



Innovative Climate Control Transforms Former Coach-Building Workshop into Vibrant Community Hub

Introduction

What was once a renowned coach building and vehicle bodywork workshop in Solihull has been transformed by Renewal church into a vibrant community space. An innovative indoor climate control solution from Butco, featuring The Unico System, has played a crucial role in making Renewal's vision a reality.

Today, the Foundation Building

provides a flexible venue for church community events, live performances, sporting activities, collaborative working and socialising.

Retaining the distinctive character of the former industrial workshop, with its exposed steel and pipework, high ceilings and historic ambience, was an important part of the project. With the building designed for many different uses throughout the year,

an imaginative approach to heating and cooling was also required.

Strategy

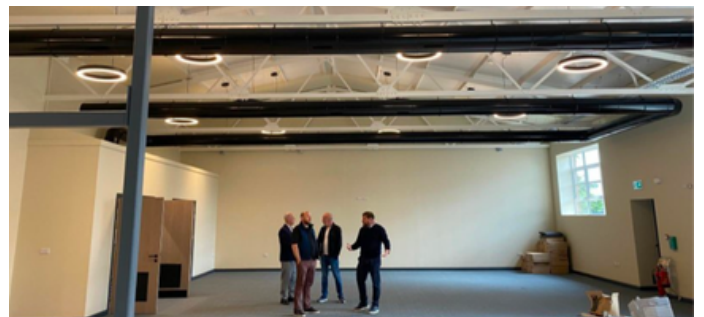
An original proposal based on conventional air conditioning units and a blanket approach had been rejected as it was over budget, did not offer the facility to customise comfort within individual spaces and did not harmonise with the building's interior.

Ongoing collaboration between Renewal and Sutton Coldfield-based HVAC specialist Butco resulted in the design and delivery of a unique Unico Small Duct High Velocity (SDHV) heating and air conditioning solution for the key reception and communal area, performance venue and break-out section.



Designed in conjunction with Bell Plumbing Supplies, Unico's principal UK Partner, the installation includes three separate ducted systems for the three areas. Four compact vertical Unico Green Series Air Handling Units are discreetly housed within ground-floor cupboards and are optimised to work seamlessly with four Daikin Altherma Sky Air Alpha commercial split heat pumps.

Cooled or heated air is distributed from the Air Handling Units through specially designed 300mm circular Unico ducting. The ducting is on full display, with its exposed black finish complementing the building's exposed steelwork and industrial heritage.



Structural limitations created significant challenges, with roof members restricted to carrying just 25kg per metre of ducting. Butco developed a bespoke suspension solution for the Unico System ducting that maximised the available space while respecting the structural requirements. A Mechanical

Ventilation with Heat Recovery (MVHR) unit was also incorporated into one of the air handlers.

Results

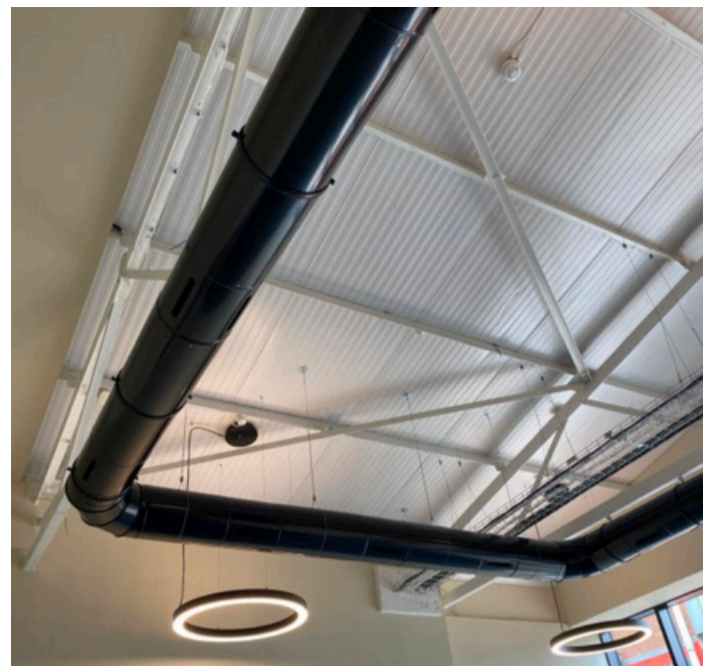
The Foundation Building now benefits from independent temperature control areas, corresponding to the building's fire zones. This allows the climate within each area to respond to its particular use.

In the live performance venue, different occupancy levels can demand varying levels of heating or cooling, while in the collaborative break-out spaces activities can change throughout the day. Consistent, quiet comfort is achieved thanks to the <30 dB operational noise level of The Unico System.

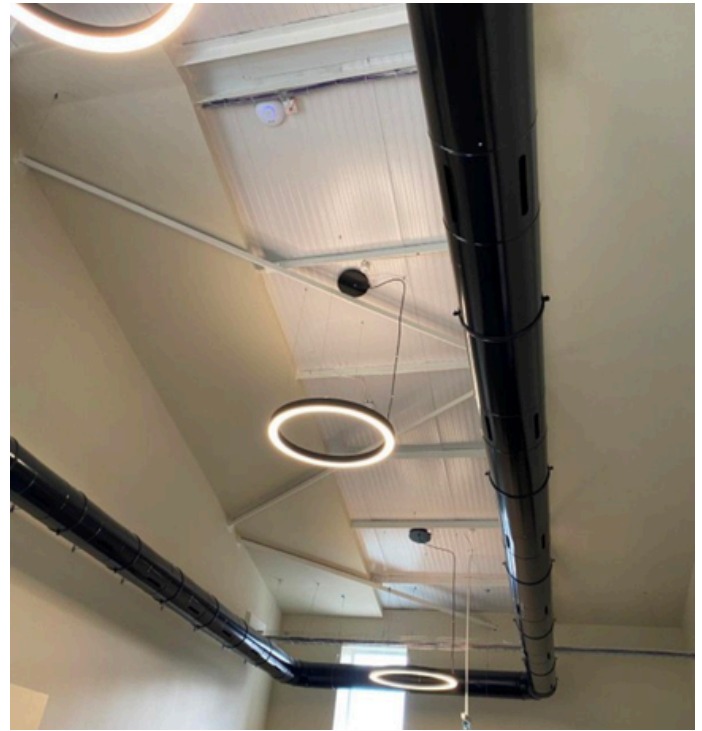


SDHV high-velocity aspiration technology provides near-instant temperature adjustment and a fast response time when heating and cooling, distributing conditioned air evenly through the space without cold or hot spots.

Andrew Shand, Renewal's Operations and Generations Manager, says: "The result is a system that responds to the way we actually use the building and it is not just a standard HVAC installation. Butco's work has been excellent and they delivered a complete M&E package. One of the most striking aspects is that the Unico System has become part of the building's aesthetic rather than something to be hidden. It really works."



Following a soft start in summer 2026, the Foundation Building is preparing for its full launch, with plans to lease the building for outside events.



Installation Date
2026

Property Type
Converted industrial workshop
/ community facility

System Specification

- Unico Green Series Air Handling Units
- Four Daikin Altherma Sky Air Alpha commercial split heat pumps
- Three independent ducted systems
- Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery (MVHR) integrated into one air handler