

External Refurbishment of Unusual Structures

The Problem / Challenge

Refurbishing the Atomium externally including recladding of large Sphere elements.

The Risks

Safe external access to install the cladding where scaffold or platform access was not possible.

The solution

Early identification of the issues to the client and contractor to encourage off-site prefabrication where possible. Analysis of the access and crane capabilities of the site are essential to validate the decisions and practicable size of modules. Contractors to access the areas to install the cladding using rope access.

Future maintenance will also be possible using rope access points installed during refurbishment.

The Benefits

Prefabrication of panels into small manageable sized units for installation by contractors accessing the building by ropes was essential .

IRATA trained cladding operatives were employed to carry out cladding refurbishment works

Key Points

- Review the buildability and access issues with the contractor as early as possible.
- Anchor points need to be built in at the design stage.
- Cost benefits may be possible as well as safety benefits.

