type blade at the business end.

P9.

This can be a long tedious process and another reason why would-be trainees need to be able to kneel for very long periods of time.

Before even attempting to train someone I always check if they can kneel down for at least 6 hours per day! Extended periods of time for hours at a time are a pre-requisite although breaks can be taken it is an impossible job to do unless a person is capable of kneeling for very long periods of time; it is not possible to restore a floor by crouching or bending over.

I have lost count of people who wish to be trained yet can't kneel??



Main floor cleaned & sealed.

P10.

After the floor was allowed to dry out in this case for two days, the floor is checked over once more and any stray bits of paint varnish seal etc is scraped up.

The floor is swept with a fine brush and then on hands & knees hovered = every square foot until the floor is both spotless and dustless as is possible.

The floor is now sealed and our Co now favours only one sealer and that is Dry-Treat stain proof this sealer is virtually client proof. The sealer allows air in & out so the floor can breathe which is very important with lime based screeded floors which accounts for approx 98% of all Victorian tiled floors.

Water & oil are resisted and with care taken at the beginning whilst the seal is curing, then the floor will not need sealing again for at least 15 years.

Previously our Co has used various seals in the past petrol distillate /water based emulsion seals all of them have raised problems at one point or another because these Victorian tiled floors are very old and porous in different sections and almost fully vitrified in others depending on the type of tiles and how they were fired or in fact where in the kiln the tiles came from as different sections of the kiln caused the tiles to be fired at higher temperatures.

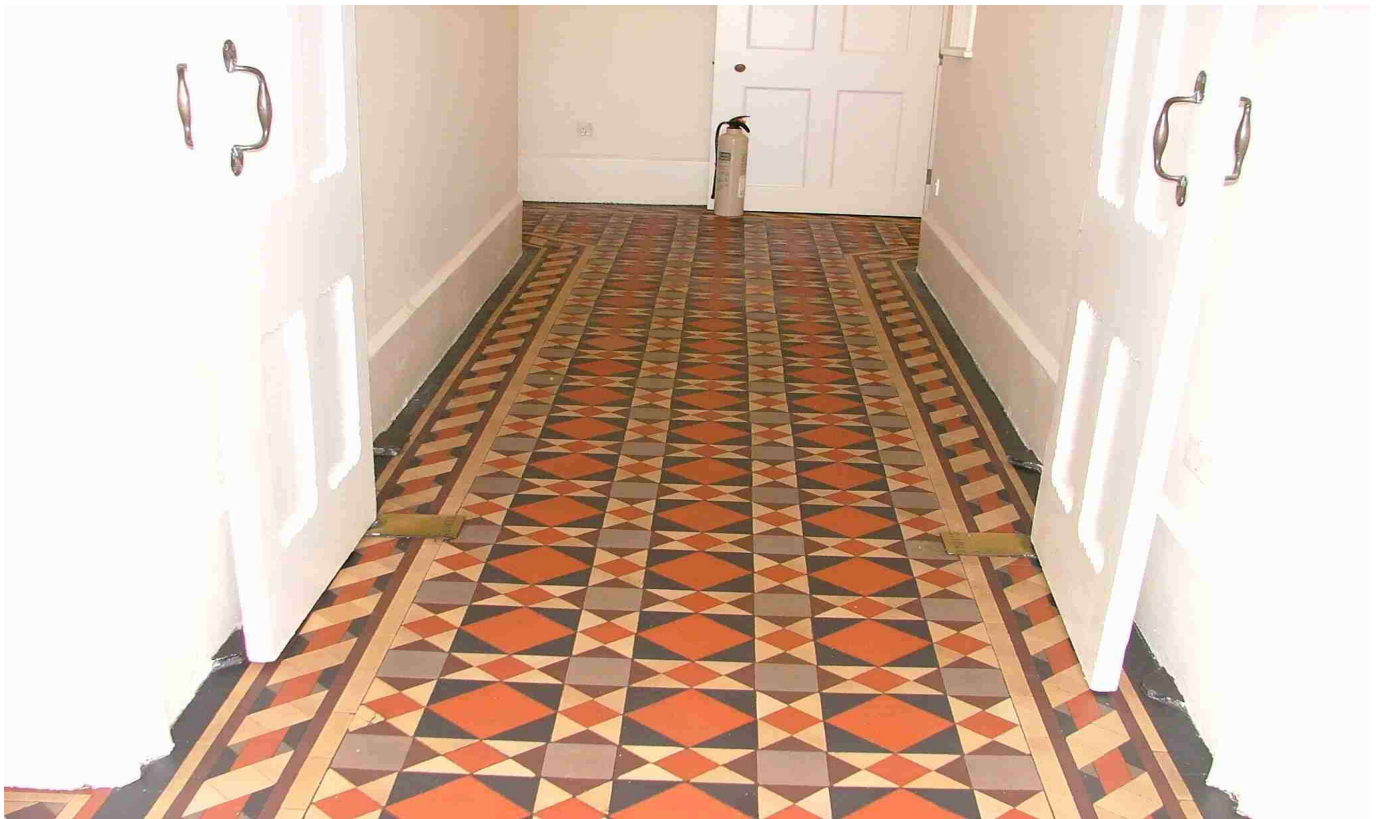
It was a nightmare sealer would peel off after minutes down or peel off and discolour a week or so later.

As a Co we will not put down a different type of sealer unless the client signs a disclaimer note. Otherwise we put our reputation behind Dry-Treat it has been used on listed & un-listed buildings now for nearly 2 years and we have never had to go back or had cause for complaint.

I'm happy to endorse Dry-Treat and have recommended its use even with suppliers of tiles and kitchen tops etc even when we are not involved in the sale of the tiles or kitchens and we are not involved in a contractual sense.



Main floor un-cleaned or sealed.



Main floor cleaned & sealed.

P12.
Clients Reference.



Kirton in Lindsey Diamond Jubilee Town Hall

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19th August 2011

Dear Steve

Apologies for the delay in responding.

We are more than happy to give positive feedback on the work you did for us at Kirton in Lindsey Diamond Jubilee Town Hall.

We were, and still are more than satisfied with the level of skill and workmanship in the piece you produced for us. It not only brings the hallway back to life, but compliments the original tile work, and brings a new and unique piece of art work to the Hall.

The restoration you also did on the existing tile work was second to none. It was both sensitive and of wonderful quality and we always felt that we were in the hands of someone who valued our building as much as we do.

We loved having you here, and love the work you did, and we missed you when you went.

I'm not sure that we could give you higher praise than that!!

We take great pleasure in recommending you and your services to anyone.

Thank you.

Helen Taylor (Heritage Officer) & Jenny Cripps (Vce Chair of the Trustees)

Kirton in Lindsey Town Hall

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