

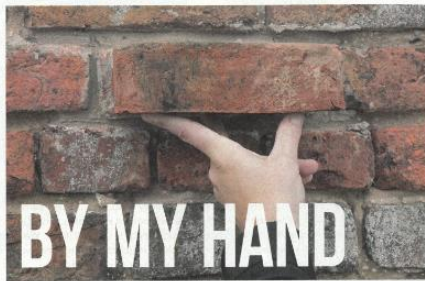
Best mid-range campaign

Jason Hughes, Managing Director of Imperial Bricks, explains why builders should use handmade bricks for new and self-build as well as renovation.



Produced in their millions, the humble brick is often taken for granted in the race against the handover deadline. Indeed, with more and more houses being built and renovated each year, just being able to source enough bricks is often a win. And yet, when all is said and done, the choice of brick remains the single most important feature of a building project, and choosing the right one is of the utmost importance.

For example, it's essential to match existing brickwork for renovations or extensions to ensure a seamless blend. Homeowners are happy to pay more for this as it adds value to the property. But it's not just a question of using a close match for colour. Variations from the surrounding buildings, whether it's in colour, weathering or size of brick, stand out and leave the passer-by with a sense that something's not quite right. Meanwhile, self-builders



and niche developers that focus on smaller, high-end projects are also focusing on the 'right' bricks, partly in response to planners, who are becoming more particular too, specifying the colour, size and style of brick.

In conservation areas, or where a region has a very specific brick (such as the London Yellow Stock), reclaimed bricks are sometimes specified and sourced for restoration or renovation projects and even sometimes for self-builds or 'infill' developments, where land in built-up areas is used for further construction. However, supply is limited, quality is questionable – there is a lot of wastage – and they are expensive. What's more, they only come in imperial sizing, as opposed to the metric measurements used in modern construction. Unfortunately, many machine-made bricks that try to mimic reclamation features often fall short of the look and character required.

Back to Basics
An alternative is new handmade bricks – now a thriving market. The demand has grown consistently for these bricks. Builders are looking for both imperial and metric sizes, and the ability to match both the regional variations in colour and texture around the UK. However, some suppliers are unable to meet this demand. We've heard reports from some smaller construction firms who are reporting waits of over a year before bricks arrive on site.

Our team of in-house brick specialists is often asked to help source alternative products as we have a large range available from stock. We've introduced several new bricks as a solution to brick shortages including a Waterstruck range in metric sizing. These measure up exactly with modern blocks and lintels. The new metric Waterstruck range has seven varieties: Traditional Buff Waterstruck, Buff Multi Waterstruck,

Mellow Multi Waterstruck, Antique Multi Waterstruck, Rural Red, Rural Red Multi and Weathered Rural Red. Waterstruck bricks have a unique texture due to the traditional methods of production. The bricks are soft-mud moulded using clay with a high water content. Water is also used as the releasing agent, giving the bricks a relatively smooth appearance. They've already been used in a number of high-end new builds.

Meet your match

We're also seeing an increasing demand for brick matching. It's always worth asking your local merchant or the brick manufacturer directly for a sample or ideally a test panel showing a section, so you can check the colour, size and texture. Often an expert eye can help quickly identify the brick required. Our brick matching app (available on Android through the Google Play store as well as iTunes) allows builders to view our entire range or upload a picture of existing brickwork for our team to match.



We recently supplied Cheshire Barn Homes for Hooftield Hill Barns, a rural conversion which is Grade II listed. We were able to match the original brickwork for infill and repair, providing Old Reclamation Clump handmade bricks in imperial sizing, and ensuring the new construction kept the rural character required – with a contemporary twist. Our Farmhouse Orange blend was also used as brick slips in a country cottage in Shropshire to create an internal feature wall in the bathroom. The



homeowners wanted a real contrast to the very contemporary white gloss bathroom suite, using a brick that matched those used to originally build the property, for an authentic look and feel. These case studies show the variety and flexibility handmade bricks offer, demonstrating just why they are so popular.

MORE INFORMATION
For more information on Imperial Bricks circle the readerlink below.

Circle readerlink 162



IMPERIAL ANSWERS DEMAND WITH NEW WATERSTRUCK BRICKS

Imperial Bricks has introduced new Restoration Red and Restoration Oxford Yellow Multi Waterstruck bricks in response to increasing demand for regionally appropriate variations. These traditional handmade bricks are made using a relatively soft clay, with water used as the releasing agent for the moulding process, giving them a smoother appearance, while still retaining character. The new additions work well in the renovation of period properties, extensions, boundary walls as well as high-end new builds.

Bricks vary in colour and composition across the UK, and Imperial's range of 50+ handmade, wirecut and pressed bricks includes options for 'every region.

"We have a sustainable supply of both new bricks which are fully tested to BS EN 771-1 and F2 rated for frost resistance, they can be found in our Brick Matcher app, which offers an on-the-go guide to our complete range, available for iPhones and Android phones." - Jason Hughes, Managing Director of Imperial Bricks

The Restoration Oxford Yellow Multi Waterstruck brick is designed to suit properties found across Oxfordshire, Cambridgeshire, East Coast and East Anglia. A standard version without a weathered finish is also available. The brick was recently used on a Grade 1 listed castle in Kent for a sensitive repair and stabilisation project.

The Restoration Red Waterstruck is suitable for most regions across the UK. "We have

a sustainable supply of both new bricks which are fully tested to BS EN 771-1 and F2 rated for frost resistance," adds Jason Hughes, Managing Director of Imperial Bricks. "They can be found in our Brick Matcher app, which offers an on-the-go guide to our complete range, available for iPhones and Android phones."

Call 01952 750816 or visit www.imperialbricks.co.uk for further information.



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SEPTEMBER 2016

MASONRY MATERIALS & LANDSCAPING
Another brick in the wall!

ROOFING, FLOORING & INSULATION
From top to bottom!

THE IMPERIAL BRICKS INCLUDE OVER 50 TRADITIONAL HANDMADE, WATERSTRUCK, WIRECUT AND PRESSED BRICKS

Feature preview

Paul Groves reveals what this month's articles have in store

BRICKS ARE A TIMELESS PRODUCT, USED BY ALL CIVILISATIONS AROUND THE WORLD. WHETHER IT'S FOR A ONE-OFF, HIGH-SPEC HOME, A SMALL DEVELOPMENT OR A CONVERSION OF FORMER INDUSTRIAL OR FARM BUILDINGS, DEMAND FOR HANDMADE BRICKS IS HIGHER THAN EVER.

Limited land available for building has led to a rise in stone-city built sites and the relaxation of planning restrictions on brown green belt or rural sites. In these situations, it's important to build in keeping with the surroundings. As developers are looking for bricks in a wide choice of colour, size and finish, reclaimed bricks are difficult to source, expensive and of variable quality. Handmade bricks are a reliable resource, available in imperial sizes to match existing structures or height to measure up exactly with modern blocks and lintels.

"Imperial Bricks we have expanded to the demand by introducing new colour and finishes to meet new requirements," says Managing Director Jason Hughes. "Our new Waterstruck Multi range is growing and our new high-end developments will meet the safety and aesthetic character that handmade bricks offer."

"One of the benefits of handmade bricks is their variety – there is a brick for every situation. Imperial Bricks offers a brick matching service which can be used to provide an exact match to any site or colour of brick."

"We can be weathered or even 'soaked' (darker) to fit in with the surroundings. In a recent project, we supplied London developer Moxey Miles in a range of eight contemporary coloured bricks located near Putney Park. Our Green Reclamation Yellow Brick bricks were specified, to give the new buildings an instantly weathered appearance and to blend the development into a new contemporary urban context."

"The consistency of a standard metric size, along with the traditional wire-brush finish, offset the brick solution for this project."

"Handmade bricks, using manufacturing techniques hundreds of years old, are probably subject to modern movement and changing prices."

"Our local bricks include using brick slips internally for a greater 'imposed brick wall' effect without the hassle and expense of uncoursing a wall or laying full-size bricks over one."

"Our bricks are available in sites, but we've recently launched a new Brick Matcher app that takes the brick-finding work offline including colour-matching, Victorian White Claret and natural metallic blue Shropshire Green."

Wear the crown
with our finest traditional handmade bricks

Our handmade, wirecut and pressed bricks are perfect for restoration, renovation or new build. Available in regional variations, bespoke blends and standard or reclamation finishes.

We offer:

- Six types of bricks in imperial and metric sizes
- Handmade brick slips for feature walls or external cladding
- One large lime mortar and brick weathering lines
- F22 brick matching service

Call 01952 750 816, email sales@imperialbricks.co.uk or visit imperialbricks.co.uk

