

## CASE STUDY

# ABU DHABI URBAN PLANNING COUNCIL

Arena Tiling, based at Heathfield, Devon, was chosen by project manager BW Interiors International as the only British contractor to work on the relocation of the Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council (UPC) headquarters.

The agency is responsible for the future of Abu Dhabi's urban environments, and the expert authority behind the visionary Abu Dhabi 2030 Urban Structure Framework Plan.

The new offices will be the first of their kind in Abu Dhabi, and will boast major environmentally-friendly credentials. In addition, the project will be used as a case study to implement Estidama procedures in Abu Dhabi. Speaking on behalf of BW Interiors International, project director Darrel Ahmed comments: "The relocation and refitting of the new headquarters, located over three floors of the Al Mamoura Building in Abu Dhabi, has been of major importance to BW Interiors. It was essential that we chose a tiling contractor with experience in the UAE, as well as a reputation to produce the quality of finish we needed. Arena Tiling has certainly lived up to our expectations."

As the project is Abu Dhabi's first major environmentally-friendly office, there was high priority placed on LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Compliance.

Since its introduction in 1998, LEED has become the standard rating system for green and environmentally-sustainable building projects. Therefore, the use of environmentally-friendly practices and materials for the project was of vital importance. Every tile supplied for the project had to have a recycled material content of at least 50%.

Architect Gensler, which has offices in Dubai and London, specified that the 200m<sup>2</sup> main reception area was to be laid with 600 x 600, 100% recycled Decoran glass tiles from Float Glass Industries. Furthermore, the lunch room

had 140m<sup>2</sup> of an engineered surface (agglomerates) tile containing up to 72% of post-consumer recycled glass imported from Italian factory Trends.

The remaining part of the project involved over 400m<sup>2</sup> of mixed floor and wall tiles for showers and prayer rooms, laid with a porcelain tile from Italian factory Emilceramica's Blocks range. The 450 x 450 tile with high recycled content, perfectly combines respect for the environment with excellent aesthetic and functional qualities. In addition, the trims for the project utilised were UK-based Genesis' PVC Bullnose and Optimax movement trims.

To source the LEED-compliant materials tiles, Arena Tiling enlisted the assistance of George Hogan, sales director of Birmingham-based specialist tile importer, Solus Ceramics. George was able to supply valuable information and then source the required specified tiles for Arena Tiling. In addition, Nicholls & Clarke's export director, Paul Dawtrey, was also able to offer the compliant materials for fixing all of the tiles and arranged the exportation of the materials to Abu Dhabi by Airfreight.

A spokesman for Arena Tiling commented on the project, saying: "After all the work we have put into developing business in Abu Dhabi, it has been both rewarding and exciting to be involved in such an important and challenging project."

Arena Tiling is one of the leading specialist tiling contractors in the UK, and works within all business sectors – from shopfitting and refurbishments, to new build housing and commercial projects, throughout the UK and internationally. The company recently expanded its head offices in Heathfield to include over 2000ft<sup>2</sup> of warehouse space, used for its tile and material storage.