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New, classic roof window builds a bridge between culture preservation and building development

A long-missing key component for the preservation of Danish building heritage has arrived. On 1 February, the VELUX Group opened the order book of the new but classic roof window for historical buildings – an important product that serves to unite past and present in the same construction.

It can be difficult to please everyone when historical buildings are to be preserved. There are many solutions to the problem, but few manage to bridge the gulf of history and harmonise the needs of today with the constructions of yesterday.

On 1 February, VELUX Denmark opened the order book for the VELUX classic roof window GVR for use in historical buildings. The objective of the new products is to build a bridge between the building culture of the past and present-day demands for energy and comfort. Architect Merete Lind Mikkelsen is an expert in modernising historical buildings and contributed her vast knowledge and experience during the development of the new window. She is delighted with the VELUX Group's new move to preserve the heritage of Danish building traditions.

"This new roof window shows that it is entirely possible to develop a product that complements the aesthetics of the past and materials of the present in historical buildings, and that also ensures a good indoor climate," says Merete Lind Mikkelsen.

Classic details bring history alive

At the heart of the development of the new roof window GVR was the objective to create an impression that is firmly rooted in historical architecture. "The prime intention was to produce a new roof window that beautifully and unobtrusively blends in with old architecture. This made the task a challenging and educational process," explains Klaus Lorentzen, Director of Product Development at the VELUX Group.

"When you develop a roof window, what you normally concentrate on is what goes on inside the building. That is usually what matters most to people. But in this case, the exterior has been at the focal point from the very first sketches. For example, we decided to produce the window and flashings in zinc and copper as both materials are often already part of the old roof in the form of gutters and flashings. And zinc and copper both develop a beautiful patina, which adds greater authenticity," says Klaus Lorentzen.

A historical asset that can be further refined

Although the new roof window GVR was designed to put history at centre stage, it also contains several features that can help property developers and home owners make the most of the full potential of the building. Many projects concerning listed and non-listed buildings involve large roof spaces that can easily be taken into use as living and office space and that can make the project more financially attractive to their developers. And this is where the roof window can be an important component in making a project a bottom-line success.

"Our new roof window GVR was designed for use in heated spaces. The entire construction is based on our decades of experience with energy and comfort. And that means everything if the property developer or home owner has thoughts of using or incorporating the space under the roof as living space, an office or workshop. Suddenly, the idea of preserving our building heritage can turn into developing our existing buildings – and that is not unimportant when we're talking about buildings worthy of preservation," comments Klaus Lorentzen.

An important step that must be taken now

Of Denmark's total building mass of some four million buildings, 9,000 are listed and 335,000 deemed worthy of preservation. Within the next few decades, experts estimate that many of these will require thorough restoration if they are not to fall into complete decay and their cultural and historical value be lost for ever.

"There can be no doubt that much of our historical building heritage will be threatened if we don't come up with the requisite solutions here and now. More and more buildings passed the hundred-year milestone long ago. And this makes it a challenge for the builders of today when they have to try and carry out repairs that honour the skills and traditions of the past but preserve such buildings for the future. Our new roof window is an important contribution to the preservation of this cultural treasure trove – not just our historic monuments but also quite ordinary townhouses. That's why we are confident that our new window could mean wide-ranging consequences in this area," concludes Klaus Lorentzen.

The VELUX classic roof window GVR has already made its debut with the restoration of a listed building from 1828 on the island of Falster, south of Copenhagen. The project was financed by private funds and the support of Guldborgsund Municipality and the Danish Agency for Culture.

The classic roof window GVR

Since it was founded in 1941, the VELUX Group has been creating solutions that combine comfort in buildings with user-friendliness and aesthetic appeal. In the development of the new classic roof window GVR, the Group deployed its vast experience to create a product that builds a bridge between building traditions of the past and the future.

The VELUX Group asked its best engineers to develop a roof window that makes it possible to unite modern thinking with historical building tradition. They allied themselves with one of the country's leading experts in the development of historical buildings, the award-winning architect Merete Lind Mikkelsen. They made her thoughts on building tradition and classical aesthetics their guiding principles. The result is a product that raises the standard of preservation of our shared building heritage and reinforces the VELUX Group's position as the leading innovator in the business.

Om VELUX Gruppen

I mere end 70 år har VELUX Gruppen skabt bedre boliger for mennesker verden over ved at bringe dagslys og frisk luft gennem taget. Vores produktportefølje består af såvel ovenlysvinduer og ovenlysmoduler som en lang række dekorations- og solafskærmningsprodukter, rulleskodder, indbygningsprodukter og intelligente fjernbetjening. Det er produkter, der bidrager til et sundt indeklima og bæredygtige løsninger – til leg og læring, arbejde og fornøjelse. Med salgsselskaber og fabrikker i mere end 40 lande arbejder vi globalt og har omkring 10.000 medarbejdere verden over. VELUX Gruppen er ejet af VKR Holding A/S, et fonds- og familieejet aktieselskab. Du kan læse mere på www.velux.com.

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