

17<sup>th</sup> May 2024

## **Boccia UK specify world class Taraflex® sports flooring from Gerflor.**

**In anticipation of the 2024 World Cups, Boccia UK has made a strategic decision to enhance their training and competition venue with world class Taraflex® Evolution sports flooring. This choice underscores the importance of high-quality, durable surfaces in the world of competitive sports.**

**Taraflex® Evolution, provided by Gerflor, is renowned for its versatility across various sports and leisure activities, making it an excellent choice for Boccia UK's diverse needs. The flooring's benefits, such as comfort, safety, and a specialised surface treatment for easy maintenance and optimal performance, align with the rigorous demands of elite boccia players.**

**This collaboration with Gerflor not only prepares Boccia UK for the upcoming global events but also sets a new standard in the sporting community for facilities that prioritise athlete welfare and performance. The end result, 450m<sup>2</sup> Taraflex® installed in Mint Green, a major transformation to their facilities, a world class indoor sports surface...**

...it's where champions begin, learn, train and play!

Boccia stands out as a paragon of inclusivity in sports, designed to accommodate athletes with high support needs. It is a precision ball sport, similar to bocce, that is contested at local, national, and international levels. Players deliver soft leather balls with the goal of getting closest to a white target ball, or jack. The sport demands strategic thinking, precision, and teamwork, making it not only a test of physical skill but also of mental acuity. Its accessibility allows people of all abilities to compete on an equal footing, promoting social integration and fostering a sense of community and equality. This makes Boccia not just a competitive sport but also a powerful tool for education and social change, especially within school environments where inclusivity is paramount. The game's simplicity in design belies the complexity of the tactics involved, offering a rich and rewarding experience for all participants.

Boccia is a remarkable example of an inclusive activity that has adapted over time to embrace a wider range of participants. Initially designed for athletes with cerebral palsy, it now offers people with various disabilities the opportunity to compete. The use of ramps and head pointers allows players who cannot throw or kick a ball to participate fully in the sport. With the assistance of a ramp assistant, players can strategically position and propel the ball, aiming for accuracy on the court. This evolution of the sport underscores the importance of adaptability and inclusivity in athletic activities, ensuring everyone has the chance to engage in competitive play and enjoy the camaraderie and challenges of sports.

Boccia, as mentioned is a sport that demands precision, strategy, and control, has seen a remarkable surge in popularity, becoming the fastest-growing disability sport globally. Its roots can be traced back to ancient civilizations, evolving through time to become the sophisticated game it is today. The British Boccia squad's success at the World Boccia Championships in Rio back in 2022, where they secured a gold and two silver medals, is a testament to the skill and dedication of the players. This sport not only challenges the athletes physically but also mentally, as they must carefully plan each move to place their coloured balls near the white target ball, or "jack." The game's inclusive nature allows for individual, pair, or team participation, making it accessible and enjoyable for a wide range of players.

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With over 54,000 people playing in England alone, Boccia's impact on physical and mental well-being is significant, with many players reporting improved confidence and quality of life. As the sport continues to grow, it fosters a competitive yet supportive community that celebrates the achievements of athletes with disabilities on an international stage.

Boccia UK, established in 2007, plays a crucial role in the development and success of athletes in the sport. Through the World Class Programme (WCP), funded by UK Sport, Boccia UK supports athletes in their training and competition needs. The WCP is instrumental in preparing players for major international events, including World Cups, European Championships, and World Championships, ensuring that athletes have the resources and support necessary to compete at the highest levels.

Greg Baker - Boccia UK's Performance Director said, "We are now in the middle of a busy season with a full calendar of events."

On the association with Gerflor, Baker added, "We have managed to agree a partnership with Gerflor who are providing us with their Elite Performance sports flooring at our training camps in Glasgow. What is important for us, is that it's the same flooring that will be used as the playing surface at all the major sporting events we will be attending, around the world in 2024."

It is clearly evident that this partnership between Boccia UK and Gerflor has marked a significant step in the preparation for upcoming major sporting events. By securing Gerflor's Elite Performance Sports flooring for their training camps in Glasgow, Boccia UK athletes can train on the same high-quality surfaces they will compete on globally in 2024. This consistency is crucial for athletes to perform at their best, as it allows them to become accustomed to the playing surface, reducing the potential for surprises during competition and enhancing their overall preparedness for the challenges ahead. The collaboration underscores the commitment to providing athletes with top-tier facilities that mirror the conditions of the world's most prestigious tournaments.

Commenting on the project David Carter Gerflor National Sales Manager, Sports Flooring said, "Funded by Sport England, we have agreed to supply our world class Taraflex® Evolution sports flooring to Boccia UK for their training camps in Scotland. This is precisely the surface on which the team will compete on across all the significant sporting occasions in 2024".

Claire Taggart from Larne in Northern Ireland and David Smith OBE who lives in Swansea, are both currently world number ones. David Smith is Britain's best ever Boccia player and is known for his colourful blue and red dyed haircuts. They also come together to compete as the BC1/2 Team which is currently ranked third in the world.

Claire Taggart commented, "Training on the Taraflex® sports flooring is incredibly important, mainly because all major tournaments are held on this surface. Competing across many different surfaces means it's tough to find familiarity and get used to every surface, but having regular access to Taraflex® will mean that at major competitions we are better prepared and can hit the ground running. "

Echoing Clare Taggart's comments, David Smith OBE said, "Being able to use and train on Gerflor's Taraflex® sports flooring is really important for us a squad. All the major international events use Taraflex® as the preferred surface of choice for World Boccia. Being able to train on Taraflex® at world class performance camps just gives us that extra bit of practice and confidence."

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David Smith OBE concluded, “The playing surface does make a huge difference on how the balls react and having that extra training on Taraflex® sports flooring means that we are not going to be found wanting, when it comes to competing on the bigger stages around the world in 2024.”

David Carter ended by saying, “Gerflor have contributed by funding the costs incurred for the temporary install and removal for a number of camps to ensure the team get the best preparation possible”.

Learn more about Gerflor solutions, ask for a free sample or contact us to speak to a specialist today by calling 03332 412901, emailing [contractuk@gerflor.com](mailto:contractuk@gerflor.com), or visiting [gerflor.co.uk](http://gerflor.co.uk) for the latest innovations.

## Technical overview of Taraflex® sports flooring

Taraflex® Evolution is a synthetic indoor sports flooring that can be specified for a wide range of sports applications, in a variety of sectors. It delivers optimal safety, comfort, and performance for users, as well as being available in an extensive choice of vibrant designs, making it the ideal choice for a host of locations.

Taraflex® Evolution is perfectly suited for a variety of applications, including most sporting and leisure activities, and is also a popular choice for sports halls in leisure buildings, as well as the go to preferred option for many prestigious and elite sporting events. In fact, Taraflex® sports flooring has been fitted at every major sporting event since 1976 and is approved by many National and International governing bodies as a world class sports surface.

Taraflex® Evolution easily meets the rigorous demands of a vast array of sports activities, it provides excellent coefficient of friction, this means twists, turns, stops/starts can be carried out without the fear of slipping or gripping and subsequent injuries from physical activity. The shock absorption qualities of Taraflex® Performance, also helps players gain even more enjoyment from sport. It offers a P1 category shock absorbency of 25% to 35%. Taraflex® Evolution is available in 21 colours and 4 wood-effect designs as standard, with an addition of 110 solid colour options available.

Over 6 million pupils everyday enjoy the benefits of Taraflex® sports flooring as it delivers a versatile range that can be used for various multi-specialist applications. Taraflex® is ideal for new build projects and refurbishments and is extremely durable and cost effective to maintain. The Triple Action ProtecSol® surface treatment ensures that no polish is ever required for the lifetime of the floor, it also saves on both water and energy consumption, as part of a cleaning and maintenance regime, excellent news for the planet and future generations. Taraflex® is manufactured with a minimum of 30% recycled vinyl content and is also 100% recyclable.

Taraflex® meets the EN 14904 Standard, which is the minimum performance requirements to be met by indoor sports floors. Its objective is to draw attention to the necessity of installing safe and comfortable floors that will reduce the risk of injuries.

With a complete range of outstanding sports surfaces that can meet specification requirements for compliance with P1/P2/P3 shock absorption Taraflex® sports floorings are perfect for delivering optimal safety and protection for users, regardless of their age and sporting ability. The combination of D-Max™/D-Max™+, CXP™HD foam, ensures that Taraflex® sports floorings are durable, high-performing and stand the test of time. The exclusive Taraflex® technology ensures that the sports floors are longer-lasting ...a massive boon, when long-term planning and budgeting are perceived as being two key considerations for specifiers.

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Taraflex® is a sustainable solution thanks to its unique product construction:

## **IPI – Impact Protection Index**

The mechanical property of the sports flooring is to provide the right level of immediate comfort for the users when falling, diving, or sliding on the floor. The Higher the IPI = Less pain, less bruising and less bone traumas.

**1/** Indoor air quality - Meeting ISO 16000 standards, it has some of the lowest VOC emissions on the market.

**2/** Energy saving - A colour selection with high light reflectance values assists with lighting energy saving.

**3/** Reduced maintenance costs – the ProtecSol® surface treatment is the most durable on the market. It ensures minimal maintenance and exceptional sustainability of the product.

**4/** Proactive post manufacturing waste management - Use of recycled content in product design and the PVC is also 100% recyclable.

**5/** A second life programme for post installation waste - Re-use of post installation waste and redundant materials

**6/** Selected and responsible raw materials - NO heavy metal, NO solvent, NO formaldehyde, NO substance potentially subject to REACH\* restrictions

\*REACH is the European regulation on registering, assessing and authorising chemical products within the European Union.

Taraflex® Evolution is available in 20 designs as standard and it offers a P1 category shock absorbency of >25% and is treated with the Triple Action ProtecSol® surface treatment so that no polish is ever required for the lifetime of the floor.

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