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## The Awards 2018



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# 1: Buildings

Here for your delectation and delight are 140 RIBA Regional Awards – the first stage of the rigorous three-tier process which proceeds through the National Awards and the Stirling Prize shortlist and will culminate in the overall Stirling winner for 2018. At this point it is a diverse selection of the best work that architects are doing in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and so provides a health check on the profession. The Stirling laureate may be lurking in these pages – though it can also come from Scotland, which declared too late for this special issue. We'll publish the Scottish winners on [ribaj.com](http://ribaj.com). London, as ever, exerts its capital power, accounting for 61 of the awards. Northern Ireland and Eastern England seem to be enjoying something of an architectural boom, to judge by the numbers. It's good to see so many strong education and housing projects this year and some exemplary conservation schemes. Prepare to be fascinated. Many more photos of every winner online at [ribaj.com](http://ribaj.com) ●

JOHAN DEHLIN



6a's Coastal House, Devon, page 9.

## ONLY ON RIBAJ.COM

He was careful in the orientation of streets and houses to make the most of sunlight and advocated maximising connections to the outside

**Pamela Buxton sees the forward thinking of Letchworth designer Barry Parker: [ribaj.com/barryparker](http://ribaj.com/barryparker)**



# South West

With the lion's share of England's historic buildings here, you can boost cultural value easily, says Andrew Vines



One quarter of all England's listed buildings, and one third of its scheduled monuments, are in the South West. History is rich in these parts. It's woven into the fabric of society and it's part of our everyday. Collectively it presents a litany of almost every construction material used through the ages.

So in a time of change, what's the future for all this past? The government puts an emphasis on making great places, and with good reason. The historic environment is at the core of our towns and cities cultural quality, and we've made huge strides in some of our urban environments in recent decades. Oft-quoted examples such as Plymouth's Royal William Yard and Exeter Princesshay

have led the way where others follow, and we can look forward to creative developments in the likes of Swindon's Carriage Works conversion, quayside development at Hayle, and Tiverton Riverside, to name but three.

In the past, the 'style' debate has polarised opinion from Poundbury to Bath and a few places in between. Honest contemporary next to slavish pastiche can be a touch disorientating if, like me, you navigate the world by architecture. Are we at last reaching a consensus on style? Modern interventions which keep the significance of historic sites and provide a sustainable future should help diffuse the debate.

But challenges lie ahead. There's no short-

age of crystal balls predicting the market's response to seismic retail change in our commercial centres. Historic England's Heritage Action Zones, led by local needs, are here to help. In Weston-super-Mare we are using our skills and resources to help ensure the town's heritage plays a part in its regeneration.

Exciting times. So let us approach design opportunities with inspiration and creativity – and respect (humility even) for what's there. That way we will help develop the cultural value of the South West's places, and the wellbeing of its communities. After all, it's just good design; and good town planning. ●

Andrew Vines is planning director for Historic England in the South West



## Challender Court, Bristol

Emmett Russell Architects for Bristol City Council

Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 518 m<sup>2</sup>

Challender Court makes excellent use of a constrained, brownfield council site to supply eight one bed apartments required to be robust, low maintenance and low energy. The modest, brick-clad terrace minimises any overlooking of surrounding houses, with shielded balconies and roof lights to the upper units of the simple two storey, pitch roofed form. Differentiation of front and back in the site layout, together with a carefully articulated threshold between shared surface and front door, makes for a landscape of quality and delight. A planted bank mediates a slight level change, with a rill (part of the sustainable drainage scheme), spanned by chequer plate bridges demarcating more private spaces. Internally the 50m<sup>2</sup> units are surprisingly generous (designed to Lifetime Homes standards) and every opportunity has been seized to create variety in layout and fenestration. The development will test the viability of Passivhaus in social housing, with central plant (in common stairwells for access) and heat metering to each home.

Sustainability Award

## Pengwynver, Penzance

Stan Bolt Architect for private client

Contract value: Confidential

GIA: 305 m<sup>2</sup>

This extension to a 1920s granite cottage above Cornwall's Sennen Cove has transformed the house, removing mid-century accretions to reveal a robust shell. The extension is conceived as a rippling wave: three pitches with ridges running parallel to the house. The single storey form is spaced off the existing cottage by a flat roofed entrance zone. From the road, the slate-roofed extension sits subservient in scale to the two storey cottage. Entered via a new recessed front door and walled courtyard set into the hillside, the link between old and new frames a first view of the sea. Internally the timber-lined roof hovers over a deep kitchen/living room bounded by slate walls to the north; full height, west facing glazing gives mesmerising views over Sennen Cove. The old cottage has been simply restored, allowing the evolution of the site to read clearly. Viewed from Sennen, Pengwynver respects its context – the glass and slate disappear into the hillside unlike so many jarring contemporary interventions. This building allows the addition of spaces and services without denying the structure which has endured the best part of a century in this exposed setting.





MAX GREASY

**Charlie Bigham's Food Production Campus, Wells**  
**Feilden Fowles for Charlie Bigham's**  
 Contract value: Confidential  
 GIA: 7,860 m<sup>2</sup>

As the first phase of an ambitious 20-year masterplan for the redevelopment of Dulcote Quarry to create a food production campus, this building sets a direction of travel, with a quality working environment and a bespoke production line ready for growth. From a brief which demanded exceptional standards for only a modest extra cost to a typical factory, the architect has produced a playful building which responds to site context, brief and historic industrial archetypes. It masterfully mediates between the primacy of the process and the wellbeing of the workforce – attracting talent is critical. The building adopts a traditional factory roof of asymmetric pitches with north lights, spanning more than 40m. Above the plinth, volume is expressed as two parts differentiated by colour and scale: The ochre and red of the upper levels respond to the striated rock face of the quarry. One corner is eroded to create a terrace and framed by a quirky asymmetric entrance tower. Servicing requirements are unselfconsciously accommodated in a calm assemblage – while hard to define as architecture, the composition of elements is almost painterly. Internal production spaces are tightly regulated in materials and detail. In the most densely populated areas the form is adapted to give views out. In common areas and offices, materials and details are generous – an oak framed and lined screen mediates between open plan workspace and meeting rooms, terminating in a centrally located test kitchen with inviting refectory table. This building demonstrates the added value that client ambition and architectural ingenuity can bring – as a statement of intent for an employer new to the area, whose brand is bound up with quality, the building is an excellent advocate.

Building of the Year

JOHAN DEHLIN



**New Tate St Ives**  
**Jamie Fobert Architects with Evans & Shalev for Tate St Ives**  
 Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 1,802 m<sup>2</sup>

The reconfiguration and extension of Tate St Ives has resulted in twice as much gallery and enhances a public route. The visible manifestation of the new building – a faience-clad loading bay – is minimal and modest, underplaying its impact on the interior experience. The gallery extension has been carved out of the hillside; the top lit space is capped by deep, in-situ beams which create rhythm and character. From the loading bay, soaring etched-glass doors give access to a huge goods lift connecting all floors – and also providing better disabled access. A new picture store and workshop help the gallery work better. A winding in-situ concrete staff stair with lacquered steel celebrates simplicity while connecting a new, upper level staff entrance to offices and staff amenity with stunning seaward views. Granite and glass gallery rooflights emerge into a public landscape echoing nearby cliff tops. By architectural ingenuity, a building has been delivered where there appeared to be no site, with minimal intrusion. It has created an intriguing new public landscape and pedestrian connection from hilltop to beach and, with subtle reordering of the original gallery, it achieves a seamless environment in which to enjoy art.

**Coastal House, Devon**  
**Ga architects for private client**  
 Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 500 m<sup>2</sup>

The transformation of this early 20th century house close to the south Devon coastal path is breathtaking in its elegant restraint. Retention of much of the original structure, wrapped in an insulating 'duvet' and faced in reclaimed slate, has produced a house rooted in place; rich in history and also in contemporary detail and delight. Outside, an elegant oak framed veranda and the curious ovoids that punctuate the deep lead fascia are the only clues to what lies within. The interior has been reinvented by the removal of one of four chimney stacks. New openings are framed in board-marked in situ concrete and a winding timber stair rises through the central three-storey, top-lit atrium, creating a series of balconies and terraces to make an extraordinary interior landscape. At ground level the floor level has been dropped to connect inside and out, elongating existing windows and creating a grand scale for the more public rooms. From the centre of the plan are views out, from coast to inner courtyard. Externally, garden designer Dan Pearson has created a series of landscapes moving between rolling clifftop and walled gardens. This project, emerging from years of dialogue and a change in direction well into the design, respects and reinvents the original house to create a timeless and beautifully made new home.

Conservation Award



NICK HUFTON





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### Temple Gardens, Temple Cloud Archio for Bath & Stratford Homes

Contract value: Confidential

GIA: 1,309 m<sup>2</sup>

This development has restored and reopened a disused pub and provided 10 hotel rooms and nine houses around a communal landscape, bringing new life to Temple Cloud's village centre. The disparate elements of the scheme work together to address the challenges of the site, in setting and financial viability. Facing the hotel rooms onto the community garden, in a barn-like two storey block on the busy A37, protects the site. A five-house terrace frames the garden while a pair of south facing, semi-detached houses addresses Temple Inn Lane. At the heart of the site a historic barn has been converted into more houses. The scheme draws on the morphology and detail of the village, interpreting traditional form and fenestration. The tradition of brick reveals to rubble elevations and dressed stone surrounds to brick cottages is updated in the stretcher bonded brick reveals to the guest room windows (echoing the converted barn) and the crisp, projecting cast stone surrounds provide articulation and a contrast to the tweedy stock brick elevations. The three modules of precast 'picture frames' dance playfully across the elevations. Temple Gardens demonstrates that contemporary architecture, inspired by the vernacular, can feel rooted in place.

Project Architect of the Year for Kyle Buchanan



ANDY TYE



HUFTON+CROW

### Brunel Building, Southmead Hospital, Bristol BDP for North Bristol NHS Trust

Contract value: £430m. GIA: 110,500 m<sup>2</sup>, Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £3,891

This is an outstanding response to the client's brief to deliver 'an exceptionally sustainable healthcare facility'. Public areas are accessed through a lively central, top-lit street which separates in-patient rooms, organised around a series of landscaped courtyards, from the core clinical facilities. This diagram, together with careful design to facilitate daylight and views, creates a positive environment. Site levels are exploited to create an entrance plaza at one end of the internal street, while locating the Emergency Department in a calm position at its opposite end, on a level below. Visible staircases in the street encourage mobility and give access to single rooms with views, many naturally ventilated. The clinical spine connects towards via discrete upper level bridges which preserve privacy for patients. Prefabrication helped streamline construction; unitised facades incorporating fixed glazing were used, plus louvred panels and reconstituted stone with local pennant rubble to plinths. Sustainability was a priority: energy use is less than 50% of the previous hospital. The Brunel Building is an exemplar hospital; it demonstrates that a strong brief, a visionary client and a talented design team can achieve excellence even when required to do so via the Private Finance Initiative.



DAVID GRANDORGE

### Duncan Cottage, Bath James Grayley Architects for private client

Contract value: Confidential. GIA: 198 m<sup>2</sup>

The reordering of and extension of Duncan Cottage has transformed this listed building. Research revealed that John Palmer, the original architect, had intended to add a loggia to the east elevation, and this is now there in a contemporary style. The addition makes the house's evolution legible, while echoing the quality of detail and material of the original building and removing accretions which had diminished the clarity of the plan, cluttered the rear court and obstructed daylight. The loggia addresses the garden, effortlessly mediating a level change. The architect worked closely with local suppliers to create a crafted addition which uses tightly jointed Bath stone ashlar for walls and floors to create a timeless and innovative garden room which appears carved from a single block. The internal half flight of stone steps in the loggia was delivered by wholeheartedly engaged stone masons. A state of the art kitchen is elegantly inserted into an historic space, and a series of bathrooms, previously in the extensions, are threaded into the existing house. Duncan Cottage transforms an 18th century listed home to meet 21st century requirements.

Small Project of the Year



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# North East

It's the region's universities that are leading regeneration in these great cities and around, says Prue Chiles



Newcastle University, my workplace for over three years, has given me a whole new perspective on the North East. Newcastle and the region have a similar creative spirit to Sheffield and the Peaks but it has a grandeur as well, captured in its architecture, engineering and its topography. These great post-industrial regions of the north, that gave London its wealth during the industrial period and created the fine buildings and townscapes we still see today, invite and need greater knowledge and appreciation from London and a greater distribution of support and wealth from the centre.

Newcastle can feel like an island trapped somewhere between England and Scotland.

What a city though, and how under-appreciated. It is not just its great Georgian centre and bridges over the Tyne, it is the sheer post-war ambition of the place – the brave new Newcastle with its own underground and modernist tradition. There is a strong architectural culture and it looks east, still – surely the Civic Offices are among the best Scandinavian modernist buildings in the world?

Now the universities are the main regenerating buildings here. One of the great things about Newcastle is how physically embedded the universities are in the city and region. They are truly civic universities and the public routes through them are some of the best townscape and landscaped

public spaces. The RIBA and universities are gaining momentum, in both building and research. Instead of just validating star architecture, an initiative to think about what important themes should be built on and researched into is encouraging practitioners into research and researchers into practice. Colleagues of mine at Newcastle and Northumbria are working in very different innovative ways in the region, celebrating present and lost buildings in interesting ways, thinking of new materialities – and the influence of the region is palpable. ●

Prue Chiles is professor of architecture at Newcastle University and a director of CE+CA (Chiles, Evans and Care) in Sheffield

ANDY MARSHALL



**Durham Cathedral Open Treasure**  
**Purcell for Durham Cathedral**  
Contract value: £5.26m  
GIA: 1,705m<sup>2</sup>, Cost per m<sup>2</sup>:  
£3,086

Purcell has worked with Durham's cathedral staff for more than seven years to insert new visitor spaces to showcase its collection of historic items, from medieval books and stonework to Anglo-Saxon artefacts, in the existing grade I-listed buildings. The architect has remodelled previously hidden spaces and created suitable environmental conditions for the differing needs of the collection. Bronze stainless steel and glass lift shafts provide accessible routes throughout while new timber doors separate and secure the zones. This restricted palette of materials has been used against existing stone structures to provide a high-quality finish based on traditional craftsmanship. The judges were particularly impressed by the quality of the workmanship and detailing, including the inclusion of lead-framed secondary glazing to enhance the structural performance without affecting its appearance.

Conservation Award  
Building of the Year



**Hauxley Wildlife Discovery Centre, Morpeth**  
**Brightblue Studio for Northumberland Wildlife Trust**  
Contract value: £610,000, GIA: 295 m<sup>2</sup>, Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £2,068

Hauxley Wildlife Discovery Centre sits in a nature reserve and was designed to optimise views and its relationship with the environment. Its axial form takes the visitor from formal offices and learning spaces through a café and framed viewing points. It has opened up wildlife trails and birdwatching opportunities for all. There has also been an exceptional level of engagement with volunteers, who constructed the timber frame, straw bale walls and a rammed earth floor, and pieced together the gabion frames, laid the green roofs and did the lime rendering. The use of local materials is outstanding and includes locally quarried stone, wool from local sheep for insulation and clay from nearby road works for the flooring. Timber frames and sawn boarding from trees on the client's estate, as well as straw bales from local farms, were also used. The result of all this effort is a concrete-free building that significantly reduces embodied energy and provides a healthy internal environment.

Client of the Year  
Sustainability award

JOHN FAULKNER



**113-115 Ouseburn Road, Newcastle upon Tyne**  
**Miller Partnership Architects for Libby Davidson, Tim and Pippa Kendall**  
**Contract value: Confidential GIA: 305m**

113-115 Ouseburn Road is an exemplar for contemporary living where resources are shared to create a template for sustainable accommodation. It responds to needs of people wanting to downsize but stay local and considers how homes can adapt to an ageing population. The architect was initially approached by a homeowner looking to divide the site of their existing house, release capital and create a bespoke home for retirement. Their neighbour then joined them. The two houses are designed by the same team and constructed through a shared building contract to create the best value for both owners. They share light wells as well as external spaces. The resulting project sits perfectly on the site, using level changes to maximise daylight while creating privacy through louvres. The buildings are modest in size but optimise the space and are beautifully detailed. They make the most of a tight budget that had to mitigate for former mining works under the site.

Project Architect of the Year



JILL TATE



JILL TATE

**St Andrew's Road, Hexham**  
**Elliott Architects for private client**  
**Contract value: Confidential GIA: 230 m²**

This house on St Andrew's Road in Hexham is a corner plot in a streetscape of stone garden walls and gabled Victorian houses in a conservation area. This scale and massing was picked up by Elliott Architects which split the building visually into two asymmetric blocks by way of a recessed entrance and a glazed circulation spine on the first floor.

Strong gabled forms face the street while pairs of windows with stone mullions minimise the visibility of the building's aluminium window frames externally. On the street-facing elevation, the contrast between the rough stone used at ground level and the ashlar above breaks down the facades further, giving the contemporary elements the appearance of floating above the 'garden wall'. The slate from the roof has been partially wrapped down the rear elevations to create a subservient facade with large sliding glass doors enabling the main living spaces to open out onto the south facing garden terrace.

**The Sill National Landscape Discovery Centre, Hexham**  
**Jane Darbyshire & David Kendall for Northumberland National Park Authority**  
**Contract value: £8.8m GIA: 3,080 m², Cost per m²: £2,857**

This project celebrates the landscape with a harmonious building that seems to spring from it. Its long sweeping roof leads the visitor from ground level to the apex of the building, where a platform provides views over Northumberland. The long-distance views of the scheme from Hadrian's Wall are particularly well considered, as the mass of the building sinks into the hillside and here its roofs take the form of low-scale farm buildings. The approach to the discovery centre leads visitors to the curving glass facade, which is oversailed by a canopy of photovoltaic panels. Once inside, visitors find themselves in a space that opens through a series of exhibition areas, classrooms and social spaces, all with views of its surroundings. The judges praised the way the building interacts with the landscape and respects the historic setting. It stimulates and delights users of all ages and has already exceeded its expectations. The planting on the roof is particularly successful, using local grassland mixes to support local species.



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# North West

Matthew Schofield finds some unique curiosities amid the North West's listed 20th century buildings



The North West has some wonderful post-1914 listed buildings and structures. Port Sunlight is home to one of the finest First World War memorials, a panorama of pen- sive statues of soldiers and sailors, mothers and children, built in 1921 for Lever's soap factory workers. After the war, Liverpool and Manchester demonstrated their wealth and confidence by building vast commercial and civic buildings, neoclassical in Portland Stone and modern metal framed, emulating New York and Chicago.

One of the first was the Cunard Building, Liverpool but also there's India Buildings with its majestic shopping arcade and the

large circular Central Library in Manches- ter. Some magnificent churches were built, such as St Monica's (Bootle), a masterpiece of brick expressionism with deft touches of art deco, but also the more quirky St Oswald and St Edmund Arrowsmith (Ashton-in-Maker- field) with a full complement of Harry Clark stained glass, showing saints resembling the silent film stars of the time, with doe eyes and rosebud lips.

Post 1945, more curiosities unique to the North West are to be found. The Cheshire countryside is home to Jodrell Bank, begun in the early 1950s and still the third largest fully steerable telescope on the planet. In

Wallasey there is a very early eco-building (St George's School, 1960), one of the largest passive solar energy buildings anywhere. Post-war migration of mainly Irish and Polish to the North West has left a legacy of wonderful 1960s Roman Catholic churches, using radical shapes and materials of the pe- riod, rich in modernist art and design.

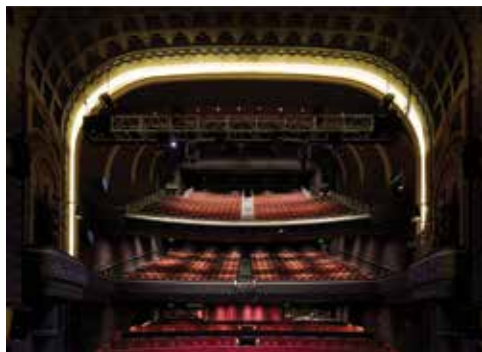
Finally, there is the rocket-shaped Ad- dleshaw Tower of 1973, which was built to house Chester Cathedral's bells and is the only free-standing cathedral bell tower to be erected since the Reformation. ●

Matthew Schofield, chair, Twentieth Century Society, North West Group

**Liverpool's Royal Court, Liverpool**  
**Allford Hall Monaghan Morris for Royal Court Theatre Trust**  
Contract value: £5.97m, GIA: 4,296m<sup>2</sup>  
Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £1,390

Collaboration between client and architect has breathed new life into Liverpool and a historic grade II listed building that celebrates its 80th birthday this year. The project was carried out in three 'acts'. The first refurbished the auditorium and introduced cabaret style stalls seating, allowing the audience to dine, drink and dance throughout a performance. The second rationalised the front of house, adding a bar and a curving glass and steel extension to provide lobby, box office and refreshment spaces. The final act was to refurbish the basement as a studio for smaller shows. This is astute conservation, in keeping with the spirit of the building, and this 10-year collaboration has left all with a renewed sense of pride and joy.

Conservation Project of the Year



ROB PARRISH

ALLAN CROW

ribaj.com



**101 Embankment, Greengate**  
**Flanagan Lawrence for Ask Real Estate**  
Contract value: £38m  
GIA: 19,058m<sup>2</sup>  
Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £1,994

101 Embankment is an important piece in the regeneration jigsaw at the junction of Salford and Manchester, facilitating the extension of Manchester's business and retail district across the River Irwell into the long neglected Greengate area of Salford. The building is the first part of a two-phase development arranged on several levels. A grade II listed sandstone viaduct forms a grand base for the new office building, which sits 9m above a significant new area of public realm. The modern steel and glass office building appears as a lightweight, highly polished jewel, in contrast to the robust facade of the railway embankment. Existing and newly created perimeter arches house retail and workspace units intended to revitalise the public realm, while the interior of the podium contains a multi-decked car park. 101 Embankment is elegantly detailed, and has maximised the site by stitching together multiple elements while celebrating the embankment.

The RIBA Journal June 2018

**Walk the Plank, Salford****Architectural Emporium for Walk the Plank****Contract value: £879,178, GIA: 1,062m<sup>2</sup>****Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £828**

Walk the Plank (WTP) is a theatre company with a diverse range of work, including large-scale public productions, mentoring, training and working with disadvantaged groups. Born out of a travelling theatre ship, WTP wanted to build a new home to unite makers, delivery and management teams. With a shoestring budget, the project reuses an old warehouse, extending it to the north. The site strategy is bold and inventive, placing the new office building at the far end of the site on the busy crossroads, reached by a path running alongside the road. This gives the visitor an introductory promenade of the yards and workshops and creates a safe 'street'. Elsewhere, the architecture is economical and inventive. A beautiful sheltered courtyard is created by removing the roof of one of the old buildings. A quirky interior refers to the company's history on a boat and produces a finer scale of privacy.

Client of the Year



SIMON BUCKLEY

**Timekeepers Square, Salford****Buttress for English Cities Fund****Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 3,327m<sup>2</sup>**

Located within Salford's Adelphi/Bexley Square conservation area, Timekeepers Square is a development of townhouses adjacent to the grade II\* listed St Phillips church and a Georgian square. The brief was to regenerate a cleared housing plot and create a contemporary neighbourhood that sits comfortably with the surrounding heritage. The new terraces reinstate the area's lost urban grain, strengthening the church's setting as a focal point and defining a new pedestrian boulevard at the development's heart. The design takes precedent from the area's Georgian terraces, responding to them in height and massing with a strong vertical emphasis and a repetitive, regular rhythm applied to the fenestration patterns. The material palette is very successful – the light grey brickwork in particular acts as a gentle foil to the sandstone church and the historic red brick housing. Together with the stone of the landscaping this creates a harmonious composition and a light, cheerful atmosphere.

**Storyhouse, Chester****Bennetts Associates and Ellis Williams for Cheshire West and Chester Council****Contract value: £37m, GIA: 7,000m<sup>2</sup>****Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £5,286**

This is a new public building type combining a theatre and library (RIBA July 2017). Its spaces range from informal to grand and theatrical. A children's library is visible and inviting from the street, yet intimate and comfortable inside. The design is a radical solution to the flexibility required by the organisation. The theatre can morph from an 800-seat proscenium to 500-seat thrust stage in an ingenious, low-tech and cost-effective way. Taking cues from commercial spaces such as bookshops and pubs, the project creates a new atmosphere for a cultural venue that is refreshingly free of commercial trappings. Externally the treatment is bold and well judged. The new brickwork complements the original, while the robust cast glass screen befits the scale.



PETER COOK

**Maggie's Oldham****dRMM Architects for Maggie's****Contract value: Confidential****GIA: 260m<sup>2</sup>**

Built in the grounds of the Royal Oldham Hospital, Maggie's Oldham lifts the spirits and inspires people to cope with cancer and its treatments. Raised on six slender columns, the building floats over a new garden of pine, birch and tulip trees. A 'tree of life' grows through the building. On entering, visitors are surprised by the space, light and views to the garden below, to the sky and to the Pennine horizon. As the first tulipwood CLT building in the world, dRMM's design challenges the synthetic palette of hospital architecture. Every detail is considered, including oak door handles in lieu of metal ones because people undergoing chemotherapy feel pain from cold surfaces, and protecting the terrace from UV by creating an overhanging roof. With one in three people suffering from cancer and 400 visits per week, the building's importance is clear. It is an exquisite building created with loving care, yet economical, efficient and sustainable.

Building of the Year

Sustainability Project of the Year



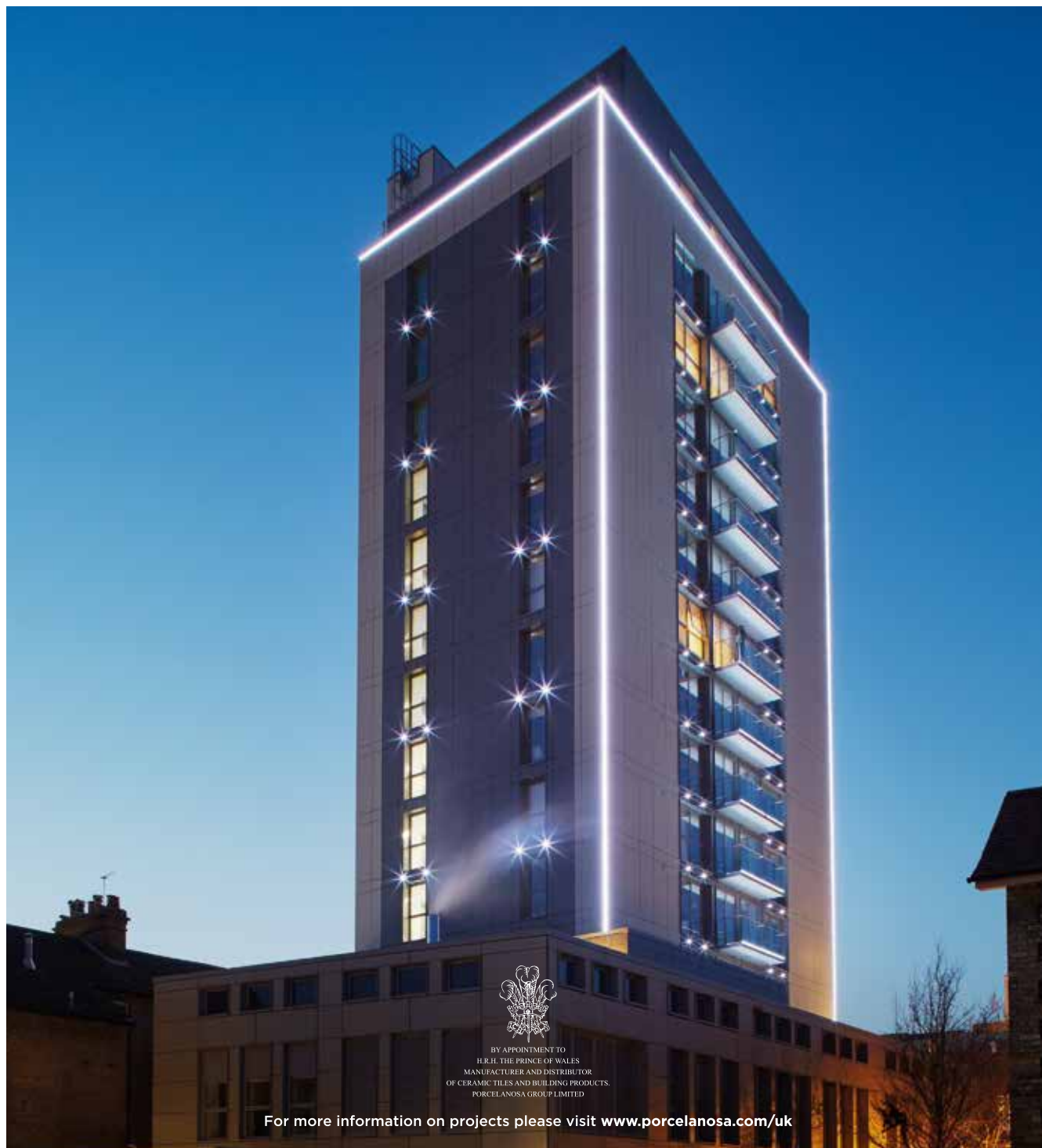
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# Yorkshire

Integrating historic buildings in developments helps attract those all-important visitors says Simon Baker



A key aspect of working in Yorkshire is about making places attractive to secure visitors and revenue. There are areas of our towns and cities that still are under-utilised, with vacant property. Consequently, there isn't enough intensity of activity; driving footfall to establish an attractive destination is paramount to the success of a business proposition. Projects are decided on sustainability of use and revenue streams rather than asset value uplift alone.

The opportunity therefore exists to create places and spaces of distinction, where design capitalises on existing asset character. The curation of place and the choice to retain or remove existing building fabric is a key con-

sideration at the outset of regional development plans. There are significant numbers of existing buildings where reappropriation and refurbishment prove to be more attractive than building renewal. 'Dead landmarks' reduce the attractiveness of an area. Our experience shows that the integration of historic buildings with regeneration schemes can create popular, stimulating destinations and act as a catalyst for further investment. Developers and investors who have taken a patient approach to capital recognise that the long-term returns can be favourable.

This is particularly so with redevelopments in an improving market area, such as has been experienced with Marshall's Mill

and Tower Works in Holbeck Urban Village in Leeds. In such areas a careful curation of refurbished property and new build is changing perception of the area.

We are also seeing greater appetite for establishing interesting mixes of uses, with individual buildings supporting multiple occupiers. Celebrating the users and their activities, while amplifying the uniqueness of buildings and place, can only be to the advantage of the development and the wider area. This subtle stitching and repair of buildings and place is a key aspect of development in the region. ●

Simon Baker, founder and director, Group Ginger, Leeds



## National College For High Speed Rail, Doncaster Campus, Doncaster

Bond Bryan Architects for Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council

Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 7,319m<sup>2</sup>

A teaching environment for post 18-year-olds is balanced with the engineering and commercial aspirations of a complex client structure managed by Doncaster Council. The campus is in a commercial retail park, where picture windows at each end of the 'railway shed' stand out like a beacon, giving views of the full sized locomotive in the atrium. The saw-tooth roof form is seen by the architect as a modern interpretation of the traditional engineering factory, with an additional vertical section that provides north-facing lights and PV solar panels. The facility has yet to reach its capacity of 1,045 students, but is already providing attractive, flexible accommodation for retraining rail workers. It has been designed to exemplify environmental standards.

Sustainability Award



## Albert Works, Sheffield

Cartwright Pickard Architects for City Estates

Contract value: £2.2m, GIA: 1,817m<sup>2</sup>

Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £1,211

Set in the Cultural Industries Conservation Quarter of Sheffield, this project uses crisp, modern insertions to bring back into use four virtually derelict warehouses. The result provides flexible workspace for Jaywing, a creative marketing agency. The project 'speaks' Sheffield with confidence. It is sympathetic to its context, while bold clear interventions provide impact. Externally, anodised aluminium cladding marks the infill elevation to Matilda Street. Internally, exposed concrete and brickwork provide thermal mass which assists the environmental performance. The Courtyard infill virtually doubles the usable area and creates a new heart for the office accommodation. The space is wonderfully lit by north lights and provides a generous and calm working environment. Furniture and finishes are co-ordinated with a fine attention to detail throughout.

Project Architect of the Year



## Scarborough Market Hall and Vaults, Scarborough

Group Ginger for Scarborough Borough Council

Contract value: £2m, GIA: 1,985m<sup>2</sup>, Cost per m<sup>2</sup>:

£1,007

Scarborough Market Hall, opened in 1852, has been revitalised with the repair of its fabric and the addition of a mezzanine. On the ground floor pop-up stalls can be reorganised to provide a flexible activity and entertainment venue. The mezzanine has timber-clad retail units and dining areas with great views up to Scarborough Castle or the bustling market below. During strip-out key historic and architectural features were retained in-situ or sensitively removed for reuse later in the project. The external appearance of the Market Hall remains largely unchanged apart from sensitive accessibility improvements. But the Market has been transformed, becoming a much visited destination and reclaiming its position at the heart of civic life in Scarborough.



MARK HADDEN



**Square Chapel Arts Centre, Halifax**  
**Evans Vettori for Square Chapel Arts Centre**  
 Contract value: £4.7m, GIA: 1,927m<sup>2</sup>, Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £2,462

This is a gem of a project (RIBA J November 2017), neatly connected to the adjoining grade I listed Piece Hall. The Square Chapel is a red brick grade II\* listed chapel that was converted in the late 1980s into a thriving, but cramped, community arts centre. Now it has new facilities, knitted together by a bold triangular 'prism' which reconciles the various geometries and levels. The foyer, conceived as a woodland glade, uses steel branched columns to replace trees previously there. This is an uncompromisingly modern building that is immensely satisfying. Square Chapel is closely linked to its community and the open nature of the centre reflects the organisation's ethos that the arts should be accessible to all.

**Old Shed New House, North Yorkshire**  
**Tonkin Liu for private client**  
 Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 210m<sup>2</sup>

The clients had spent several years looking for a quiet site to build their retirement home before they found a farm shed located in a wild garden, on the edge of a small village in North Yorkshire. A long double-height gallery maintains the tree-lined approach and a tall library, bounded by mirror-backed shelving, evokes the copse of silver birch found on the site. Walking into the library through a sliding door from the living room brought gasps from the awards jury. It is the heart of the home and a showpiece for a lifetime's collection of books. Clever use of light and mirrors give the impression that it is an art piece in itself. Otherwise this is a modest three-bedroom house, built cost effectively, but with exquisite detailing inside and out.

Small Project of the Year



GREG STORRAR



**The Piece Hall and Calderdale Central Library and Archives, Halifax**

**LDN Architects for Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council**  
 Contract value: Confidential  
 GIA: 6,100m<sup>2</sup>

The Piece Hall is a grade I listed Cloth Hall, dating from 1779. It had been in decline for a number of years until Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council promoted it as a cultural, creative and community focus for the region. As a conservation project every stone has been carefully reviewed and repaired or replaced with appropriate restoration skills. But it is in the transformation of this building that the ambition of the design team and clients stands out. Previously the spaces were unheated, and the scheme includes new infrastructure and building services to deliver high-quality commercial space for new businesses operating in shops and cafés. A new entrance creates permeability from town to the railway station. The new Central Library and Archive is a modern facility and a bold addition beaming with civic pride.

Conservation Award  
 Building of the Year

**The Hide, Driffield**  
**Group Ginger for Yorkshire Water**  
 Contract value: £425,000, GIA: 156.50m<sup>2</sup>, Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £2,716

This is one of Yorkshire's best locations for bird watching, claiming over 265 species of birds since 1959. As well as the extensive resident population, many migrants are attracted to use the coast and River Humber as a flight path to and from Europe and further afield. The new bird hide provides a centrepiece to the reserve, combining a public viewing gallery, a classroom and a 24-hour twitcher's hide for dedicated ornithologists. Each user group has been provided with a specific space that carefully considers their individual requirements and aspirations. Environmental considerations have influenced the design throughout, from the choice of materials to the wood burning stove that uses materials salvaged from the reserve. Step-free access has been provided by a new earth ramp built by volunteers. This has been located at an angle not visible from the reservoir so as to avoid disturbing the birds.

Client of the Year



JIM STEPHENSON



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# East Midlands

Farming, manufacturing, and a rich history: variety and diversity mark this region, says Jonathan Hendry



The East Midlands region covers many vast and varied urban and rural landscapes, stretching from the rich moors and dales of the Derbyshire Peaks down to the boot and shoe makers of Northamptonshire and across to the coastline, bound by the vast arable farms and food producers of Lincolnshire, home to Bomber Command.

In the heart of the East Midlands is Leicestershire, which holds the region's most populous municipality, the city of Leicester.

This has a diverse and vibrant culture not only famous for the recently discovered remains of King Richard III, but also for its pork pies and steeped sporting history.

Neighbouring Nottinghamshire is not only linked to the legend of Robin Hood – it's also famous for its rich industrial heritage of lace-making, Raleigh bikes and as the birth place of fashion designer Paul Smith.

Historically the region has some of the country's finest examples of historical

architecture, from Chatsworth House and Hardwick Hall to Lincoln Cathedral. More recently we have gained the Nottingham Contemporary gallery by Caruso St John.

It's this cocktail of diversity and richness of variety that makes the East Midlands region such a magical place to live and make architecture. ●

Jonathan Hendry is founding partner of Jonathan Hendry Architects, Holton le Clay, Lincolnshire



TOM NAPIER

**Orchard Barn, Ashover, Derbyshire**  
**Chiles Evans + Care Architects for private client**  
Contract value: Confidential  
GIA: 138 m<sup>2</sup>

This humble yet exemplary house sits in a prominent location within the village of Ashover and has been sensitively restored to retain its integrity and continue the historic narrative. The client was keen that the physical restoration should be a catalyst to re-ignite the special relationship that the building has historically enjoyed with the village and community. The barn has been restored with new windows, rebuilt chimneys and repaired stonework. Approached by way of the orchard, it now welcomes visitors through a generous new opening that successfully reconnects the barn with the garden setting and house. Within is a double-height space that establishes a new venue for community gatherings. It is genuinely surprising to find such a range of delightful spaces, meticulous detailing and new possibilities for re-use imaginatively achieved in such a small project. There's life in the barn conversion yet.

Small Project of the Year

THOMAS SMITH

**NGS Macmillan Unit, Chesterfield**  
**The Manser Practice for Chesterfield Royal Hospital**  
Contract value: £7.5m, GIA: 2,142 m<sup>2</sup>  
Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £3,501

The Chesterfield Royal Hospital Trust set a brief for a 'calm, non-clinical environment' and the new building delivers on this with rare maturity and delight. Its setting is critical to its success looking out across farmland and a gently rolling horizon. The awards jury was particularly impressed by the level of consideration given to the patient experience at each moment; subtle changes in geometry transform corridors and reception spaces into informal and relaxed places to be, naturally lit and ventilated. Externally, white Corian cladding creates a building of great elegance and reinforces the sense of quality. With its carefully selected planting this is a truly uplifting place to be. The support of Macmillan and donations from the National Garden Scheme were clearly fundamental in setting the level of ambition and informing the design processes in this treasured location.

Building of the Year

Client of the Year

Project Architect of the Year (joint) Guy Barlow



MARK HADDEN



**Font House, Market Harborough**  
**Gluckman Smith for private client**  
Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 175 m<sup>2</sup>

What was a dilapidated bungalow and garden in 2012 is now an exemplar for conservation-led design. Today Font House and its restored walled garden sit within the context of the grade I listed main house, church and parkland of a country estate. The result is immediately satisfying and elegant, but comes as the result of continual consideration and refinement at every turn of the design and building process. The new house is conceived as a low pavilion with a delicately judged transparency and connection to the walled garden and yet achieves a degree of privacy and intimacy in its more private spaces. These seemingly conflicting requirements have been skilfully arranged in a layout that is entirely symmetrical and sets up a pleasing geometrical relationship with the garden and main hall beyond. The house and garden are a testament to the highest quality of design and execution.

Conservation Award

Project Architect of the Year (joint) Diana Dina

**The GlaxoSmithKline Carbon Neutral Laboratories for Sustainable Chemistry, Nottingham****Fairhursts Design Group for University of Nottingham**Contract value: £15.8m, GIA: 2,912 m<sup>2</sup>Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £5,425

'This is bigger than just a building – it's a whole philosophy' is the claim. This project demonstrates an unwavering focus on sustainability and challenges every aspect of the design and construction process. The result is a building that not only achieves BREEAM Outstanding and LEED platinum awards, but signals how such an approach can directly inform architectural design and enhance the user experience. A distinctive volumetric form has its origin in the need for a highly-serviced laboratory space, but one which can be naturally ventilated. The undulating roof generates power, admits daylight and embraces biodiversity. Internally, both the timber frame and wall panelling are on view without extraneous finishing materials, again reinforcing the commitment to sustainable and accountable design decisions. The building brings forward welcome new thinking for this typology through a deep collaboration between the client and design teams.

Sustainability award



MARTINE HAMILTON-KNIGHT

**Vijay Patel Building, De Montfort University, Leicester****CPMG Architects for De Montfort University**Contract value: £42m,  
Internal area: 25,000 m<sup>2</sup>Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £1,680

This substantial art and design campus centre actively promotes collaboration and openness between university departments and has transformed a significant area of the city for the public. A retained 12-storey tower serves as the focal point for the composition around which other spaces are skilfully arranged. The clear legibility of the layout results from the insertion of a series of dramatic atria, which mediate between the different building forms and allow visual connections between departments. Internally the aesthetic often exhibits an honest, industrial approach adding liveliness and interest. Elsewhere the building is calmer, functioning more as a backdrop to students' work. Spaces such as the roof terraces, riverside café, and generous public realm are particularly successful in connecting the interior functions to the surrounding context and promoting the enjoyment of this part of the city and riverside.



MARTINE HAMILTON-KNIGHT

**University of Nottingham Advanced Manufacturing Building****Bond Bryan Architects for University of Nottingham**Contract value: £17m, GIA: 9,000 m<sup>2</sup>Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £1,889

This building is immediately recognisable as a dynamic and powerful statement at the gateway to the university's Jubilee Campus. However, its assured simplicity belies a complex brief and a series of well-resolved and interesting interior spaces. A large simple volume containing functional workshops contrasts with a more fluid accommodation block containing office, research and meeting spaces. The resulting undulating form creates an embracing entranceway and a series of uniquely formed meeting areas at the changes in geometry. Users return again and again to the calm yet geometrically interesting atrium as they circulate around the building, a feature that encourages collaboration and shared working. The spatial layout is expressed clearly in the building's external appearance, with the two primary forms clad in contrasting materials and colours. The project team deserves great credit for its careful handling of context, the resolution of complex spatial demands and the creation of an innovative working environment.

PHIL GRAYSTON

**One Angel Square, Northampton**  
**BDP for Northamptonshire County Council**Contract value: £40m, GIA: 17,473 m<sup>2</sup>Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £2,289

Angel Square responds to an ambitious brief to combine workforces from 12 separate properties in a single BREEAM Excellent HQ. The 2000 strong workforce is united in a place that promotes collaborative working – clearly evident in all aspects of the design. Conceived as a 'Yin Yang' plan, the layout arranges two wings around a central atrium court. Its elegant glazed roof admits high levels of daylight into the deep plan building and allows for natural ventilation. The court functions as an informal gathering space, with further breakout spaces peeling back from the atrium. The entire layout is both legible and functional while the external envelope displays a pleasing and confident rigour in a conservation area. One Angel Square demonstrates a highly competent and elegant approach that showcases innovation in the workplace environment.

NICK HUFTON





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# Northern Ireland

Beyond the ever-pressing political noise, David Capener sees a rising tide of new talent lifting all architecture here



A 499,000m invisible line carving its way across the island of Ireland has become a visible symbol of our pre-Brexit woes and perhaps, more importantly, the future stability of the Good Friday agreement — here be ghosts. Northern Ireland/the north of Ireland, my own personal dialectic, a place I love and, if I'm honest, sometimes hate. I hate living in a place where a simple punctuation mark like a slash has become a powerful signifier for 30 years of violence, immense pain and visceral anger — something I will never understand.

But, amid the noise, there are other things to talk about. Like new emerging architectural practices and older established firms who, as the tide of talent has risen, have risen too.

It's a story reflected in the 21 schemes short-listed for this year's Regional RIBA Awards here — a list three times longer than last year.

It is a pleasure to visit and write about many of these buildings. Most memorable so far this year was ARdMackel's new building for Coláiste Feirste — the only secondary-level, Irish language school in Belfast. It's a simple, low budget affair built into the prehistoric limestone hills of west Belfast; a handshake with the geographical history of ancient Gaelic-speaking inhabitants who walked its slopes. One to watch is the firm's soon to complete Lónra Uladh, a broadcasting building for Irish language radio station, Raidió Fáilte.

For many practices, the size of Northern

Ireland and the complexities of procurement frameworks puts the focus mostly on small domestic projects. Among the bland white boxes of conveyor-belt 'modernism', in vogue particularly along the north coast, are a number of noteworthy residential schemes. One is the Micah Jones designed agricultural-barn-inspired 'long house' in Co Down — reflecting a diverse local vernacular, also present in the work of MMAS, Shane Birney Architects, Patrick Smyth, McGonigle McGrath and others.

What becomes of the invisible-visible line remains to be seen but in the midst of the noise, there are good things happening — things worthy of celebration. ●

David Capener is a writer on architecture



**County Down Barn, Newtownards**  
**Micah T Jones Architect for private client**  
Contract value: £245,000, GIA: 240m<sup>2</sup>  
Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £1,021

This is a beautifully crafted building that references its site through the use of the barn typology; the local area by its exploitation of the drumlin (little ridge) landscape; the vernacular via its scale and section, and the need to build sustainably through its location, compact form and layout. Internally the house is full of intelligent and delightful design play. Exposed timber finishes are complemented by wood-burning stoves and cast-concrete surrounds, almost acting as sculptures. No build material was wasted in this enjoyable example of craftsmanship and design creativity, which is used to develop functional solutions that enrich and enhance the living experience of its occupants. The architect has created a beautiful, functional, hospitable and engaging home.

House of the Year  
Small Project of the Year



**Castle Tower School, Ballymena**  
**Isherwood + Ellis for Education Authority Northern Ireland**  
Contract value: £16,028m, GIA: 10,006m<sup>2</sup>  
Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £1,600

Designing a new school for 300 children from nursery to school leavers is a challenge, especially when it must accommodate children with special educational and physical needs and there is a desire to integrate ability at each school level. Immediately striking is the bright and airy social concourse with views to an outdoor garden. There is a generosity in the circulation which, combined with sensory courtyards, resource areas and voids, makes a pleasant walk through the school. Subtle colour coding assists orientation. The school successfully resolves a complex brief through careful planning, client commitment and a belief by all stakeholders in the value of their school pupils and the contribution architecture can make to their development.

Integration of Art Award



**No 37, Belfast**  
**FAMILY architects designers makers for private client**  
Contract value: £100,000, GIA: 56m<sup>2</sup>  
Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £1,786

On the backstreets of the Ormeau Road, No 37 sits apart from the brick built community within which it resides. It addresses that space between city centre and suburbs, and issues of differing family sizes and our evolving accommodation needs over our lifetimes. This playful dwelling, clad in black timber, almost directly abuts the street. There is joy to be had from the section and resulting elevation, which separates the building into two volumes — one accommodating a tall living/dining/cooking space, while the other houses bathroom and utility storage at ground level and a bedroom above. The building addresses the concern that small living could be claustrophobic by generating views between the spaces and on through the south facing window wall into an outside garden.



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**Omagh Hospital and Primary Care Complex, Omagh**

**TODD Architects, with Hall Black Douglas for Western Health & Social Care Trust**

Contract value: £75m, GIA: 27,000m<sup>2</sup>  
Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £2,778

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This complex hospital building has succeeded in creating a bright, airy and relaxing interior with efficient organisational strategies, resulting in a holistic and very welcoming environment for healing. The linear two-storey structure, which is appropriate in this rural setting on the edge of Omagh, is a new model of healthcare provision. GP practices are integrated into the hospital design and take advantage of the co-located facilities. Ward areas contain single en-suite rooms for a mix of patients in recovery, rehabilitation or receiving palliative care. The nursing stations are located in the centre of the blocks, giving them visual supervision of, and pleasant views through, the wards to the outside. Open break-out areas dissolve the traditional clinical barriers between staff and patients, encouraging social interaction and relaxation. It is evident that an engaged and informed relationship between the client, design and user teams, and the contractor has delivered an exemplary healthcare building.



CHRIS HILL



**Main Site Tower and Peter Froggatt Centre, Queen's University Belfast**

**TODD Architects for Queen's University Belfast**

Contract value: £15.6m,  
GIA: 14,982 m<sup>2</sup>  
Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £1,041

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This new School of Law integrates impressively with the adjacent Gothic and Tudor style library and music school. It is a redevelopment that has retained the structure of the old tower, reducing it in height while adding additional accommodation at the lower levels. Although the total floorspace has increased, the overall form is now respectful of the streets and squares that surround it. Internally, low floor-to-ceiling heights in the retained library frame have been remodelled to ensure a sense of lightness and air, with central voids cut from the original block. This is a complex scheme which ticks many boxes in terms of serviced accommodation, spatial experience and sustainable reuse. This part of the university is a better place because of it.



**Sportlann, Belfast**

**ARdMackel Architects for Coláiste Feirste**

Contract value: £2.35m  
GIA: 1,892 m<sup>2</sup>  
Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £1,242

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Coláiste Feirste, an Irish language secondary school, occupies Beechmount House, near the top of the Falls Road. The property's original front gardens fall away steeply to the east and it is in front of the house, to the north, that this sports hall is sited. The building has a simple geometry; central through-access separates the tallest volume of the large sports hall from the ground-level changing rooms and stores, with minor hall/classroom, gymnasium and upper level walkway above. The structure is clad in two tones of dark grey brick with strategically-placed punched windows that allow views through the building. Internally the concrete structural frame, and concrete block infill, are exposed and left undecorated. Built to a tight budget and complying with Department of Education spatial standards, this building demonstrates what can be achieved when creative thinking is applied to what might easily have proved a very constraining brief.

GARY QUIGG





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**Corriewood Private Clinic, County Down**  
**McGurk Architects for Corriewood Estates**  
Contract value: £5m, GIA: 3,433m<sup>2</sup>, Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £1,456

The architect has responded sensitively to the existing listed building and a spectacular site to produce a significant extension with an elegant classical feel, which respects the original building and enhances its setting while also providing a carefully considered model for elderly care. Bedroom doors are individually coloured in soft pastel shades to help patients identify their own rooms. Ground floor rooms for those who so desire have direct access to small individual garden areas which are cultivated by the occupants. In contrast to the original Victorian building, the new work is predominately clad in dark brown brick. Elevations are pierced with regularly spaced, deeply recessed, two-storey panels with floor to ceiling glazing on each floor. Recessed floor spandrel panels are brick clad. Housing/ Residential Development of the Year

GORDON MCAVOY



**Newry Leisure Centre, Phase 2**  
**Kennedy FitzGerald Architects for Newry, Mourne and Down District Council**  
Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 5,660 m<sup>2</sup>

Situated near the centre of Newry, this leisure centre, which is phase 2 of the overall scheme, rationalises the council's sporting facilities into one 'hub', adding two large sports halls, squash and handball courts, a café, spin studio, various fitness spaces and a trampoline pit to the largely wet facilities housed in the first phase. The newer building has a different language to the old one and is clad in a white machine-cut brick over a dark brick base, thus helping to reduce the combined scale of the two buildings. The judges felt that the workmanship on the building is exemplary. The vigorous modelling of what could have been a bland functional block gives this structure great civic presence, sending out a clear message of the importance of health and fitness in our lives. It enlivens and strengthens the public realm and has the potential to increase footfall.

DONAL MCCANN

**Maison Wedge, Killinchy**  
**BGA Architects for Henry and Denise Quinn**  
Contract value: Confidential  
GIA: 240m<sup>2</sup>

Maison Wedge is a private house that sits just below a ridge line in the landscape, giving it expansive views along the Strangford lough shore of drumlins, sea inlets and other sites of archaeological interest. Two elegant forms partially clad in timber make up the sprawling, low lying building, with parabolic roof forms that echo the rolling countryside of County Down. The living space is a large and impressive volume with magnificent views. Just as rewarding is the staircase which leads to a more intimate space, bringing to mind the cosiness of an ancient ship captain's house. The architect has worked with light, form, material and orientation to make spaces that are a delight to occupy. The house could just as easily be read as a museum or a gallery, for it is the sculptural forms, the experience of the space and the connections with the outside that define this project. This beautifully crafted and modelled building reflects its surrounding landscape, and from within ensures the owners incessantly connect with it.

AIDAN MONAGHAN



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TODD WATSON



**The Weaving Works, Belfast**  
**RMI Architects for Karl Group**  
Contract value: Confidential  
GIA: 3,400m<sup>2</sup>

This project involves the refurbishment and repurposing of a former Victorian linen warehouse, in a conservation area immediately to the south of Belfast City Hall. The success of the scheme, which secured full occupancy before completion, depends on the skill shown in balancing the retention of original structure and fabric with the insertion of new finishes and servicing to provide grade A office space above ground-floor restaurant and café uses. In the original three upper floors of the building, sections of Belfast red brick and old pitch pine timbered floors have been retained and repaired, and the robust early concrete structure exposed to good effect. A new top-floor glulam timber structure has been added to give the building a 'lid' and its floor to ceiling glazing enables panoramic views over the city and surrounding countryside.

Conservation Award

**St Bronagh's Primary School, Rostrevor**  
**D-ON Architects for Trustees of St Bronagh's Primary School**  
Contract value: £2m, GIA: 1,488m<sup>2</sup>  
Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £1,343

The long low building of St Bronagh's Primary School is modelled in a restrained and structured contemporary architectural idiom, with a timber clad lower front section reading against a taller rendered section. There is considered detailing throughout, enhanced by a high standard of workmanship. The plan hinges through 45°, with the taller multi-purpose hall accommodated down a slope. Its seven south-east-facing classrooms have large glazed openings that provide atmospheric frames to the mountains beyond. Roof lights pop through the roof, allowing light deep into the plan and reducing the building's energy requirement. Pupils were also involved in painting the roof cowls to add their own mark to their school.

Liam McCormick Prize  
Sustainability Award  
Project Architect of the Year Nial O'Neill



RICHARD WATSON

MERVYNELACK



**The Junction, Community Peace Building, Derry/Londonderry**  
**Hall Black Douglas for STEP**  
Contract value: £3.6m. GIA: 2,750m<sup>2</sup>  
Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £1,316

To secure the last parcel of European Peace 3 funding, this building was produced from inception to completion to exacting time constraints. It is already a local landmark. Standing on a formerly anti-social and interface area between disadvantaged communities of different religions, the building houses a variety of community services meeting the needs of those who are sometimes less regarded in society. The permeability of the building is evident; it can be approached and accessed from various directions and has connectivity with a number of cycling and pedestrian routes. The linear plan has been 'kinked' to respond to the site and there is an access and vertical circulation route through the width of the building. It is clear that users, staff and visitors enjoy the building and its relationship to the surroundings and it is an exemplar for such projects.

Client of the Year  
Living Spaces Award

# South

The Isle of Wight may be the most southerly tip of this region but, says Colman Cotter, its influences extend across the world



Like many architects, we often encounter the 'not in keeping' criticism of new designs. Here on the Isle of Wight we challenge this comment by simply asking what is in keeping? As well as historic buildings such as Osborne House and Quarr Abbey, the island has influences from around the world. Some places may have their own leaning, like Ventnor on the south coast towards art deco, but in the spaces between is a collection of contemporary bespoke homes for design literate clients, many from London.

Our scattered practices have a tendency to do more than straight architecture; at Modh we offer graphic design as well. As elsewhere, each firm specialises – in conser-

vation, housing and so on. But every year Isle of Wight architects gather at the Royal Yacht Squadron in Cowes to celebrate architecture and conservation projects with a wider audience. The Isle of Wight branch of the RIBA may be small but it supports and binds these practices.

The next major opportunity on the horizon is the Isle of Wight Council regeneration programme following a consultation last summer called 'Wight we Want'. A workshop for ideas for Newport harbour is just one of the strands. The programme is aiming for large scale change on some important local sites as well as smaller interventions where appropriate. The Isle of Wight Council's

regeneration team says it is committed to raising design ambitions for the island and ensuring new development is attractive and responsive to the historical and geographical context, while holding its own in exemplary design and new architecture.

As architects here we welcome contributions from the mainland and this summer will showcase work both by students who study across the water at Portsmouth architecture school, and the finalists of the Young Designer Awards. We hope this will help raise the aspirations of the local community about what can be achieved through high quality architecture. ●

Colman Cotter is director of Modh Design



**Berkshire House, Reading**  
**Gregory Phillips Architects for private client**

Contract value: Confidential  
GIA: 562 m<sup>2</sup>

This is a pristine and immaculate example of the early 21st century modern house. While not innovative or challenging in design (textbook in its use of contemporary language) it just does everything so well. Every detail is finely honed, each facade carefully composed and the house achieves faultless finesse at every scale. Materials vary in texture from rough brick through pale stained western red cedar to polished grey concrete, all combining in a palette of greys and soft Scandinavian tones. The 'compression-and-release' route from the forecourt, through an etiolated colonnade to a low, dark lobby and into a majestic double-height dining hall is also a classic, but expertly executed, effect. And the architect has achieved an outstanding level of spatial variety and sequence of internal spaces on the standard south-facing, rectangular site. It is a joy to walk through, revelling in how materials, light, route, and space have been modelled and modulated.





**Big Data Institute, Oxford**  
**Make Architects for The University of Oxford**

Contract value: Confidential  
 GIA: 7,449 m<sup>2</sup>

The BDI is home to myriad analysts busily examining medical data to find patterns and create cures. The peril is that they could feel isolated in their work, so the architect has arranged light, high-ceilinged open-plan floorplates around a large central atrium. The aim of the design is to give people a sense of belonging and to encourage interaction and fruitful inter-collaboration between disciplines. With the deft handling of natural light and beautiful acoustic timber panels, every floor creates a level of openness and engagement, creating the feeling of one enormous multi-layered space. The BDI is the exact opposite of the dingy, cellular buildings of the past. It's a delightful workplace – and naturally ventilated, the first of its kind in UK academia – so a truly innovative building as well. But it is also an exemplary building in the standard of working environment it achieves for the researchers within.

**Canoe Lake Leisure Tennis Pavilion, Portsmouth**  
**PAD Studio for Canoe Lake Leisure**  
 Contract value: £1.1m,  
 GIA: 322 m<sup>2</sup>, Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £3,416

This building serves as a clubhouse for the tennis courts that sit on either side of it. The original brief – to replace a sad, single storey pitch-roofed building – was expanded and all money needed was raised by local donors to benefit the community. The finished structure includes communal spaces, a rooftop club room and a terrace. It is a delightful example of contemporary architecture with its benefits of light and openness. It sits on a tight site next to a path which attracts vandals and consequently the building is extremely secure, yet it is delightfully open both inside and on the upper floor. This has been achieved by dividing the building into a sturdy brick base acting as a plinth to a delicate first floor clubroom, and terrace with butterfly roof. Every part of it has been carefully considered with no compromise on the materials – whether German brick or huge frameless corner windows. The pavilion is a true local success story.

Client of the Year



**Hubert Perrodo Building, Oxford**  
**Design Engine Architects for St Peter's College, Oxford**  
 Contract value: £2.2m, GIA: 297 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £7,407

This building, which feels like a piece of exquisitely crafted furniture, replaces a collection of motley sheds huddling beneath the grim lowering mass of the neighbours' three-storey flank wall. The college's quad desperately needed a fourth side and the architect has perfectly plugged the gap, with a structure enclosing ample accommodation over four floors. Unlike neighbours, old and new, with their finials, dormers and other projections, the Hubert Perrodo Building is admirably pure, an unsullied Platonic cuboid. However, it manages to mediate between a 20th century block to the west and older converted school building to the east with material references and sympathetic proportions. This is despite being taller than its neighbours. As well as the beautiful and bewitching building, the project included the landscaping of two contiguous quads which have been cleared of clutter and replanted to create pockets of privacy within a spacious overall effect.





**Pheasants, Henley-on-Thames**  
**Sarah Griffiths + Amin Taha for private client**  
Contract value: Confidential , GIA: 575 m<sup>2</sup>

This house, on a site beside the Thames, is extraordinary in its challenge to convention. It is approached by foot along a path which passes a Corten ancillary pavilion and an over-sized reflecting pool before tucking into the house, confronting a small top-lit court, and turning sideways into the living space. This pattern of movement through major and minor spaces with promenades and pauses continues through the house itself, overturning assumptions about how spaces should be disposed and what they should address. Creating the house has taken more than a decade, yet there is no evidence that anything has been downgraded or any difficulty sidestepped. It all works beautifully and the house is clearly a comfort and joy to the clients. Uncompromising and uplifting.

Project Architect of the Year Sarah Griffiths



**Thames Tower, Reading**  
**dn-a architects for Landid Property & Brockton Capital**  
Contract value: Confidential  
GIA: 23,470 m<sup>2</sup>

Thames Tower, bang in the middle of Reading, could have been just another office building and once it was: this new structure replaces an older Thames Tower, a stumpy and outdated 1970s office block. The development team didn't demolish the building, though, but stripped it back to its original concrete frame and then completely reimagined both interior and the exterior. With creative engineering they also managed to add another four floors. All the embodied energy in the concrete has been preserved, and yet the resulting building is so pristine in form and the interior spaces so light and open that it is hard to believe that it is not completely new. The Phoenix-like Thames Tower also distinguishes itself through the huge contribution it makes to the public realm, and the refined purity of its architecture.

Sustainability award



**The Queen's College, Oxford, New Library**  
**MICA Architects for The Queen's College, Oxford**  
Contract value: £10m, GIA: 2,687.00 m<sup>2</sup>  
Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £3,722

Beneath the lawn of the Provost's garden of The Queen's College, Oxford, is hidden a brand new college library. This invisibility is welcome given the grade I status of the existing 17th century English Baroque library to the west. The large subterranean library is daylight-filled thanks to an extremely large longitudinal rooflight which gives those within superb views of the listed facade from below. The extension and rooflight are successfully concealed and old and new are linked with masterful care and discretion. This effect is achieved through a beautifully crafted lift and stair situated in one of the structural bays of the old library. These appear entirely natural in the historic setting due to the deft handling of their insertion. There is no hint of compromise to the restored listed buildings or to their setting and the few new elements which are visible feel right and good.

Regional Conservation Award



**The Sultan Nazrin Shah Centre, Oxford**  
**Niall McLaughlin Architects for Worcester College, Oxford**  
Contract value: £8.9m, GIA: 846 m<sup>2</sup>  
Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £10,517

Worcester College had an urgent need for teaching facilities in one of Oxford's most historic colleges. The result is a building of extraordinary elegance. Every space is high-ceilinged and flooded with daylight, every element is designed and crafted to the most exacting tolerances and standards, and every part fits together sweetly – from the radial brick pavers to the curved seats and huge oak doors of the auditorium up to the spaces themselves. The centre is classical in spirit, with crisp proscenium and a slender stone stoa marching along a cricket pitch facade, but the smooth stone and glass planes and minimal detail are uncompromisingly modern. To create a building of such extraordinary elegance has taken time, unstinting application from client and procurement team, a generous donor, a building team capable of the highest levels of craftsmanship and an architectural team capable of the very highest design quality.

Sustainability award



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# South East

Magali McKay finds history, landscape and a wealth of local materials make a sense of place central to architecture here



For many people, the words 'South East' include London. But away from the pull and dominance of the capital, we are free to appreciate the distinctiveness of our immediate surroundings: the character of our local area, the sense of space, the landscape. Here in Lewes, I've come to enjoy this feeling of remoteness. It takes time to adapt, to become sensitive to this environment. The town is situated at the convergence of three valleys within the South Downs National Park, and landscape really is everywhere you look.

At the end of every street and narrow twitten, Kipling's 'whale-backed hills' define the undulating skyline. Lewes is full of history too, with buildings dating back to

Saxon and Norman times. Both local geology and local history have informed architecture throughout the years and still do today. We are never far from a conservation area or a listed building. This very particular set of circumstances has a significant impact on the planning process. But local architects embrace the vernacular: materials like flint, chalk, local clay tiles, bricks and locally grown timber are abundant in the architectural palette.

If people are natives of this region, they rarely move outside the area – why would they? They have the hills and the sea nearby, and the capital only an hour away. If they have moved from elsewhere, they plan to in-

vest in the long term. That's very good news for architects; we can help adapt and transform all kinds of buildings into homes for life. Vernacular buildings, both urban and rural, provide a sense of scale and guide us in our design responses. When we practise architecture away from London, we get to understand the essence of what makes a place unique: we get the sense of place. The result is that many new buildings here simply could not fit anywhere else.

Here, it makes sense to stick to architecture's number-one rule: be site-specific. It's rewarding, and enjoyable too. ●

Magali McKay, founder of astula-architecture, consultant at BBM Sustainable Design



MARTIN GARDNER

## Black House, Kent

AR Design Studio for private client

Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 344 m<sup>2</sup>

This house is highly impressive with its crisp lines and thoughtful response to the landscape. It hovers gracefully over the garden, stretching out over the views. An inspiration was nearby Sissinghurst Castle Garden, famously a series of individual experiences each hidden by walls and hedges. In the house, principal spaces are located on the four corners, each enjoying a different relationship with the surrounding landscape. The central courtyard serves as both the divider and the connector – a screen from direct views but enjoying the vistas and glimpses to the various parts. Uniform finishes of external black timber boarding and white painted interiors makes for a calm and simple execution. The only element that departs from this palette is the brick tower which, like Sissinghurst, provides the view that draws together the various parts. This is clearly a modernist design which enjoys pushing structural possibilities to achieve an impressive 7.3m cantilever.

## City of London Freeman's School swimming pool, Ashted

Hawkins\Brown for City of London Freeman's School

Contract value: £8.2m, GIA: 1,750 m<sup>2</sup>, Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £4,686

This swimming pool replaces one on the school grounds which recently burned down. The location is sensitive, set within the Green Belt, near grade II listed buildings and next to ancient woodland. In response, the architect has created a building that is practically invisible from the outside. The simple, low-lying form clad in dark brown zinc panelling reveals few hints as to what one will experience within. This interior is predominantly timber with white-washed glulam frames and CLT panels – all well detailed and finely crafted. The atmosphere is light and spacious with a cathedral-like quality, its tranquillity heightened by beautiful views across a meadow to the woodland beyond. The proportions and spatial arrangement of the main pool interior. Level with the ground outside on two sides, are elegant and pleasing, windows dropping down to the floor to create the sensation of swimming in nature.



JACK HOBHOUSE



**Studio in a Ruin, East Sussex****Carmody Groarke for private client****Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 68 m<sup>2</sup>**

This project is the transformation of a structure from an unremarkable ruin, in an unremarkable field, into a beautifully poetic building. It is part of a collection created within the grounds of a family home, commissioned by a patron of art and architecture. The scale and configuration of the spaces inside are unexpected, the studio being much bigger than the photos convey. While it is a single open-plan space, its change in level splits it in two separate parts. One section is sunk partly below ground and provides basic infrastructure to support life inside. The upper space sits at ground-level and focuses on the remains of an inglenook fireplace and a new, wide window opening out to views of the surrounding countryside. The design process has clearly been very rigorous and controlled, yet there was an interesting dynamic and enough flexibility to allow the local blacksmith (who didn't like working from drawings) to make his own mark on the roof.



JOHAN DEHLIN



QUINTIN LAKE

**Sibson Building, Canterbury****Penoyre & Prasad for University of Kent****Contract value: £26.7m, GIA: 8,200 m<sup>2</sup>, Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £3,256**

This is a new building that links the Schools of Mathematics and Business. A thoughtful structure, with a clear architectural concept, it is the largest building on the University of Kent's campus, and its design and management have been rigorous enough to withstand the project's development and budgetary constraints. Zigzagging wings help to integrate the two schools while allowing them their own dedicated spaces. A central atrium brings them together to use shared facilities such as the café and lecture theatres, and welcomes the wider campus. Set in an area of ancient woodland, the wings dissipate into the surrounding trees – offering a delightful and uplifting experience from inside the building. Natural light pours in to the top-lit atrium, which provides a welcoming entrance and lively place to socialise. Circulation is carefully choreographed around pausing spaces. Sibson is an exemplary education building embodying creativity with an intelligent and responsible approach.

Regional Project Architect of the Year Michael Fostiropoulos

**Oatlands Close, Surrey****SOUP Architects for private client****Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 264 m<sup>2</sup>**

A surprise hidden behind a suburban house, this is a complete transformation, with a new rear extension and garden pavilion and extensive internal refurbishment. A delightful series of spaces opens up to the garden. The new additions are bold, employing an asymmetrical form, and are very much a departure from the usual run-of-the-mill glass box house extensions. These moves are a contextual response to the site. The garden is fully connected to the house, using a material palette that is simple and robust: grey bricks, used on walls both inside and out for solidity and sculptural quality, avoiding fussy detailing and complex junctions. The garden pavilion is located in a beautifully-landscaped garden which kicks off in a direction unseen from the main house. It is the knuckle which connects the garden to the house, offering opportunities to retreat and work peacefully while keeping half an eye on the kids in the house.



ANDY MATTHEWS

# Wales

In this robust landscape, practitioners need an understanding of the sense of place, says Dafydd Tomos



From our base in mid-west Wales you can find pretty much every kind of landscape to suit just about every kind of weather and inclination. Within half an hour you could be climbing a craggy mountain, squelching your way across remote moorland wilderness, swimming in the sea, a river, a lake or underneath a waterfall, wandering through woods, exploring

old mines and quarries, or ambling through gentle pasture land.

It is a landscape robust enough to take modern interventions. The scars of the old industries in the north and the south are slowly healing into the surrounding terrain. Part of this process lies in developing new buildings and structures on old sites, and where this is done with skill and care the

sense of landscape is enhanced.

There is a growing demand for housing and much of the public sector's building stock is in need of renewal or replacement. The most skilled practitioners can meet this growing demand with an understanding of the sense of place. ●

Dafydd Tomos is director at George + Tomos Architects, Machynlleth



PAUL MCMULLIN

## University of Bangor Arts and Innovation Centre Grimshaw for University of Bangor

Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 10,700 m<sup>2</sup>

In Bangor 'town and gown' are separated by a steep hill and the A5 trunk road. The old Main Arts Building dominates the skyline, high above the town. Its new neighbour, the Arts and Innovation Centre, is known by its Welsh name, Pontio, which means a bridging. The centre's objective is to bring the town and university together culturally, linguistically and topographically. Tall planes of diffused glass slide through and between the stone-clad blocks. This is a compelling sculptural assemblage that invites curiosity while giving little away about the building's contents. Inside, the principal public facilities are the flexible theatre and cinema. There are also seminar and lecture rooms, creative workshops, social learning areas and the student union. Visitors ascend a spectacular, crevasse-like atrium girdled by sweeping balcony ledges offering fine views. At the top it is a short final climb to the terrace of the old Main Arts Building. Pontio is a pleasure to traverse.



GYURI SZABO

## Yr Ysgwrn, Gwynedd

### Purcell for Snowdonia National Park Authority

Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 784 m<sup>2</sup>

Hedd Wyn was killed in 1917 at Passchendaele a few weeks before he won the Chair of the National Eisteddfod, the ultimate prize for poetry written in Welsh. His story draws thousands of admiring visitors to his remote farmstead, now a museum. Today's visitor experience seems very close to that which would have been enjoyed at any time over the past century, despite the significant architectural interventions that have transformed the site into an efficient and sustainable cultural attraction. The reception is in a gently remodelled stone barn. A hay shed to the rear is now a beautiful small café space. The first exhibition space is a new barn set into the slope. A winding path leads upwards to the old farmhouse, now with invisible environmental controls. A second, discreet new barn means that the farm continues to shape and to conserve the natural environment.

Conservation Award

Project Architect of the Year: Elgan Jones  
RSAW Building of the Year



ELAINE LEWIS

## St David's Hospice, New In-Patient Unit, Newport KKE Architects for St David's Hospice Care

Contract value: £4.45m, GIA: 1,665 m<sup>2</sup>

Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £2,673

This 15-bed hospice owes much of its special quality to the unusually insightful client. Its brief for the new building draws on the operation of the charity's other centres and international best practice for end-of-life care. Nothing matters more to the patient than the feelings of the family that they leave behind, so it follows that the focus of design should be on the experience of visitors as much, if not more, than on the patients themselves. The hospice is beautifully calm and serene. It achieves an air of spirituality while avoiding any implication of judgmental sanctity. Spaces for withdrawal and contemplation follow the secular spiritual approach. The use of natural materials defies sterile clinical convention, while the patients' rooms have a gentle domestic character. Clinical fixtures are unobtrusive. Furniture and built-in fittings are refined and well constructed. For such a complex facility this level of design control is a terrific achievement.

Client of the Year





Victorian Coach House by award-winning architect Peter Williams. Ten linked CR-13 rooflights.

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# East

The influx of young professionals has brought with it a pulse of creative energy, says Norfolk's Jenny Harvey



Norfolk is often thought of as a backwater, hard to get to and conservative in its approach due to a lack of cultural diversity. These outdated preconceptions – not helped by Alan Partridge! – are a far cry from the young, lively and creative Norfolk that is rapidly emerging.

The high cost of living in London, together with greater awareness of health and well-being, makes Norfolk a very appealing place to live and work for young professionals. In the 2011 census, the median age of people in Norwich was 34, with Cambridge even lower at 31. This influx of creative energy is driving strategies in arts and culture and challenging the way our industry positions itself with a desire to do things differently.

Norwich University of the Arts graduates are choosing to stay in Norwich. The school's central location contributes to the artistic and political activism of the local community. The (not so) new architecture faculty, embedded within this well-established and reputable art school, has the potential to develop an exciting new breed of diverse practitioners with progressive ideas and knowledge of the local demographic.

Alternative practice approaches are starting to emerge in Norfolk, with much more collaborative thinking about designing the built environment. Recent projects in Great Yarmouth and Anglia Square in Norwich have grown out of community involvement.

A collection of creative disciplines are working with community groups to make a change – facilitated by architects – and to create sensitive, appropriate and relevant proposals with real public value. We must not underestimate our ability as architects to bring people and processes together; it is something we are very good at and is important in breaking down the age-old communication problem between architect and public.

Eight of this year's 12 shortlisted projects involve regional practices, a testament to the strength of local talent. Hopefully next year a Norfolk project will go further. ●

Jenny Harvey is an architect at Hudson Architects



**Five Acre Barn, near Aldeburgh**  
**Blee Halligan for Five Acre Barn**  
Contract value: Confidential  
GIA: 450 m<sup>2</sup>

Five Acre Barn provides bed and breakfast accommodation for five visitors who can live and dine together, or use their rooms as a base. It has a stepping, organic form that wriggles among the trees in a mature garden. Each room is expressed in the roof form and has its own timber deck. The new building is directly linked to a retained workshop that has been repaired in such a minimalist way that once inside, you are surprised by the single-volume stylish kitchen/living space. Everywhere the finishes are simple, but the mid-century furniture, artwork and light fittings bring a Shoreditch-style to Suffolk. What is most surprising, and pleasing given the standard of workmanship, is that the project has largely been a self-build. The owners not only installed the cedar shingle cladding themselves, but completed most of the joinery and decoration. The scale and budget might be modest, but this imaginative building punches well above its weight.

Small Project of the Year





**The Deerings, Harpenden**  
**Gresford Architects with Nicolas Tye Architects for private client**

Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 400 m<sup>2</sup>

The client for this Passivhaus-standard house was as influential in the design as the architects, initiating sustainability strategies and now monitoring them daily. The modern look and layout are the work of Nicolas Tye Architects. Obtaining consent was a challenge, surrounded as it is by traditional suburban housing. It offers a flat face to the front garden, largely screening it from neighbouring pitched roofs, garages and extensive drives. The internal layout is generous with a study, screening room, pantry and wide circulation spaces. Detailing and construction were overseen by Gresford Architects to achieve the levels of air tightness. There has been considerable investment in the fabric and technology of this house but at the same time it feels warm, fresh and open.



QUINTIN LAKE



**Storey's Field Community Centre and Nursery, Cambridge**

**MUMA for the University of Cambridge**

Contract value: £8.28m

GIA: 2,248 m<sup>2</sup>, Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £3,685

MUMA's Storey's Field is a community centre and nursery on the new North West Cambridge development that presents the highest quality architecture. It shows how an architect can add joy to every part of a building. Such is the consideration of detail, imagination and architectural variety, the nursery spaces are worthy of an even more sophisticated audience, while the community centre is given the architectural importance of a town hall. It can host weddings, concerts, funerals and debates, as well as exercise classes and local groups. Sustainability has been a strong consideration. Natural ventilation is elegantly integrated into a stack form that draws air passively into the hall via an underground labyrinth. A beautiful biodiverse landscape incorporates rehomed fruit trees. Underfloor heating is derived from the overall development's central heat/power plant and rainwater mains supply toilets. Sustainability Award  
 Building of the Year

ALAN WILLIAMS



**Stephen Perse Foundation New Sports and Learning Building, Cambridge**

**Chadwick Dryer Clarke Studio and LSI Architects for The Stephen Perse Foundation**

Contract value: Confidential

GIA: 2,940 m<sup>2</sup>

The technical challenges this project had to overcome were severe. The site has very restricted access, the school remained operational throughout the construction, the planning authority was not convinced that the proposed volume could be accommodated within the conservation area and neighbours were worried about noise and overlooking. But Chadwick Dryer Clarke has transformed learning opportunities at the school as well as solving a host of problems with the existing buildings by bringing a disparate collection into coherent use. The new sports hall is at the centre of the plan with new corridors, rooftop play spaces, study areas and classrooms wrapped and stacked around it, using every inch of the site. The circulation has been ingeniously designed to offer views of different learning activities, link the old building to a new lift, and open up the interior spaces to the outside.

RICHARD CHIVERS



ALAN WILLIAMS

**The David Attenborough Building, Cambridge**

**Nicholas Hare Architects for the University of Cambridge**

Contract value: £37.9m, GIA: 13,411 m<sup>2</sup>

Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £2,826

This project represents a true working partnership between the original architect, Arup Associates led by Sir Philip Dowson, and Nicholas Hare. What has helped give the building a new lease of life is the change in use of the upper floors from closed laboratories and offices to light filled, open plan offices for the Cambridge Conservation Initiative. The architect has treated the building fabric with the utmost respect, repairing and cleaning concrete, matching window detailing and replacing the lead cladding with a matching aluminium panel while recognising the shortcomings of the public access and the windswept first floor circulation spaces. This clear thinking has focused change and architectural intervention on the ground and first floors – a new grand stair is combined with a ramp to reach the first-floor entrance. The whale skeleton which hung outside for nearly 50 years was removed and cleaned and is now the centrepiece for the entrance pavilion, shop and meeting place.

Conservation Award

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LEWIS KAHN



**Bushey Cemetery, Hertfordshire**  
**Waugh Thistleton Architects for The United Synagogue**

Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 644 m<sup>2</sup>

Having completed several synagogues, Waugh Thistleton has a long-standing relationship with the Jewish community, and the simplicity, austerity even, of this project is a reflection of respect, trust and empathy. In keeping with the Jewish idea of being buried simply in a cardboard coffin, the design carries through the idea of returning the body – and building – to the ground. The limited number and small scale of the structures are a considerate acknowledgement that the scheme is just a stage in the ongoing process of enlarging Bushey Cemetery, as the rammed earth walls of the prayer hall will return to the earth once the cemetery is extended again. In contrast with the plainness of the buildings, the landscape is almost lush, with a tree belt and series of balancing ponds to capture rainwater run-off. The project is a poetic response to the cemetery's programme and the traditions of the Jewish faith.

PHILIP VILE (2)

**Aura, Great Kneighton, Cambridge**  
**TateHindle for Countryside Properties**  
Contract value: Confidential  
GIA: 35,024 m<sup>2</sup>

Aura is a development of 650 homes in south Cambridge. Sited on Cambridge City Council land, it is an example of how good new housing communities can be if a local authority puts all its effort behind it and refuses to accept the disappointing norm. The council worked for more than a decade with architects to establish a masterplan, obtain planning permission and select a development partner. Throughout it has remained closely involved to maintain the quality of its vision. Taller blocks contain flats facing the main road, Lime Avenue, stepping down to two storey courtyard houses around parking courts, and single villas facing the Country Park. Inside the flats, high ceilings and the balconies running round two sides of most homes give a sense of generosity. The site is also sustainable from a transport perspective as it is linked by guided bus to the station and city centre.



ALAN WILLIAMS



**White Heather House, Southend-on-Sea**  
**SKArchitects for HARP**

Contract value: £696,000  
GIA: 425 m<sup>2</sup>, Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £1,638

This is a wonderful example of an architect, Steve Kierney, not letting a project fail. He formed his own construction company, overcoming early setbacks to deliver the project to a tight budget and timescale. And it really is changing lives, providing inspiring emergency homes for vulnerable women in the red light district of Southend. The layout of three new blocks around a courtyard solved the problem of a restricted site and creates an appropriately sheltered, private and secure environment for residents who draw support from each other and want to distance themselves from the outside world. The buildings are colourful, simply built and carefully placed to maximise the sense of space on a leftover urban plot. HARP is a worthy Client of the Year, providing much-needed sanctuary for women who are made homeless in Southend.

Client of the Year

ALAN GLOYN



**New Library, University of Bedfordshire, Luton**  
**MCW Architects for University of Bedfordshire**  
Contract value: £25m  
GIA: 6,939m<sup>2</sup>  
Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £3,609

New Library is a highly visible first step in the regeneration of Luton town centre. The university is a major investor in the area, and its buildings are of different scale and quality to its surroundings. The nine-storey building offers a transparent, open ground floor that encourages the public to enter, with the library security barriers purposefully pushed back. This is a generous gesture in this rundown part of town. The building is investing in high quality facilities for disadvantaged students, filled with books and a dazzling array of screens, tables and sofas, with specifically designed areas for silent working. Every effort has been made to link these spaces. Slim lightwells give views onto study activity below and hold-open fire doors on the stair ease circulation.

Small Project of the Year



NICK HUFTON

**St Chad's, Tilbury**  
**Bell Phillips Architects for Gloriana, Thurrock Council**  
Contract value: Confidential  
GIA: 12,480 m<sup>2</sup>

Gloriana, the regeneration arm of Thurrock Council, has already received awards for its pioneering work in providing social housing. It has continued to identify underused council sites to introduce housing that mixes tenure types. Bell Phillips has been an integral partner in this, and the efforts of both on behalf of local people are impressive – all in one of the most depressed areas of the region. Here, Bell Phillips has worked with reduced means – two types of brick, two or three storey houses – to create a strong piece of urban design framing long views of dock cranes and sheds to find a sense of place and attachment to the wider landscape. How the terraced and infill houses come together to offer ever changing experiences is evidence of a careful 3D design. These Thurrock housing schemes could show housebuilders a thing or two about placemaking, even in areas of low house values and little investment. These are houses that would be prized and pampered in more privileged parts of the UK.

KILIAN O'SULLIVAN



**West Court Jesus College, Cambridge**  
**Niall McLaughlin Architects for Jesus College**  
Contract value: Confidential  
GIA: 4,140 m<sup>2</sup>

This extension to Jesus College manages the difficult trick of feeling old-fashioned in its handcrafted materials such as oak, elm, red clay floor tiles and red brick, while being entirely modern in its loose geometry, daylighting and simplicity of form. Facing Jesus Lane, the building extends an existing structural frame by two floors, providing hotel rooms to generate income. By setting back the top facing the court, it completes the parapet line of its neighbours, while four storeys are appropriate toward the street. This level of judgement is carried through. The north elevation delicately steps between two scales and is completed by huge oak windows. The transition to the adjoining building is achieved with the 'pivot' of a lantern tower. A walk through the building reveals further alterations, including a new basement conference centre. Everywhere the architecture is based on weighty, characterful materials. The sequence of spaces seems inevitable, but we know they took skill and determination to deliver.

Project Architect of the Year Tom McGlynn

NICK KANE





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# Jacksons Fencing





# West Midlands

Gary Woodward finds Birmingham as fascinating and lively as he did 30 years ago – get under its skin



Birmingham's motto is 'Forward'. What does that mean to me?

Growing up in a small, quaint Warwickshire market town, my trips into Birmingham as a youth fascinated me. It wasn't so much the scale of buildings and roads, though impressive, but the multiple layers they created: the Bull Ring Bus Station that led to the fish market (and the combined smell of both) then to Woolworths; the subways, the fly-overs, the disparate architectural styles, the steel-drum players, and vendors shouting 'Evening Mail!' from booths on street corners...

Over 28 years of studying, living and working in Birmingham I am still fascinated by how those layers stack up and interrelate

– and I have witnessed, been part of, and now find myself influencing how these layers are shuffled and change.

There's always a new layer emerging or waiting to be discovered. Some are planned and some evolve organically. The shiny office blocks rising at Snow Hill and Paradise contrast with the hi-techies, makers and creators in re-purposed Victorian warehouses and factories in Digbeth. The diverse layers of music on offer from Symphony Hall and Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, to the 02 Arena, a local band in the back room of a Mo-sely pub, to a cabaret bar in the Gay Village.

There are the big headlines; Birmingham Commonwealth Games, arrival of HS2,

Coventry City of Culture – these will all bring much-needed investment and global focus on our region. For any newcomer to Brum and the West Midlands, my advice is to be patient, to spend time and effort in seeking out and getting under the skin of the place – as it's not always obvious or in your face. Then you will be hooked.

It is the ever-increasing wealth in diversity on offer – the places, buildings, activities, people and culture that keep Birmingham moving 'Forward', creating a place that the teenage/student me would still find awe-inspiring and want to explore. ●

Gary Woodward, development planning manager, Birmingham City Council



HUFTON + CROW

**Royal Birmingham Conservatoire**  
Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios for Birmingham City University

Contract value: £42.5m, GIA: 10,250 m<sup>2</sup>  
Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £4,146/ m<sup>2</sup>

Civic stature at this state-of-the-art facility anchors the university's expanding city centre campus. Yet although its external brickwork carapace lends an air of 'urban castle', its design encourages public access. A three-level entrance foyer connects north and south entrances and students, staff and public mingle in the timber-lined split-level foyer with a café overlooking gardens. From here a processional stair links a 500-seat orchestral concert hall, recital hall, organ studio, jazz club and experimentation room. The judges praised how FCBS overcame technical challenges posed by the spaces, especially within a relatively small footprint and budget. Different acoustic requirements received exceptional architectural, environmental and acoustic integration.

Building of the Year



ANDY MARSHALL

**Willow Barns, Stoke-on-Trent**  
PRP for Eric Wright Construction

Contract value: £16m, GIA: 9,100 m<sup>2</sup>  
Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £1,758/ m<sup>2</sup>

Willow Barns comprises 75 flats for retirement living and should be considered a benchmark for the genre. Procured through PFI competition, as one of three in the area, the project draws inspiration from the southerly topography of the site and existing early 19th century agricultural buildings. Three new triple-level brick barns containing the apartments are laid out around a retained model farm that has been refurbished to provide communal facilities. A new timber-clad wing contains dining and social areas. In contrast to the homely barns which are carried out in brick, these linking communal spaces are composed of black-painted industrial quality girders and glass. Achieved within tight budgetary and PFI constraints, Willow Barns is all the more commendable as a thoughtfully conceived response to a sensitive site and community of aging residents.



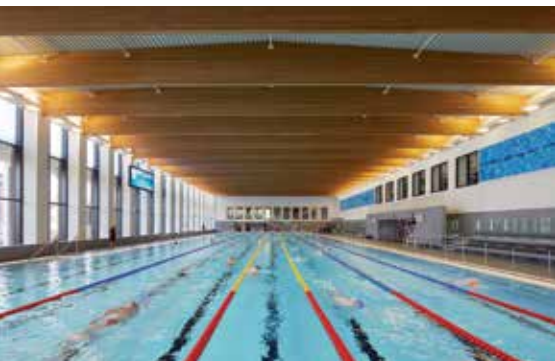
LISALOGWIG

**Hope View House, Worcestershire**  
Warren Benbow Architects for Roman and Tracey Iwanczuk

Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 351.0 m<sup>2</sup>

The quality of Hope View House is the way it concentrates appreciation of its views. Challenges included building on a hill in an area of outstanding natural beauty and the client's wish for Passivhaus standard. From below, the house reads as a long dry-stone retaining wall with a single glazed aperture – a concept that allows it to nestle into the contours. A meadow grass roof completes the impression that it is not so much 'on' as 'of' the hill. A three-sided entrance courtyard artfully conceals the view, delaying the 'reveal' until the living space. Here full-height windows draw attention to a splendid panorama. Internally this logic is followed with straightforward rigour, placing principal rooms to the south and more full-height windows. This is an impressive example of architect and client in harmony with each other and site.

Sustainability Award



HUFTON + CROW

**University of Birmingham Indoor Sports Centre**  
**Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands for University of Birmingham**  
Contract value: £35m, GIA: 13,205 m<sup>2</sup>  
Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £2,651

At a gateway site on the university's Edgbaston campus, the client's aspiration was not only for a sports centre for students and staff that was state-of-the-art but for one that would invite the local community too. Taking advantage of the sloping site, the architect has organised the large components of the brief (50m pool, multi-purpose hall, squash complex, fitness suites and a car park) in a coherent, legible layout that avoids becoming overbearing. Smaller rooms are deftly incorporated into the building's stepped section, which is used to open cross views between spaces. The building's civic role is celebrated externally with brick facades and a portico flanking the pool that marks the campus boundary and guides the visitor to the entrance. The choice of brick gives the centre an immediate sense of place, avoiding the temptation to fall back on default steel and glass. Since opening, the centre's membership from university and town has surged and is a fitting recognition of both the client's and the architect's vision.

Client of the Year

NICK HUFTON

**Mailbox, Birmingham**  
**Stanton Williams for Brockton Capital and Milligan Retail**  
Contract value: Confidential  
GIA: 18,600 m<sup>2</sup>

One of the most successful aspects of the original Mailbox conversion from postal office to mixed-use building – with offices and apartments above a retail and parking podium – was the opening of a new pedestrian route through the building. From a retail point of view, however, it performed less well, a fact attributed to the passage being open to the elements. The brief this time was to breathe life into the multi-level mall by enclosing it. As the scheme was destined for high-end shops, the client stipulated that it should feel more 'urban room' than passage. The result is a high-quality arcade with an atmosphere normally associated with art galleries. Its elegance and calm derives from a 'less is more' approach. Eschewing a free-for-all of shopfronts, the architect has imposed a unifying aesthetic that draws together walls, floors and roof with a consistent palette of creamy white stone, plaster, glass and metal, which extends to the design of fittings, signage, lighting, alarms and security cameras.



RHYS BROOKES

**The Old Court House, Worcestershire**  
**Harrison Brookes Architects for William Rucker**  
Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 462 m<sup>2</sup>

When the client bought Old Court House, it had been abandoned for decades and was on the verge of collapse. Its rescue is testimony to what can only be described as a labour of love. Dating from about 1510, the house had been reduced to its central brick chimney stack, a stone base and deteriorated oak frame. There were only limited clues to the original massing and features. The most delicate decision was how to complete the house on the side that was now absent. Working with the language and palette of materials of the restored wing, the architect has succeeded in striking a balance between new and old. The new wing provides valuable space and an opportunity for contemporary design, for example an open-plan living space. Externally, the other clue to the difference is the flush windows on the modern side and projecting bays on the other. Conservation in this case was more resurrection and reinvention than preservation.

Conservation Award



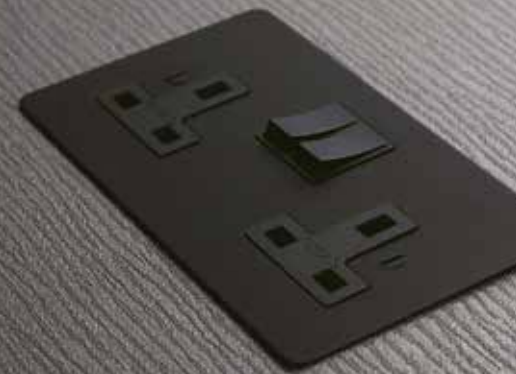
**Shropshire Residence**  
**Gregory Phillips Architects for private client**  
Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 1,535 m<sup>2</sup>

Heir to an English tradition of grand country homes, this family house reinterprets the genre in a modern idiom. The symmetrical wings of the historic manor house archetype are disassembled as four separate two-storey pavilions that extend into the landscape in pin-wheel formation from a central hall. This simple concept draws the building and its gardens together, as well as allowing each pavilion to accommodate different activities, from home gym and swimming pool in one to living-dining in another. This pattern is repeated on the upper floor where bedrooms form clusters for the master suite, children and guests. Generous balconies combine with large, opening window walls at ground level to provide plenty of outdoor access, further dissolving the boundaries between the outside and inside. Even on a grey day, the quality of daylighting inside the house and its level of openness imbue it with a quality of 'California-living' that many modern houses in England aspire to – though there are few that achieve it with such panache.

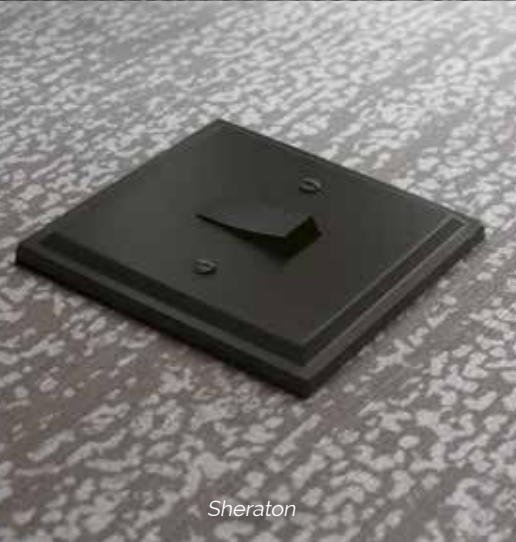
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# London



London, characterised by contradiction, hypocrisy, inconsistency, inhumanity, inequality and intense beauty, is the perfect Petri dish for deeply creative architectural responses. All this plus the inordinate pressure of people and the endless question of where to put them? We can't go up (skyline), we can't go down (water table) we can't go in between (garden-grabbing). These constraints are the life blood of architects. We may rail against injustice but it's good to feel needed.

Difficult sites also spur new types of London developer. A few years ago these were mainly taken on by boutique speculators with low overheads and maybe the odd

savvy architect. Now they are beginning to be tackled by bigger beasts, seeking to emulate the successes of the small guys. Ambitious councils are setting up arm's length development companies to look at small sites programmes, which would never have been financially viable before, and are pursuing them with idealistic, design-led gusto. Community Land Trusts are getting projects off the ground. Unusual partnerships are forming, with arts-focused developers looking to fill the void of artists' housing in the city.

We are also seeing more mainstream interest in design quality: the word 'beauty' – long derided as implicitly flighty, indulgent,

subjective, altogether too feminine for serious discussion – was even used by our (short-lived) last housing minister.

This seems to indicate a wider audience embracing design. Perhaps the idea successfully trialled by the tech businesses, that design is king, has percolated down to the construction industry. Areas traditionally dominated by specialist practices have opened up to new bidders, breathing fresh air into stale spaces, the Cinderellas of architecture: hospitals and housing. And proving that a fresh pair of eyes can sometimes outweigh decades of experience. ●

Tatiana von Preussen is director of vPPR Architects



**Victoria and Albert Museum Members' Room, South Kensington**  
**Carmody Groarke for The Victoria and Albert Museum**  
Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 530m<sup>2</sup>

The new V&A members' room creates a congenial gathering place that is connected to the entrance sequence of the museum and its gallery spaces below. Views to and from the heavily modified space are improved through a raised floor. Mirrors bring in the beauty of the surrounding courtyard buildings and the movement of people below, widening perception of the internal space and putting it at the heart of the museum's life. A balance is struck between brightness, of both light and acoustics, and a material warmth and depth from timber and leather. The smaller spaces within the members' room and the beautiful bespoke layout allow a variety of configurations for different events. The impressive travertine bar pulls this linear collection of rooms together, with detail that is suggestive of the collection housed below. The architects have skilfully expressed and magnified the importance of this social space through micro elements that achieve a macro effect. This is a work of craft, in light, that feels like it has always been there.



**Bridge Theatre, Tower Bridge**  
**Haworth Tompkins for London Theatre Company**  
Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 3,673m<sup>2</sup>

The Bridge Theatre is London's first new commercial theatre of scale for 80 years. Using innovative prefabrication techniques, the 900-1,000 seat flexible auditorium has been slotted into a shell and core space that was designed without a final use beneath a housing complex. Built off site in Norfolk, the theatre was designed, trial erected for client review and delivered to site fully integrated with ventilation, sound, lighting and AV infrastructure and architectural finishes. The auditorium materials palette is simple but warm with dark brown/black painted steel for the main structure, natural oak slats for the tier fronts, black recycled rubber flooring and rich burnt orange wool and tan leather upholstery. The design allows for multiple configurations of stage and seating. With no fly-tower the theatre has a moveable floor system which was invented and developed for the project.



**Royal Academy of Music – The Susie Sainsbury Theatre and Angela Burgess Recital Hall, Marylebone**  
**Ian Ritchie Architects for The Royal Academy of Music**

Contract value: Confidential  
 GIA: 3,159m<sup>2</sup>

This extraordinary intervention fulfils the Royal Academy of Music's desire for more accommodation within the confines of its grade I and II listed buildings. It replaces a 1970s auditorium, and adds a new one with a different ambience at rooftop level. The result has a contemporary feel that sits comfortably within its historic setting. The theatre, designed to accommodate both opera and musical theatre, provides over 300 seats, 40 per cent more than in its previous incarnation. It has a warm sensual quality, its faces lined in meticulously detailed faceted cherry wood. The additional 100-seat recital hall exploits the last major area into which the Academy could expand. Clad in Nordic blue pre-patinated copper developed for the project, it merges with the new fly tower to create a unified form that is imperceptible at street level. Lined in pale, exquisitely detailed lime washed oak inside, it is tranquil, calming and visually cool.

Joint Building of the Year



ADAM SCOTT

**Shaftesbury Theatre, West End**  
**Bennetts Associates for The Theatre of Comedy Company**

Contract value: £5m  
 GIA: 342m<sup>2</sup>, Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £14,620

To remain competitive this grade II listed Edwardian theatre needed to extend its performance capabilities. This retrofit project has added a new fly tower, which increases flying capacity from 12 to 35 tons, and houses offices and plant rooms. A new structure was interlaced within the existing building structure to carry the exceptional new load. Piles were driven 28m down while the 1,400-seat theatre remained fully operational. The fly tower is encircled by rudimentary staff offices in a stepped profile, to avoid overheating and to break down the bulk. The works have reduced the theatre's operational costs through improvements in plant efficiency and the introduction of air source heat pumps. The success of this complicated project is a reflection of the excellent relationship between client and architect, who are continuing their creative partnership on the next phase of improvements. The result of these efforts is the creation of a terrific new facility and powerful, sculpted Corten addition to the skyline of London's West End.



PETER COOK





**Victoria and Albert Museum Exhibition Road Quarter, South Kensington**  
**AL\_A for Victoria and Albert Museum**  
Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 4,501m<sup>2</sup>

Every so often an architect, site and client create a special moment in the city. The new courtyard, café, shop and gallery of the Exhibition Road Quarter is such a place. Significant alteration to a grade I listed screen opens the V&A to the Science and Natural History Museums. A constrained site is manipulated, carved and folded to overcome difficulties of topography, entry and the scale of gallery space to be provided. Surfaces roll, kink and step to create a welcoming sequence. The free-flowing architecture is at peace with the intricacies of the plan and in comfortable contrast to the buildings that hold its edges. Materials are handled with aplomb: ceramics to the court and café roof, timber floors and a carefully chosen grey in the galleries. The deep black stair is a joy.

Joint Building of the Year



**Turner's House, Twickenham**  
**Butler Hegarty Architects**  
**for Turner's House Trust**

Contract value: £1.2m  
GIA: 189m<sup>2</sup>  
Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £6,349

This quietly radical project is an extensive restoration of the diminutive villa that the artist J M W Turner had built for himself in Twickenham as a retreat from his busy London life. To a great extent, the original design of Sandycombe Lodge (1813-15) was Turner's own, although the ideas of his friend Sir John Soane can be detected in the intense entrance hall with its sequence of arches. The grade II\* listed villa had been 'at risk' until this exemplary restoration. It involved demolishing later additions, remodelling its interior and furnishing it as a museum using the inventory of Turner's London house and the artist's own sketchbooks. The architect describes the house as being returned to a 'solemn brick structure' rather than its 'polite Regency' incarnation. Such extensive remaking, including the removal of wings, would not be the usual approach for a building of this calibre. But the bold decisions are in this case justified in recreating a unique vision – and Turner's largest work.

Conservation Award



**Fitzrovia House, Fitzrovia**  
**Carmody Groarke for private client**  
Contract value: Confidential  
GIA: 512m<sup>2</sup>

A fusion of careful restoration and reductionist contemporary interventions in this grade II\* listed Regency townhouse has created an elegant family home for the art collector clients. Built in 1827, the six-storey end of terrace house forms part of the Adam brothers' only London square. The proportions and decorative qualities of the principal rooms have been carefully reinstated and the rooms then sparsely furnished in a way that not only emphasises the beauty of the original but provides a perfect setting for displaying artwork in a home environment. The subsidiary spaces to the rear have been detailed meticulously and sit within the cascading glass roofs of a four-storey atrium. Every opportunity has been taken to exploit the original within the canon of classical proportion and restrained form and detail. The outcome is a very beautiful but vital home, tailored with great dexterity to accommodate the reality of family life.

**Dartmouth Park House, Dartmouth Park**  
**AY Architects for private client**  
Contract value: Confidential  
GIA: 216m<sup>2</sup>

Beginning as a modest conversion of an over-developed Victorian terraced house, this became an ambitious redevelopment of the entire building. By reflecting the client's travels and interests, the architect has created an unusual and exotic home. A series of light airy spaces are linked by a courtyard, staircases and terrace. A spectacular 9m void contains a white-steel and mahogany staircase extending from the basement to the second floor in a series of straight flights, curves and bridges. On the street the former shopfront is discreetly painted grey, with smoked glass concealing the theatricality of the interior.





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**Caroline Place, Bayswater**

**Amin Taha + Groupwork**  
for private client

Contract value: £1.2m

GIA: 300m<sup>2</sup>, Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £4,000

If serious architecture can be fun, this is the house that proves it. In a small and unassuming shell the architect has created a flexible home on all levels; with hinged cabinetry and walk-through bathrooms, the experience of living in this carved out cave will be delightful. In its playfulness of use but also in its love of material and detail this is architecture of significant ambition. Stone is used in multiple textures underfoot and overhead and concrete is textured to match, bringing a continuous yet rich feel from top to bottom of this home. It's like living in a medieval stone workshop. Designing a home around the client's needs, the architects' love of materials and their ability to manipulate space, has delivered what can only be described as a tour de force. The intelligent humour and confidence of this building is infectious... and it makes you smile.



**Gin Distillery, Whitechapel**

**Open Practice Architecture** for private client

Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 133m<sup>2</sup>

Set in the corner of a nondescript car park off the backstreets of Whitechapel, the Gin Distillery is a wonderful example of exemplary contemporary architecture patched together with considered heritage reclamation and restoration. The taller brewery building it abuts and a rear residential elevation facing the site presented light and privacy challenges. Within the patched, repaired and part-reinstated brick shell, a series of spaces have been given a clear hierarchy and grandeur. A calm collection of simple but high-quality materials, finishes and gestures sit comfortably together, accentuating the intricacy and depth of the original material. The architect's handling of light, space, views and height is excellent. The attention to detail is evident without being overcomplicated or fussy.

TIM SOAR

LEON CHEW



**Red House, southeast London**

**31/44 Architects** for Arrant Land

Contract value: £465,000

GIA: 130m<sup>2</sup>, Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £3,577

This new-build is an assertive piece of architecture, justly confident of its place in the street without being disrespectful and sharing something of the spirit, solidity and decoration of its Victorian neighbours without artificiality. It matches the size, scale and character of surrounding two-storey dwellings while providing a split-level three-storey contemporary home. The site's unusual shape is formed by a kink in the road and the flank of an adjacent house. The architect has inventively carved out intimately angled living spaces sprinkled with small glazed courtyards, drawing light and ventilation into the low-level kitchen, dining and living areas. An exquisite, crafted home that responds elegantly to its context.

Small Project of the Year

**The Makers House, Hackney**

**Liddicoat & Goldhill** for Liddicoat & Goldhill

Contract value: £782,000

GIA: 221m<sup>2</sup>, Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £3,538

The Makers House is a new one-off house by Liddicoat Goldhill. Initiated as a speculative development, it sits in a terrace of semi-detached villas. Arranged over four levels, the upper two storeys are bedrooms while the ground floor is a split-level living space. Throughout the scheme there is a very high level of inventiveness in the bespoke detailing. Externally the building sits well in its context. The overhanging roofs are inspired by the neighbours, but extended and played out into an aesthetic of layering which the architect describes as a continuation of the 'workshop' idea of the interior. The sloping roof is generated by a rights-of-light issue but is well incorporated into the whole and does not feel like a compromise.



**VEX, north London**

**Chance de Silva & Scanner** for Stephen Chance and Wendy de Silva

Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 115m<sup>2</sup>

A small corner site on a residential street has become an experiment in architecture and sound. The music Vexations by Erik Satie, a potentially endless loop of notes, was the starting point for the collaboration between the architect and the sound artist Scanner. Its curved form reduces the volume from the street and allows it to take advantage of the views. The layout provides flexible living and work spaces. This unique house, which took eight years to complete, lovingly uses honest materials throughout. The result is uplifting.

HELENE BINET

RORY GARNINER

SIMON WATSON



**Abell and Cleland, Westminster**  
**DSDHA for Berkeley Homes**  
 Contract value: Confidential  
 GIA: 39,380 m<sup>2</sup>

These two buildings in the historic centre of London (RIBA J, April 2018) enjoy a symbiotic relationship and are a fine example of street architecture, sculpted to respond to complex constraints including stringent light requirements. It's a mature and responsive architectural embrace that holds a part of the city. Landscaping leads inhabitants in and through entrances, flowing into courtyards of plastic form and onto roof terraces. The depth and structural integrity of the facade is compelling, bringing lightness, shadow and movement to a part of the city that was once dark and oppressive; a bold yet sympathetic conversation with adjoining residents and historic fabric. The sum is a series of wonderful oases to enable joyful living in an increasingly dense part of the capital.



LUCA MISEROCCHI

TIM SOAR



**15 Clerkenwell Close**  
**Groupwork + Amin Taha Architects**  
 for 15CC

Contract value: £4.65m  
 GIA: 2,000 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £2,325

This project is an astonishing, seven storey architectural triumph located close to Clerkenwell Green in central London. It's the architect's own development of apartments, sitting on the site of an 11th century Norman Abbey, and the thoroughness and care in every inch of the project crossed the border of obsession very early in the process. The resulting building is a truly bespoke, hand-crafted work of art, but it is one that retains grace and balance. The facade is formed from limestone structural columns and beams which are set away from the building envelope and are presented in a variety of finishes: smooth, rough, drilled and straight from the quarry. A 'fallen' column with some decorative carving is symbolic of this hand-crafted workmanship of the material, richness of narrative and joy of the project. Communal elements in the development, such as a glass lift and rooftop tree and reed garden, show playful inventiveness and materials used in the apartments themselves are concrete and wood, with polished floors, exposed ceilings, and oak doors and walls, arranged like a complex puzzle.



JOHAN DEHLIN

**Black Stone Buildings, north London**  
**Ga for private client**

Contract value: £1.2m, GIA: 359 m<sup>2</sup>, Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £3,384

Seen from the street, Black Stone Buildings is an unusual and irregularly stacked block where traditional materials, such as lime, sand and ash render, have been hand-worked to reveal a slate aggregate, its black flecks giving texture to the abstract facade. Inside, a complex unfolding of spaces results in three apartments nestled tightly into this corner plot. Spatially, all three homes have interesting and complex compositions of outdoor/ indoor spaces that artfully manage privacy and bring daylight deep into the plan. They share common themes: loggias and terraces form external rooms and large sliding windows allow a diverse array of views – from sky and garden to wider vistas.

**Brentford Lock West Block E**  
**Mæ for Waterside Places**  
 Contract value: Confidential  
 GIA: 3,993 m<sup>2</sup>

This waterside scheme adjacent to historic warehouses shows an intelligent response to site and typology and unfussy attention to material. Two pavilion buildings are given direction by the sawtooth roofline and a deep east-facing loggia. This expresses an idea of canal-side living as well as a monumentality which suits the landscape. The loggia, formed of alternating brick columns in an AB rhythm, provides verticality against adjacent buildings and affords a solid and usable external amenity space for the housing units behind. At ground, the gap between pavilions provides a double-height entrance space large enough for community use. Through this outdoor area, residents can see the canal and enjoy a communal terrace, a waterside amenity space. This building's simplicity of form, robust detailing and generosity of spirit results in a bold yet sympathetic addition to the canal bank.



RORY GARDNER





**Faraday House, Battersea**  
**dRMM Architects for Battersea**  
**Power Station Development Company**  
 Contract value: Confidential  
 GIA: 7,350 m<sup>2</sup>

On a difficult site at the western edge of the Battersea Power Station masterplan, this comparatively small development gives delight in its form, material use and typological arrangement. It's defined on one side by a railway and a residential courtyard on the other. The building mass is a canyon of cantilevered boxes forming an expressive commercial route below. Units are well planned, with larger two bed units pulling morning and evening light into living spaces. There are three units per core, their location changing from north to south, responding to views to and from the river. The architectural expression externally brings a crafted feel through hand-finished copper cladding which reflects warm light into the spaces around it, giving the homes a strong identity.



**Kings Crescent Estate Phases 1 and 2, Hackney**  
**Karakusevic Carson Architects and**  
**Henley Halebrown for the London**  
**Borough of Hackney**  
 Contract value: £50m,  
 GIA: 24,800 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £2,016

Kings Crescent is a local authority-led development for new and refurbished housing on an original estate that was half-demolished in 2000. Housing that remained has been upgraded with large balconies and winter gardens and the old garages have been converted into new flats. Residents of the estate were very much engaged with the development project and were able to remain in their homes throughout the work. The masterplan allowed for new connections and permeable spaces: three courtyards with very different emphases, from contemplation to play; a gardening club; and an intelligently furnished interior 'play street'. The three new brick-clad blocks vary in height from 5-12 storeys, creating a visual family. Brick, concrete, steel and timber provide a simple palette, the brickwork containing subtle art deco detailing with timber on the balconies and in lobbies. The dual aspect entrances are light and airy, allowing views through to courtyards and shared amenities which give a sense of delight and intrigue while timber-framed shop fronts sit well at street level.

PETER LANDERS



**Gasholders Court, King's Cross**  
**WilkinsonEyre with Jonathan Tuckey Design for**  
**King's Cross Central Limited Partnership**  
 Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 14,050 m<sup>2</sup>

These three residential drums sit comfortably with the grade II listed cast-iron 1887 gasholders of King's Cross which, fully restored, remain the dominant feature on the new skyline. The architect created a fourth, theatrical, central drum-shaped courtyard where the gasholders meet. Blocks are clad in a delicate and intricate aesthetic of steel and glass panels with a veil of pierced external shutters admitting dappled light to the rooms. The interior is based on a watch design with brass linings in a polished floor, balustrade design and custom-designed door handles combining base materials with precious. A brass lining to the vertical edge of the external shutters continues this language on the facade.

**De Beauvoir Block, Dalston**  
**Henley Halebrown for The Benyon Estate**  
 Contract value: £5m, GIA: 2,495 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £2,004

This is a collaborative workplace for start-up businesses. The brief was to adapt some Edwardian industrial buildings in a conservation area. On the top floor a creative 'village' of well-designed workspaces caters for any sized business. Timber-framed units on top of the existing buildings are wrapped in EPDM rubber. Low cost and innovative, the blocks suit the original warehouse brick. Thoughtful rationalisation allows re-use of the cores and provides new, external circulation to maximise floorspace. Wide desks are used as external breakout spaces in the reconfigured central courtyard and there is a cafe/bar at ground level. The heated circulation spaces and highly insulated work spaces benefit from natural ventilation.



**Hazelhurst Court, Lewisham**  
**Levitt Bernstein for Phoenix Community Housing**  
 Contract value: £12.7m, GIA: 4,345 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £2,923

An underused site is transformed to provide 60 affordable homes with extensive communal spaces for older people. It's sensitively conjoined to an existing housing block to form a horseshoe of two courtyards, encouraging community. A fish pond, planters and benches encourage residents to relax and socialise. The housing feels very homely and welcoming and shared dining and living space has a cosy domestic scale with plenty of light and exposed cross laminated timber for interest. Homes are mostly accessed via outdoor galleries, all being dual aspect to provide ample daylight, ventilation and a connection to the courtyards and streets. Balconies are enclosed, allowing use all year.

NICK KANE

TIM CROCKERR



**Sutherland Road,  
Walthamstow**  
**Levitt Bernstein for East  
Thames Housing Group**  
Contract value: £14m  
GIA: 4,800 m<sup>2</sup>  
Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £2,917

This row of houses had to be bold and beautiful to respond to its immediate industrial context – but sensitive enough to work with the smaller, terraced, period houses behind. Landscape is crucial in unifying the scheme: a large courtyard sits between a terrace of mews houses clad in red corrugated metal opposite brick apartment blocks with distinctive, irregular saw-toothed roofs. This roofscape adds interest to the street frontage and helps break down the continual mass. All homes – whether one or two-bedroom apartments or three-bedroom mews houses – are dual aspect with truly workable spaces and considered design and composition. The quality of the external brickwork, metalwork and detailing adds to the success of this scheme. Open air stairs and cores have been integrated well behind the punctuated brick facade. This is genuinely affordable London housing which also manages to be delightful and generous in size.



**South Gardens, Southwark**  
**Maccreeor Lavington for Lendlease**  
Contract value: Confidential  
GIA: 35,841 m<sup>2</sup>

Here is the first 360 new homes of Lendlease's Elephant Park masterplan, replacing the Heygate Estate. The scheme uses three plots within the masterplan: a mix of townhouses, mansion blocks and a tower each with their own garden, terrace or balcony amid green spaces, so it feels like a small village. A range of architectural forms and typologies means each of the nine buildings has its own character. All use different brick colours, so can be read as individual while sharing some characteristics. Different designs sit happily within the streetscape, harmonising the new scheme with its context. For example, opposite an existing bay-windowed terrace is a modern take on the bay window. Charming landscaping between the buildings includes children's play equipment, a bug hotel and the customary hedges, planting beds and trees.



**Riverlight, Vauxhall**  
**Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners for  
St James Group**  
Contract value: £260m  
GIA: 69 m<sup>2</sup>, Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £3,766

As mass housing on a riverside site, this series of buildings is exceptional. The appropriately named development offers bright sunlit space both inside and out and its effortless construction gives beautiful reflection, a lightness of touch and strong colour to this important transition site on the edge of the Battersea Power Station regeneration. Six narrow blocks provide east or west facing units lining gardens and commercial squares. The landscapes give river views, making spaces punctuated with greenery and threaded with water features bringing interest and a soothing acoustic. Larger maisonettes have their own private gardens; for those who live above, the vertical circulation is brought outside the building skin, offering dynamic expansive views of the city and the river below. This singular move creates a sense of place and adds identity to the development.

**Royal Albert Wharf Phase 1, East London**  
**Maccreeor Lavington with detailed design by RMA Architects for Notting  
Hill Housing Group**  
Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 24,800 m<sup>2</sup>

This is new housing for the Albert Basin in Royal Albert Dock. The mixed-tenure scheme includes shared ownership, affordable rent, private rented-sector housing and market sale. The buildings are dressed in a rich brick cladding with different coloured glazed-brick spandrel panels and coloured precast concrete string-courses and copings identifying buildings. The materials palette is friendly and timeless. Central courtyards are of a good scale, providing views from balconies, children's play areas and greenery. Double height community spaces on the corners of the blocks provide life and activity. Attention is paid to bin stores and plant room access doors with patterned metal work. Inside, windows at the ends of communal corridors draw the eye along, giving light and a sense of location. And the homes themselves have large windows which allow light to flood into the large, useful spaces.





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BENEDICT LUXMOORE



**The Bourne Estate, Camden**  
**Matthew Lloyd Architects for London Borough of Camden**  
Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 7,338 m<sup>2</sup>

The project is an ambitious estate regeneration which does a lot right. The strategy involved the introduction of two new blocks in a form and scale that was in keeping with the original grade II listed estate layout, relocation of outdoor games area and inclusion of a resident association hall at the ground floor of one of the new blocks. Happily, the new blocks seem to complete the original 1905 layout. The quality of materials and the finish on the new blocks is high with large areas of glazed tiled facades linking to the age and character of the existing estate buildings. Tall, impressive arched entrances through the block are a reworking of the extant entrances nearby. The internal communal areas are carefully finished, with sculptural benches and double height areas. The private sale and social housing flats are spacious and bright with dual aspects and pale timber flooring.



NICK HUFTON

**Victoria Hall King's Cross**  
**Stanton Williams for Aga Khan Development Network**  
Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 9,029 m<sup>2</sup>

Victoria Halls supports cultural identity for graduate students of Aga Khan University. And the architect has set a new bar for design quality in student residences. Immaculate detailing and high quality, natural finishes convey a sense of permanence, referencing both the adobe architecture of the Middle East and the heritage of King's Cross. A recessed volume in the ground floor plinth welcomes visitors to the reception. The sequence of spaces from the timber panelled reception up to the courtyard works very well, creating the opportunities to rest, meet and dwell with other fellow students. At all times, one experiences the generosity of natural light and volume together with views across into communal areas through the large expanse of delicate glazed walls. Crafted detailing of the internal spaces combines furniture with surfaces, the bespoke carved oak benches and warm limestone floors working together beautifully.

TIM SOAR



**Upper Richmond Road, Putney**  
**Allford Hall Monaghan Morris for London Square**  
Contract value: £27.5m  
GIA: 16,000 m<sup>2</sup>  
Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £1,719

This is a fine example of how to create a place that responds to its city context, brings life to the street and offers commercial activity where suitable. The urban block as built was delivered in two phases. The architect has skilfully addressed this by the creation of a south-facing courtyard around which both blocks wrap. Circulation to the cores is sliced through the centre of the plan which is entered from hard-landscaped west-facing courtyard. A sense of place is given by an associated low-rise commercial unit which allows southern light into the space and a striking diagonal of green glazed brick that suggests entrance. The sequence of entry is both expressive and punctuated with joyful moments. The overall effect of the staggering, wrapping and slicing of space creates a lively and enjoyable civic aesthetic suggestive of a place to shop, work, live and play.



TIM SOAR

**Weston Street, Bermondsey**  
**Allford Hall Monaghan Morris for Solidspace**  
Contract value: £8m, GIA: 1,926 m<sup>2</sup>, Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £4,154

This housing scheme has eight apartments of two or three bedrooms above a ground-floor office space. The split-section, dual-aspect units are arranged in two staggered blocks. The modern homes are exquisitely crafted. Beautiful interior detailing complements expertly used materials: exposed concrete poured in sections and cast using shutters of rough-sawn Douglas fir gives a board-marked finish with timber interior linings of oak or walnut. The interlocking volumes are expressed through large L or T-shaped windows set into deep reveals on all external walls allowing plenty of light in and views out. Blinds are built into the windows, and joinery items such as bookcases and storage cupboards are also built-in. Long balconies allow the occupant to move away from the building and provide additional amenity space. It's a project with a sense of fun.



Bethnal Green Memorial

Arboreal Architecture for Stairway to Heaven Memorial Trust

Contract value: £457,000, GIA: 98m², Cost per m²: £4,663

This memorial is for the 173 people who were crushed to death during an air raid in 1943 as they rushed to gain shelter in what is now the south-east access stair to Bethnal Green Tube. It was one of the worst civilian disasters in British history, but the only memorial had been a small plaque installed in 1993. In 2006, local architect Harry Paticas noticed it and began researching. What followed was an 11-year labour of compassion, involving meeting victims' families and survivors and the emergence of the Stairway to Heaven Memorial Trust. The outcome is a striking memorial that is part sculpture, part architecture. It has intellectual rigour and a poignant justification of form based on the negative space within the stairwell where the crush occurred, lifted to one side in the neighbouring park. In the roof 173 conical holes throw light toward the stair at midday.

Project Architect of the Year – Harry Paticas



Belvue School Woodland Classrooms

Studio Weave for Belvue School

Contract value: £234,000

GIA: 93m²

Cost per m²: £2,516

Belvue School Woodland Classrooms provides 93m² of extra curriculum space for a school in west London for children with severe learning difficulties and other needs. Designed with a warm, domestic quality, the project opens up a patch of small scrubland to the children who mainly live in blocks of flats nearby. The result is a wonderful, beautifully organised building, with a temple-like quality. A central open, covered space acts as a gatehouse to the woods. Either side are two rooms: one cosy with a wood burning stove, the other fitted out as a kitchen and dining area to help students develop independent living skills. The playfulness and ingenuity of this design are apparent at every turn, epitomised by the unique weathervane on the rooftop, twisting in the wind. Every school should have a retreat like this where students can connect with nature and be themselves.

Client of the Year



Chadwick Hall, Roehampton

Henley Halebrown for University of Roehampton

Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 6,365m²

This scheme is set in the grounds of the Georgian grade II\* listed Downshire House which itself borders the LCC's Alton West Estate (also grade II\* listed). The project provides 210 en-suite student bedrooms in three new buildings. Each block employs a distinct plan type – two are villas paired around a historic sunken garden, the third a modernist pinwheel plan that lies on an axis with the sunken garden to the south of Downshire House. The scheme's success is based on being inspiring while remaining simple and it has a sensitive arrangement of blocks within the landscape. The main materials are limited to a dark red brown brick and precast concrete, with a darker red brick which relates to the listed building and yet remains subservient. The panel felt that the architect managed to create a welcoming and calm space that is a nod both to neighbouring Georgian and modernist architecture.

Charles Dickens School, Southwark

Maccreanor Lavington for London Borough of Southwark

Contract value: £7m, GIA: 2,969m²

Cost per m²: £2,358

This project is the expansion of the school to deliver another 130 pupil places while increasing outdoor play space and gifting a welcoming public forecourt. The four main aspects of the project are a generous new hall against the site boundary, a playground elevated to first floor above the new hall, a reconfigured entrance to provide level street access and the refurbishment and rationalisation of the old school building. The school now has a welcoming entrance with space for parents to sit and talk as they wait to pick up their children. The new divisible hall is a large versatile space that the whole school can fit into, and which can be rented out for community uses. The playground above feels safe and fun and contains two sheltered canopies. Shopfitters were used to equip classrooms with storage joinery quickly. Every effort was made to not affect the school routine while work took place.







Project: Trelawney House

Architect: MJS Designs Solutions Limited

Photography: Jon Reid - Arch Photography

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Grange Primary School, Bermondsey

Maccreehan Lavington for London Borough of Southwark

Contract value: £8m, GIA: 2,680 m², Cost per m²: £2,985

This project involves the addition of 105 pupil places and an improved school entrance. A dining hall, kitchens, nursery, library, offices and a new school house are located in a series of characterful pavilions on the street front, animating the street and providing a fun and friendly entrance. The combination of light stock brick and dark metal roof references the original school. The hall is a large church-like space with a picture window looking onto trees opposite the school. The new ribbon of buildings around the perimeter wrap the site like a wall, making the interior safe and protected – evidence of the great working relationship between design team and head teacher.



Hackney Town Hall, Hackney

Hawkins\Brown for London Borough of Hackney

Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 9,500m²

This was a long-term multi-phased conservation project carried out on a very well used civic building. It is more than simply a refurbishment though, as certain architectural moves have made significant improvements. The entrance sequence has been rearranged, sweeping away more recent additions, and the resulting layout is in fact an improvement on the original which was a little cramped. Two external courtyards have been covered over to create entertainment spaces, each include a metal screen to conceal services at one end. These larger moves are generally well-judged but the really impressive work is the detailing. New bespoke brass light fittings based on one existing chandelier were commissioned from the same foundry as the originals. Stone tiles sourced from same continental quarry, and new loose furniture was commissioned to match the original bespoke furniture.



Kingsgate Primary Lower School, West Hampstead

Maccreehan Lavington for London Borough of Camden

Contract value: £18m

GIA: 2,573 m², Cost per m²: £4,000

Kingsgate Primary School demonstrates a strong collaboration between architect and client to create a surprisingly generous inner-city school on a former industrial site. Set back from the street to avoid drop-off congestion, it provides new public space and connects to the neighbouring park, which was once an under-used dead-end. The distinct saw-toothed and double-pitched rooflines pay homage to the industrial past and brings excellent levels of north light into the teaching spaces, while the grand multi-use assembly hall, with its huge volume and pitched roof, references its Victorian predecessors. The flexibility of key spaces in the school for wider community use has a real chance of success. One senses the children attending this school are off to an exceptional start in education.



Ivydale Primary School, Brockley

Hawkins\Brown for London Borough of Southwark

Contract value: £8m, GIA: 2,695m²

Cost per m²: £2,968m²

This new building doubles the Ivydale's capacity to accommodate KS2 children in a four-form entry primary school. It sits near a Victorian building yet still feels part of the same school. The distinctive graphic and colour scheme on the front facade continues within. This palette is calming and welcoming, while providing students with a more 'grown up' feel as a stepping stone to secondary school. The entrance over a zebra crossing is large, secure and works well for visiting classes of 30 children from the Victorian building. They enter into a large circulation room with a staircase up to the first floor. This space doubles as another hall space for whole school assemblies with the stairs used as tiered seating.



Gasholder Park, King's Cross

Bell Phillips Architects for King's Cross Central Limited Partnership

Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 1,600m²

This is a delightful public space created within the constraints of the grade II listed gasholder in the new King's Cross quarter overlooking the Regent's Canal. It is simplicity at its best, drawing people to the area and offering a relaxing, tranquil setting in a high-density urban environment. In a decision to be applauded, the project does not compete with the dominance of the gasholder but proposes a refined, engaging design which reflects light and views of its surroundings. Restoration of the heavy cast-iron structure, coupled with the new delicately polished sculptural fins and roof, gives a captivating experience in a cloister-like walkway. The colonnade provides enclosure and openness with a variety of experiences and spaces. Inside the continuous colonnade, the grass area is raised like a 'hugging sofa' facing towards the south with views over the canal, creating an appealing bank to sit or run about on.





**Sandringham Central at Sandringham Primary School, Newham**

**Walters & Cohen Architects for London Borough of Newham**

**Contract value: Confidential. Wider project cost: £3.2m, GIA: 688.5m²**

Sandringham Central is a new building and playground providing specialist nursery, pre-school and arts spaces for Sandringham Primary School. The architect's initial analysis and feasibility work extended the scope, ambition and potential for the building. It embraces its location, echoing the form of the adjacent houses. Inside, a generous entrance area with window seating greets parents and children. The main nursery space is well proportioned with robust materials. The dance, art and music rooms upstairs are accessed via the playground, up a series of wide stepped terraces. The quality of finish is very good, and the attention to detail evident. The deliberate overlapping of nursery and primary school functions is cleverly handled. The finishes and spaces are playful with a clear consideration to children's (and teachers') senses. This project should contribute very positively to the education of many children for decades.



DENNIS GILBERT

**Marlborough Primary School, Chelsea**

**Dixon Jones for the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea**

**Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 4,905m²**

This is a school that wonderfully defines a school culture arranged around daylight interiors and external play space. Teaching areas surround places of congregation, linked to a central stair and bridge. Orientation and connections are carefully orchestrated to ensure the daily life of both teacher and student are enhanced. A series of levels and variable screens allow for different scales of event, and steps and an internal ramp offer places to rest and a dynamic experience throughout the centre of the plan. Circulation routes are kept short and active with shared learning spaces creating a happy hierarchy of places for learning with views to the outside. Long views prevent an institutionalised feel and create variety in a school day. A games area on the roof is enjoyed by other users out of hours. Readable, fresh and distinctive, this is a school that will encourage pupils to play, learn and achieve.



PAUL RIDDLE



JACK HOBHOUSE

**Salters Hall, City of London**

**De Metz Forbes Knight for The Worshipful Company of Salters**

**Contract value: £12m  
GIA: 5,230m², Cost per m²: £2,294**

The project is a restoration and extension of an extraordinary 1976 Basil Spence building in the City of London (RIBA, October 2016). Designed for The Salters, an ancient livery company, it combines bold post-war brutalism with a world of ritual and tradition. It seems like a little white concrete castle. The Salters needed to bring it back into good repair, make it economical to run, and make better use of its spaces. The care and subtlety of the restoration is remarkable, comprehensively and faithfully renewing almost everything that Spence created while making delicate incisions and additions throughout, updating and replacing all servicing, raising the EPC rating from F to B. The lettable area of the building has been significantly enlarged. A new entrance pavilion on a different side of the building has a better relationship with improved surrounding public space, restoring and extending the landscape and making links to the wider City.

**St Augustine's Church, Hammersmith, London**

**Roz Barr Architects for The Order of St Augustine**

**Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 585m²**

This project demonstrates how with simple moves and extraordinary care and attention, an otherwise unprepossessing building can be transformed, in this case into a place with a calm, ethereal quality, wholly fitting for a sacred space. Years of layers of paint and decoration were stripped from timber and masonry, with defects left exposed. This has created an almost Shaker-like aesthetic of lightness, simplicity and purity. New confession booths were formed, delicately detailed to echo the form of the internal vaulted ceilings. The floor level of the altar was raised and reconfigured. The architect's fruitful collaboration with artisans and makers permeates this project. Subtle restoration combined with beautiful and accomplished detailing, and the addition of exquisitely crafted sacred elements, has transformed a mediocre building into a place with a transcendental quality, expressed through the human effort of making simple things very special.



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## Buildings

### RIBA Regional Awards/London



HEINI SCHNEEBELI

FEILDEN FOWLES

#### Walthamstow Wetlands, London

**Witherford Watson Mann for Waltham Forest Council**

**Contract value incl extensive landscape: £4.85m**

**GIA: 738m<sup>2</sup>, Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £3,225**

The Walthamstow Wetlands cover 200 hectares of previously private reservoir land. It now very successfully links four London boroughs, opening up a beautiful expanse of land and waterscape for public recreation. The collaboration between client and architects, involving multiple stakeholders and specialist consultants, has been exemplary, exceeding the brief – which was to provide amenities and infrastructure to allow public access to the site, including two original buildings. The sensitive handling of the restoration of these historic waterworks buildings is particularly successful, combining reclaimed and new materials. The main visitor centre is in the former Engine House – now with a new swift- and bat-roost chimney – while the Victorian Coppermill Tower has been converted into a second viewing platform further along the route. The signage and wayfinding underlines the industrial past of the site. Hugely popular, it is an intelligent integration of architecture and landscape to create a new public space.



JASON ORTON



#### Waterloo Community Farm, London

**Feilden Fowles Architects for Jamie's Farm and Oasis Waterloo**

**Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 423m<sup>2</sup>**

Rus in Urbe: this project is London's most central urban farm. The wasteland site has been transformed into a collaborative home for a trio of organisations with a shared focus on education: architect Feilden Fowles and the charities Jamie's Farm and Oasis Waterloo. This collective team has created an oasis

in the bustling city. The site includes a design studio, animal pens, a classroom, planting, central yard and barn. The barn mixes the typology of agricultural architecture with CNC components to create a delightful building that can be used in multiple ways. At the other end of the site is a light and airy architecture studio within a walled garden. It is a delightful place to work and to visit. Versatile in use, all the structures are designed to be temporary and demountable. The collective cluster can potentially move to another location in the future.

HUFTON + CROW

#### University of Roehampton Library, London

**Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios for University of Roehampton**

**Contract value: £24.5m**

**GIA: 6,708 m<sup>2</sup>, Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £3,652**

The new library at the University of Roehampton is a successful civic building, part of a wider masterplan to transform the entry to the complex. The entrance takes advantage of the sloping site by creating a loggia to the east with the library café. The journey down the main staircase into the library is a joy. Cellular spaces to the west shield views of less than beautiful existing buildings while the two atria bring light into the heart of the plan, concentrating the social and architectural experience. A strong grid runs through the building with acoustics, services, structure and structural columns working effectively with the rhythm of book storage. Seating, vestibules and double height study spaces attract different user groups to the view and light. Externally these spaces aesthetically inform the geometry and depth of the facade. This library creates many joyful places within a strict and meticulously constructed architecture.



ANTHONY COLEMAN

#### Streatham and Clapham High School phases 1 and 2, London

**Cottrell and Vermeulen for The Girls' Day School Trust**

**Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 1,625m<sup>2</sup>**

At this independent day school for girls, a new sixth form centre sits within a rooftop extension over the existing main school building while a ground floor extension houses a new school entrance and dining hall. The work included internal refurbishment and landscape. The sixth form centre is a predominantly timber new structure, book-ended by common and study spaces connected by a spine of well daylit classrooms, offices, a science laboratory and service spaces. Impressive tree-like cross-columns feature within study and common rooms. Stair towers connect the centre with the rest of the school. The ground floor addition acts as a focal point in a more baroque language, enlivening the first point of contact with the school. Overall the architect has rationalised the arrangement and access, increased accommodation and made a face to the street with a skilful and playful language.



**25 Savile Row, West End****Piercy & Company for Derwent London**Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 5,700m<sup>2</sup>

This refurbishment of a 1930s office is exquisitely executed, from the first conceptual move to the finest point of detail. The primary spatial move was to cut a three-storey atrium in the middle of the plan, and to suspend within it the lightest of sculptural steel staircases. This has connected volumes of space across floors, with views through and across the whole building, creating a great sense of openness and light. Externally the white render and grid of black steel windows were reconditioned. Into this a beautifully detailed bronze framed entrance was set. An approach of bringing together cutting edge digital and traditional craftsmanship techniques has created a very beautiful building for the long term, which enriches the cityscape in which it sits in an understated way.

JACK HOBHOUSE

LUCIA MISEROCCHI

**Alex Monroe Workshop, Tower Bridge****DSDHA for Alex Monroe**

Contract value: Confidential

GIA: 200 m<sup>2</sup>

This is the second appointment by the same client to create a new studio for the jeweller near Tower Bridge. The project is the result of a successful collaboration between an enlightened client and very skilful architect. The facade is protected by a wrapping of horizontal Corten slats which recalls the composition and articulation of the surrounding streetscape, characterised by the steel security shutters pulled over shopfronts at the end of the day. However, glimpses of life and work can be clearly observed through the gaps and then the large internal windows. Internally the building is clad in timber with a simple steel staircase close to the front elevation. The new building is a delightful rough jewel, with a distinguished presence, despite a width of only 4.5 m in a wide road which does not have a very specific character.

**53 Great Suffolk Street, Borough****Hawkins\Brown for Morgan Capital Partners**Contract value: £9m, GIA: 4,000m<sup>2</sup>, Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £2,250

53 Great Suffolk Street is the sensitive refurbishment and extension of a Victorian warehouse that brings 40,000ft<sup>2</sup> of much needed workspace to Southwark. The architect has honoured the contextual materials, history and story of the building in the design. The new extension takes on the language of the existing building, reinterpreting it in a contemporary and confident manner. A palette of quality, crafted materials complements the existing building to create a rich working environment. The architect has worked hard to make the exposed mechanical and electrical services in the office ceilings as beautiful as possible. The design intention and quality of materials are carried down into the basement. Every aspect of this office building has been carefully considered, and the palette of materials enhances and complements the raw nature of the existing warehouse.

TIM CROCKER

RORY GARDINER

**St James's Market, West End****Make Architects for The Crown Estate / Oxford Properties**Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 36,399m<sup>2</sup>

The brief was to transform a poor-quality environment directly south of Piccadilly Circus into a world-class destination with high-quality offices, comprising two new office and retail buildings, one behind a retained facade. The architect has created a small public space between the existing listed building and a new office block. The opened-up space on the ground level appears as a repair to the fabric of the four narrow streets joining at the point where the open space has been created. The juxtaposition of the two buildings, together with a new square, forms a welcome addition, a destination point instead of an area which is used simply to service the buildings in the centre of London.







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**70 Wilson, City**  
**Astudio for Stanhope**  
Contract value: £21m, GIA: 7,400m<sup>2</sup>  
Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £2,838

This is a remodelling and retrofit of a 1980s office in a relatively low-rise part of the City of London. Stanhope wanted to provide desirable spaces for 21st century commercial tenants and high levels of environmental sustainability, including a BREEAM Excellent rating. Architect and client considered every element of the existing building before deciding whether to keep it – from cores to handrails. This leads to a convincing example of re-use and gives the building an intriguing character. The jolly boldness of the building's new character, the new reddish cladding, and the stacked boxes adding additional space on upper storeys, are not subtle, but nor is the street corner cluster of buildings which 70 Wilson embraces. The two restored facades make positive and different contributions to the streetscape, picking up on the colours, form and ornament of the surrounding architecture. The overall effect is joyful.



**Central Parade, Walthamstow**  
**Gort Scott for private client**  
Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 800m<sup>2</sup>

Central Parade is the conversion of a prominent 1960s office: stripping out of the interior, creating an open plan area for the cafe, bakery and 'meanwhile' office desk space plus two larger shops spaces, and four tiny plywood-clad incubator units. Polished concrete floors, exposed concrete columns and soffits provide a robust, relaxed back drop. Within the shell, a suspended black metal frame with lights hanging from it draws the eye from the exposed services beyond. A graphic stencil on the concrete floor is in keeping with the building style, and simple bespoke plywood furniture adds quality. The plywood incubator units with shop windows are particularly successful. The flexible design lends itself to transient use. The architect dealt with budget and programme constraints with aplomb, especially when you realise that a large share of the budget went on new M&E and IT. The council should be commended for its own initiative to support local people and business, rather than relying on large private sector companies.

**Knox Bhavan Studio, Peckham**  
**Knox Bhavan Architects for Simon Knox & Sasha Bhavan**  
Contract value: £300,000  
GIA: 146m<sup>2</sup>, Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £2,055

Stepping inside this former stationery shop you are greeted by a three-storey entry hall accommodating a staircase to the basement and a steel stair up to a mezzanine level meeting room. Every millimetre of space on this small rectangular site has been carefully designed so it works hard and is used effectively. The facade inspires and delights passersby – every day people gaze into the shop window (office window), stroke the fake grass outside, take photos of the facade or knock on the door to come in and see what's inside. This building opens up the profession of architecture to a wider audience. Absolutely every aspect of this office design has been thought about, exquisitely crafted and detailed. It provides daily delight to those who see it.



**Bloomberg London, City**  
**Foster + Partners for Bloomberg**  
Contract value: Confidential GIA: 66,354 m<sup>2</sup>

Occupying a whole block in the city, this large office building houses all of Bloomberg's London employees under one roof for the first time. A covered walkway is incorporated around the building's external perimeter, while a new street carves the building into two blocks connected by bridges. Internally, the process of moving through the architectural procession and up in the lifts creates a completely immersive environment. The concourse level buzzes with activity. There's a sense of Willy Wonka about the space, but it is here that the real success of the project starts to emerge. Everywhere you look there is an inventive detail. From the bespoke folded aluminium ceiling 'roses' to the magnetic floorboards. Overall the project is a tour-de-force. The multiplicity of inventions at numerous levels is carried through with such conviction that no-one could fail to be impressed by it.

**R7, Kings Cross**  
**Duggan Morris Architects with Weedon Architects for Argent**  
Contract value: £70.2m, GIA: 22,295m<sup>2</sup>, Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £3,149

Sitting as the colourful backdrop to the Granary Building in the King's Cross regeneration programme is R7 – the next generation of workplace. It breaks down the massing through a series of set-backs and recesses that create south-facing terraces or gardens on each level, which benefit from views across the city. Two distinct shades of satin pink to the metal-finned facade split the block in two, with one being grounded by an exposed concrete colonnade. Everything on this building feels bespoke and colour-matched to the 'pink' facade, from the suspended lights in the colonnade to the paved flags on the terraces. It is a testament to the architect's attention to detail and drive to make this project something very special and original.





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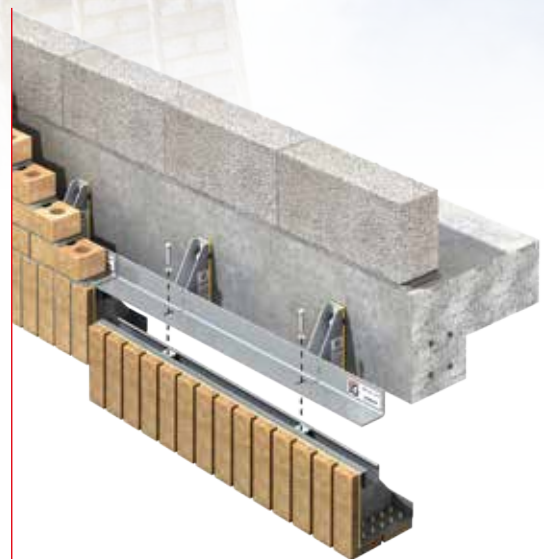
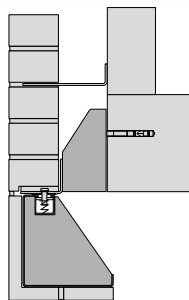
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**The Leadenhall Building, City**  
**Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners for British Land**  
 Contract value: £340m, GIA: 84,424m<sup>2</sup>  
 Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £4,027

This new 50-storey skyscraper in the City of London is already famous for its slanted 'cheesegrater' form which responds to British Land's desire to be able to offer its own diverse clients office spaces of different floor areas (diminishing as the building rises) and the demand from planners to preserve key historic views of St Paul's Cathedral, particularly from Fleet Street. It is one of the more striking and elegant towers to have been added to the City's jumbled skyline in recent years. Instead of a central core, the building has a full perimeter braced tube, which is visible as a giant bold steel exoskeleton on three sides, giving a visceral sense of the building's balancing act. The front facade glazes this over in a huge straight slick shimmering sweep from floor to sky, creating a dramatic contrast.

**The Department Store, Brixton**  
**Squire and Partners for Squire and Partners**  
 Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 6,147m<sup>2</sup>

This project took an unoccupied and dilapidated former department store from 1906, and reimagined the buildings to create a series of inspiring work and social spaces for a multi-disciplinary architecture and design practice. The brief included a series of units for new and existing local businesses, including a community Post Office, coffee roastery, vinyl record store, delicatessen and bar/restaurant. The architecture model-making space on the ground floor provides a 'museum of curiosity' type shop window, providing inspiration to passers-by who peer inside to see the display of what architects do and how they work. This project has a sense of fun mixed with its honouring of history which brings delights to those who step inside.



**The Sekforde, Clerkenwell**  
**Chris Dyson Architects for private client**  
 Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 480m<sup>2</sup>

This is the careful restoration of a historic pub, and the introduction of a new-build three-storey building in its yard to house a guest lodging plus kitchen and administrative rooms connected to the pub. The new three storey building is a contemporary interpretation of Georgian architecture. Traditional materials and methods mean it sits comfortably next to the old pub, separated by a dramatic glazed slot, while the crisp simplicity of the form, hard edge parapets and deep reveals are unashamedly contemporary. It succeeds in being a sustainable pub that will engage and serve locals for years to come.

London Sustainability Award



**White Collar Factory, Shoreditch**  
**Allford Hall Monaghan Morris for Derwent London**  
 Contract value: Confidential, GIA: 27,220m<sup>2</sup>

Following research by architect and client into why tenants often prefer refurbished Victorian industrial buildings to new-builds, the White Collar Factory is a new-build reinvention of a refurbished office typology. The outcome is an exemplary development full of quality materials, finishes, details and playfulness; alongside public and community-spirited generosity, innovation and experimentation (plus lots of lovely concrete). Six buildings surround a public space including the retention and refurbishment of two corner buildings that help embed the development into the existing context. The buildings house offices, studios, incubator space, restaurants and apartments. The ambition and level of innovation of the brief and concept development is high.

**No 1 New Oxford Street, West End**  
**Orms for TH Real Estate**  
 Contract value: £41m  
 GIA: 10,000 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £4,100

This central London scheme is a handsome refurbishment of a 1930s triangular plan building, with major alterations and extensions made in the spirit of the original building. The architect very carefully researched the original design and attuned its proposals to the aesthetic of the art deco of the period – in a dynamic contemporary way. The top two floors of the building have been rebuilt and a ninth floor added. It is impossible to see any differentiation between the old and new aspects, as the whole facade has been meticulously tinted to match; and the new stonework has been stitched in with great care. Throughout the project the architect, in deference to the original spirit of the building and in keeping with the care with which it has approached the renovation, has gone far beyond what would normally be expected of a design for a commercial redevelopment.





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# Golden rules to follow when calculating U-values for inverted flat roofs

It's a complicated area but one that is essential to get right. Dow looks at the pitfalls and offers some guidance



With increasing focus on the realised energy performance of buildings, rather than just the designed performance, the robustness of U-value calculations is of paramount importance in ensuring that a beautifully sculpted structure performs as well in reality as it did in computer models.

The importance of U-values to long-term energy performance means there is an array of tools to assist with calculations, making the task fast and relatively simple. Undoubtedly, anything that helps make a job easier is to be welcomed. However, it

is crucial that we do not overlook some of the unique aspects of inverted flat roofs, which could potentially lead to misleading calculations. Even with the most sophisticated suite of tools at our disposal, we will get unreliable and unrepresentative figures if the information input is incorrect.

## Location, location, location

The location of a building obviously affects energy performance – we all know that two identical buildings, with identical U-values, built in different climates would produce

## Above

34000sqm of XENERGY™ SL and XENERGY™ MK by Dow is being used at Royal Wharf in London. It is the single largest project that Dow has worked on in the UK





Approximately 90 percent of the thermal contribution to an inverted roof's U-value comes from the thermal insulation.

dramatically different results. But might the U-value calculation itself be affected by these factors? For example, differing rainfall levels have an impact on the rainwater cooling effect.

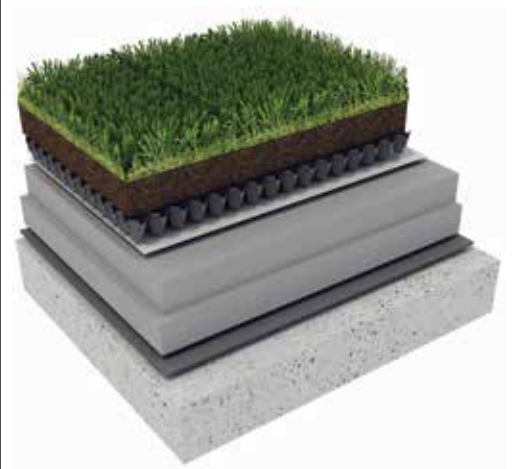
Placing insulation above the waterproofing layer during inverted flat roof construction, rather than below it, as in traditional warm roof construction, provides many advantages. However, it also introduces rainwater cooling as an additional heat loss mechanism. Heat is removed from the building fabric as the water flows beneath the insulation boards on the roof and down a drainage outlet.

Rainfall can vary by as much as five times from the driest to the wettest locations in the UK. This has a considerable impact on the rainwater cooling effect seen in inverted flat roofs.

As the volume of rainfall increases, so does the amount of heat that is removed from the building. Therefore, a correction (Delta U) needs to be factored into the U-value calculation to account for the differing effect of the average rainfall in a building's location and the subsequent percentage of that rainfall that reaches the roof's waterproofing layer. The method for calculation to account for rainwater cooling is specified in BS EN ISO 6946:2007.

European Technical Approval Guideline (ETAG) 031-1 stipulates that 75 percent of rainwater can be assumed to flow underneath edge-profiled interlocking boards for calculation purposes. This is obviously a substantial proportion of the total rainfall. However, water flow can typically be reduced to around five percent with the addition of a water control layer - not to be confused with the waterproofing layer - on top of the insulation and beneath the ballast. This significantly reduces the penalty (Delta U) otherwise calculated.

Delta U becomes increasingly important



**Top Right:** Inverted roof buildup with paving or aggregate ballast using XENERGY™ SL and XENERGY™ MK by Dow

**Above:** Inverted green roof buildup using XENERGY™ SL and XENERGY™ MK by Dow



**Above** XENERGY™ MK by Dow is used as a water control layer to reduce the rainwater cooling effect

**Above right** Drainage outlets removes the water that flows underneath XENERGY™ SL by Dow insulation boards

as U-values become smaller. It is particularly important for the low U-values that can be achieved today using leading XPS products like Dow XENERGY™ SL.

#### **Accounting for difference between design and declared lambda**

The thermal conductivity of all insulation products has an intrinsic degree of variability, which is accounted for through statistical analysis of European Products Standards thermal test results, providing a reliable and consistent approach. The ageing of materials is also considered, adding to the robustness of thermal conductivities used in subsequent calculations; the 'declared' lambda value. BS EN 13164 specifies the process for generating the 'declared' lambda of extruded polystyrene (XPS) insulation such as Dow XENERGY™ SL.

The declared lambda value is sometimes

referred to as the 90/90 value – ie 90 percent of production achieves the quoted conductivity value with a 90 percent confidence level. Architects frequently use declared (90/90) values as a design value as they factor in performance over an expected 25-year lifespan.

However, additional correcting factors need to be incorporated into the calculation of the declared (90/90) value for inverted flat roofs, accounting for the unique end use conditions. This entails an assessment of each of the individual materials comprising the construction element, based on their thermal resistance, which can be derived from their thermal conductivity and thickness.

Approximately 90 percent of the thermal contribution to an inverted roof's U-value comes from the thermal insulation.

Diffusion and freeze/thaw rates are used

to determine possible water absorption over time as specified by ETAG 031-1. These two particular mechanisms are used because the efficiency of thermal insulation is affected by the amount of moisture it contains, meaning correction factors cannot be calculated until moisture levels have been determined, as outlined by BS EN ISO 10456.

The design lambda is calculated by adding the inverted roof correcting factors to the declared lambda value, necessitating an increase in the thickness of insulation required to achieve the desired U-value. Failing to account for these factors can lead to a significant underestimate of the amount of insulation required to meet the specification.

Manufacturers of proprietary materials should be able to provide accurate information for the calculation. In lieu of guidance from manufacturers, it may





be acceptable to use generic information for the materials. Regardless of the approach, confusion about the thermal conductivity value used for the thermal insulation material must be avoided as an overwhelming majority of the total thermal resistance that contributes to the final U-value is down to the thermal insulation layer.

#### **Roof build up and potential condensation effects**

On inverted flat roofs the fact that the waterproofing layer is on the warm side of the insulation boards reduces the possibility of interstitial condensation, as it acts as an efficient vapour control layer. The risk of surface condensation is also relatively low because the boards maintain the roof's waterproofing close to the building's internal temperature.

While the risk of condensation is

Rainwater cooling condensation is a phenomenon that can happen both in the summer and winter months.

considerably reduced it has not been eliminated, and the potential for other physical mechanisms to contribute needs to be considered. Sudden drops in temperature, causing condensation, can be the result of the rainwater cooling effect, where rainwater flowing beneath the insulation boards removes heat from the roof structure.

Rainwater cooling condensation is a phenomenon that can happen both in the summer and winter months.

The significant thermal inertia of concrete decks is at minimal risk of interstitial or surface condensation because of the duration and extent of deck cooling. The same cannot be said for lightweight decks which, without adequate mitigation measures, face significant risks.

Design constraints may prompt architects to contemplate placing some insulation below the deck within the ceiling void, diverging slightly from the inverted flat roof concept where all the insulation is above the waterproofing layer. Without adequate care, the resulting increase in thermal resistance below the waterproofing layer increases the risk of condensation forming.

It is widely recognised that effective inverted flat roof designs require that the lion's share of the insulation must be placed on the exterior of the building above the waterproofing layer. It is also incredibly difficult to identify the tipping point where condensation effects will emerge. Ventilation of the insulation layer within the building cannot offset the increased risk as it would render the roof insulation

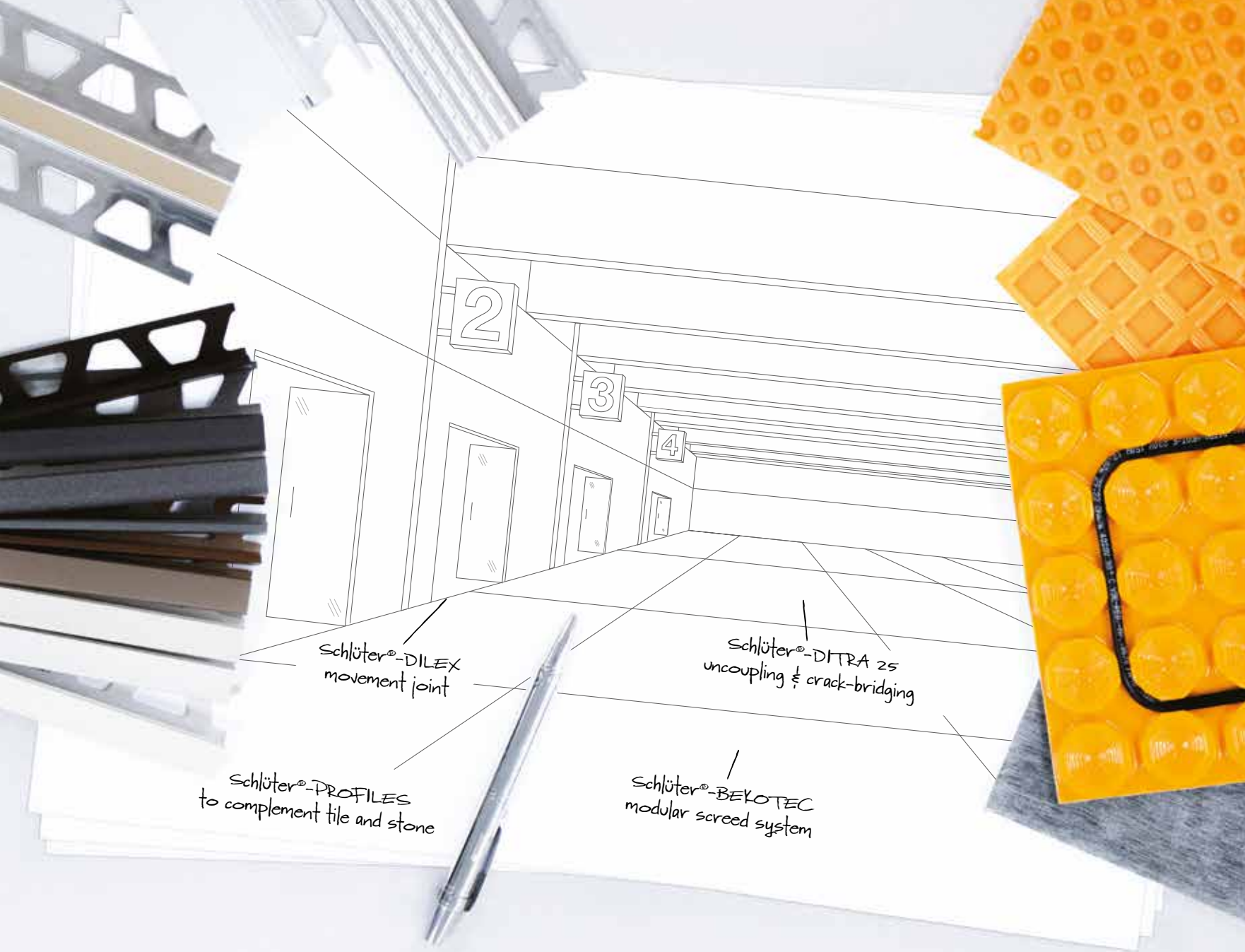
#### **HELP IS AT HAND**

There is more than meets the eye when calculating U-values for inverted flat roof systems. However, guidance is available to help ensure we all get it right – and to help protect the reputation of the building industry as a whole.

For assistance with making or reviewing U-value calculations for inverted flat roofs, and information on relevant correction factors, contact Dow Building Solutions' technical helpdesk.



For more information contact Dow Building Solutions technical helpdesk:  
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## Frida Escobedo



This year's  
Serpentine Pavilion  
designer, based  
in Mexico City,  
explains how she  
learned to build fast.  
The pavilion opens  
on 15 June.

**Tell us about  
Mexico's  
architectural spirit**

**What do you mean by  
primitive?**

**Is the new  
architecture  
brought about by  
social change?**

**Tell us about you**

**Explain your  
Serpentine Pavilion  
design**

**Why do Mexicans like  
courtyards?**

**What else you are  
working on?**

**What distinguishes  
your architecture?**

It is a centralised country but there are many voices. A new architecture is emerging that is raw and primitive.

It might not be the best word, but in the sense of referencing the past; certain geometries and materiality. Mexico City is in a constant state of unfinish. Architects can't rely on expensive materials.

Yes. The emphasis is on more with less and to ensure buildings age well. It is about taking responsibility for public money, not something that usually happens in Mexico. The political context is very fluid. Architects need to build quickly because changes of administration cause live projects to stop. Oaxaca Cultural Centre is an example of that strategy – simple form, one material, completed on time.

I didn't have a relationship with architecture before my studies. The practice started out through a collaboration with Alejandro Alarcón, who got a commission to extend his mother's house, then his grandmother's and a friend's. Before I knew it, I'd been practising for seven years. You need to move in different ways to in Europe. You learn early on that the spectrum of architecture includes research.

Pavilions are a condensed form of experience. The idea of it being in the park and then sold was an interesting problem. Hence the design is not materially contextual – roof tiles are universal. Another aspect was the idea of a public space within a public space, like a Russian doll. The courtyard concept came from Mexico.

Mexicans have a complex relationship with public persona – a duality. They are warm and social but also closed. Families are tightknit. The courtyard is introspective and at heart of the intimate space. I recommend The Labyrinth of Solitude by Octavio Paz.

We are very busy, with nine people working on 13 projects such as hotels, housing and a cabin. We are also doing a research project about contemporary ruin and a sculpture for the Jardin des plantes d'Orléans, France.

If anything, we don't treat art, design and architecture as different things – they are all spatial practices.

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**Stephen Cousins on  
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# Shape up or die

Realistic self-assessment of our role and the reunion of practice and academia is our only salvation

Piers Taylor

For much of the construction industry, architects have become dispensable and marginalised to the point of becoming little more than mere self-aggrandizing stylists for a few trophy buildings. Not only are we thought of as petulant dandies who add cost and complexity, we are also considered unaffordable.

Is it any wonder we've become semi-irrelevant to the general public, developers, governments and the construction teams that we used to lead? Architects presume their worth is evident to everyone, and yet, as Flora Samuel demonstrates in her new book *Why Architects Matter*, not only do many non-architects not even know what we do, but we are very bad at presenting the case for why we are useful – let alone essential.

## Do carpenters matter?

In many ways it is tragic that a book of this bald title had to be conceived and written at all. It is impossible to imagine a book titled 'Why Doctors Matter', or even 'Why Carpenters Matter'. We know we need them and the arguments for their existence are obvious.

While we've always been a profession in crisis, we're now in a new, special crisis of our own making. Samuel sets out that, for the most part, we are responsible for our own downfall, being not only incapable of demonstrating why our skills and knowledge are essential but also being unclear what our skills and knowledge are. The problem, in many ways, is that we are fixated on the wrong things: time and again, when asked to justify our existence, we call on aesthetic codes.



Yet, as Samuel shows, most people – including the other highly skilled professionals within our teams – do not share the same aesthetic values, or even understand our language, which Samuel describes as 'unintelligible' to most of them. Instead of hearing this and attempting to reconcile the gulf between us and others who commission architects or work with us in design teams, we retreat further into our world. We seek solace among other architects and in the architectural media which we still feel reflects our values. We care more about what our peers think of us than non-architects, making us, as Jeremy Till says, 'increasingly irrelevant and ultimately irresponsible.'

We are simply not good at explaining why what we do matters – and of course this is hindered by not being sure about what we do in the first place. In addition, Samuel argues that our self image is delusional and still propped up by our identification with the unreconstructed, totalitarian, swashbuckling alpha male heroic role models, personified

by Howard Roark, our beloved modernists – Corb, Mies – and other globe-trotting neo-liberal greats – Foster, Rogers, Koolhaas.

## Reflection leads to redemption

There is salvation, however. Much of the book shows a path to redemption if we're prepared to be a little more self reflective as a body, and stop trying to convert the naysayers. Samuel suggests that to be a 'profession' is to profess custody of a body of knowledge, and, in making the case for architects, she begins by reminding us what it is we know. She goes on to make the case for what we might do with that knowledge. She argues that while architects are 'socio-spatial problem solvers, integrators of complex bodies of information and masters in space-craft' and work in knowledge-based organisations, 'knowledge' is not a word many architects feel very comfortable with as a way of describing the essence of our professional discipline.

Samuel suggests that we need to strategically re-frame our knowledge and skills for





**Left** Learning a craft and a profession, with all the knowledge that entails, at the Architectural Association's Hooke Park Big Shed.

the 21st century. One of our main problems is that we identify with the 'wrong' body of knowledge, which is a 'pantheon edifice of instruction, moral code, does and don'ts, through which architecture as an academy is established'. Salvation is ours, she says, if we are prepared to destroy the mythology of the architect as a 'visionary' and focus on more normative forms of research and knowledge generation and concentrate on how to make architecture appropriate to its environment.

At its heart, this is an evidence-based approach to design – something of a sea change for architects, who are instinct-led generalists. A researcher herself, Samuel's key argument is that design research is the most effective way to improve, and share, our knowledge. First, however, we need more research to discover how to do architectural research better. This is a process of 'systematic and original investigation undertaken in order to gain knowledge and understanding and de-risk innovation', which is then widely disseminated. In the UK, we usually con-

sider 'research' to have a technical focus, but Samuel demonstrates that the European understanding encompasses artistic, scientific, social and business issues. This makes sense, as the built environment is an interdisciplinary problem, and Samuel makes the case for sociologists, economists, geographers, city planners and architects to retreat from our individual conceptual worlds and create more interdisciplinary connections.

#### **Practice and academia**

Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios is a good example of a practice fully engaged in research (environmental) and I would argue that its own research in this field has allowed it to add value to projects. Research should be not a sample board but a specialism that is disseminated – and in the case of practice applied in a building which then adds value.

Next, in addition to working more collaboratively, we need to restore links between academia and practice so practice can understand, and be part of, a research culture. Never have they been more disconnected, writes Samuel, for now there is something of a cultural chasm between the two. The best method of research for practitioners is within practice, and there is significant funding available for practice-based research (although as this is European funding, it may disappear). Many architects are sceptical about the need to carry out research to provide evidence for their worth which they feel to be 'common sense', but as Samuel shows, architects' views of what forms common sense differs greatly from others. Research can help us state what we know more effectively

Salvation is ours – if we are prepared to destroy the mythology of the architect as a 'visionary'

and, critically, help in stating our value.

Samuel reminds us architects that we generate far more value than we capture. She describes how architects work in a knowledge-based service sector, creating boundary objects (imaginings of the future expressed materially) in the form of models, drawings, reports, events and experience that facilitate organisational learning and the transfer of knowledge. If we can evidence our value in a manner that the world understands, writes Samuel, it – and protection of title – become non-issues. If a large procedural part of what we do may become robotised or hived off by apps or other professionals looking for a slice of the construction pie, we are potentially saved by our ability to empathise.

#### **Worth the effort**

My hunch is that many architects will have to work at this, but if we become more empathetic we will be free to update our ideals and ethics and, via research in practice and stronger links between practice and academia, reshape our knowledge and problem-solving skills to think about future expert-systems and the development of the built environment in the long term. While that may seem a tall order, Samuel's fundamental point to architects is that we have no choice: we must shape up and reformulate or die out. Meanwhile, eager to plan for the future, I'm off to change my business card from mere 'architect' to 'socio-spatial problem solver and master in space-craft'. ●

Piers Taylor is an architect and founder of Invisible Studio. He is researching Designing through Making with Flora Samuel



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# It pays to show social commitment

The social value your practice can offer will enhance your chance of winning public work – and could reap benefits in meeting the skills shortage

**Matt Thompson**

Since 2013 public bodies have had a statutory duty to squeeze extra value from suppliers of goods, works and services – including architects – under the Public Services (Social Value) Act. Bidders on public tenders must demonstrate how they will improve the social, environmental and economic wellbeing of the local area.

The Act requires local authorities to demand more benefits from suppliers in return for taxpayers' money. Getting more for less has been the mantra since 2007, and so anything that makes it easier to negotiate better value for the communities local authorities serve is good news. While the Act underpins the information asked for in planning applications and frames Section 106 agreements, it often goes further. At Westminster City Council, for example, the social value element in tender documents can account for up to 10 per cent of the final score.

Convincing evidence takes the form of future commitments backed up by past performance, sometimes for things that might only benefit the project indirectly, if at all. For example, Hawkins\Brown Architects is involved in numerous local charities including the Centrepoint Sleep Out, and does more than its fair bit when it comes to offering work experience and visiting schools.

Put bluntly, this does nothing to improve the quality of the project. Looked at in the round, though, and you might say that it improves the background conditions that support architects generally, a kind of kar-



mic hedging bet against future skills shortages. For Roger Hawkins, founding partner at Hawkins\Brown, it's all about the people who will use and be affected by the buildings they design. 'We engage with people at every level. If I hear a member of staff referring to a project as "mine", it's a yellow card. It's never "my" building – it's the client's building for other people to enjoy and use.'

On the supply side, deploying the Act has served as a lens for big businesses' corporate social responsibility efforts. While the public pressure to be seen to be ethical and invested in the circular economy has been around for a long time, the Act gave it a focus that until

For over 10 years, Centrepoint supporters have been swapping their beds for sleeping bags in Sleep Out, an event to raise money for and awareness of homeless young people. Hawkins\Brown says it believes in the significance of architecture as an agent of social change, and has raised up to £10,000 for Sleep Out since 2016.

then had been missing. The threat of losing out on plentiful public contracts has been enough to shift the market towards more responsible practice. Put another way, 'doing' more social value gives you a competitive advantage.

For architectural firms, however, especially smaller or micro-businesses, the Act is a bit of a head-scratcher. Adding social value is the very essence of architects' constitution, a fundamental pillar of the pact that affords them their professional status in society. As Robert Wilson, director at small practice Granit Architects, puts it, 'We'd like to think that everything we do has social value. I can't imagine us ever looking at a scheme without thinking, "How does this improve the larger picture?"' That being so, the request to demonstrate how you add social value is like asking a confectioner to demonstrate that she makes sweets. Bewildering.

### Boosting opportunities

A recent breakfast seminar organised by David Miller Architects (DMA) and Westminster Business Council, and sponsored by Landsec, explored the issue. With particular emphasis on boosting training and employment opportunities for young and disadvantaged people, the event brought together a high-calibre cross-sectoral panel of experts from the worlds of property, construction, architecture, education and the third sector to share their experiences.

Its theme blurred the process of demonstrating social value on the one hand and encouraging a larger number of people into the construction industry on the other, to the point where the two seemed synonymous. While this is not necessarily wrong, it is not the whole picture.

Social value has many other facets – for example, improving social amenity, air quality and access to water and trees, and



The MacEwen Award New Wortley Community Centre in Leeds demonstrates clear social value in its delivery, providing a home for drugs rehabilitation, IT and skills classes and ex-offenders programme. How can architects embed these sort of positive outcomes into every day practice so that it is recognised by clients?

reducing crime and fuel poverty.

Nonetheless, the theme could hardly be more relevant to architects wanting to work on public contracts. Slotting neatly alongside the RIBA's new core curriculum topic, Architecture for Social Purpose, and the Architecture Trailblazer Group's efforts to formulate an apprenticeship route to professional qualification, it connects the dots back to the quest for diversity and gender equality. And with the construction sector facing a labour and skills crisis at all levels, the business imperative is clear cut.

Caspar Rodgers' London-based micro practice Alma-nac is one of those that wants to work on public contracts. He and his colleagues are very focused on social value as a goal, linking up with community groups on bids whenever they can. However, they appear not, as he puts it, to be 'firing on all cylinders' when it comes to how they measure and communicate their activities. 'How do you articulate something that is non-quantifiable in a way that is concise, authoritative and believable? What's to differentiate it from the slick of snake oil out there?'

DMA's practice manager Fiona Clark has some answers. Speaking from experience that dates back to 2012 when the Public Procurement (Social Value) Act was published, DMA is living proof that CSR is not just for the big boys. As she says, 'There are no barriers to getting involved in creating social value. It need not be a drain on resources.'

This is truer now than it has ever been. Clark name-checks non-profit organisation

Heart of the City, which offers free advice, tools, resources and mentorship to SMEs grappling with how to capture and communicate social value. She also mentions the CIOB's industry partnership Supply Chain School, which offers free training to suppliers to contractors and Tier 1 clients.

DMA set up its strategy before the advent of this kind of comprehensive help. Impressively for a practice with only 20 employees, it has provided at least 16 week-long work experience placements a year to school students since 2014, and last year participated in British Science Week, leading schoolchildren in the design of an office space.

Clark believes the strategy has reaped tangible commercial dividends. Six work experience students have joined full-time, saving the practice recruitment time and cost. Less obviously, junior employees take the work experience students – all digital natives – under their wing, learning valuable skills in the process.

'It's a brilliant way to get them to develop their own management abilities: setting deadlines, giving clear briefs, looking after the students' welfare, teaching them things, all in a very safe environment,' she says. And of course, recording, measuring and communicating the outcomes gives them a distinct advantage when bidding for publicly funded work.

Architects already contribute hugely to the circular economy. Their designs add commercial value for their clients and untold social value to the communities they sit in. And that's the problem: until they quantify their social value and can shake these contributions out like so many bonbons from the confectioner's jar, their efforts will remain unrecognised, and they will lose work to those who can. For the good of not only themselves and the profession, but for all of society, it's time to put that right. ●

### WHAT IS CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY?

It can involve a range of activities such as:

- Working in partnership with local communities
- Socially responsible investment (SRI)
- Developing relationships with employees and customers
- Environmental protection and sustainability

Source: University of Edinburgh

How do you articulate something that is non-quantifiable in a way that is concise, authoritative and believable?





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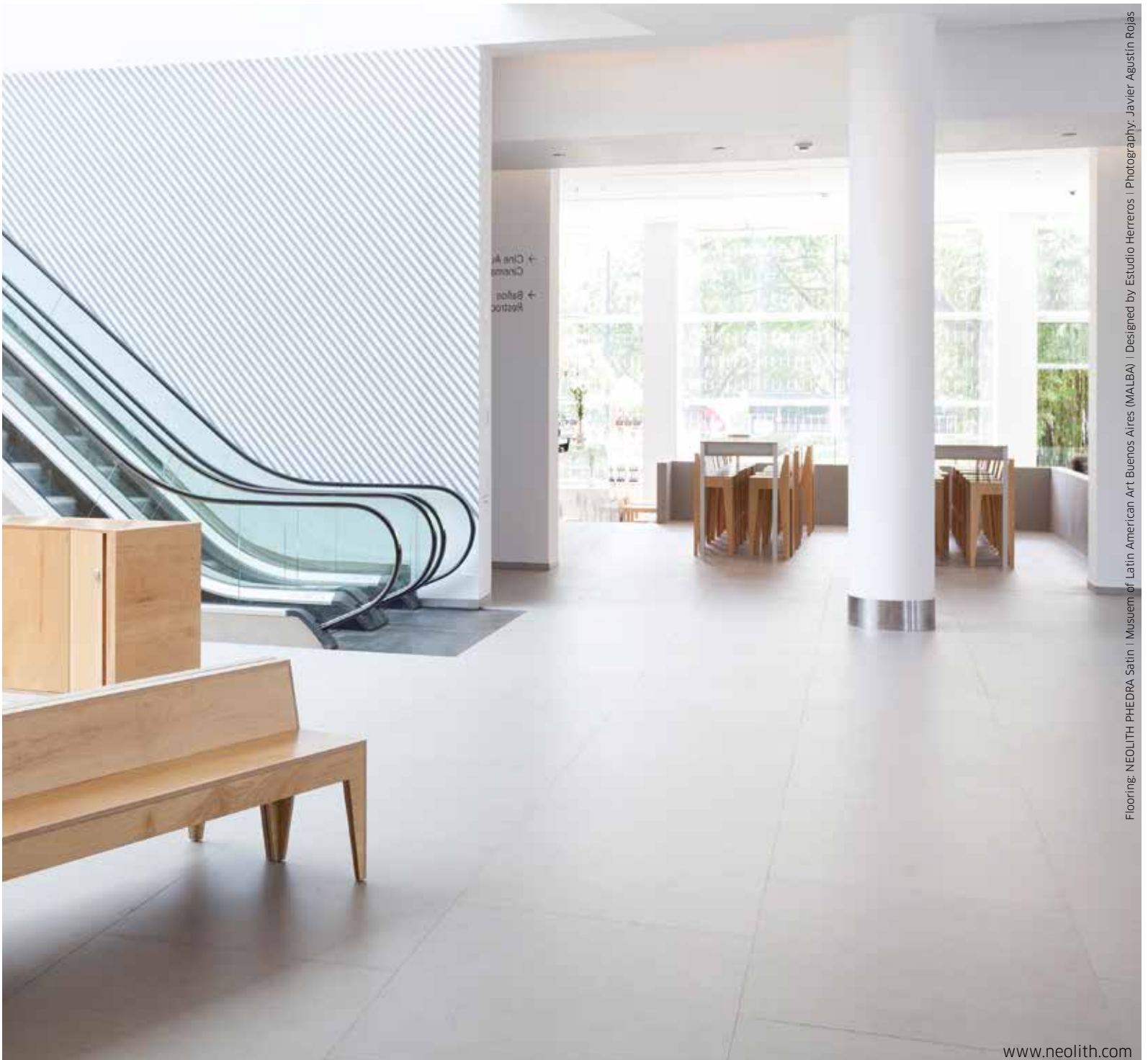
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# Let's solve the real housing crisis

The short design lives of new builds combined with a lack of love for post-war homes will see the housing shortage becoming far, far worse says Paul Bulkeley

How long do you think your house was designed to last? Let me put it another way. When do you think your house will be demolished? Houses generally get replaced when it is cheaper to replace them than it is to maintain them or when more money can be made by knocking them down.

Would you knock your house down if the roof finish or kitchen needed replacing? Probably not. What about when it no longer meets your requirements? It's likely you would move or extend, borrowing against the value of your home. But what if the kitchen, carpets, decoration and heating, roof and facade all needed replacing at the same time? It would not make economic sense to keep it, particularly with VAT pushing up any repair bill. You might well consider knocking

it down – a developer certainly would. The only thing stopping you would be how much you love your (probably old) house.

As an industry, we are not solving a housing crisis, we are creating one. The true crisis is that our houses are not being built to last. Their construction is defined by speed, cost cutting and skin-deep branding. It is not that houses necessarily need to be built to last: where I grew up in the Congo, you and your neighbours could build a house over a long weekend. It was a basic mud hut, fit for purpose, cost next to nothing and was cheap to maintain. You might need to build yourself a new one every 15 years but that required very limited resources, so no problem. The rate of production easily kept up with the rate of replacement.

In the UK things are very different. Our houses often take over two years to build, including the full development process; they cost around 30 per cent of our lifetime income and take 30 per cent of our life to pay off. For these reasons the UK needs houses that will last.

Let's look at the big picture. There are approximately 25 million houses in England. Since the 1950s we have been adding on average 220,000 houses to the housing stock annually, and in 2016/17 we build 227,000, including 37,000 conversions, largely under prior approval. House building peaked at 350,000 homes annually in the mid 1930s and 1960s. It has been estimated that 240,000 houses are needed each year for the increasing number of new households. Critically, this figure excludes any reductions in

Even if only 10,000 houses are year are demolished, it would take 2,500 years to replace the housing stock

the housing stock. In addition to catering for new households we need new homes to replace those that are demolished. How many more houses might that add to the figures?

There is very limited data and no apparent consensus on the rate of demolition and what that demands in terms of a rate of replacement. In the past, during times of slum clearance it has been as high as 100,000 a year. Records suggest that around 21,000 houses were removed from the stock annually in the 1980s and since 2006/07 this has been steadily falling from 22,000 to just under 10,000 in 2016/17. This is an historic low but the removal rate is likely to accelerate as 'young' housing stock – the 50 per cent of our homes built in the past 50 years – ages.

If we assume that only 10,000 houses a year are demolished, as they are now, we would need a replacement rate of 0.04 per cent of the total housing. On this basis it would take 2,500 years to replace all of our current housing stock. Few houses will last this long. As the oldest houses in Britain are little more than 500 years old and limited in number this seems a ludicrously low figure to assume in perpetuity. Over 75 per cent of the housing stock is now well over 50 years old. But these long lifespans don't predict what will happen to more modern buildings. Historic homes, often of masonry construction, are buildings that survived. In Britain, we love our period properties so we care for them and they last. Can the same be said of more recent homes?

Historic rates of replacement are a poor guide to the future. Most demolitions today

Will our modern housing stock last?



ISTOCKURBANCOW



**Above** Coates House, Nailsea, as an office block, and redesigned by Snug Architects with 55 flats (**right**).



are of post-war homes. The simple truth is this: when we don't love where we live its life expectancy drops dramatically. Modern methods of construction don't come with 2,500-year warranties. We are not even looking at a century's lifespan. Today we build for speed. We too often build with materials that only have a 15-20 year manufacturer's warranty, and all them will need to be replaced at roughly the same time. In many cases it will make more economic sense to start again, not least if there is a shortage of land and little love for the house itself.

This may sound like good news for architects like us who specialise in housing, and very good news for our developer clients, but it is not sustainable and wouldn't be even if it were economically viable. The challenge is that the vast majority of our current housing stock was built post war. That is 15 million homes that are less robust and less loved than our historic housing stock. If, instead of assuming our houses will last for 2,500 years, we assume a more realistic 200 years, the required rate of replacement increases to 0.5 per cent. This would demand an additional 125,000 houses a year on the housing target – half again on top of current projections. In the worst case scenario the unloved post-war home's chance of being demolished demands a replacement rate of 1 per cent or 250,000 houses a year. That would more than double current targets.

And this is still not the true measure of the crisis. What if it turns out that today we are constructing buildings with even shorter lifespans? When all warranties expire and modern houses need many essential components replacing all at the same time, one may well find it more economical to replace all

these snazzy new homes. If so we might need to rebuild a far higher proportion of our new housing stock and within as little as 40 years. On this basis we could need to build as many as 625,000 houses a year just to maintain numbers. This is an unsustainable legacy for future generations.

Our rush to build houses quickly is in danger of creating a scenario where houses need replacing faster than we can build them. This will result in a significant number of households becoming homeless. At current rates of construction and on the basis of these projections some 400,000 households a year could be homeless by 2060. Now that is a real crisis. These assumptions may be overly pessimistic – we hope so, we would rather know so.

What can be done? We must build houses that last at least a lifetime and most importantly build above the true rate of replacement. To solve a crisis you need to know the true source of the problem. Our problem is the same as it has always been: Vitruvius's *Firmitas, Commoditas, Venustas*. We need houses that are cost effective to maintain, adaptable and loved. At Snug Architects we are currently repurposing a lot of offices as residential. This may double the life of those

**We must build houses that last at least a lifetime and most importantly build above the true rate of replacement**

buildings. They may even make it to their 100th birthday.

This is part of the solution but it does not solve the crisis. It is suburban housing that we must tackle. Legislators, planners, designers, lenders and developers must work together to establish a viable approach to the delivery of houses that are built to last. The act of building houses must become more than a short-term economic activity. It must become a generous act and an investment in our collective future; more national infrastructure than asset class. Perhaps we should even be receiving tax breaks for maintaining our homes.

If we can't expect this through developers' own inclinations we must make it in their interest. If those who deliver houses had ownership of the future things might be different. We have found it is always the case that those clients who retain some measure of ownership invest more in quality. We need those who create to have ownership of the consequences. Then they will take responsibility and generosity will become self-interest. This approach is high capital cost but long life. The Congolese option of low cost, short life seems unlikely to work in our drawn out, costly and highly contested approach to planning, though post-war prefabs shows that it is possible – and many outlived their extended design life.

Whichever approaches we take we need to focus on solving the real crisis – the one we are still creating. By all means let's build fast and we certainly need to build more, but let's build houses people will love. This, above all things, will delay their replacement. ●

Paul Bulkeley is founding director of Snug Architects





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# Spoken impediment

Verbal contracts are legal now, but they remain very difficult to prove in a dispute

Alistair McGrigor

It can't be very often that a High Court judge is called upon to analyse a 10-minute conversation that took place two years previously in a bus shelter in Camberwell. A recent case perfectly illustrates why lawyers like written contracts: it's because writing down an agreement is the simplest way of definitively recording what's been agreed. This case amply demonstrates the mess and uncertainty that arise when an oral contract is relied upon, on a construction project that is going wrong.

In December 2015, a mixed use residential and retail project in Camberwell was in trouble. The main contractor, HOC, was in dire financial straits, and potentially owed the employer a large sum by way of liquidated and ascertained damages. Site work had stopped and all the subcontractors had left.

HOC knew that new subcontractors were needed to finish the project, and on 2 December one of its construction managers asked Dacy, a subcontracting company, to attend site and start work the next day.

Dacy was known to HOC because it had worked on five previous projects for HOC – but on the fifth of those projects Dacy was left unpaid to the tune of around £170,000. Not surprisingly, Dacy did not want to enter into another subcontract with HOC.

Knowing this, HOC arranged for the contracts manager of IDM Properties also to attend site on 3 December, the key purpose of which seems to have been to introduce IDM Properties to Dacy. IDM Properties is a developer with a rather unclear relationship to the original employer company, possibly some

sort of joint venture arrangement.

The fateful 10-minute conversation between Dacy and IDM Properties took place that day in a bus shelter by the site. Dacy's owner took from the meeting the fact that IDM Properties (not HOC) would engage Dacy directly, and pay it for work carried out. HOC would remain involved to check Dacy's applications for payment. Dacy certainly did start work on site, and its first three applications were paid by IDM. The last three applications were, however, not paid in full, and in May 2016 Dacy left the site and began adjudication proceedings against IDM Properties for the £247,000 it was owed.

The central issue in the case was therefore whether the bus shelter meeting comprised an oral contract between Dacy and IDM Properties, or Dacy was instead engaged by HOC. IDM Properties claimed from the start that IDM was never going to engage Dacy directly, and that the 3 December meeting was about working together on future projects.

Unfortunately for IDM, the judge considered this version of events unconvincing – not least because the HOC construction manager had the same recollection of the meeting as Dacy's. There were also draft letters prepared the very same week from IDM to HOC, which proposed that subcontractors on the project would be engaged directly by IDM.

The judge laid emphasis on the fact that it would have been be 'verging on the commercially suicidal' for Dacy to have agreed to work for HOC again, bearing in mind the £170,000 owed from the previous job and the rumours about HOC's financial position.

As a result of the judge's view that IDM Properties engaged Dacy, via the oral contract created in the bus shelter, the adjudication for unpaid monies was valid, and IDM Properties was required to pay the £247,000 it owed to Dacy.

Until 2011 when the Construction Act was updated, only written contracts could have been relied upon to enforce payment via adjudication. As a result, adjudicators and judges now have to try and work out from brief conversations such as this whether a contract exists and what its terms are. An agreement in writing would have been better – but when a project is on the ropes it is understandable that written contracts may not exist to clarify what was really agreed. ●

Alistair McGrigor, CMS Cameron McKenna  
Nabarro Olswang LLP

The fateful 10-minute conversation between Dacy and IDM Properties took place that day in a bus shelter by the site

## IN PLAIN ENGLISH: LIMITATION PERIODS

To prevent contracting parties from being forever liable for their breach of contract, a party can raise the 'limitation period' defence, which provides a time-bar on bringing claims after a certain period of time has elapsed. For contractual claims, the length of that period will depend on how the relevant contract was signed.

A contract signed simply by a single signature will have a six year limitation period, whereas a contract signed more formally as a deed (ie with witnessing of signatures, or with two company directors signing rather than just one) will have a 12 year limitation period.

Almost inevitably you will be asked to sign appointment documents and warranties as deeds, to give the client or beneficiary the benefit of 12 years in which to bring a claim. You may want to consider whether the project merits a 12 year limitation period.

Consider also when the period should run from: the date of practical completion of the project, or the date that you complete your services. Clients prefer the former for all parties on a project, to provide one consistent date when the limitation period ends, but that may mean a longer limitation period for you if your services have come to an end well before practical completion.





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# Room within a Room

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Antonello da Messina's 1475 painting of St Jerome in his Study was not only a great Renaissance perspectival study but presented viewers at the time with a novel notion of space – that of 'a room within a room'.

St Jerome sits within a raised wooden structure, a carrel: his study. His slippers are at the foot of the steps, a cardinal's hat behind him. Around him is his lectern writing desk, plants, bookshelves and all the appurtenances of his status and biblical meditations.

The overall idea is of a small space of intense study within a much larger architectural volume. But in depicting it, could Antonello da Messina have, in fact, created the first hot-desking workstation?

## The brief

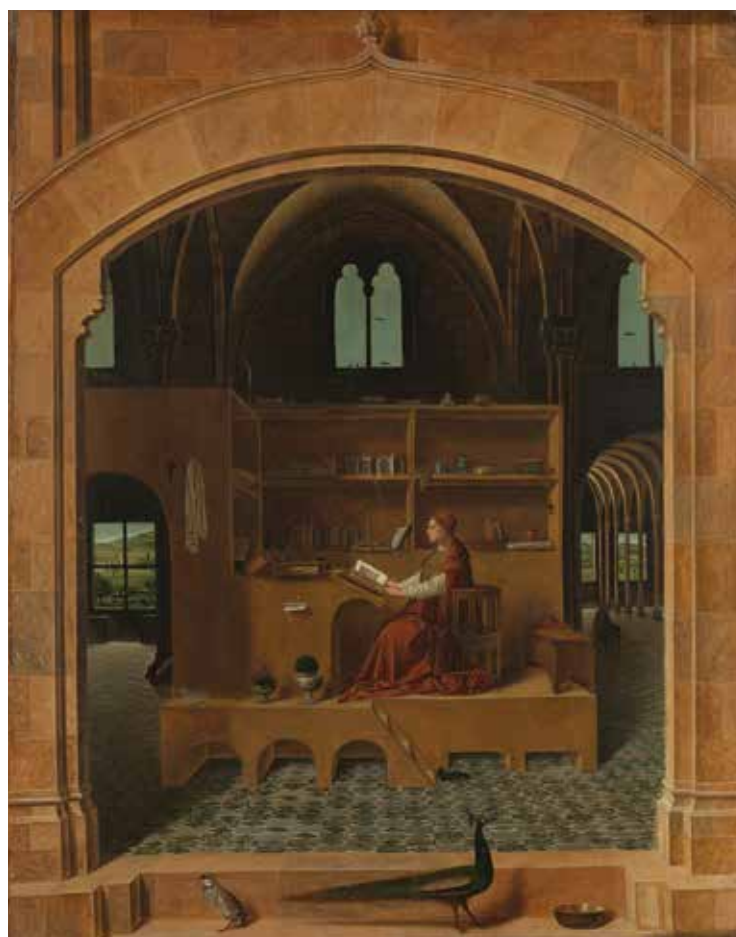
RIBA/J/SterlingOSB's Room within a Room ideas competition invites proposals for a portable, transformable workspace made from SterlingOSB in a room within a house, public building, school or office.

It is to be a space for study and will require a desk and bookshelves, perhaps with a seat or day bed as part of the design. It will require some hanging space to allow our Renaissance person to display their work and ponder it, away from prying eyes. It may have openable windows and moving shelves or levels. All this is open to the imagination of the designer.

This will also be a space that critically transforms to become a stage for exposition of those same ideas. Our modern day Room within a Room may be able to turn inside out – to go from private study to public forum.

It may be like a reversible jacket, itinerant architecture, transforming wagon for a Wild West snake oil salesman. Hinging, reversing, sliding or folding open, it will at once be a place of solitude and ultimate revelation – all formed from SterlingOSB.

**Right** St Jerome in his Study. Antonello da Messina, c1475.



THE NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON

**CRITERIA** Design a space of no more than 8m<sup>2</sup>, predominantly from SterlingOSB, in which people may emulate the concentration of the beatified Jerome; a space within a larger architectural volume to which one may retreat to study. It may be roofed or not – the point is that it facilitates a level of separation from the space in which it sits.

Entrants will demonstrate how SterlingOSB can be employed in the design of a small building or installation, how the space is used and how SterlingOSB's bespoke and high strength features are an integral part of the design.

Designs are likely to be wholly internal, but may be partially external. If so, the cladding material must take account of its exterior context. Internal cladding materials, if used, should also be explained.

**JUDGING** Chaired by RIBA Journal, judges will be looking for imaginative uses of SterlingOSB and innovative spatial propositions. Any proposal should consider the structural, acoustic and thermal demands of the design. Prefabrication, panels or CNC fabrication may all be considered. Other materials may be used to both clad and fit out the proposal but structural integrity is to be predicated on the use of SterlingOSB.

The winning proposal will be the one that, in the minds of the judges, produces a solution that is spatially powerful, has a logic if transformable, and which best accommodates the demands of the modern day Renaissance man/woman, while making best use of SterlingOSB's properties.

**ENTRY FORM** Please go to [ribaj.com/roominaroom](http://ribaj.com/roominaroom)

**SUBMISSIONS** Entries must include the following and be laid out on no more than two A3 sheets, supplied electronically as pdfs:

- Plan and sections explaining function.
- Elevations showing the external look of the intervention.
- 3D axonometric showing construction methodology and or/components.
- Any supplementary images you might consider helpful, for example showing spatial configurations.
- An explanation of no more than 400 words describing the nature of the proposal.

## NOTES

- The jury's decision is final.
- First prize: £2500. Three commended submissions: £250.
- No correspondence will be entered into by the organisers or judges regarding feedback on entries.
- Shortlisted entries will be notified in writing.
- Shortlisted entries will be invited to the prizegiving event on 20th September 2018.
- Please email questions to [ribaj.roominaroom@riba.org](mailto:ribaj.roominaroom@riba.org)

**Deadline for entry: 19 June 2018**

Please email your entry to: [ribaj.roominaroom@riba.org](mailto:ribaj.roominaroom@riba.org)





Conservation  
& heritage



Design, construction  
& technology

# Sustainability superheroes

Maria Smith spins a yarn of hope and disillusion



Maria Smith

When I was at university, 'sustainable architecture' was a thing you could be into; an alternative style you might adopt that involved things like rammed earth, straw bales and Trombe walls. Not being into it took the flavour of adolescent smoking; of relishing our impending end and being too painfully cool to be earnest. Now of course we don't need to worry because all architecture is sustainable. Isn't it? Then what is this circular economy everyone's talking about?

I imagine it like a superhero blockbuster. Captain Capitalism is a malevolent overlord wielding power over all through mind control and promises of protection against all evils. Sustainability Kid is a plucky hero fighting against Captain Capitalism, seeking to destroy his supremacy by persuading the mortals that Captain Capitalism's protection is a racket and his true motivation is only power at all costs. Sustainability Kid puts up a decent fight, but Captain Capitalism ultimately prevails by subsuming Sustainability Kid's life source into his own and becoming the even more powerful Super Sustainable Capitalism Man. In the sequel, a new hero, The Incredible Circular Economy, takes on Super Sustainable Capitalism Man. Will Super Sustainable Capitalism Man subsume The Incredible Circular Economy like he did Sustainability Kid? Or Will The Incredible Circular Economy defeat the overlord and save the world?

The origin of the term 'sustainability' in this context is the 1972 'Limits to Growth' report commissioned by the Club of Rome. The report recognised that if growth trends (population etc) were allowed to continue unchanged, then planet earth would reach carrying capacity before 2100. However, if these growth trends were altered, then it would be possible 'to establish a condition of ecological and economic stability that is sustainable far into the future.' Then in 1987, 'Our Common Future' published by the World Commission on Environment and Development, recognised that there are limits 'imposed... by the ability of the biosphere to absorb the effects of human activities' and that 'sustainable development can only be pursued if population size and growth are in harmony with the changing productive potential of the ecosystem.' In other words, the term 'sustainability' came about to highlight a negative but somewhere along the way became co-opted to designate a sub-type of the very thing it opposed.

Our Sustainability Kid was no match for Captain Capitalism. Motivated by limitless power, Captain Capitalism was able to see past their scientific and moral differences and mercilessly consume Sustainability Kid whole. The composite superpower, Super Sustainable Capitalism Man gained strength throughout the 90s and 00s and while the polar ice caps melted we drove our Volkswagens to work safe in the knowledge that our vindicating sustainable design award certificate was in the post. All too soon, sustainability had nothing to do with the limits to unchecked growth, and instead became a box for the business savvy to tick.

As the new millennium progressed, Super Sustainable Capitalism Man's power began to wane. The financial crisis violently brought the notion of a limit to growth back into the public consciousness. Time for a new hero: enter The Incredible Circular Economy. This was an older superhero whose origin story played out in the 1960s, but in the aftermath of the crash, the Ellen MacArthur Foundation and others brought the Circular Economy into public and political favour. Inspired by natural ecosystems, a Circular Economy is a system where the outputs of every process form an input to another, round and round with no wasted resources or energy flinging off and causing harm. It is framed in direct opposition to exploitative, polluting, linear systems. Super Sustainable Capitalism

Captain Capitalism  
was able to see past  
their scientific and  
moral differences and  
mercilessly consume  
Sustainability Kid whole

Man will of course not take this lying down but this time, we know his playbook.

Slowly, Super Sustainable Capitalism Man will use his mind control powers to corrupt The Incredible Circular Economy's gallant mission until in the mind of the masses it's no longer an attack on the linear systems that exploit human and environmental resources leaving mountains of waste in their wake, and instead becomes an engineering problem that can be fixed with more efficient technology. As this belief takes hold, Super Sustainable Capitalism Man will audaciously swan in as the hero, professing that the solution lies within his capitalist arsenal! The evil genius!

When I was at university, 'sustainable architecture' was a thing you could be into. Now it is both indisputable and meaningless to equal extents. There is no question that buildings shouldn't be 'sustainable', and there are no 'unsustainable' buildings; which is in too large a part a semantic accomplishment. Can we learn from this appalling achievement? Is the blooming profile of the Circular Economy our second chance? Can we stop Super Sustainable Capitalism Man from subsuming The Incredible Circular Economy like he did Sustainability Kid? Can we help The Incredible Circular Economy defeat the overlord and save the world? ●

Maria Smith is a director at Interrobang architecture and engineering and Webb Yates Engineers, and is co-chief curator of the Oslo Architecture Triennale 2019

# Uncover the value of the materials you specify

Help is on hand from the experts at Build Aviator to make your specifications easier and much more effective

Ask yourself one question, when you write a specification do you know the true value of the materials? Build Aviator has been working with architects to give them a better understanding of the cost of chosen building methods and materials.

Some architects will just want an SAP (standard assessment procedure) calculation, which Build Aviator can provide through its trusted suppliers and team of in-house assessors. However, as the company has integrated thousands of product options into SAP software, the team can work with you to find the most cost-effective solution to meet your requirements, providing you with product rich U-values – not the notional specification from Approved Document Part L1a.

The product knowledge of the Build Aviator specialists and its selected partners can help with your pricing strategy. Let's just say you've specified timber cladding – you'll be presented with product pricing for different cladding manufacturers, so that you can achieve the best quality of build for your client's budget.

Although an as-designed SAP is a requirement of planning, this can sometimes slip through the net, and energy performance isn't assessed until works have begun. At this point you may realise that the building rating is lower than expected. Perhaps you've specified a 150mm cavity and you're wondering why the rating is only a C. The Build Aviator team can scrutinise the materials used in the building, and give you guidance on the products that could be affecting the performance and suggest remedial actions that could be taken to help improve your SAP score.

SAP isn't just about selecting the right materials though – understanding how the materials work together and the difference between laboratory performance and onsite performance is critical. One of the



key factors of an SAP assessment is thermal bridging. If the detailing isn't carefully considered and the values don't adhere to Part L standards, extra labour and cost may be required to rectify issues. To offer support with this, Build Aviator has teamed up with Local Authority Building Control (LABC), to provide the relevant RCDs for your project as part of its SAP service. These RCDs feature a product specification page, providing you with a selection of product options that fulfil the required build up specifications, such as cavity insulation, blocks, wall ties and screed.

## Taking a Holistic Approach to SAP

When specifying the design, it is advised that you take a holistic view of energy performance and look to reduce energy

**Above** Build Aviator has solutions that can support throughout each stage of your project.

**Right** Build Aviator provides RCDs as standard with each SAP to help you minimise thermal bridging.

The Build Aviator team can scrutinise materials used in the building and offer guidance



demands across every aspect of the building, including insulation, glazing orientation, and high efficiency heating and ventilation systems that feature controls. If you're looking to go above and beyond minimum building requirements, renewables and smart controls should be considered.

If you were to specify materials that achieved the maximum U-value targets, but systems that met minimum efficiencies, you could find that the dwelling would not pass. Let's go back to the 150mm insulation scenario. Let's say a boiler with minimum efficiency was used in the building, despite the high insulation, the overall performance would be affected by the boiler. This outcome could be the same if poor insulation was used alongside a renewable heating system. All the building elements should reduce energy demand, which is why the SAP assessors available through Build Aviator offer a service to scrutinise your specification and can advise on alternative product solutions.

#### **Achieving a more accurate SAP calculation**

In a number of cases an SAP calculation provides default values, using typical performance figures for the building materials and systems. This can offer room for error, either during estimation if costing is based on a generic product type as costs could vary significantly, or during procurement, if a replacement product



needs to be selected and there is insufficient knowledge of product performance. So Build Aviator can work with you to join your SAP with an estimate, giving you more accuracy with your result, and enabling you to get a true understanding of costs – as well as simplifying procurement through its merchant partners. If a replacement product is required, you can contact your SAP assessor, who will run the product through the system to check for any deviation in the SAP result.

To help you demonstrate product value evidence to Building Control our SAP summary report, including product listings and U-value calculations, will be provided within an on-site compliance support pack as standard. The associated RCDs and inspection sheets will also be included in the pack, along with any air-tightness or acoustic testing notes and advice, should you require these services. ●

#### **ABOUT BUILD AVIATOR**

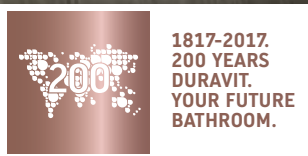
Build Aviator offers a range of services for each stage of the build process. From support with your product specifications, to assistance with testing upon completion, to help you achieve a smooth route to building control sign off.

Build Aviator puts the clients' needs at the heart of every project, whether that's building to minimum regulations or achieving an increased level of comfort and energy efficiency.

Through its services, guidance and support, Build Aviator helps you to build intelligently and to a specification that works for you, with products that are locally available.



For more information on Build Aviator visit [www.buildaviator.co.uk](http://www.buildaviator.co.uk) or contact [info@buildaviator.co.uk](mailto:info@buildaviator.co.uk) Call 0121 328 9150.

The Duravit logo, featuring a stylized blue bird-like icon to the left of the word "DURAVIT" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font.

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# 3: Culture

## Why we'll miss Will

Who will take on Will Alsop's legacy of genial sceptic and serial bon viveur?



Hugh Pearman Editor

Will Alsop. You could never hear the name without smiling appreciatively. His recent death at 70, when his collective practice aLL Design was busy from Canada to China, came as a shock to a profession that had perhaps taken his existence for granted as the perpetual licensed outsider, the creative force who did things his own merry way, and to hell with the accountants. This was the man who could say a bad word on camera at the Stirling Prize ceremony (he won it, for his Peckham Library) and then defuse the situation with his characteristic chuckle.

It's worth considering what Will stood for. Having worked for Cedric Price, he inherited Price's mantle as the genial architectural sceptic with a think-before-you-build attitude, for whom a drink or several with friends was certainly more important than obsessing over a shadow gap. He thought big, and he thought ahead and he painted, often on a large scale, and well. He was one a true artist-architect, a surprisingly rare breed.

Just like Cedric, Will believed that over-planning was a curse, that happen-

*Will believed that over-planning was a curse, that happenstance should be allowed to take its course*



stance should be allowed to take its course, and that sometimes – often, in fact – it is better either to design nothing, or to design lightly and generously, allowing for change. 'We spend a lot of time NOT doing projects,' he told me, the last time we profiled him for this magazine (RIBA, Jan 2015). His contradictory tendency was to regard plainly no-hope projects as all but completed. But unlike Price he did get a surprising number of buildings built: the Alsop Lyall and Stormer 'Grand Bleu' government building in Marseilles being his breakout project. His loose part-built masterplan for Urban Splash's New Islington development in Manchester reminded me of his unbuilt 1992 design for Berlin's Potsdamer Platz which would have allowed the city to heal itself naturally, over time.

Northern Powerhouse? Will had the whole Transpennine Supercity thing sort-of years ago. He made a book and a 2004 TV programme about it, chatting away at the wheel of his Range Rover, flicking his ciggy ash out of the window as he went.

Everyone speaks of Will's generosity – with his time, with his patronage of small emerging practices, with his ideas. Some say he could be boorish and that he had little time for those who didn't buy into the Will way. You couldn't always guarantee that he'd turn up but when he did – for instance, to help judge our annual Eye Line drawing competition a couple of years back (this year's deadline June 12, everyone) – his contribution was both laconic and transformative.

For me the canonic Will building no longer exists, though it existed for four times as long as it was originally meant to, moved locations during its lifetime, and was partly redesigned by him in the process. The oval shrink-wrapped marine plywood tube of the Cardiff Bay Visitor Centre was an agile enough design to outlast certain 'permanent' office buildings, say. Well done and thanks for everything, Will. To make a rock comparison, you were the Lemmy of architecture. ●

ONLY ON RIBAJ.COM

'I like the way they weren't worried about it looking stark'

Valeria Carullo on how the glamour of Italian set design appeals: [ribaj.com/italiancinema](http://ribaj.com/italiancinema)

# Homage to Horus

Leeds' neo-Egyptian Temple Works deserves saving



Oliver Wainwright

A field of great glass cones extends across a rooftop in Leeds, like a colony of crystal teepees, stretching for two acres above a surrounding landscape of Victorian brick warehouses. It is a strange enough prospect now, but when Temple Works was built in 1836, it would have been an even more surreal sight. Where I now stand on asphalt, a lush green field once grew, grazed by a flock of sheep – who were shuttled up and down from the rooftop in their own hydraulic lift.

Built by the king of the Leeds flax industry, John Marshall, Temple Works was the site of many world firsts in its day. This early green roof was no miserly carpet of sedum, but a proper field of grass on a 1m-thick bed of soil, installed to maintain humidity in the factory below and prevent the flax fibres from drying out. The hydraulic lift was one of the earliest of its kind too, while between the conical roof lights (which doubled as ventilation shafts), rainwater was funnelled down inside the building's cast iron columns and used to power steam engines in the basement, which fuelled the whirring spinning machines above. It was an exemplar of intelligent environmental design, 150 years before BREEAM.

This was little-known on the street of course. Instead, passersby were met with a magnificent Egyptian frontage, lifted straight from the Temple of Horus at Edfu – a personal obsession of Marshall's, Egypt having had an important flax industry in the ancient world. Fat stone columns rise to elaborate lotus capitals, while winged solar discs stare momentarily from above the tapering

A flock of sheep were shuttled up and down from the rooftop in their own hydraulic lift



portals. It was an alien arrival to the streets of Holbeck in the 1830s, and is just as startling today, alongside an air-conditioning accessories office and a sandwich delivery depot.

Step inside the former spinning hall and the effect is breathtaking. Thought to be the largest room in the world when it was built, the factory floor stretches 125m by 70m, punctuated by a stately hypostyle grid of iron columns with capitals of bundled papyrus, from which huge groined brick vaults leap between bays. Circular pools of light from the conical roof lights lend the room an ethereal air akin to the Great Mosque of Cordoba.

While many of Yorkshire's bold bastions of industry have been preserved as galleries or luxury flats, time hasn't been kind to Marshall's grade I-listed monument. Under the neglectful ownership of the Barclay brothers since 2004, the complex shows frequently on heritage at risk lists. It suffered a partial collapse in 2008, and metal clamps now encase many of the iron capitals, which have been prone to cracking, while water drips through the mossy ceiling and down the flaking walls.

For a few years, the complex took on an unexpected life as an atmospheric community arts venue run on a shoe-string, populated by occasional installations, performances, raves and 'zombie gaming nights' (it was described as 'the premier 'dead person' venue in the North'). Burberry had promising plans to turn Temple Works into a £50 million factory-cum-showroom, with Patrick Lynch working on a sensitive scheme for the site, but they pulled out over Brexit uncertainty.

The building was finally put up for auction for a pound at the end of last year, but was acquired one day before the sale in a last-minute deal with CEG, a commercial estates giant which owns around £800 million worth of properties across the country. This includes a 3.2ha site nearby, part of the planned 'South Bank Leeds' development, where Feilden Clegg Bradley has drawn up a masterplan that includes what could become the tallest building in the city. CEG has yet to reveal its plans for Temple Works, but suggests the building could find a long-term cultural use – finally a Tate Modern of the North? Backed by the financial might of two Swedish pension funds, it may finally see Marshall's majestic monument saved from ruin. ●

Oliver Wainwright is architecture critic at the Guardian. Read him here every other month and at [ribaj.com](http://ribaj.com)

## HORROR STORIES

Looming on the horizon near Temple Works stands the Dalek-like hulk of Bridgewater Place, the tallest building in Yorkshire at 32 storeys, responsible for creating downdrafts of such strength that a lorry was blown on to a pedestrian, crushing them to death. A row of huge metal baffles was recently installed along the street to protect people from the great gusts.





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# Quality bid

A year after Grenfell, quality can wait no longer



Ben Derbyshire

Even before the Grenfell disaster many of us who work in housing had identified that delivering quality and performance in the built environment was a major issue – it has become so much more pressing in its aftermath. In April, I was delighted to be asked by the government to chair the opening session at its design conference Achieving Well-Designed Places. I emphasised that poor quality living conditions are a global challenge; that we won't meet the needs and aspirations of a diverse population unless we have a diverse and appropriately empathic profession; and that improving society's ability to predict and deliver buildings and places that reliably support human wellbeing is self-evidently a pressing need. It's great to see the government and politicians backing the view that good design has a major role in solving the housing crisis, with a Cabinet seat for a housing secretary (at last) and a significant team at the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government to tackle quality.

What do we mean by quality? Quality outcomes are those that we can show, with supporting evidence, benefit human wellbeing.

We must be clear that performance is about environmental sustainability, physical and mental health, education, economic success, community and a sense of belonging, and safety – and especially in these dark, post-Grenfell days, fire safety. Aesthetics,

What do we mean by quality? Quality outcomes are those that we can show, with supporting evidence, benefit human wellbeing

'poetry in the economical use of scarce resources', as Ralph Erskine would say, is an important indicator of our success in weaving all these aspects together. We need to measure and evaluate these outcomes, feed them back and build a shared body of knowledge for success. And we need to engage with stakeholders and local communities, from the very start, so they have a meaningful voice in setting objectives and a say in delivery.

Touring the country, I have been struck by the efforts being made among local branches to collaborate on quality, nationwide. The issue is not just to ensure that important national documents such as the National Planning Policy Framework encapsulate adequate definitions of quality, but that we see local leadership setting out and enforcing quality standards and design codes in local and regional plans. That is why I am promoting initiatives to bring key stakeholders together to deliver best results.

A joint memorandum on procurement for sustainable quality outcomes between RIBA, CIOB and RICS aims to drive change in quality procurement at a time when policy makers, developers and local authorities are open to the lessons of poor procurement as never before. I'm developing the London Housing Expo, in collaboration with New London Architecture, the Design Museum and Future of London to showcase innovation in homes and placemaking and leave the capital a high quality legacy. I'd love to see RIBA branches working on similar projects.

As a first step towards more universal post occupancy evaluation I have asked the RIBA Sustainable Futures Group to work with others on an overlay on the Plan of Work that would enable all practitioners to set out a template with their clients for agreeing a process within their standard service offering. And I'm working with the Royal Town Planning Institute, Local Government Association and Chartered Institute for Housing on a project called 'Future Place' to champion best practice and actively support local authorities to improve the quality of their placemaking.

Improving the quality of our housing and communities will take action. RIBA and its members have access to the expertise and can articulate the solutions. When I meet the new secretary of state, James Brokenshire MP, I'll be emphasising that if we don't start improving quality now, before building many more homes, the opportunity will be lost. ●

@ben\_derbyshire president@riba.org

## DISCIPLINARY SUSPENSION

On 11 December 2017 the RIBA Hearings Panel found Mukundkumar Dolatbhai Vashee of London guilty of breaching the RIBA Code of Professional Conduct, in particular: Principle 2.1, Principle 2.2 and Principle 2.3, in that he failed to undertake an accurate survey of the property sufficient to enable a viable scheme for planning purposes. The errors regarding site dimensions were significant and had a significant impact on the scheme as drawn for planning purposes. The panel decided that the appropriate sanction was a retrospective suspension of membership for a period of six months, which has now been deemed served.

On 29 November 2017 the RIBA Hearings Panel found Laura Petruso of London guilty of breaching the RIBA Code of Professional Conduct, in particular: Principle 1.4 and Principle 2.1, in that she was party to a conflict of interest and did not either remove its cause or withdraw from the conflict. There was a conflict of interest in that she was both the architect for the build and a director and shareholder of the contractor company. This was in circumstances where the building contract she endorsed required a Contract Administrator; a role that the contract stated the contractor company would fulfil. The panel decided the appropriate sanction was suspension from membership for six months.





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# SCHÜCO

# Twenty of the world's best new buildings

As the RIBA announces the winners of its 2018 Awards for International Excellence, Corinna Dean gives a flavour of the process that leads to its ultimate International Prize

The RIBA International Awards are a relatively new arrival. The inaugural edition was launched in 2016, and awarded to Grafton Architects for its outstanding university building UTEC, University of Engineering and Technology, in Lima, Peru.

The biennial awards are a definitive single-category award given to the most transformative building which demonstrates visionary, innovative thinking and excellence of execution, and makes a distinct contribution to its users and its physical context. The system is two-tiered. First, 20 new buildings are selected from the entrants to the RIBA International Prize; these are the winners of the RIBA Awards for International Excellence and this year's batch is shown here. From this 20, four finalists are selected, one of which will be the winner of the International Prize, announced in November.

In contrast to the RIBA award, the World Architecture Awards (WAF) invites entries in 33 categories. However, the advantage of the seemingly more modest remit of the RIBA awards is that each winner of the Award for International Excellence is visited, allowing for a rigorous judging process.

This creates a grand global task in which around 20 architects are dispensed to visit each of the entries shortlisted from a total of 232. This year's diverse entries ranged from Rogers Stirk Harbour's 50-storey BBVA Ban in Mexico City, to a post-earthquake reconstruction project in Guangming Village, China, and the contemporary art museum Zeitz MOCAA in Cape Town, South Africa, by Thomas Heatherwick Architects.

Probably the hardest task is judging a large scale building against a single dwelling. I was lucky enough to accompany the judging

**Right** Learning from a visit: Lanka Learning Centre.



CORINNA DEAN

**Above** Colombo, Sri Lanka: Studio Dwelling by Palinda Kannangara Architects.

**Right** Budapest, Hungary: M4-Metro-Line-Budapest by Főmterv-Palatium-Uvaterv – Consortium with Palatium Studio, Budapesti Építőművészeti Műhely, Gelesz és Lenzsér, Puhl és Dajka, sporaarchitects, VPI Studio.





Probably the hardest task is judging a large scale building against a single dwelling

SEBASTIAN POSINGIS



TAMÁS BUJNOVSZKY



team to the relatively small island of Sri Lanka, which boasted two shortlisted entries, a studio dwelling and community learning centre. The buildings contrasted starkly.

To facilitate the judging process, the architects Marcus Lee (Lee Architects) and Greg Penoyre (Penoyre & Prasad) worked closely with the local representative from the Sri Lankan RIBA chapter – which was launched in 2017 by past president Jane Duncan. This forms part of the broader network in Asia and Australasia, and among many criteria it has been set up to achieve knowledge exchange in sustainable design.

The first visit was to a studio and dwelling at Rajagiriya, Colombo, by Sri Lankan architect Panlinda Kannangara, who conducted the tour for the judges. His informal approach allowed the judges to pause and ask questions throughout the visit as well as to experience the space in use. The four-storey in situ concrete building is wrapped with an envelope of fired laterite bricks, creating a shading screen and mitigating the need for air-conditioning. The undercroft space at ground level, which is used for parking, provides an architectural event in itself, with a full width view through to lush marsh land framed by the building. A processional staircase fitting the building's classical plan takes visitors up to the dramatic piano nobile with folding glazed panels running the full height.

As we moved through the building each floor offered its own distinctive experience. Arriving on the upper level we were met with expansive views: waterways extended to the east with views of old Colombo, while to the west, against the background of the city's rapidly growing skyline, the 46-storey 'Clearpoint Tower' boasts the tallest vertical garden in Asia as well as the luxury of 10 cantilevered swimming pools. In addition to an active local architecture scene the city is experiencing a construction boom, fuelled by somewhat contentious Chinese investment. One such project is the creation of 'Port City', a sustainable metropolis with the addition of 233ha of reclaimed land next to Colombo Port, which will accommodate hotels, a golf course, apartments and a water sports area – although the absence of an environmental Impact Study has thrown the environmental credentials into question.

The rigour and elegance of the studio dwelling, coupled with its sensitivity to the local environment both in its dialogue with



The informal approach allowed the judges to pause and ask questions throughout the visit as well as to experience the space in use



**Above** Eastern Province, Sri Lanka: Lanka Learning Centre by feat.collective.  
**Top** Milan, Italy: Vertical Forest by Boeri Studio.



DOLORES ROBLES-MARTINEZ



SIMON MENGES



**Above** Mexico City:  
BBVA Bancomer  
Tower by LegoRogers  
(Rogers Stirk Harbour +  
Partners and Legorreta  
+ Legorreta).

**Left** Chur, Switzerland:  
Bündner Kunstmuseum  
by Barozzi Veiga.



CEMAL ENDEN

On-the-ground experience for the judges provides valuable insight to the context of a building

the waterways and its sustainability credentials, means it is a strong contender for one of the 20 Awards for International Excellence.

The second visit, a community learning centre in Kalkudah, eastern Sri Lanka, was reached via seaplane. The area has been severely ravaged, by both the 2003 tsunami and 26 years of civil war. The Lanka Learning Centre was designed by feat.collective – a Stuttgart-based not for profit office which consists of architects, designers, and political scientists – which worked with a local Sri Lankan aid worker to define the brief. Other similar projects will be rolled out by the collective as part of a larger aid programme.

The striking five-sided brick, concrete, metal and teak assembly mediates between the dispersed suburban edge and arid open terrain. Five buildings are grouped around a circular central space projecting an immediate impression of a safe haven for learning, which combines an inward focus while offering future agricultural/horticultural activity beyond the buildings' defined structure.

Such on-the-ground experience for the judges provides valuable insight to the context of a building. At the Lanka Learning Centre, local buildings are composed of a combination of traditional earth rammed walls with palm-clad roofs, and brick and corrugated structures, designed to combat extremely high levels of humidity. Simple design and low cost maintenance, plus the building's versatility, enabled the centre to accommodate its diverse and wide ranging

**Above** Büyükçekmece / Istanbul, Turkey: Sancaklar Mosque by Emre Arolat Architecture.

**Below** Vilanova de la Barca / Lleida, Spain: The Ancient Church of Vilanova de la Barca by AleaOlea architecture & landscape.

programme, which trains students in subjects from the growing hospitality trade to educating school children and training primary teachers. Local RIBA representative Nela de Zoyosa drew a cautionary note in observing the permeability of the building structure and its vulnerability to rodents, but in an overall assessment of the scheme Lee was upbeat. 'The atmosphere is one of both delight and an overwhelming appreciation of context, creating a building of outstanding merit achieved with limited means,' he said.

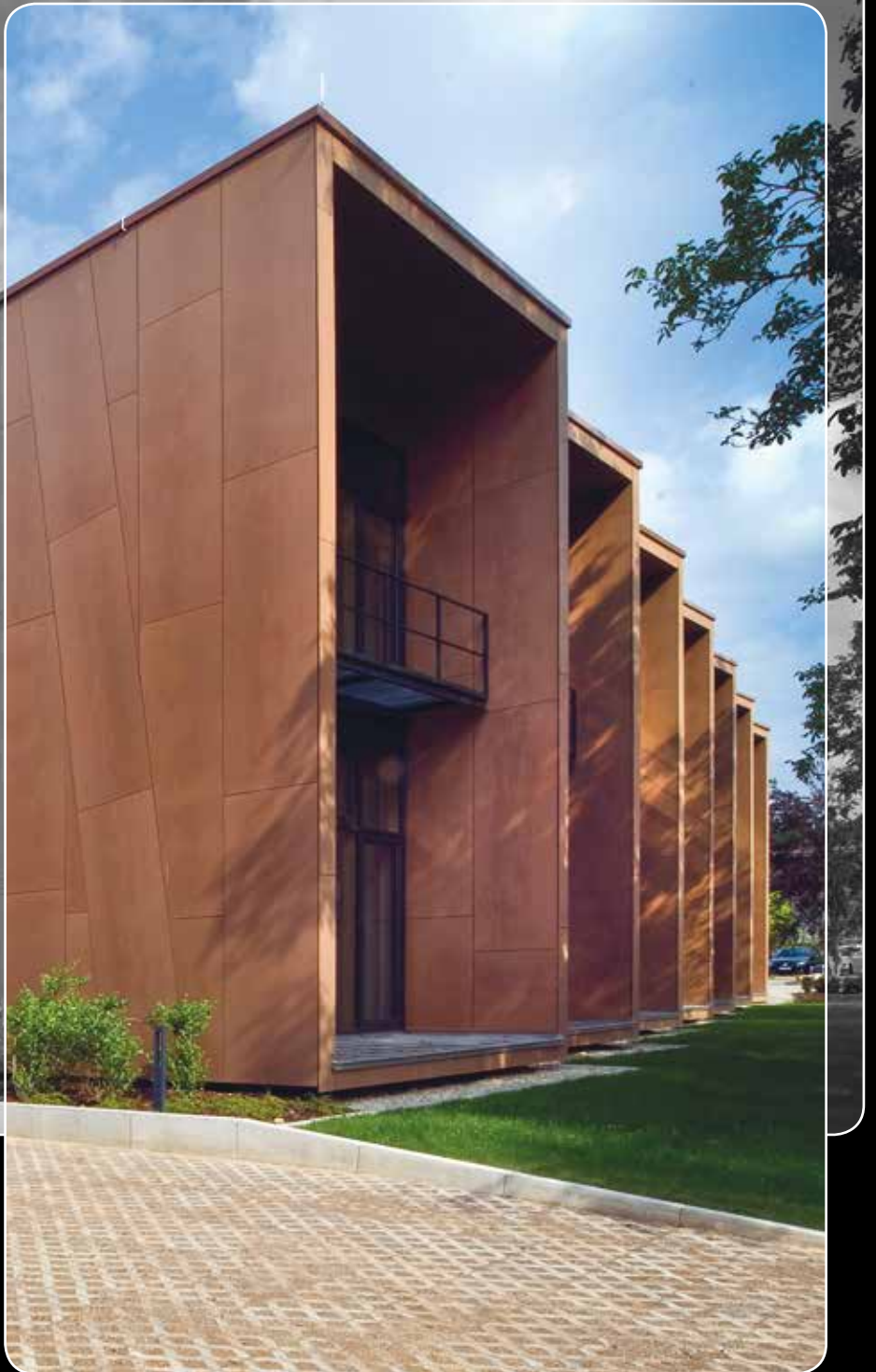
Returning to London, the jurors deliberated over the shortlist, chaired by Elizabeth Diller of Diller Scofidio+Renfro. Grand jurors Diller, Joshua Bolchover of Rural Urban Framework and dance choreographer Wayne McGregor will make the final decision. ●



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# Monet and masonry

The National Gallery's focus on Monet's use of architecture is a good way of considering his work anew

Pamela Buxton

When Claude Monet painted his famous depictions of buildings such as Rouen cathedral, he approached the task like a military campaign. First, he staked out and secured the best vantage point. Then he set up his canvasses, working on up to 10 consecutively throughout each day according to which light conditions he wanted to capture in which painting. After working on these for some time, he decamped to his home studio to develop them further, often over a period of several years, before returning to the original location to complete them.

The results of not only his painstaking studies of Rouen but those of his visits to Venice, London, and many locations throughout France, the Netherlands and the Mediterranean are resplendent in *Monet & Architecture*, a new and inevitably hugely crowded exhibition at the National Gallery in London.

This themed approach to the work of such a well-known artist is a rewarding way of considering it anew. Rather than focusing on the sublime water lilies for which Monet is best known, this selection concentrates on his paintings of cities and suburbs, and his use of architecture to punctuate depictions of the rural landscape.

In the informative audio-guide to the exhibition, curator Richard Thomson described the architectural theme as an 'interesting and challenging way of finding new ways of looking at an artist we think we know so well'.

It turns out to be a very effective lens for viewing his work, created in a career spanning the 1860s to the early 1910s. We learn how Monet consistently used architecture as a means to structure and enliven his art, whether as a foil to the irregularity of na-



**Above** Claude Monet, *The Houses of Parliament, Fog Effect* (Le Parlement, effet de brouillard), 1904.

ture or, most memorably, as a screen for the reflection of light. Sometimes the solidity of the buildings provides the paintings with anchorage; on other occasions they evoke memory and stand in for the human presence.

The exhibition kicks off with Monet's use of buildings in the picturesque tradition. On two trips to the Netherlands in the 1870s, he was evidently very attracted to the exotic nature of the architecture and the landscape. In *Houses on the Banks of the Zaan, Zaandam* (overleaf), he enjoys the contrast of the buildings and their rippling reflections – an effect that he returns to throughout his career in works such as his series of paintings of Venice.

The exhibition draws our attention to how Monet deliberately chose to include within his compositions buildings with a maximum appeal to the potential buyer – travelling armed with guide books so as not to miss out on the best views.

Often, however, he was drawn to humble buildings such as a customs officer's tiny cottage at Varengeville on the Normandy coast, depicting it in various ways in 1882 – from above, below, afar, in sunshine and in shade, its solidity contrasting with the agitation of the waves and the landscape. Likewise

We learn how Monet consistently used architecture as a means to structure and enliven his art



**Left** Claude Monet, *The rue Montorgueil, Paris. The National Holiday of 30 June, 1878 (La Rue Montorgueil, Paris, Fête du 30 juin, 1878)*

the church at Varengeville is depicted from various vantage points in paintings from 1882, most dramatically at the top of a massive, stark cliff viewed from the beach below. Trips to the Mediterranean provided fresh landscapes and architecture to fuel his work.

For a decade from 1867, Monet became fascinated by the built urban environment, depicting the hustle and bustle of the modern city and its suburbs. Often he painted recently completed buildings such as the Houses of Parliament in London (1871) and in Paris, the Gare St-Lazare (1877). The latter is shown as an ultra modern construction of glass, steel and steam.

Monet is interested in conveying the pace of life in the modern city, whether it be the frenzied celebrations of *The National Holiday of 30 June* on the rue Montorgueil (1878), where the architecture is almost obliterated by the Tricolours, or the rhythmic drudgery of labour in *The Coal-heavers* (1875), which shows workers unloading barges at Asnières.

Often Monet seems interested in architecture not so much as for its own sake as a compositional device. This is particularly the case in his famous paintings of Rouen cathedral from the 1890s, where he gave full rein to his fascination with the nuances of light and

the effect of different weather conditions on the facade. Shown together, the results are startlingly varied – sometimes the cathedral appears bright in full sunlight, other times pink, bluish, even grey, the crusty surface of the paintings testament to the long creative process of refinement and reworking.

The Rouen collection shares a gallery with a series of atmospheric London paintings from around the turn of the 20th century. These are a particular highlight, with the added appeal that they are depicting scenes so nearby – Charing Cross Bridge, Waterloo Bridge painted from the Savoy Hotel, and the Houses of Parliament (1904), most memorably the amazing *Sunset* with its startlingly fiery glow amid the gloom. There is a real sense of the fog and the industrial activity along the river – Monet never shirked smoking chimneys – but he sometimes edited out *Cleopatra's Needle*.

Monet & Architecture closes with a room of beautiful paintings of Venice exploring the seemingly floating nature of the city with depictions of light on architecture and its reflection in the water, an element that sometimes takes up half the canvas.

Monet's exhibition of this series in 1912 marked the end of his engagement with architecture. With his eyesight fading, he concentrated on painting his garden in Giverny, particularly the famous water lilies, until his death in 1926. ●

More images on [ribaj.com](http://ribaj.com)

**Below** Claude Monet, *Houses on the Banks of the Zaan, Zaandam (Maisons au bord de la Zaan, Zaandam), 1871.*



*Monet & Architecture*, until 29 July, 2018. The National Gallery, Trafalgar Square, London WC2N 5DN. £20 weekdays £22 weekends



Technology that inspires

# Chelsea Residence

## Upscale

The affluent neighbourhood of Chelsea is located in West London between the River Thames and Sloane Square. Countless celebrities have resided and continue to reside in this vibrant area. The King's Road thoroughfare was built in the 17th century by King Charles II as a private road to Kew Palace and was privately owned by the Crown until 1830.

Chelsea Residence is a single-family home in this area which has been extensively renovated. For the restoration project, the developer contracted James Tillyard from Mosaic for the systems integration. The Mosaic team is comprised of experienced specialists.



A single-family home in Chelsea, the Chelsea Residence, was extensively renovated. The Systems Integrator James Tillyard from MOSAIC was contracted for the restoration project.

Fotos: Jonathan Bond



Simple elegance is the overriding feature of the 260 m<sup>2</sup> house. The multiple bedrooms are not only a veritable treat for the owners, but also their guests. The spacious, bright dining room provides enough room to host large parties. In the evening, the owners can relax in the tastefully furnished living room, or play a round of billiards. Well-chosen pictures adorn the walls in every room. To match the furniture, the owners opted for the Gira touch sensor in brown with anthracite inserts.

Systems integrator, Mosaic, recommended that the client install a KNX system with the Gira X1 server. The solution can do everything a user needs in a single-family home, such as; switch lights on and off, activate light scenes and raise or lower blinds. Four Gira G1s were also installed in the residence. The G1 is a compact room operating device for the KNX system which features both an elegant exterior and an impressive interface design. The solution not only looks accomplished, it is also simple to use. The Gira G1 has a wide

range of uses, from lighting and blinds control to room temperature setting, programming of timers, and calling up scenes up to door communication.

The Gira G1 can also be used as a home station in combination with the Gira DCS-IP-gateway and a door station video. When the doorbell rings, the device automatically transfers to the door intercom mode. The door station, featuring an integrated camera, gives residents additional security, ensuring that the door will not open for uninvited guests.

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# GIRA

# Vanishing point

Disappear Here offers a new perspective on the optical illusions and precious drawings of the past

Hugh Pearman

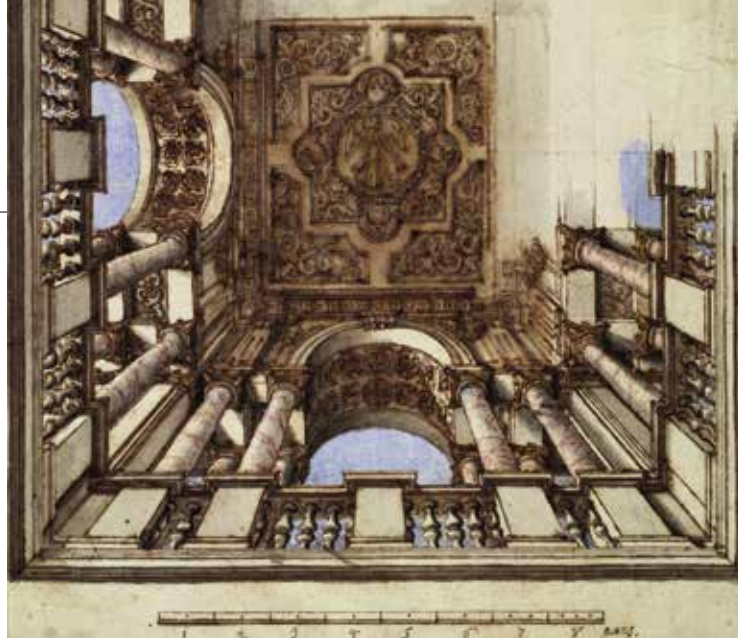
We all need a bit of perspective, do we not? We all like old drawings and optical illusions? If the latest RIBA exhibition Disappear Here – curated by Marie Bak Mortensen, the RIBA's head of exhibitions, and designed by Sam Jacob Studio – at first comes across as a bit thin, at least it does not suffer from the curse of clutter. It's spare and lean, perhaps. And besides, the point of this is that the design itself is part of the exhibition.

The resulting show uses various original drawings from both the RIBA's collection and Niall Hobhouse's Drawing Matter collection in Somerset.

It starts well visually. The view into the gallery from the doorway is of a false-perspective sequence of gradually smaller portals in shades of blue, tempting you into the gallery to see if it leads anywhere (don't try, it doesn't). Once inside the gallery proper, the installation continues to play with your mind, the flat walls turned into seemingly 3D abstract architecture with painted lines alone. Perspectival drawings play their part in the painted false perspectives, connected by their internal vanishing points. This tricks the eye and makes you question their actual size: you realise how we take the neutral wall for granted in galleries and it's disconcerting to find that gleefully subverted.

Mirrors play an important part in the design, here used like low wainscoting to give the impression of other rooms beyond the room you are in. In one corner the mirrors coalesce into an optical illusion, puzzling you about the depth of the structure you gingerly step into, in my case with arms outstretched. What is solid and what is air and light? It's another example of looking into a space that does exist, but in a collapsed

*I gingerly stepped into the structure with arms outstretched*



state, much of it being reflection.

Surrealism plays a part too. There are two curious infinity wells in the floor that turn out to be physical manifestations of drawings in a book of Serlio's, which sets out how you draw octagonal 3D objects – the well-heads – in perspective. One is a regular octagon, the other develops two points that turn out to be Serlio's perspective lines made solid.

There are two actual rooms in the show: one containing a row of the precious books (multiplied again in mirrors); in the other a film installation hurls objects and fragments derived from the old books on perspective towards you from their vanishing points as if exploding outwards. This ought to be better than it is: as realised it is a bit anaemic, feeling unfinished, not really communicating what it's about satisfactorily.

The drawings are relatively few but exemplary, ranging from Boullée's famously colossal and unbuilt immaculately geometrical 'project for a metropolitan cathedral' to Lutyens' rough sketch of an unbuilt version of his Memorial to the Missing in France – a worm's eye perspective done freehand. There are early perspective drawings from John Smythson and Superstudio and one of a tower block by HT Cadbury-Brown and Erno Goldfinger. There are interiors, fragments and a startling and puzzling Hawksmoor perspective of Wren's Royal Hospital in Greenwich on fire. And there is a Max Clendinning design for a conservatory that moves away from strict perspective into the field of art.

It need not detain you long, this show, if you just want to absorb the feel of it. But if you start to look with concentration into the various drawings, picking up similarities or divergences of approach or just bravura talent, it will reward you. You can lose yourself in some of these imagined worlds. ●

**Above:** Design for a ceiling with columns and coffered arches, Italy circa 1700, unknown designer.

**Below:** Foregrounding the blind alleys and rabbit holes of false perspective.

**Disappear Here: On perspective and other kinds of space**  
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# Robin Spence 1938 – 2018

Co-founder of Spence and Webster, principled architect, artist and tango-dancer who cherished honesty and integrity in buildings



Robin Spence of Spence and Webster was a principled and talented architect with a clear design philosophy. He was educated at Bedford School and briefly followed his father's footsteps in the RAF before deciding his talents lay in the arts, leaving for art college and then studying architecture at the University of Cambridge.

After graduating he travelled in the USA, working for a while at Skidmore Owings and Merrill in Chicago, before returning to the UK. He then worked for Douglas Stephen, and for Spence Bonnington and Collins, also designing two remarkable steel framed houses in Hunstanton and Cambridge.

Then came fame, accompanied eventually by disappointment. In 1971 he entered and won the international architectural competition for the New Parliamentary Building in Westminster – as important a competition in its day as the roughly contemporaneous Pompidou Centre competition in Paris. On the strength of the win he set up Spence and Webster.

This project proposed a large covered public space in which debates could be relayed, with offices for MPs arranged in galleries around it, but although it passed two separate votes in the House of Commons, it was quietly dropped by the government in 1976. Much later Portcullis House by Hopkins was built on broadly the same site.

The practice however continued with various different projects, including a housing scheme in Central Milton Keynes, Ross Hall Hospital in Glasgow, and a pair of elegant steel-framed courtyard houses in Belsize Park Gardens, where he and his business partner Robin Webster lived for several years.

Spence and Webster regularly entered architectural competitions, and won some more, although major entries that were not selected included Northampton County offices, the new Australian Parliamentary Build-

ing at Canberra, and the Paris Opera. All these proposals showed Spence's enormous talent in organising large and very complex briefs into clear and simple plans that worked really well.

He received many tributes from clients who enjoyed living or working in his buildings, saying that his designs had greatly improved their quality of life.

He was greatly influenced by Mies van der Rohe, and strongly believed that architecture should be the honest expression of a building's structure, materials and construction.

Had he not been so principled, Robin might have built more, but he declined to work for clients who were not interested in 'proper architecture'. He felt the quality of his work was self evident, and was not interested in self-promotion. He was a patient and clear thinking teacher, and one of his greatest legacies was generously passing on his passion and enthusiasm for honesty and clarity, qualities he applied not only to design but to his life.

He practised until recently as Robin Spence Architects, working from Shoreham by Sea, where he was also an active member of the Shoreham Society.

Among his later work were brilliantly designed residential schemes in Cornwall and West Sussex: these all illustrated his clarity of vision and ability to compose buildings that led one client to describe him as 'the master of light and space'. Peter Palumbo also praised him as 'one of the most gifted architects of his generation'.

Robin was also a talented artist, and produced many luminous coloured pencil drawings of holidays in Greece and Crete, as well as more abstract watercolours. He was an enthusiastic windsurfer, and latterly also gave lessons in tango dancing, which he perceived as another serious art form. Indeed, when he and his wife Delia moved to Shoreham by Sea later in life, he converted their house beautifully to be suitable for tango dancing and parties.

He is survived by Delia, and by a son and grand-daughter by a previous marriage. ●

**Robin Webster**

Read Glenn Howells' memories of Robin Spence at: [ribaj.com/robinspence](http://ribaj.com/robinspence)

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# RIBA J125 YEARS

## When the war is over...

Hugh Pearman

Wartime economies meant that the RIBA Journal moved from fortnightly to the monthly frequency it has had ever since. The issues, along with the paper they were printed on, became thin. The profession was impoverished. By the summer of 1943, the Institute was agonising about a still-distant postwar profession in a discussion paper presented by Michael Waterhouse, its honorary secretary – and third in his famous architectural family dynasty after Alfred and Paul.

Waterhouse, who wielded capital letters like weapons, noted that architecture had been harder hit by wartime stringencies than any other profession: 'Far harder than Medicine – the Law – Accountancy – harder even than Surveyors or Engineers. Very early in this period all civil building was banned. There was no knowing where our daily bread – still less tomorrow's bread – was to come from.' War work was mostly not architecture, he pointed out. 'I am tempted to define it as a combination of Organisation and Improvisation.'

For him, the prime need was to get back to the real stuff. 'We must set a standard of the best to which others will be compelled to conform by the force of public opinion,' he urged optimistically. And to prove that nothing changes, he warned against architects sniping at each other in the press – especially private practitioners taking a pop at their public sector colleagues. 'So long as our aims and standards are the same we are all Architects together in spirit and practice.'

People would react against bureaucracy, he said, but postwar reconstruction could not be ad hoc. 'Let us only hope... that the history of the rebuilding of an unplanned London after the Great Fire does not repeat itself too exactly.'

How timely, since in July and August 1943 the RIBA went to town on the London County Council's County of London Plan by

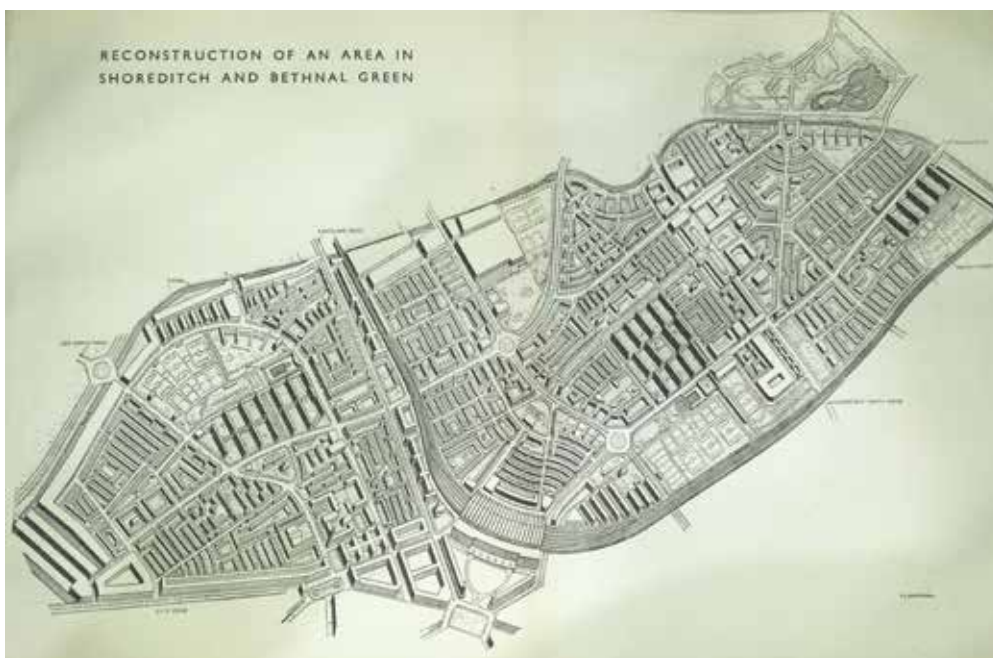
The Journal noted the authors' insistence that razing London and starting again was not the answer

Abercrombie and Forshaw, published in a lavish and well-designed book at a time of austerity – and which was a popular success. The Plan might seem radical by today's standards but the Journal noted the authors' insistence that razing London and starting again was not the answer, and that an organic approach of grafting new growth on the old stock, as they put it, was the way forward. Though it depended on where: in the blitzed East End, for instance, the RIBA published the Plan's design for a total clearance and rebuilding of nearly 1,000 acres of Shoreditch and Bethnal Green.

The RIBA's reviewer WR Davidge was in no doubt about the virtues of the Plan. 'For the first time in its long centuries of history London is at last planning-minded... congratulations are due to the London County Council on the really magnificent gesture they have made.' The Plan was 'human and sympathetic in its inspiration, careful and methodical in its analysis of the innumerable interests involved, businesslike and practical in its suggestions, and at the same time magnificent and energising in the ideals which it sets forth.'

So an on-the-ropes profession, starved of rewarding work by the exigencies of war, had seen a future in which it would play a key role. An end to the work famine was in sight. You can hardly blame them for going a little over the top in their enthusiasm for centrally planned rebuilding. Some of which we'll take a look at in our next RIBA J125 issue. ●

**Below** After the Blitz the 1943 County of London Plan envisaged a new East End.





### Termini railway station Rome, 1961

Rome's Stazione Termini, the Italian capital's main railway station, owes its name to the Baths ('Terme' in Italian) of Diocletian, built in this area in 300 AD. While the first station was completed on the site in 1863, projects for a new building were developed in the 1920s, and finally the commission was given in 1939 to Angiolo Mazzoni, an architect and engineer affiliated with futurism. The war brought works to a halt in 1942, after the completion of the two distinctive side blocks characterised by plain facades with a long series of arches that echo a Roman aqueduct. The competition held in 1947 for the completion of the

station was won jointly by Eugenio Montuori, Leo Calini and the team led by Annibale Vitellozzi, whose collaborative design was completed in 1950. Its main elements are the office block overlooking the Piazza dei Cinquecento and the atrium with the spectacular undulated roof which cantilevers by 19m towards the square. This reinforced concrete shell structure is one of the most original and remarkable examples of Italian post-war modernism. ●

**Valeria Carullo**

**The exhibition Eternal City: Rome in the RIBA Photographs Collections opens at the Vittoriano in Rome on 29 June**

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**SonaSpray K-13 acoustic decorative finish applied onto metal profile deck at Converse HQ to decorate and control reverberation. The SonaSpray range is applied in just one visit, assisting in reduced programme times. Range of 5 finishes from textured to plaster smooth.**



Subscribe to our social media channels to view our Ellie Explains series where 3yr old Ellie explains acoustics

# OSCAR ACOUSTICS



We don't mean to go on about it, but at Sunsquare we take all things rooflight very seriously. Our flat rooflight systems are the strongest and most durable on the market. You may have heard that before, but with years of rigorous testing to refine each product to our superior standards of perfection we'd bet our lives on it. We design and manufacture in the UK with our team of skilled experts, who we like to call our master builders. When we say safety, we mean safety and that's why our rooflights are the safest on the market. Why? Because we use laminated panels as standard. But don't just take our word for it, the British Standards Institution agree, which is why all our products have the BSI Kitemark seal of approval. Lastly and most importantly, we're not vain but our rooflights are a true thing of precision and beauty. Still need more reasons why we're the leaders? Well, we know our products are superior and that's why we offer a full warranty on every product, that's what we call being confident. We've also got 14 years of rooflight knowledge, yep we know, we're getting old. And finally, we are a member of the National Association of Roof Light Manufacturers making us the market's trusted choice.

# There's a story behind all our rooflights

**STRONGER  
SAFER GLASS**



LAMINATED INNER PANES  
AS STANDARD

Sunsquare Limited offer a range of Rooflights including solutions for fixed units, hinged with electrical opening mechanisms, electric rooftop access and walk-on Rooflights.

For more information telephone 01284 848 798, email [sales@sunsquare.co.uk](mailto:sales@sunsquare.co.uk) or visit [www.sunsquare.co.uk](http://www.sunsquare.co.uk).

The first and only Rooflight manufacturers to be BSI verified and awarded a Kitemark.

