

Fast-track steel framed apartments for Edinburgh

A six storey block of apartments in Edinburgh is the latest in a string of flatted developments to be built using Metsec's light gauge steel framing. The growth in popularity of the system has been fuelled by the need for quick completion as the housing boom continues across the UK. Its ability to achieve taller structures than timber frame is also adding to demand.

Metsec's Metframe panelised super-structures are bolted together on site, cutting up to 50% off the build time of masonry. The framing at the 3162 m² St Clair's project took just 11 weeks to erect by Metframe approved installer Gyplok with dry envelope stage being reached in 15 weeks.

A new joisted panel floor solution developed by Metsec as a faster alternative to its normal concrete floors was also used in the Edinburgh development which was built by the Peter Walker Group. The new floor is

constructed from prefabricated Metframe floor cassettes with 18mm OSB which are bolted into place between the wall panels. This structure provides a floating floor which is covered with battens and then chipboard to provide the surface for the final floor finish. The benefits of this dry floor design are speed of installation, reduced weight and lower cost. Acoustic performance of the new floor solution can be adjusted according to specification; at the St Clair's development it meets a Rw 53dB rating.

The flexibility of the Metframe system enabled the architect to incorporate feature 'turret' style hexagonal lounges at each corner of the building to offer the 36 two bedroom apartments good views of the city. The high strength to weight ratio of light gauge steel means Metframe minimises foundation loadings whilst still being able to cope with high wind loads or snow drifting.

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