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November 2021

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The houses issue

Salary survey: Getting back to normal?

McLean Quinlan adds family value

Colourful voices: this year's Rising Stars



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The RIBA Journal November 2021

Beautiful houses and how to make them, plus the nitty gritty of Victorian poverty, inclusion and pay: letters.ribaj@riba.org



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Double fun –
London house
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1: Houses

BURNT HOUSE,
PORTUGAL
STEFANO RIVA AND
OMAR SALA

Read the full story:
ribaj.com/burnt-house

Ten years after a couple first began dreaming of leaving their urban lives in Lisbon to live on, and off, a small parcel of inherited land in Portugal's Douro Valley, Stefano Riva and Omar Sala have transformed the site's twice-burned-down ancestral house into a three bedroom family home. The property had sat as a roofless ruin for 50 years, awaiting resuscitation.

With an autonomous light steel-framed volume inserted inside the ruin's thick traditional granite walls and modest 70m² footprint, the new enters into dialogue with the old. The narrative of the building's different episodes and states are consciously and graphically expressed through the extrusion of a new white gable roof, which thrusts out of the original structure like a flag signalling the building's renewal. Internally, this new volume enables a guest room, services and the master

bedroom's closet to be tucked into the eaves. Snuggled up against the old structure, an additional béton brut walled extension both complements and contrasts with the old building's stone and forms a new glass fronted lounge-cum-home-office; expanding the house's area within the legally permitted 20% limit, and adding a roof-terrace with more sweeping views.

The name of the farm where the clients now carry out their small independent business living on the land is called 'Enxertada', which means 'grafted' in English. Surrounded by blueberry bushes, and sat beneath the vinho verde vines, from which the clients now make their livelihood, Burnt House offers an architectural manifestation of a grafting of new onto old; the fresh growth of a contemporary home rising from the rootstock of a long burnt-out ruin. Justin Jaeckle

STEFANO RIVA



Resurrection shuffle

A Georgian townhouse has won a new lease of life as two modern flats in ROAR Architects' dexterous manipulation of its empty shell

Words: Eleanor Young Photographs: Ollie Hammick

When Shaun O'Brien of ROAR Architects went to inspect this house in London's Kentish Town he found a deserted room two feet deep in post and a mish mash of landings and half landings, with Georgian rooms awkwardly chopped into bedsits. Other bidders to buy this long-empty women's refuge were scarce; one planned to knock it down and start again.

The 34 year old O'Brien had reworked houses before, clubbing up with family and friends to develop properties in his 20s as a route to getting his own home. This one was also close to home, a commission from an uncle and aunt for two flats for their adult children. But the scale was different. Only the brick shell of the original would remain in the completed revamp, and that sliced into with enlarged windows and extended with a new storey behind the parapet.

Credits
Client Mr & Mrs Thompson
Architect ROAR Architects
Contractor Dardan Building Services
Joinery SLS Builders

Suppliers
Bathroom tiles Solus Ceramics
Paint Paint & Paper Library, Little Greene, Dulux

Buildings House

The first job though was to establish the paperwork for the building, which was missing a use class. Once it was established it was just one house the studio was able to apply for a single planning permission and remove the closet wing that was moving away from the house with visible cracking, facade work and extension. Only after this was through and the work was under way did ROAR apply to split the building into two homes.

After the auction O'Brien spent a couple of months camping out in the house, as his own home was completed. That was before the clear-up of nappies and rubbish in the front garden, and graffiti on the side walls, while the rooms were still dark from an oversized tree of heaven in the modest back garden. 'It gave me a chance to see how crap the house was,' he says, adding, 'Terrible circulation.'

Now it looks like one of the most handsome houses on a well heeled street. The facade, likely rebuilt post-war, was defined by cement render and oddly mean windows. Stuccoed, it holds its own: the base of the windows have been pulled down 60mm to match the rest of the street and bring in extra light, with new header and keystone details in Roman cement and rendered

IN NUMBERS

£475,000

total contract cost
(excl vat)

£2715

GIFA cost per m²

173m²

area

**JCT
Intermediate**

form of contract



Top right The living space of the upper flat is light and open plan.

Left From the back garden you can see the lower flat with its Crittall screen and, to the right, the side door entrance to the upper flat.

Right and far left The open tread ply staircase to the upper flat makes the most of the ascent.



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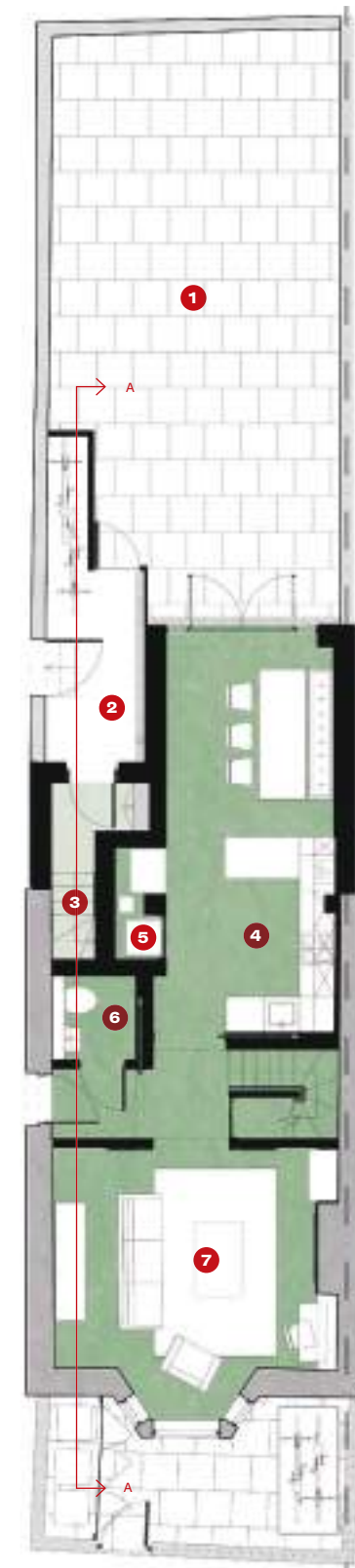
reveals. 'There was previously no detail, we didn't want to leave it as ugly,' says O'Brien. Of course, that is just the outside – it was also insulated internally and the entire ground floor damp-proofed.

It is a neat jigsaw of circulation with two independent entrances (it was important the flats could be split in the future), garden access and three flights of stairs. There are moments where the design really sings and a joy in seeing how ROAR has expressed the very different character of the two homes.

In the lower flat there is a sense of Georgian proportions with boutique hotel plushness. Looking over the small garden, Crittall-framed windows add surprising character and their frames avoid the bleed of space from the relatively narrow 3.3m wide kitchen and dining room. Green cupboards bring a punch of colour to the darkest part of the kitchen, overlooking the dining space. Space is well used, with a laundry cupboard plus a guest toilet subtly appropriating the space under the stairs of the flat above. In the same way, the second bedroom was designed for a built-in bed that sits partly over the canted ceiling above the stairs. But it



Ground floor plan



Left Ground floor
kitchen and dining.



- 1 Garden
- 2 Entrance to upper flat
- 3 Staircase to upper flat
- 4 Kitchen and dining
- 5 Laundry cupboard
- 6 Downstairs loo
- 7 Living

Above The flank wall of the house has been re-stuccoed around the lower flat's front door, along with the rest of the ground floor.

Second
floor plan



is the bathroom that we have really come upstairs to see, a sinuous insertion into the main bedroom, the dark grey opening to the warmth of orange and terrazzo-style porcelain surfaces. It has presence but the space it takes is finely judged, leaving a comfortable niche outside for a small writing desk.

The upstairs flat is a bit of a climb, up two storeys, but specially-made open tread ply stairs, dark walls and windows and a large rooflight make it a welcome journey. Halfway up (over the downstairs loo) a large display or storage shelf with mannequin hint at the fashion interests of its inhabitant. ROAR has dealt with the constraints of fire compartmentalisation at the top of the stairs with a large panel of glass, so the stair and adjoining kitchen share the space visually. The kitchen and living space are light and airy, the ply kitchen with its stowaway ladder-cum-workspace showing the versatility of ROAR's interior skills. It feels younger and lighter as it flows into the living space and it is clear this is very much a home.

The planning constraints tell most on the upper flat, a refusal for a small roof terrace, the need to build the extended upper floor behind the parapet – unfortunately a very high one which obscures the green view unless you are on your tiptoes.

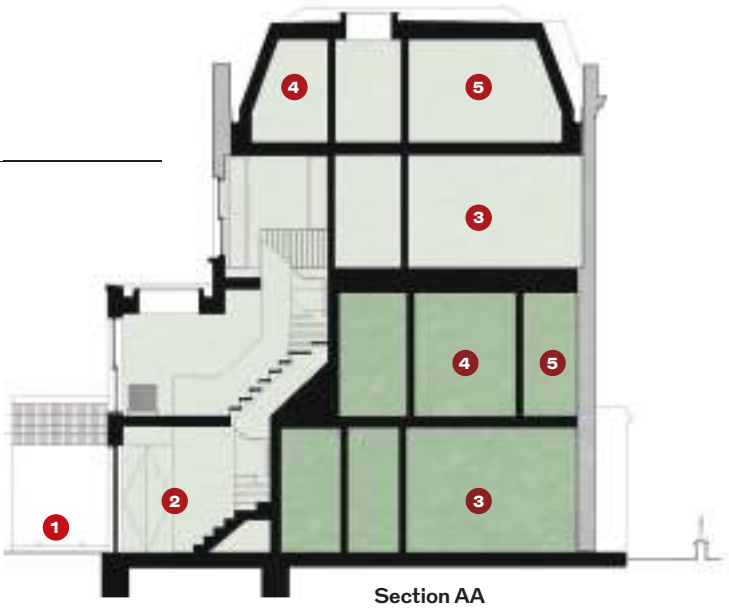
But as a rescue and re-use mission it goes beyond gentrification to make the building work really hard for a whole family and shows a range of developer and architectural skills that should stand ROAR in good stead. ●

Sill heights now match others in the street.



- 1 Garden
- 2 Staircase to upper flat
- 3 Living
- 4 Loo/bathroom
- 5 Bedroom

Below The bathroom makes neat use of the divided space of the master bedroom in the lower flat, with a warm blast of colour.



Large bespoke glass buildings

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Scandi noir

McGinlay Bell's Glasgow house prizes Nordic idioms in blackened timber, glass and brick, and geometric volumes with a domestic scale

Words: Ben Addy

Photographs: Jack Hobhouse

There is often a Nordic inflection to Scottish cultural production, not least in architecture. In the design of this house in the famously leafy and affluent Glasgow suburb Bearsden, these influences have been knowingly explored and celebrated by McGinlay Bell.

In April 2016, roughly a year before their appointment on this project, practice founders Brian McGinlay and Mark Bell took their Y4 students from Strathclyde University on a study tour to Finland: five days, five cities, 30 buildings by Alvar Aalto. The consequences of discussions instigated by this trip can be seen both in the formulation of the firm's strategic response to this site and in the detail and expression of the completed building.

A two story block of brickwork containing the most intimate rooms locates the building on the (private) street edge and provides an anchor on two sides to a comparatively informal low level pavilion of black stained timber and glass. The two volumes are legible as such at all times on the compact site and are of a markedly and appropriately different character, both internally and externally. Enclosed, with controlled and elevated views in the case of the former; expansive, fluid and permeable for the latter. The two elements are nevertheless united through a carefully judged approach to scale, lending domestic familiarity to this building; an unassuming sensibility unlike some of its more substantial neighbours that, once the



IN NUMBERS

304m²
GIA

25.4
kWh/m²/year
net energy use

6.99
kg CO₂/m²/year
emissions

4117
kWh/year on site energy
generation

Left One of three courtyards running along the home's deep plan, which help blur the distinction between inside and outside.

connection is appreciated, does indeed bring to mind Aalto's residential work. The Aalto reference is also reinforced in a direct visual manner by the vertical emphasis of the timber on the pavilion element, the asymmetric butterfly roof atop the sheer volume of the private block and a horizontal plane of brick-work set into the ground at the entrance.

These influences also reflect the clients' predilections. A construction professional and an accountant, the couple have an enthusiasm of their own for 'mid-century' architecture and the acknowledged references in the design will no doubt have brought a lot of enjoyment. However it is in the coherence of the spatial concept that the success of this project is primarily experienced.

As a response to the constrained site (formerly the neighbouring villa's tennis court) the low level pavilion is particularly effective – the orthogonal meandering of the plan provides three simple but distinct courtyards, carefully scaled and related back to the internal spaces which they adjoin. At the front of the house a 'den' abuts a timber decked suntrap; midway through the plan

Credits
Architect McGinlay Bell
Engineer Forward Consulting Engineers
Services engineer Design ME

Suppliers
Brick Petersen Brick
Timber cladding Bute Sawmills
Roof Site Sealants
Window system Schüco, Senior Architectural Systems
Rooflights Roofglaze
Flooring/microcement Top Ciment
Timber joinery Thomas Johnstone

Below There's a crisp, Scandi minimalism to the home's one-storey pavilion.

Above Vertical timber cladding and the butterfly roof of the two-storey block tacitly tip their hat to Aalto.



a pocket garden is a welcome intrusion that provides visual separation between a secondary bedroom and the living room; at the rear the kitchen and dining space extends outside the building line and into the back of the plot. While the Nordic idioms found in this building are clear to see; especially in the form and exterior detailing; on a blisteringly hot July afternoon (flip flops, palm fronds, a cooling breeze though the house) references to the west coast Case Study Houses are also enjoyably apparent in the fixed spans, material efficiency and above all the emphasis and suitability of the home as a venue for entertaining. While this house may be a departure for Bearsden in terms of aesthetics and how a home might be conceived, there is also a sense of effortless comfort that the well-heeled suburban setting will be untroubled by.

The underlying strategy has been pursued rigorously and consistently through the design process, translating well to the completed building. This is notable as the procurement of this building did not follow the conventional pattern: the project was self-managed by the client couple, with individual trades directly appointed and co-ordinated. There are instances in the detail where a disconnection in sequencing be-



Above Locally sourced black-stained timber perfectly offsets the slender, buff-coloured Petersen Tegl brick.

Top Despite being a self-managed project, good site attendance by the architects ensured the concept was carried through to the execution.

tween trades led to additional work being required to bring things back together. Project architects can come under particular pressure in such circumstances and here the increased site attendance of project architect Angus Ritchie was crucial in maintaining the clarity and cohesion of the two principal organising elements, so clear in the concept, all the way through construction.

Of course there are advantages to self-procurement, principally in relation to cost and flexibility in material sourcing. Slender bricks, of a typically high quality, were bought direct from Petersen Tegl in Denmark; and rough timber boarding, off the saw, stained black and mounted on edge, was obtained via the architect from another client's supply on the west coast of Scotland. It is gratifying that the specification of these two materials was secure throughout the process, intrinsic as they are to the external expression and detail of the building. Photographs of the building taken by Jack Hobhouse following completion also show a matter-of-fact fascia to the pavilion in black elastomeric membrane; the roof covering lapped over the perimeter and brought down to the top of the timber cladding. This has since been covered with black zinc, per-

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Buildings House



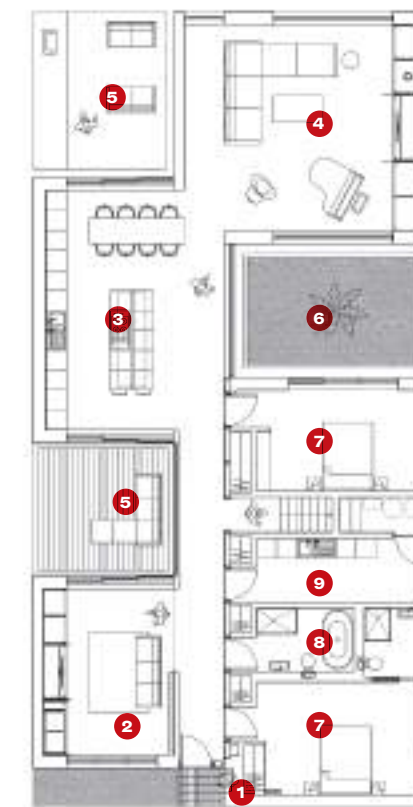
haps a more conventional facing material, although the directness of the EPDM may have been truer to the original design ethos.

Internally, the project makes extensive use of microcement in various pigments. The material is used on floors, walls and ceilings; and also sliding doors and the kitchen. The uniformity of this approach is practical – it is a versatile finishing material. However, used in multiple colours it is not the simple background that would make the most of a play of light or the clever geometric orchestration of the space, while at the same time – and given the uniformity of texture and finish – it also curiously flattens the sense of materiality. By contrast, the intersection between the two-storey volume and the pavilion is highly convincing: access to the private areas of the house is demarcated with beautifully designed, co-ordinated and fabricated cabinetry. The same book-matched joinery covers the end wall of the living room and together these elements provide a material counterpoint that lends finesse to the interior. ●

Ben Addy is managing director at Moxon

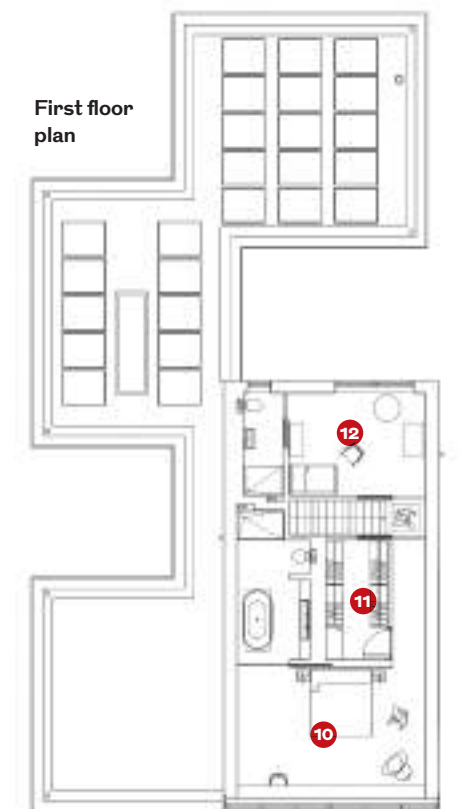


Ground floor plan



There is a sense of effortless comfort that the well-heeled suburban setting will be untroubled by

First floor plan



Top left Bathrooms use microcement floor and wall finishes for a homogenous feel.

Top right Courtyards help the home seem like a fluid grouping of internal and external spaces.

Left The pavilion holds the main living and dining areas, with the brick block forming more intimate sleeping spaces.

- 1 Entrance
- 2 The Den
- 3 Kitchen/ dining
- 4 Living room
- 5 Courtyard
- 6 Garden courtyard
- 7 Bedroom
- 8 Family bathroom
- 9 Utility room
- 10 Master bedroom ensuite
- 11 Dressing room
- 12 Study



On many levels

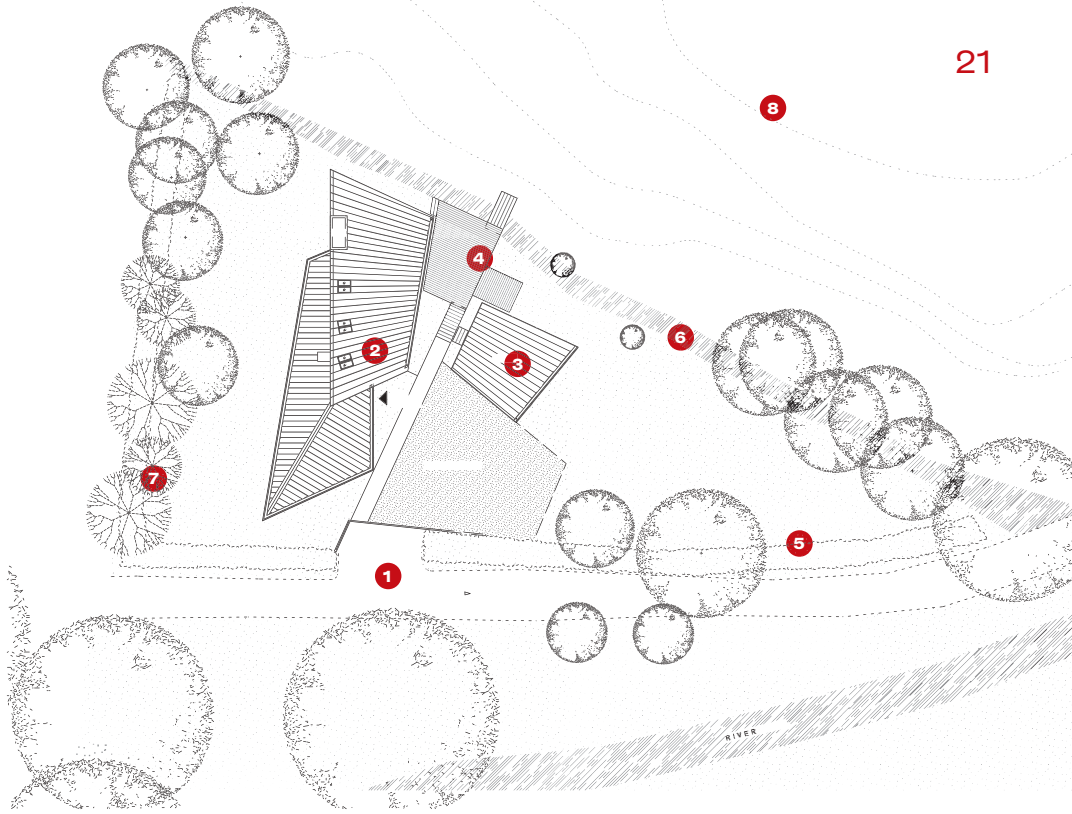
Much of the charm of Cowper Griffith’s quirky and engaging house is a result of its Norfolk floodplain location

Words: Isabelle Priest Photographs: Peter Cook



Below The three volumes of the building were inspired by the patterns in the bark of a tree, but also the client’s desire to build something interesting.

- 1 Front gate
- 2 Main house
- 3 Garage/recording studio
- 4 External terrace
- 5 Orchard
- 6 Stream/ditch
- 7 Conifer trees
- 8 Salt marsh



Architects can sometimes be disparaging about the existing buildings on a site before they get to unravel their creativity on it. I have a friend whose childhood home was described by the architect for its RIBA Awards submission as suffering from ‘decades of neglect’, ‘eerily cold’ and ‘draughty’ – even though it had been entirely refurbished a few years before. Convincing planning departments a development should happen can play a role in the words that emerge, but journalists should be wary of repeating adjectives like ‘rotten’ and ‘dilapidated’ which architects use to describe the homes most people are content living in. Since that experience with my friend’s house, I’ve learned to be more careful.

My thoughts turned to this again last month as I stood with Cowper Griffith architect Stuart Everatt in the zinc-lined loggia off the first-floor master bedroom at the

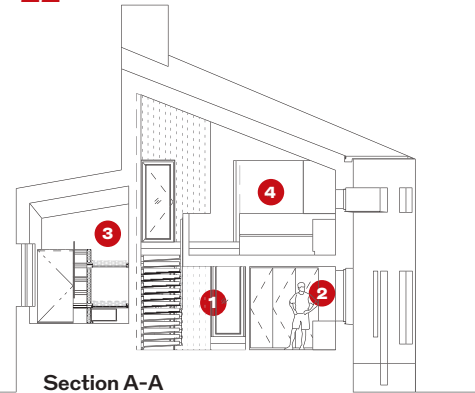
front of Marsh Edge House in Norfolk. Below, on the narrow lane that leads past the house to the sea, a woman had stopped her car and was peering over the hedgerow at the new knapped flint and timber building with its dynamic angular roofs. She looked perplexed and then started talking to us, wondering if we might be the owners.

It turned out the bungalow that had previously been on the site was her mother’s home for 25 years until a few years ago. She recalled how it had been a happy place, full of memories and how it had been a ‘wrench’ to let go. Knowing the architect was in front of her, it was notable she didn’t say she liked the look of it now. She was more concerned to know if the new house had retained the name of the old.

Everatt hadn’t actually been too tough when describing the existing building to me. He only used a couple of the words mentioned,

The house sits on a flood plain, at risk from the sea but also the surrounding marsh.





but it’s interesting to acknowledge how the themes of finding beauty in things ageing well and patinas in today’s architecture are only acceptable if they develop after a site has been renewed. Since we need to find ways to demolish less and reuse more, maybe we also need to find different intrinsic beauties like those reminisced by the woman at the gate – those less tangible and perfectly good.

Marsh Edge House is the last home on a track that ends with the sea in north Norfolk, beyond Hunstanton. Twenty years ago, Cowper Griffith completed a house further back which the clients bought 10 years ago and loved. More recently they commissioned the practice to build a chalet studio opposite. When this latest plot came up, the clients decided to build a new home as well. The brief was to maximise the number of bedrooms, views of the setting, build as sustainably as possible and make a unique, interesting home worthy of its location. A row of conifers bounds one side of the triangular plot while to the north, the site is separated from the beach



IN NUMBERS
202m²
Gross internal area



Changing levels inside and out, the exterior lounge deck slices between the main house and the garage, offering views diagonally through the site.

- 1 Hallway
- 2 Utility
- 3 Bunk bed room
- 4 Kitchen and dining area
- 5 Veranda
- 6 Dressing area
- 7 Master bedroom
- 8 Chimney stack

Left The richly coloured bespoke iroko wood front door is designed to contrast with the weathering sweet chestnut of the cladding.



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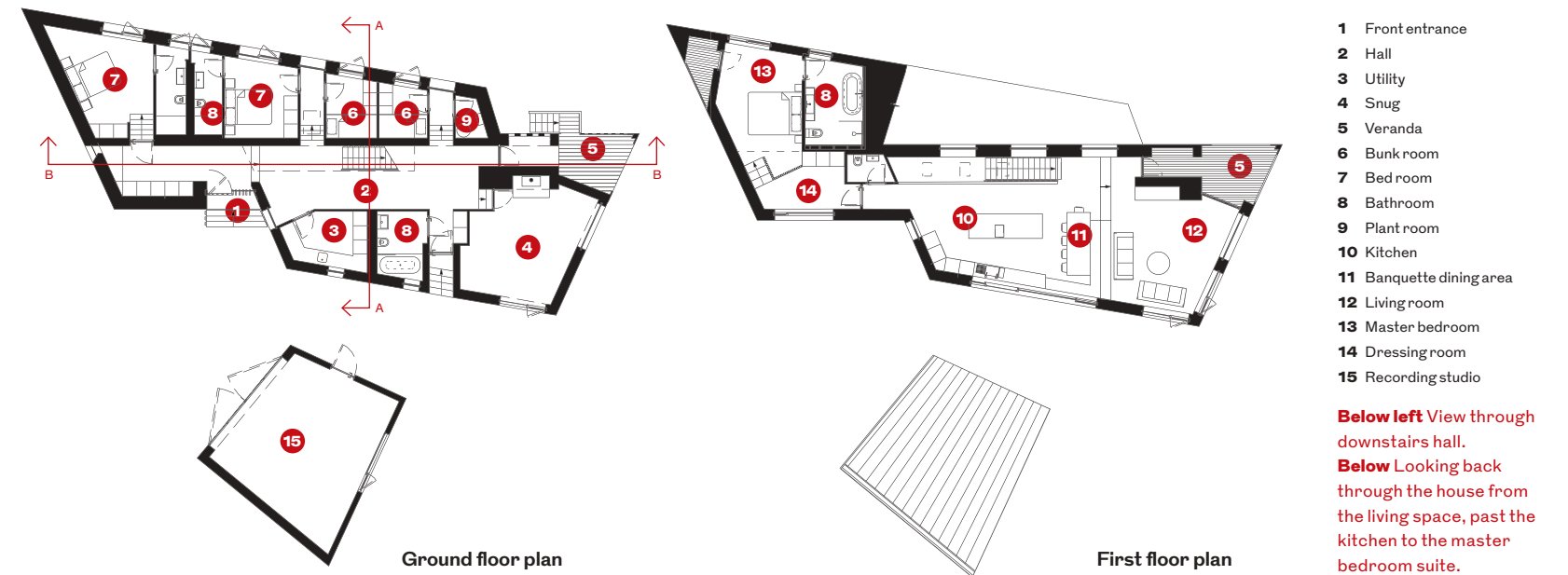
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Buildings House



by a stream, the coastal path and three-quarters of a mile of salt marsh. There is a bird sanctuary at the end of the lane on the other boundary and to the south is the village. The clients are a musician and his family. He likes to paint and birdwatch, and would bring references to artworks to project meetings. You can see these interests coming through in the house's architecture.

Memories of the site are not completely erased, however. The triangular arrangement of its three blocks, two collided together separated from the other by a miniaturised canyon leading to the sea, was inspired by patterns found on the bark of a tree on the site. The

triangular theme is replicated across the finished building in the two-storey stained glass window by the entrance, the design of the stair railings, and the joinery of the bespoke oak fitted wardrobes in the ante room of the master bedroom used as a dressing room.

'This is not a normal home,' explains Everatt. 'It has small purposeful bedrooms and there is an emphasis on living space. A major design focus was also around flooding because the house is right on the floodplain of the marsh and the sea.'

To the left of the plot is the main house, a flint-faced front block with an interlocking timber weatherboarded block offset behind.

To the right is a double garage, also weatherboarded, which is being converted into a recording studio now the clients have decided to spend more time in Norfolk. The buildings step down in height from the conifers to the house then garage. The knapped flint is inspired by the local vernacular, albeit carried out in a more challenging contemporary way with continuous corners rather than traditional red brick coins.

Where the two volumes intersect along the central side is the entrance, set back with a deep reveal like the windows on the front elevation. The stained glass window creates a sense of arrival. As you climb the horizontal





Level changes create idiosyncratic spatial experiences yet happen so effortlessly you barely notice them

Left Compact bunk room with bespoke plywood joinery designed to accommodate only as much stuff as absolutely necessary.

Top right Sneaking past the bespoke oak wardrobe joinery up another level in the master bedroom.

Below Looking back towards the front door in the hall. To the left is the bottom half of the stained glass window with its triangular design and smoked panels.

Credits
Architect Cowper Griffith
Client Private
Contractor Robson Construction
Structural engineer Cambridge Architectural Research
Lighting designer Workplane Lighting
CLT designer/supplier Eurban
Joiner Scope Joinery



the dressing area to the bed area, which is a theme throughout the house. The changes in level create idiosyncratic spatial experiences but were initially created to deal with the flooding risk. The hallway is high up enough in the event of the 10-15-year flood, while the snug and bedrooms that come off it each have their own short associated stair to raise you up again for the 100-year flood. The trick Cowper Griffith has pulled off so brilliantly is that the level changes happen so effortlessly and comfortably you barely notice them.

This carefulness is evident all around the house, which is stylishly quirky and engaging – you are in continuous dialogue with the architecture and its setting as you move around. That might become burdensome if executed badly but here the references and interactions create a subconscious context appropriate for a second home designed as a retreat and place to enjoy oneself. Downstairs, the CLT is simply white painted in the guest bedrooms, giving a kind of European holiday camp vibe. At the same time, the sliver of cork detail where the oak timber meets the wall is minutely accurate and refined. Everywhere there is a richness of materials: limestone hearths, encaustic and zellige tiles in the bathrooms, the blackened steel handrail, oak, ply, sweet chestnut, flint and concrete.

To many designers the array of materials and textures would spell disaster. But here it creates enough interest and architectural weightiness to give a sense that the home could endure. It's precious in how carefully it has been designed, but less so in style terms, which is refreshing, easier to imagine living in. Maybe it is in that complexity that Marsh Edge House perpetuates the memories made in the old bungalow – and how you can see it becoming the site of many new ones too. ●

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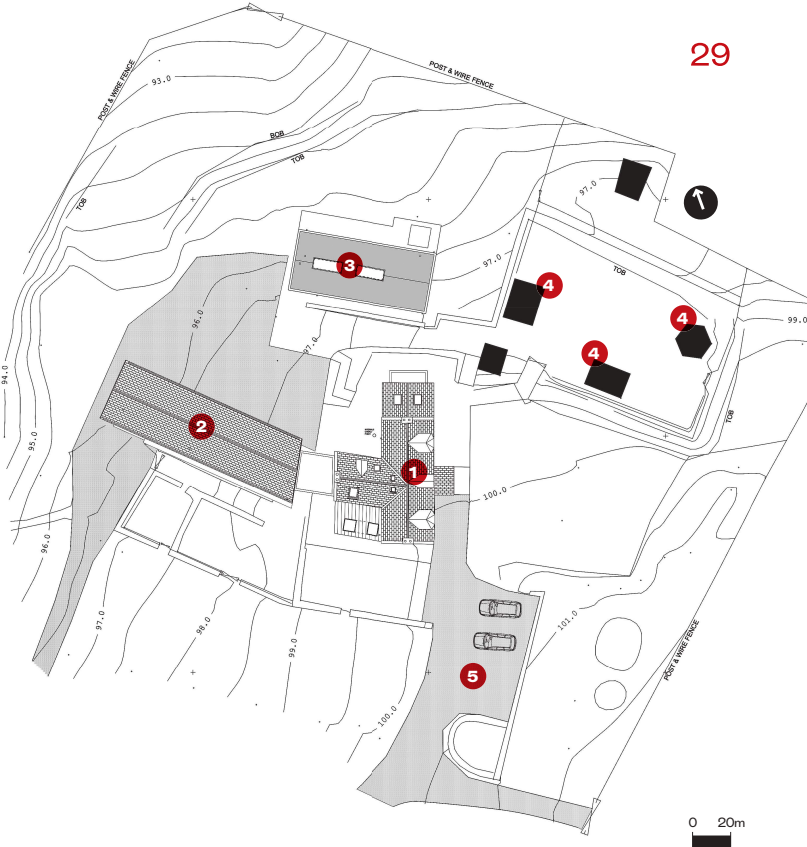
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Let it snow

Brown and Brown is used to designing for the climate of the Scottish Highlands, so it knows how to make a thick coat elegant

Words: Hugh Pearman Photographs: Dapple Photography



Site plan

- 1 Existing farmhouse
- 2 New living space extension
- 3 Games room and guest suite
- 4 Outbuilding
- 5 External parking

‘So much of what we do is landscape and weather driven,’ says Andrew Brown. He and wife and business partner Kate set up their eponymous practice in 2010 – the date will tell you that this was after the great recession following the financial crash. Before that, between them they had worked for Scottish practices including Rural Design on the Isle of Skye, Simpson and Brown, RMJM and Richard Murphy Architects in Edinburgh (profiled in RIBA J April 2020).

This, then, was a rural, altitudinous fresh start for a lowland couple - Andrew is from Glasgow, Kate from Beverley in East Yorkshire. Their base at Strathdon on the eastern side of the Cairngorms is pretty remote, and explains their connection to weather and landscape. Last winter, Andrew says, the temperature hit 24° below zero at one point and they had a metre and a half of snow on their green studio roof. But as he says, it’s not the cold that matters so much as the wind, and that affects everything from levels of insulation and triple-glazing to structural en-

Right and left The new extension continues the ground floor of the original farmhouse over the sloping side onto a new plinth that ends with a cantilever.



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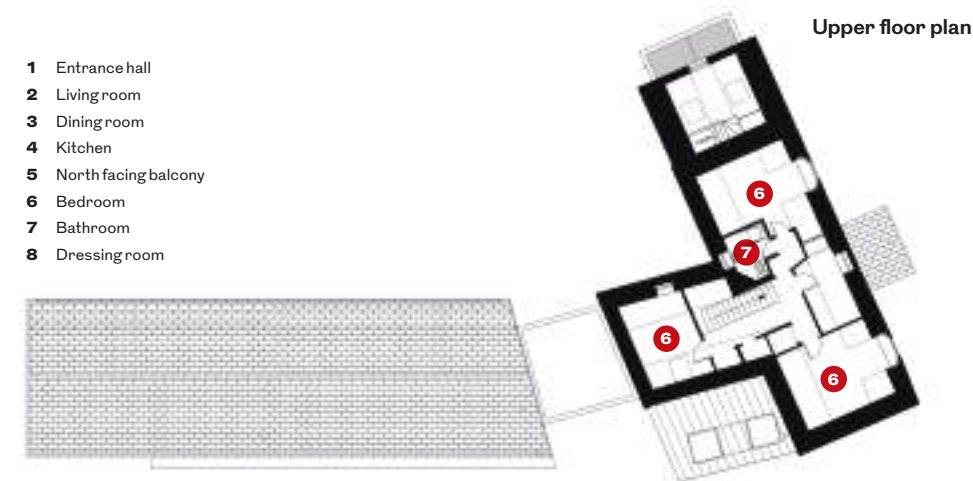
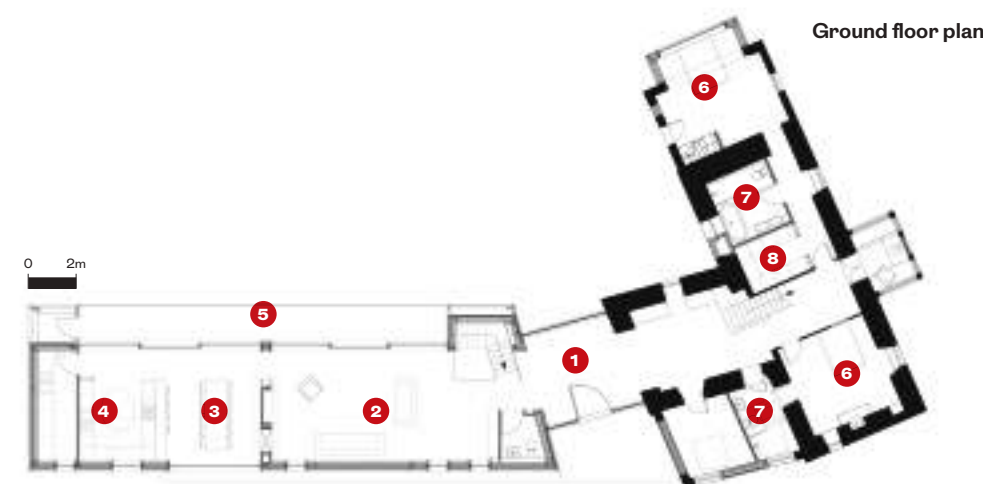
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Buildings House



- 1 Entrance hall
- 2 Living room
- 3 Dining room
- 4 Kitchen
- 5 North facing balcony
- 6 Bedroom
- 7 Bathroom
- 8 Dressing room



A glazed link joins the original house and new extension, also acting as a passive solar collector for the main house in the winter.



gineering that pays great attention to wind loading and uplift.

Compared to where its architects live, the site of this house at Tullochgrue on the western side of the national park near the Aviemore ski slopes is relatively sheltered by Highlands standards; but the new building is still stoutly tied down and braced through its steel frame (with timber-frame wall infill). A rural retreat for a large multi-generation extended family, it is designed to be used all year round, sometimes as a work base: so it's much more heavily occupied than an occasional bolthole.

The design evolved as a single-storey extrusion angling away from an existing T-plan, 19th century, two-storey former farmhouse. This was in fair condition, so needed relatively light adaptation though it is lengthened slightly with a short added bay at its north end. The new extension is set

A woodburning stove and twin air-source heat pumps provide the only heating

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Buildings House

well back from the old house, connected by a glazed link that has the benefit of acting as a passive solar collector in winter, warming the old building. A large glass pivot entrance door ventilates it in summer. Other than a woodburning stove, the only heating comes from twin air-source heat pumps, working on a cascade system whereby one is sufficient when the house is only partly occupied, switching from one to the other to balance the usage. The house has mains electricity though water supply and drainage are (as is common in the area) off-grid.

There is nothing exceptional in the layout of this shoot-out – it contains a living room, kitchen-dining area, utility room and toilet. In contrast to the cellular nature of the old house, the new wing is spacious and light, providing large entertainment spaces rising to the underside of the roof pitch. Externally the topography provides the design stimulus. The land falls away quite sharply behind the old house, which was itself built on made-up ground. Down on the lower level and to one side was a dilapidated barn. The client's original idea was to somehow connect the house to this and refurbish it. Instead, Brown and Brown proposed keeping the extension on the ground floor level of the old house – much better for less able-bodied family members over time – which in turn meant building a masonry plinth to put it on, clad



Above View through hallway, past stair leading to the ground floor, to the new living room beyond.

IN NUMBERS

5,315m²
site area

370m²
project area including original house

£2,350
cost per m²

Credits
Architect Brown and Brown
Structural engineer Design Engineering Workshop
Contractor Spey Building and Joinery
Bespoke metalwork Metal Manufacture
Timber supplier Russwood
Glazing suppliers Internorm, Skyframe

Below left Steel and timber open tread stair down to the garage level.

Below An enclosed balcony runs along the northern elevation of the new living block to capture the best views.



in local stacked stone from the same (briefly reopened) local quarry that this farmstead originally used. Investigation revealed that the old house was, as Brown puts it, 'standing on almost nothing', with large voids in the banked-up ground beneath it. Consolidating that with civil engineering interlocking concrete blocks delayed the overall programme by around six months.

There was one other design consideration: the family's prized Ford Falcon, a 'compact' early 1960s American car. That had to be able to negotiate the track round the end of the house and park under shelter. The solution to that little problem was to express the end of the new wing as a propped cantilever, with enough space either side of the V-angled steel columns for the car to drive past, or park. There are also a couple of garages and a utility/plantroom built into the plinth on the north side, accessible internally from upstairs via a rather fine steel and timber open-tread stair.

The propped cantilever/drivethrough recurs in other of Brown and Brown's house designs but it's not wholly generated by vehicle access: it's also a way of reducing the bulk of the end of the building, not making the plinth over-dominant from below. Even so, in this one respect it recalls Corbusier's Villa Savoye of 1928-31, the pilotis of which were spaced (and the ground floor shaped)



to accommodate the angular Voisin C7 cars driven by both architect and client.

You might expect there to be a balcony, or at any rate a window, in the western end elevation, but no, it remains a solid wall clad like the rest of the building in black-painted Siberian larch. This is because the good views are to the north, looking across to the ski slopes of Aviemore. On this flank the new wing has a long balcony cut into it, beneath the over-sailing slate roof. The soffits to balcony and cantilever are in the same larch, but with a clear weathering coating. Balustrades inside and out are vertically-cantilevered laminated glass sheets with no handrail. In the main bedroom in the old house, a long horizontal window cut into the north gable end frames the same view.

There is a large expanse of glazing on both sides, all triple-glazed, while the



Top left One ground floor bedroom in the old farmhouse has a horizontal window punched in.

Above The extension is clad at upper level with black-painted Siberian larch and local stone below.

Below The dining space sits between the kitchen and through fireplace to the sitting area.

The good views are to the north, looking across to the ski slopes of Aviemore

thickness of the window reveals inside and out is testament to the high level of insulation – way beyond regulations according to Brown, though they were not targeting any particular standard such as Passivhaus. The rigid insulation wraps right round, encasing the floorslab as well as walls and roof.

The architectural language inside continues the vernacular-modern theme: most exposed timber is left pale-natural, walls and ceilings white. Cupboards and cabinets are in dark greens and greys. Light is key, all daylight coming from the sides with no roof piercings.

The architect also designed a separate green-roofed timber games room/guest suite down below where the farm outbuildings used to be. Beyond those, it is the closer wooded landscape that you see and which the architect maintained by keeping the work site as small as it could in order to preserve the setting from damage. All in all it's an accomplished piece of work, a fine place to be with a glass of good Speyside malt on a frosty day with the stove going. ●

Traditional materials create robust heritage

York Handmade's solid brick and stone give a newbuild classical country house the solidity and presence of age



Hulmefield Hall began construction in late 2015 and was complete in early 2018. The house sits within 125 acres of prime Cheshire countryside and enjoys views across the Cheshire plains. Nigel Daly Design practice of Knutsford Cheshire spent the preceding two years negotiating with Cheshire East planning department to replace a farm and ancillary buildings with a substantial country house inspired by the neo-classical era. The planning permission provided for a 20,000ft² development consisting of the 15,000ft² main house and 5,000ft² garaging, equipment stores, stables, garden kitchens and staff quarters.

Nigel Daly Design was extremely detailed in every aspect of the design and especially that of the building materials. The choice of the Galtres Blend brick was enhanced by the un-tooled 'old English' lime mortar, which stood alongside the sharp lines of fletcher bank stone, heavy section

Above This magnificent period house truly enhances the Cheshire countryside in which it is situated.

Above right This picture illustrates the high quality brickwork which adds to the classic nature of the project.

Galtres Blend brick was enhanced by the un-tooled 'old English' lime mortar



woodwork and a reclaimed welsh slate roof covering. The overall appearance achieved is that of an established country house rather than a newly built development.

The accommodation includes a substantial basement with swimming pool, gymnasium, cinema and wine rooms. On the ground floor are numerous entertaining rooms, studies and open plan modern living areas. A winged staircase in an imposing entrance hall leads to two further floors with family and guest bedroom suites. Outside are another swimming pool and tennis court in landscaped and manicured gardens, which open out to the grazing fields. The house was shortlisted for Best Individual Housing Development at the 2019 BDA Brick Awards.

The technical design incorporated use of the available land by installing a ground source heat pump which services the house and both swimming pools. ●



The Red House incorporates material and spatial references to works by Loos, Aldo van Eyck, James Stirling and the Smithsons as well as CFA Voysey.

Enjoyably eccentric

David Kohn Architects blends playfulness and pragmatism in an Arts & Crafts-inspired Dorset family house

Words: Chris Foges Photographs: Will Pryce

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After a fruitless search for the perfect country getaway among the chocolate-box villages of Wiltshire, a London couple switched tack and ventured further west, to the working farmland of north Dorset. In the rolling country south of Shaftesbury, they soon struck gold. Driving up a pitted track towards a dilapidated farmworker's house on high ground, they were sold on its isolation and panoramic views even before getting out of the car. Nevertheless, it was to be almost 10 years before the couple – now in their 50s – spent a night there, under the oversailing, almost alpine roof of an extraordinary new house that has replaced the crumbling cottage. It was worth the wait. Not only has David Kohn Architects produced a building rich in incident and ideas, but the project also benefits from the refinement of the owners' aims over time.

That happened through a series of false starts. The couple – Edward and Stephen – first appointed another architect to remodel the house, but there was little

Above Red brick echoes Dorset farmhouses, while brickwork patterns recall Aalto's Muuratsalo house.

IN NUMBERS

284m²

Gross internal area

26 months

Construction period

worth keeping; better to start again. Having only lived in small flats, and with possessions in storage, they asked for lots of space and secured consent for a house twice the size. Something didn't feel right, however, and the project was dropped. Another architect developed a scheme in a traditional style, but that lacked ambition. 'We wanted a house that was unashamedly of its era,' says Edward. A third designer proposed rerouting the adjacent track to make a squarer plot. On reflection, the couple concluded that privacy would be beneficially relieved by the occasional sight of dog-walkers and delivery drivers led astray by errant satnavs.

Somewhat exhausted – and by now thinking of a family home rather than a place for weekend breaks – they turned to Kohn, who they knew from his work on galleries. Their brief was clear. 'It should be practical, not grand,' says Edward. 'A country house that can cope with mud, rain and dogs running through, and which lets you know that you can relax.'

Kohn’s Red House is only slightly bigger than the existing one. ‘The aim was to make it compact,’ he says, ‘reducing the specifics of the previous brief to something both tighter and more flexible.’ The clients’ desire to avoid clutter was the genesis of an ingenious plan. Three ‘cores’ are arranged along each of the long sides on both floors, accommodating a larder, laundry, bathrooms and storage, and separating four generous rooms on the ground floor – an enfilade punctuated by deep reveals. Living rooms at either end face north and south. In between lie a kitchen-diner and a grand hall with a fluid, curving oak stair. Each room bulges outward in a rounded bay. That brings a whiff of the arts and crafts, which also inspired the incorporation of various small niche spaces in and outside the house. ‘The adjustments to a classical plan in arts and crafts houses are often the most joyful and memorable parts,’ says Kohn. ‘They can have greater power than the rooms themselves.’

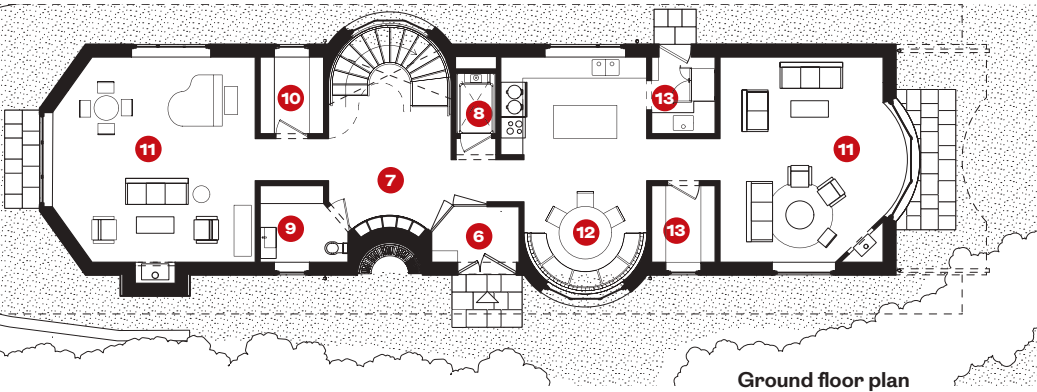
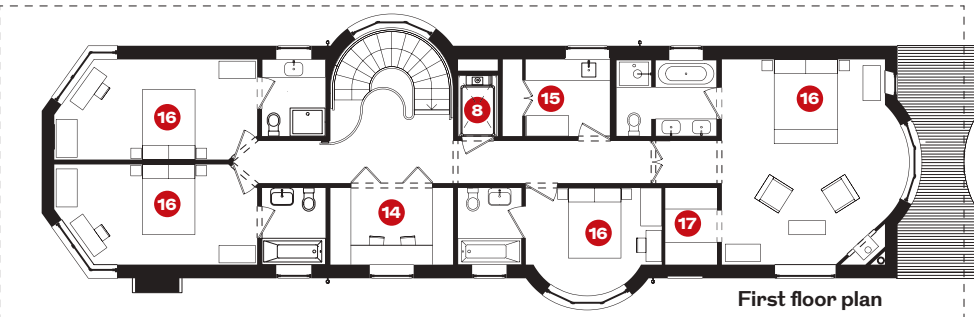
That story starts outside the front door, where an arched alcove shelters waiting visitors. Stepping into a glazed vestibule and onward into the hall, long views open up. With the thresholds between rooms slightly out of alignment, these are tantalising glimpses rather than a full reveal. It lends a pleasing ambiguity to the interior, a delicate balance between the easy informality of an open plan and the sense of protection offered by enclosed rooms. And it seems to work for family life. The couple’s daughter can scoot unhindered from end to end, but sound from a piano doesn’t disturb someone working in another room.

‘We describe it as a Dolly Parton house ... It cost a lot of money to look this cheap’

Site plan



- | | | | |
|-------------------|------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 House | 6 Lobby | 11 Living room | 15 Laundry |
| 2 Car port | 7 Hall | 12 Kitchen-dining room | 16 Ensuite bedroom |
| 3 Proposed studio | 8 Lift | 13 Utility/larder room | 17 Dressing room |
| 4 Garden | 9 Toilet | 14 Study | |
| 5 Lane | 10 Storage | | |



Below A glazed vestibule opens on to a generous hall.



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IMAGINE WHAT’S NEXT



By Hydro

Light pours in on all sides, bouncing off a pale wood floor and white blockwork walls, against which verdant views from every window register as bright pops of colour. Like the surface-mounted socket boxes and plywood cabinetry, these humble materials provide a counterpoint to beautiful artwork and furniture, and are elevated by pains taken over detailing. ‘We describe it as a Dolly Parton house,’ says Edward. ‘As she said, “It cost a lot of money to look this cheap”.’

Upstairs, the architect’s spatial games are most evident in the largest bedroom, where the curved bay window segues into a diagonal chimney breast – turning a squareish room into a pentagon – and intersects with the steep pitch of the roof to suggest a draped, tent-like ceiling. In the adjoining bathroom,

Right In the main bedroom, a round window with a slanted reveal gives a view of the sky from the bed.

Below On the first floor, the stair banister flares to form a niche space with views over fields.

Bottom right North-facing living room.



Edward points out some of the unobtrusive features that equip the house for old age – an important aspect of the project. ‘I’ve seen what happens when a house becomes a prison,’ he says. One ‘core’ contains a lift, and futureproofing extends to many small details: there are two handrails on the staircase, rounded corners on built-in furniture in case of falls, and grab-rails on the fronts of high cupboards.

Pragmatism combines with enjoyable eccentricity outside. Pronounced eaves that provide shade and shelter from rain also contribute to an impression that is both strange and familiar. Each of the functional elements is handled in an inventive or unusual way. Red brick echoes local farmhouses (Kohn was keen to avoid conventional Dorset green stone or the clichéd language

Unobtrusive features equip the house for old age



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Left Bathrooms and other functional spaces in the ‘cores’ have round or lunette windows.

Credits
Client Private
Architect
David Kohn Architects
Design team David Kohn, Robin Turner, Tom Whittaker, Matt Volsen, Jennifer Dyne
Structural engineer
Momentum
Services engineer
SGA Consulting
Quantity surveyor
Peter Gunning & Partners
Ecologist AEWC
Arboriculturist
Barrell Tree Consultancy
Main contractor
Ken Biggs Contractors
Interior designer
8 Holland Street

of agricultural barns) but is laid both horizontally and vertically. That is not as capricious as it first appears: the former denotes the location of cores within.

Bright green windows and curving downpipes have a geometric order, which is deliberately subverted in a few places: one bullseye window ‘drifts’ across the south elevation. Windows in the north facade suggest a face. Such playfulness has a serious purpose, says Kohn. ‘It’s about claiming licence for pleasure, and the extent to which we allow figuration in architecture today. We need to recover what has been excluded.’

The emerald trappings have raised some eyebrows locally, but are intended to ensure that the house is of its time and place. ‘It is neighbourly, just not the same as the neighbours – which can seem quite provocative’, says Kohn. The clients were committed to the idea that the project should have concerns beyond their own enjoyment. ‘We wanted to make a contribution to the landscape,’ says Edward, ‘and for the house to be seen – once people have got used to it – as a worthy addition’. They have succeeded in making a notable work of architecture, but not at the expense of creating a welcoming home. ‘You are asked to think about the house throughout, but not in a pushy way,’ says Kohn. ‘After all, life comes first.’ ●



Curving metal downpipes support a verandah on the south facade.

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itecture. We call it 'Architecture for the common good' because it celebrates those built projects which are of demonstrable and wide social benefit. It brings together the well known with the up-and-coming, the national with the local.

As with all the awards we run at RIBA, it is free to enter and aims to reach previously under-represented parts of the profession.

The MacEwen Award is named after Anni and Malcolm MacEwen, she first an urban planner who pioneered a conservation-based approach to regeneration in town and country, he a campaigning journalist and former editor of this magazine.

This year, as last, we are delighted to be supported by BDP, a hugely successful multi-discipline practice that has always been guided by a strong social ethos.

The deadline is 2pm on Monday 15 November. ●



JUDGES
Denise Bennetts, co-founder, Bennetts Associates
Kathy MacEwen, planner and daughter of Malcolm and Anni MacEwen
Robyn Poulson, architect, BDP
Tom Surman and Percy Weston, Surman Weston;
MacEwen Award 2021 winner for Hackney School of Food
Eleanor Young, acting editor RIBA Journal (chair)

Judges will be looking for a proactive, project-appropriate approach; architectural ingenuity and evidence of social, environmental and economic benefit to the wider community

TO ENTER YOU WILL NEED
Project details and credits
Client statement
Outline of the beneficial impact of the scheme
Images and drawings

www.ribaj.com/macewen-awards

Left Last year's MacEwen winner, Hackney School of Food by Surman Weston.

Below Bunhill 2 Energy Centre by Cullinan Studio, commended in the MacEwen Awards 2021.



Project niu airport hotel, Bremen Architects Westphal Architekten BDA, Bremen Project development Peper & Söhne Projekt GmbH, Bremen Photographer Anke Müller Klein, Hamburg

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65

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2: Intelligence



Places, planning
& community

**Susannah
Walker**

**Imogen
Clark**



With women's safety
in public space
high on the agenda,
Make Space for Girls
founders explain
their work

**In March you
started a charity
campaigning to
improve play space
for teenage girls.
What sparked that?**

**Why focus on gender
equity in parks,
rather than all public
spaces?**

**What have you done
so far?**

**Has anyone
expressed concern
at the idea of
creating different
spaces for boys and
girls?**

**What are the
solutions?**

SW Caroline Criado Perez's book *Invisible Women* notes that the things parks usually provide for teenagers – a skate park, BMX track and a MUGA – are almost exclusively used by boys. We worry about girls' health and safety, but it's also a social issue. Public space says: 'There's nothing for you'. I contacted my local council, but was brushed off. Imogen, a friend and a lawyer, thought there might be a legal basis for a campaign. IC The Equality Act 2010 says public authorities must have due regard for the needs of disadvantaged groups. In park provision that is teenage girls. We want to use that law as a positive framework for reducing inequality.

SW Good organisations are working in areas like schools; playspaces was a weird gap. When children go to parks with parents, girls and boys access facilities more equally. Once they go on their own, research in Sweden found a ratio of 80:20 boys to girls. There is a problem, but it's not intractable: it can be fixed.

SW One aim was to gather data. Lots of money goes into parks and no-one asks who is using them. We've worked with Sport Yorkshire to initiate research on five parks. We also want to trial interventions, and consultation for a project in Bath is starting soon. Reaction has been very positive. We didn't so much push at an open door as get flung into the middle of the room, very fast.

IC We don't want different spaces, but spaces that can be used by all. A fenced pitch with narrow entrances does not feel safe for girls, nor places where large groups of boys hang around. US research shows that living near a park makes girls more active, unless it has a skate park. To make more equitable space, we must recognise that.

SW It's partly the facilities – teenage girls like banks of swings, which are often fenced off in toddlers' play-grounds – and partly their design; there's interesting work on how skateparks can be friendlier. Our website, makespaceforgirls.co.uk, has examples of good practice. IC Also engaging with teenage girls, and siting facilities sensitively. Teenage girls like passive surveillance: paths, lighting and subdivision to accommodate different groups. Boys expand to fill available space. That's why architects are important to what we are doing: we need to be more creative in how we see space in parks.

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There are models for remembrance and teaching, and a Jørn Utzon model of Sydney Opera House made to convince engineer Ove Arup that it would be possible to build

Pamela Buxton enjoys life in miniature at the Building Centre: ribaj.com/models-exhibition



Intelligence is officially approved RIBA CPD. Look out for icons throughout the section indicating core curriculum areas.



Pay creeps back up

The RIBA's salary survey has good news for employment and the lower paid

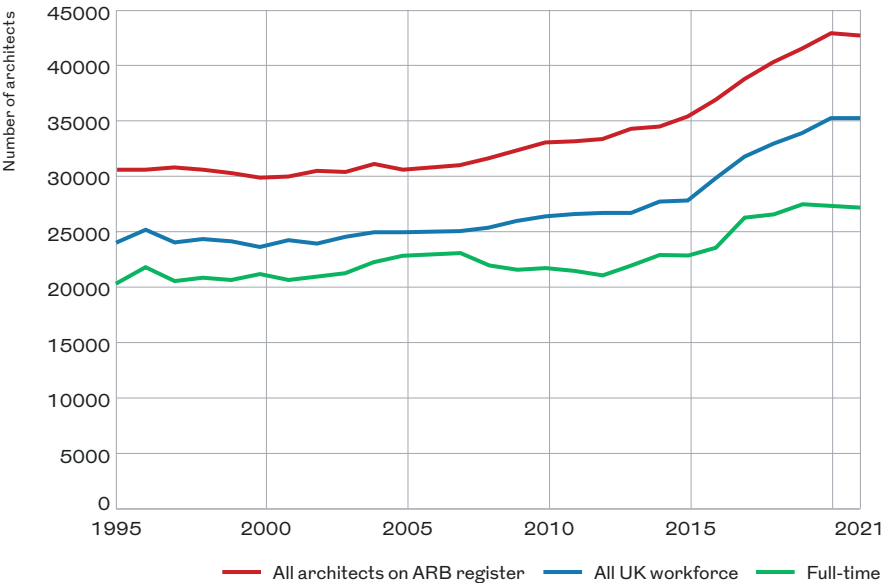
Aziz Mirza

The seismic changes almost everyone is experiencing as a result of the pandemic have affected this profession in three ways, according to results from the latest RIBA/The Fees Bureau survey of architects' earnings.

First, the number of architects has stopped growing. In the five years to 2019, more than 1,000 new architects were added to the profession every year. Some of these came from overseas, others were home-grown as the rise in university places saw many more emerging as newly qualified architects. But by the end of 2020, the number of architects on the ARB register stopped growing. In so much of the economy, it is difficult to separate the effects of the pandemic from the effects of Brexit. But the rise in numbers of architects continued for four years after the referendum vote. Unlike other sectors of the economy, EU nationals did not leave the profession after the referendum. It's a different story after the pandemic; across the country, as people realised the work from home order was to be a long-term change, EU nationals have been moving back home.

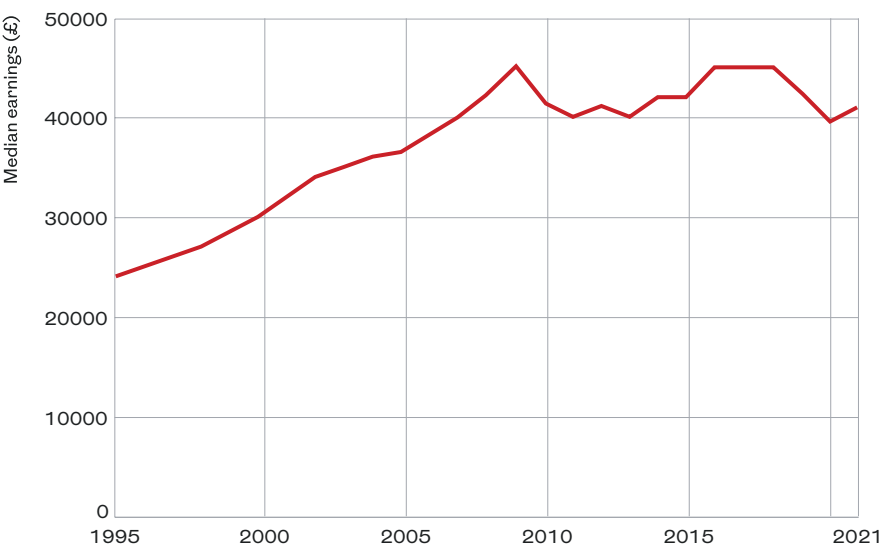
Second, average earnings have moved erratically. Pay fell substantially in 2020 but much of that fall has been reversed this year. Last year's drop needs to be set in context – earnings had been falling anyway. Until 2015, architects' average earnings had risen consistently for 13 years. This came to an end as average earnings flattened out and then started to fall. The most likely reason for the end of rising earnings is the large increase in

Long-term trends in the number of architects in employment, 1995-2021

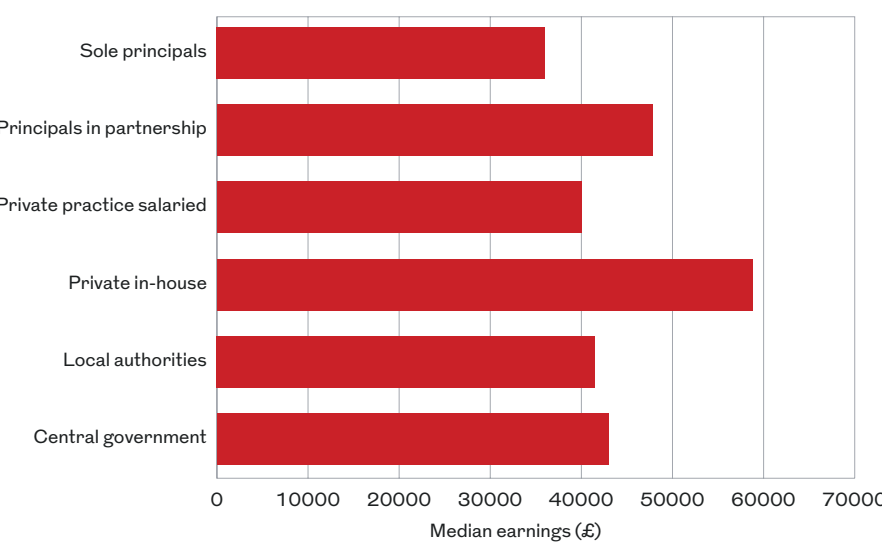


Older architects are paid more, but are experiencing falling earnings. Younger architects are paid less but are seeing average salary rises

Trends in architects' median earnings, 1995-2021



Architects' median earnings by field of employment, 2021



the number of architects, where the influx of many more young, less experienced and therefore less well paid architects brought the overall average down. But in the last two years, changes have become more exaggerated. A large fall last year has partly reversed this. Uncertain times lead to uncertain moves in the figures.

Structural changes

Third, there have been structural changes to the profession. In 2020 part-time working rose massively, partly on the back of furlough. We went from 16 per cent part-time in 2019 to 24 per cent in 2020. It has now moved back to 15 per cent this year. At the same time, the number of architects who are unemployed or not working for other reasons is broadly unchanged (3 per cent in 2019, to 4 per cent in 2020 and now back to 3 per cent) – a remarkable outcome.

Average salaries in 2021 have increased for the largest group, salaried architects in private practices. That excludes partners and directors. The average rise for salaried architects is 5 per cent, although because salaries fell last year, this year's figure is only 1.2 per cent higher than in 2019.

Delving within those figures, though, shows that salaried architects' average earnings have fallen a little compared with 2019 in medium sized practices (practice size 11-30 staff was £40,000 in 2019, compared with £38,000 now) but earnings are higher in large practices. The average for salaried architects in practices with more than 50 staff is up from £41,000 in 2019 to £43,900 now.

IN NUMBERS

£41,000
architects' average earnings on 1 April 2021

3%
rise in earnings over last year

3%
fall in average earnings from pre-pandemic levels (2019)

These rises in larger practices may reflect what is happening in the broader economy, where labour shortages are being addressed by offering more cash to recruit and retain. That could be a growing trend for the next 12 months and it is possible that rising salaries could filter down to architects working for smaller practices, too.

The upward trend in average earnings of salaried architects in private practices contrasts with the average earnings of partners and directors in those same practices. These are 4 per cent lower this year than last, but the fall is even greater compared with 2019. The average earnings of all partners and directors this year is £47,800; compare that with the average of £60,000 recorded just two years ago. This year, average earnings for partners and directors have fallen in all practice sizes. We are also seeing a fall in average earnings among sole principals, whose average earnings are 3 per cent lower than in 2019, although higher than last year's figure.

The highest earning architects this year remain those working for private in-house departments. Last year, their average earnings fell sharply, while this year it is up a little – but still below the 2019 level. Also trending down are average salaries for architects working in the public sector; local government architects' average this year is £41,500 (lower by 5 per cent) and those working in central government average £43,000 which is 6 per cent lower than last year. It is possible that this downward trend in the public sector might be due to older architects retiring and being replaced by younger, less experienced and less well paid architects.

Closing the pay gap

We do not have enough data to confirm that theory. But the idea prompted us to look a little more at how the gap between average earnings for the younger and older architects has changed over time. And it highlights a paradox; even though older architects are paid more, it is they who are experiencing falling earnings. Younger architects are paid less but are witnessing average salary rises even through the pandemic.

The first millennials started to turn 40 this year, and our snapshot of architects aged 30 and 40 in 2021 (right) shows that their average salaries are rising. It may have been a little uneven in recent years but this year's improvement in base salary is clear. More

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The average rise for salaried architects is 5 per cent, although this is only 1.2 per cent higher than in 2019

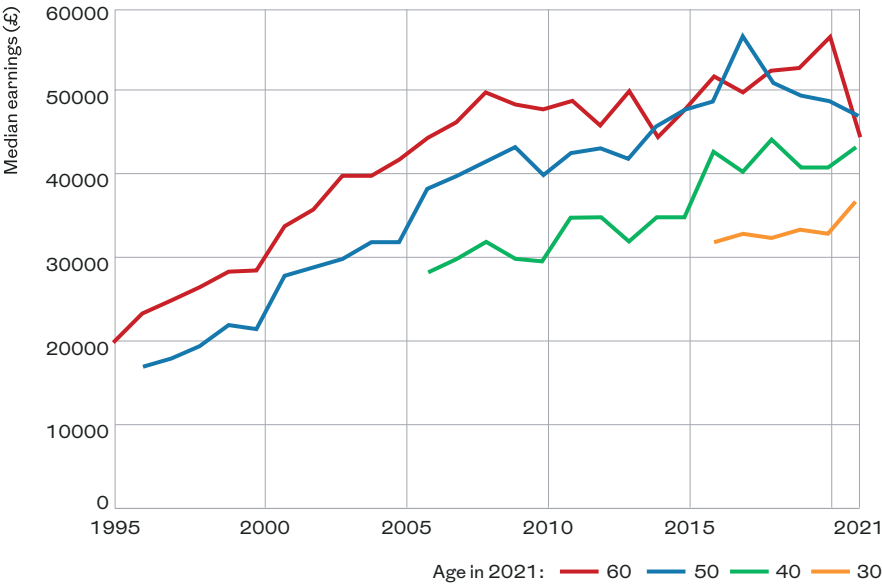
dramatic is the fall in average earnings for Generation X (shown by the line for an architect now aged 50) and for the baby boomers (now aged 60). Those who are now aged 50 saw their earnings peak as long ago as 2017 – since then, average earnings have dipped each year.

It suggests the profession – specifically, private practice – may be moving forward at two different speeds. Large practices are more likely to have corporate clients with more stable funding. Consequently they may be feeling more secure about the future, keen to retain staff by paying them more. The other part of private practice is the one person, small and medium-sized practices whose workloads may be more volatile, as smaller clients and developers put projects on hold, hitting practices' profits and reducing principals' pay. Large practices are more likely to employ a younger demographic, while partners and directors – who tend to be older architects – are likely to form the majority of staff in small and one person practices. This is probably an over-simplification but the separation of architects into large, international practices and everyone else has occurred in other professions, notably accountancy and legal. The challenge for the architectural profession is for smaller practices to maintain profit and salary levels for their partners and directors. And that relies on the difficult balancing act of maintaining or even improving upon current fee levels in a difficult and competitive market. ●

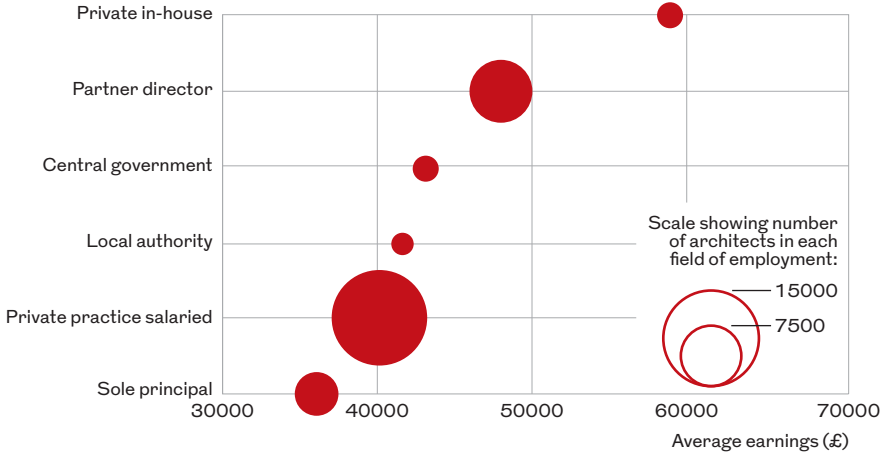
Aziz Mirza is a director of The Fees Bureau

The annual RIBA / The Fees Bureau Architects Employment & Earnings Survey is a research survey conducted among RIBA members and excludes members based overseas. A sample of members was invited by email to complete an on-line questionnaire form in May to August 2021. We are very grateful for respondents' willingness to provide their earnings information and for continuing to support the survey. A full report on the survey, Architects Earnings, is available to buy from The Fees Bureau, www.feesbureau.co.uk

Trends for median earnings in selected range of ages of architect, 1995-2021



Average earnings and number of architects in each field of employment, 2021



Architects' earnings by field of employment

Field of Employment (£)	2020			2021			2020-21 Change of median
	Lower Quartile	Median	Upper Quartile	Lower Quartile	Median	Upper Quartile	
Sole Principals	22000	35000	49700	24000	36000	62063	2.9
Principals in Partnership	32000	50000	73500	34000	47800	69000	-4.4
ALL PRINCIPALS	29850	40000	65000	30000	43430	65000	8.6
Private Practice Salaried	33000	38000	45000	34500	40000	48000	5.3
Private In-House	43375	55500	68325	51750	58750	77750	5.9
Local Authorities	41375	43750	48185	39408	41500	46692	-5.1
Central Government	37128	45700	50000	38000	43000	56000	-5.9
ALL SALARIED	33500	39000	46690	35000	40500	49164	3.8
TOTAL	32820	39500	49600	34000	41000	53362	3.8



Bring back the porch

The porch could be a critical part of post-pandemic home design, offering a public/private space for deliveries, bike and boot storage, and even a visitors’ WC

Jonathan Clarke

The pandemic has fuelled furious design speculation. There is a groundswell of ideas on how our homes can adapt and change, and an accelerated interest in hybrid living and working solutions. Most ideas fixate on flexibility, some creating new apartment typologies with neat movable walls, interchangeable rooms and clever modular divides.

Flexibility is neither a silver bullet nor the only way to end the sector’s complex challenges. The profession should instead be finding simple deliverable ideas to better equip our homes for the new normal, but these need not necessarily be ‘new’.

Return of the threshold

One ‘old’ idea to improve our homes could be reinstating the threshold or porch – particularly in multi-tenanted developments.

Thresholds are a convenient ‘pre-room’ mediating movement from one spatial status to another. They come in a dazzling variety, from the stone porticoes of ancient Greek temples, medieval churches, Georgian homes and government buildings, to the timber porches of the Edwardians, and the ornate brick of the Arts and Crafts movement – right through to the modern pebbledash, white-painted timber, or PVC modern porches and verandas.

Yet the threshold is often the preserve of the single dwelling, and a waning commodity

– in older homes, porches tend to be removed or consumed by years of refurbishment. In modern homes porches are rarely built at all – save for a light canopy over the front door.

The porch – as a space that is neither inside nor outside our homes and a mediator from a very public, to a very private space – is important to protecting the sanctity of home.

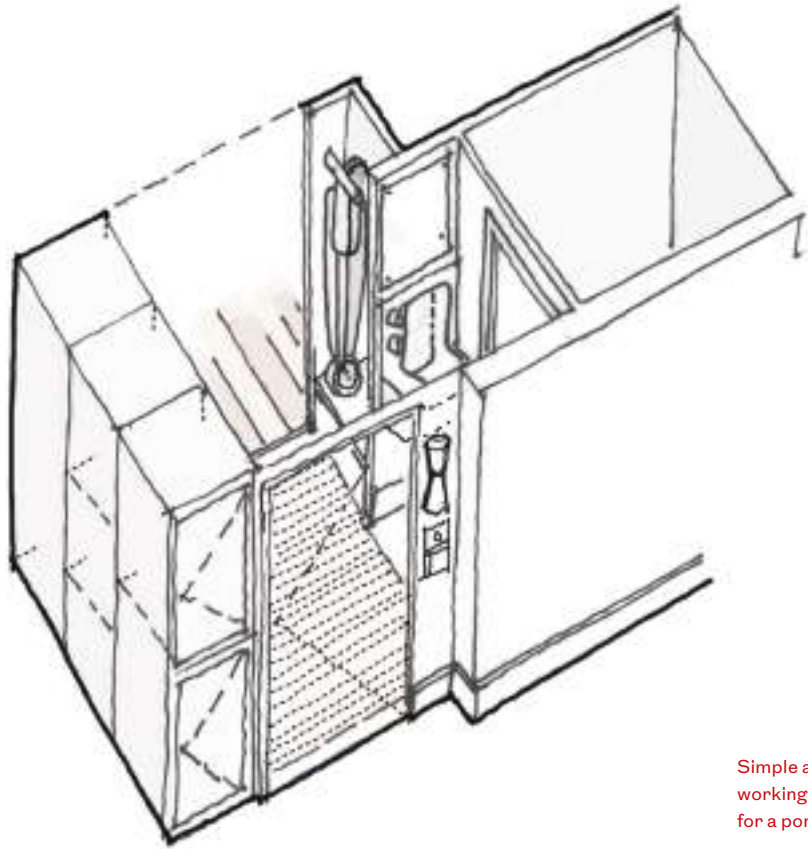
The internalised porch

The standard functions of a porch have never been more in demand.

Our retail habits are increasingly switching to online, with Amazon increasing its UK staff by 75,000. The porch could become a delivery ‘hub’ and a safe private space to receive post and parcels, takeaway and grocery deliveries, away from the ‘public’ street.

It could cater for the focus on health and the war against disease. An internalised porch housing a guest WC would allow visitors to refresh while ensuring the ‘home’ bathroom remains private. The porch could become a feature, channelling the spirit of Corbusier’s Villa Savoye where the sink and bathing area in the entrance is part sculptural installation, part functional space.

Our changing transport habits could enlist the porch for storage and charging of folding bikes and e-scooters, and as many rediscover a love of nature and green spaces, when more than now do we need changing and storage space for shoes and coats?



Simple and hard-working: Clarke’s sketch for a porch.

Although the porch is a modest functional space, it is a small change that could make homes more desirable, with benefits ranging from efficiency, security (such as for those who prefer not to use bike stores), and even energy savings when they are insulated buffer spaces between indoors and out.

In larger housing schemes and build to rent (BTR) typologies, integrating porches into individual units may not always be viable. But as developers and managers constantly seek an edge in a race for the best facilities and marketing opportunities to attract residents, one remedy could be to focus more attention on lobbies – essentially porches on a much grander scale. The lobby need not be a purely transitory entrance space, particularly if more thought is given to integrating useful services and facilities for residents such as post rooms, cycle workshops and recycling points, as it is simply reallocating dead space and adding value for those that live there.

At this time when we’re all speculating on what our homes might look like post-Covid-19, a pragmatic view is that is far more likely to comprise a series of simple clever shifts and pivots, than a tidal wave of change. Reinstating the porch may not be as revolutionary or glamorous as AI-led appliances, touch-free tech, or body temperature monitors, but it is one simple solution that deserves thought. ●

Jonathan Clarke is a director at Arney Fender Katsalidis

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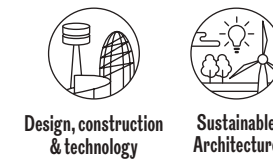
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Retrofit reaches Stage 3

We continue to track the deep retrofit project to create a new base for the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership

Eleanor Young

Stage 3 is officially labelled spatial coordination in the RIBA Plan of Work. And certainly there was a lot of testing of initial concepts in the design development for the deep retrofit for Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership.

So far the project manager 3PM has taken a back seat in our story. It was always part of the team with Architype as architect and BDP on MEP, but at stage 3, Architype's role is morphing from designer to client-side monitor, and 3PM is now charged with handling the transition to the design and build contractor ISG and its team.

The word 'handling' should be used advisedly. 3PM is coordinating a huge transfer of information and knowledge about decisions taken. It is also acting as broker between design teams as one lays into the other's designs. Patrick Watson of 3PM is an old hand at this contentious process and has a whole vocabulary that comes from the world of mediation rather than the battleground. Assumptions are challenged and tested, he would say, but he admits it is tricky.

But first the contractor team has to be appointed. There are some hurdles. Watson is familiar with the sustainable ones – he worked with lead client John French of the



For potential contractors, the scheme being a refurbishment elevates it to another league of complexity

institute on the University of East Anglia's landmark Enterprise Centre. But being a refurbishment elevates it to another league of complexity. 'That was the biggest risk,' says Watson.

A further issue was the University of Cambridge's process of awaiting costs and funding before authorising a strip out. This meant there was no chance of getting in early to understand the built fabric that was being dealt with. Add that to demands on building performance as well as making bio materials a tenet of the project and the risk any contractor was taking on was huge.

This defined the procurement route. The early idea of doing a single-stage tender was ditched in the face of fears of inflated costs. Instead a two-stage tender with market engagement was chosen. It should give a better chance to reduce or at least quantify the risks to cost.

Wendy Bishop of Architype recalls: 'There were contractors coming to find out about the building and new approaches to the job.' Alongside the financial process there was delivery on sustainability targets. She was interested to see how keen contractors were (or weren't) and whether it seemed as though they would give attention to detail. The structure of the design-and-build teams on offer varied – sometimes with Passivhaus

Above Architype's key internal strategies.

BDP's assumptions and calculations on M&E were 'challenged rigorously' by Max Fordham engineers

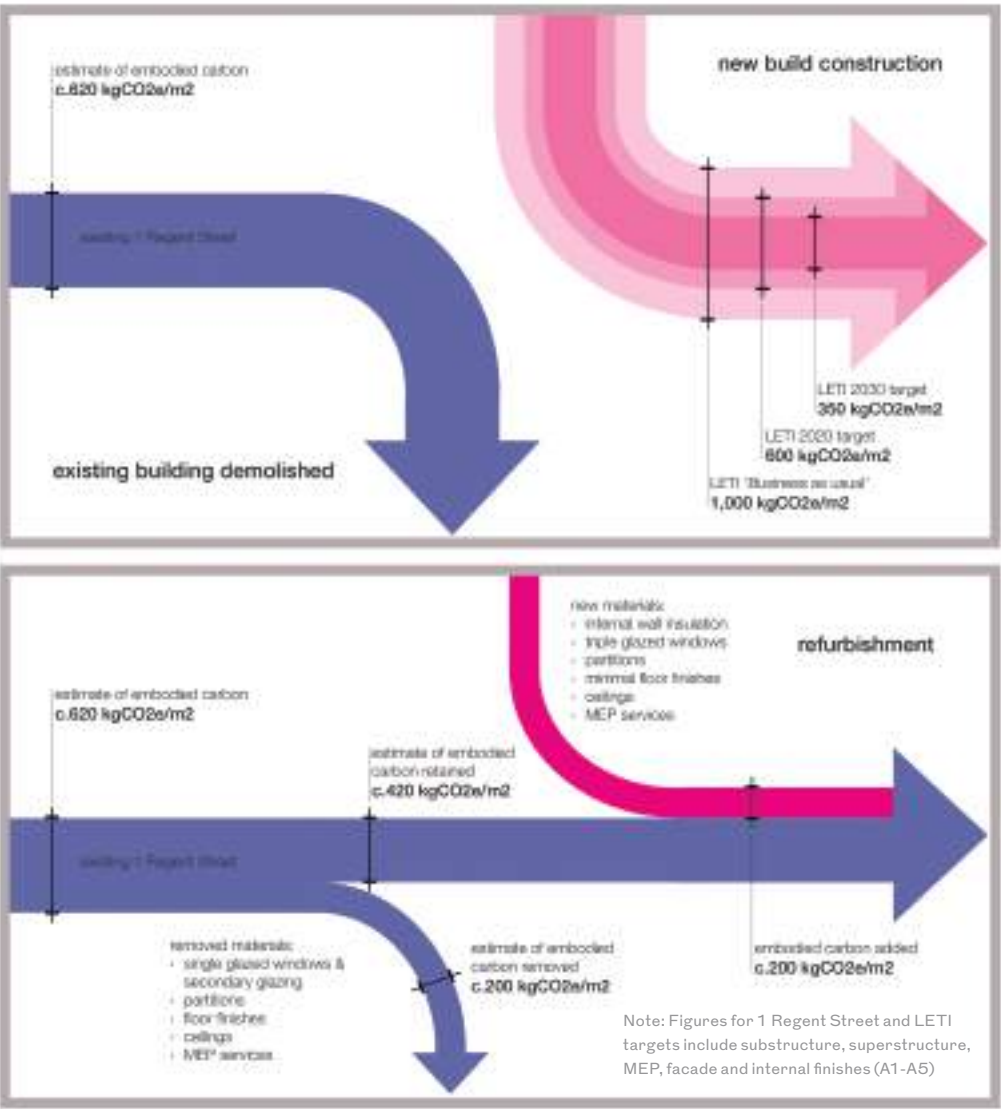
consultants, sometimes with Passivhaus expertise in the architecture or M&E practice. In the case of the selected team, led by ISG, the Passivhaus expertise sat not with the architect, Feilden + Mawson, but with the MEP engineer Max Fordham.

Once ISG had been engaged with a pre-construction agreement, interrogation of the building and design continued. 3PM wanted to capture the risks in the main NEC OptA contract by answering some big questions. Would Architype's 'sensible' stage 3 strategies around insulation really work across any structure? A WUFI survey on moisture and heat movement brought some extra knowledge to the incoming contractor team and led to plans for extra bio-based insulation. So too did survey results on the basement. This was to undergo a big change, from bog standard basement to shared workspace – essential for income generation. Getting to grips with below-ground drainage and water ingress allowed decisions that could be reasonably costed (most significantly a raised floor with insulation below).

The incoming design team had a steep learning curve, quizzing those in place, getting to know the building and being sure it was ready to take on the design liability. BDP's assumptions and calculations on M&E were 'challenged rigorously' by Max Fordham engineers, recounts Watson, admitting: 'It was painful at the time.'

It didn't affect the designs much; maybe two or three room requirements. But it threw up the question of how engaged the user, facilities managers and university were in the decisions around thermal comfort. This is a building that will require jumpers in winter, and that doesn't fit with the university's standards on limited temperature fluctuations. Cue more project engagement meetings, which luckily approved the approach.

And at the end of Stage 3, the contractor ISG was appointed on a priced Stage 4 design.



Above Demonstrating the value of upfront carbon investment in refurbishment versus new build. Figures show upfront carbon of building life cycle stages A1-A5 based on figures from Stage 3.

Project costs had gone up but the institute had successfully gone back to funders, begging hat in hand. Planning was submitted in early summer 2019 as Stage 3 drew to a close.

'As we had a two-stage contract, it is all about dialogue,' says Watson. 'It was alright once we got talking and discussing a problem. But it didn't start like that. It is a commercial issue and that's all.'

Being a retrofit and super sustainable 'all added up to extra aggro', he says. 'It was difficult, challenging and required more facilitation than normal. It is important to learn.' The Stage 3 process was less about new solutions, materials and technical fixes, Watson is sure about that. 'It was the softer side about the way we approach things,' he says.

Did that softer approach smooth things out for the new team? We shall see in Stage 4. ●

CONTINGENCY FOR THE CONTRACT

In order to get the contract let with the unquantifiable level of risk – due to not having opened up the building – a contingency sum was calculated and held by the institute to give added certainty.

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Awareness isn't enough

The road to inclusion is complicated. Start out being conscious and active about it

Marsha Ramroop

David Adjaye, on receiving the Royal Gold Medal, spoke about the purpose of his great architecture – function, beauty and community. These core architectural themes show how important it is to bring about change in equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI).

When you consider the swing of a door or the position of a window, is it only functional, beautiful and encompassing for you, and those like you, or for many?

When we place architecture in a city, do we involve the voices of the communities?

When we try to problem-solve, do we approach with a true mix of perspectives?

Some say we do not effectively deliver function, beauty and community.

There are people who can bring greatness to this profession who we are not letting in. Those who do get in aren't always given a strong enough voice. Architecture has greater potential, which with proper EDI thinking, strategy and action, we can fulfil.

What can we do?

What is stopping you from using your existing skills, knowledge and abilities to be inclusive leaders driving change? What causes discrimination and under-representation? Can 'how to tackle discrimination in architecture' be taught? Can we future proof architecture so it works for our fast evolving demography? These are the questions we must think about if we want to be effective inclusive leaders in architecture.

So we come back to the question: What



Left If diversity – the mix of visible and invisible difference – is the richness of the landscape, and Inclusion is the road through it, to the land of equity, then cultural intelligence is the best, most roadworthy vehicle to get you there.

stops us from doing this better? Where are the roots of discrimination? Peel back the layers of this question we find an answer: our bias.

We have 11 million pieces of information going into our brain at any given moment, but only the conscious capacity to process 40 (Timothy Wilson, Stranger to Ourselves, 2002). The shortcutting of information is a human biological need, and the root of bias.

But report after report shows that awareness is not enough to mitigate our own bias. We must stop saying and teaching and believing that. We need to put less store by training and more by the overall structures and processes we need to create, implement and enforce to mitigate it. There are tools around cultural intelligence and organisational change that make this easier.

CQ – cultural intelligence or quotient, as it's a measure as well as a skill – is the ability to work and relate effectively with people different to you. When applied properly, it forces us to consciously and deliberately challenge ourselves, our perspectives, and the systems we're succumbing to. This, through behavioural change, is how we break the cycle.

What is the difference between those that succeed in today's globalised, multicultural world and those that fail? Researchers asked nearly 100,000 participants that question in nearly 100 countries, and discovered four capabilities were widely shared: cultural intelligence drive, knowledge, strategy and action.

It starts with wanting to – CQ drive – and, when you don't want to, how to motivate yourself to do the work required.

Like all the CQ capabilities, CQ drive has sub-categories to help pinpoint areas that

need work. Here, these are intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, and self-efficacy.

Deriving enjoyment from the task itself, of interacting, supporting and enhancing the lives of those different from you, is fairly straightforward, as are the potential rewards or repercussions, but I'd like to emphasise self-efficacy – your confidence in success.

So much of our ability to be effective at doing better here is tied up in fear. Recognise and be conscious about it being an opportunity to learn and grow. We will get things wrong, we always do – it's human nature. However, how we react to our mistakes is a mark of high cultural intelligence and high self-efficacy. We must listen to those telling us we've got it wrong, and learn. Reflect on that and move forward differently, hands aloft, acknowledging room for improvement.

Embedding inclusive change

While we will explore each of these capabilities in more depth in our series on ribaj.com, it is not enough to simply have practised cultural intelligence traits. Every organisation and practice needs to embed inclusive change. How do we do that?

The McKinsey influence model of change is based on four cornerstones (notably it has been proven to be eight times more successful at embedding change when all four are used rather than just one). They are: fostering understanding, developing talents and skills, role modelling, and formal mechanisms.

People are more likely to change their mindset and behaviour if they understand what is being asked of them and why. This is about inspiration and the data to inform

What stops us from doing inclusivity better? Where are the roots of discrimination? Peel back the layers of this question we find an answer: our bias

change – formal structures, systems and processes to support inclusion. Recruitment, procurement and other policies can support inclusive working and give staff the skills and opportunities to behave inclusively. Training can be provided and supported with coaching, while appraisals can be backed up with inclusion-based objectives. Colleagues need to see leaders and peers behaving differently – we do mimic those around us. The culture of any organisation can be shaped by the best behaviours the leader is willing to demonstrate.

This work on behavioural change needs to be implemented across individual, studio and practice levels, starting with the most senior leadership, and then across four areas of business: attraction/education of people in the profession, retention/progression of colleagues, creation and delivery of services and products, and how we communicate with our users, customers and clients.

I have implemented this approach in other organisations; it is what I'm doing at the RIBA and what I will support across architecture.

There are no silver bullets nor quick fixes, only a deliberate, considered, conscious chip- ping away at the systems that create discrimination. Organisational inclusive change is not an option, it's a leadership obligation. There will be challenges. There will be strife. But there is also hope. This is an opportunity to join an effort to build better workplaces, better environments, and a better world. ●

Marsha Ramroop is RIBA director of Inclusion and a former BBC journalist. She will be hosting Radio RIBA, a lively mixture of chat, interviews, discussion, debate, music and poetry, focusing on promoting diversity and inclusion on 18-26 November. Find it on architecture.com



PAWEŁ MILDNER

Think longer to build sustainably

There are some quick fixes to make your building sustainable, but they can have high carbon costs that aren't immediately obvious. Time is the key

Should we design buildings for a 60 year or 200 year life? How good is our data, and how good does it need to be if we are to cut the whole life carbon of our buildings? These were some of the questions tackled in a round table discussion chaired by RIBA Journal's Eleanor Young, with representatives from manufacturers, architects, materials suppliers, the construction team and the education sector. They were looking at building longevity, at how we should design buildings that will last longer, spreading the cost of embodied carbon over a longer (more realistic) period and – ideally – employing materials that can be re-used at the end of life. The talk ranged from the larger scale of buildings down to the details of materials.

While all the speakers agreed on the importance of longer-lived buildings, there were different approaches. Zoe Watson, sustainability specialist at Levitt Bernstein, said: 'A big thing we have done is to change policy to design Passivhaus as default. Our designers are educated in passive design. Even if clients opt out later, it means that the actual design is energy efficient from outset.'

But others were doubtful. Simon Sturgis, of carbon consultancy Targeting Zero, asked, 'Is Passivhaus the best thing? What about all those tapes, how long do they last? I have a sneaking suspicion that something slightly lower than Passivhaus may be the best whole-life carbon solution. If those tapes that are invariably buried in the fabric of building are impossible to get to, do they last 200 years?'

Louisa Bowles, partner and sustainability lead at Hawkins\Brown, saw 'interesting tensions in embodied

A lot of materials that enable us to massively reduce our embodied carbon emissions now will need to be replaced several times over the building's life

Opposite We should be thinking of our buildings lasting through generations.

carbon measurements. There is a big focus on getting to 2030, and reducing carbon emissions now. But a lot of materials that enable us to massively reduce our embodied carbon emissions now don't last that long or will need to be replaced several times over the length of the building's life, increasing the embodied carbon emissions dramatically. Play with the data and some interesting things come out.'

Sarah Le Gresley, marketing director of brick-maker Michelmersh, which convened the discussion with the RIBA Journal, was particularly concerned about this. She felt that EPDs (environmental product declarations) often skewed the advantages of materials like clay brick, because they last so much longer. 'You often hear the brick industry say that clay products last 200 years,' she said. In fact, 'We have brick buildings that have lasted 6000 years and clay brick has zero operational carbon, so taking a 60 year lifespan means you cannot accurately compare material whole life carbon cradle-to-grave for the realistic life span of our built environment. We need a longer study period.' Put simply, if you calculate the carbon cost of long-lived materials over too short a lifespan, you penalise the durable products that are less carbon intensive over the full lifespan of a building and beyond.

John Cave, executive director of materials supplier EH Smith, said, 'We have continually been looking for products that can solve some of the issues. We have been involved with Passivhaus since it first came over. How do you make buildings more airtight, how do you improve ventilation, reduce thermal bridging? We are working with established manufacturers such as Michelmersh to see how industry can rise to meet the challenge.'

It is not just the materials that will give buildings a long lifespan. They must also continue to be liveable over a long period. Alex Lifschutz, director of Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands, has long been a proponent of 'long-life loose-fit' as a way of making durable buildings. He said he is concerned by standards that make new homes too small. 'We always try to extend the scale, size and volume of apartments,' he said. For instance, he believes that external balconies are rarely useful, especially above six or seven storeys.

We must design for longevity, with buildings that are adaptable and flexible

Instead they should be incorporated in the volume of the home.

Mike Leonard, chief executive of the West Midlands based Buildings Alliance, agreed. ‘The golden word is resilience,’ he said. ‘We are very much of the view that we must design for longevity, with buildings that are adaptable, flexible, not subject to over heating and resistant to fire.’

He warned: ‘We have to be very careful of unintended consequences. Governments and others are making decisions based on rhetoric rather than evidence. If we are shipping things halfway across the world and replacing them four or five times, is that really the solution to the challenges ahead of us?’

One answer is to ensure that we have valuable data, that we make decisions on the basis of knowledge rather than hunch. This can, however, be a minefield.

James Fiske, global director of data and information products at RICS, said: ‘We are trying to encourage the likes of QSs that when they measure for cost, they should measure for whole-life carbon at the same time.’ But, he warned: ‘Without data and consistent data we shan’t make the right choices. We need a way to share our experiences. The context behind that data is important as well – we need to tell what is and isn’t included.’

Sturgis worked with James Fiske on the RICS professional statement on whole-life carbon assessment, which is being updated, and also on the London plan. ‘I was very keen that we should ask for the most we could possibly get,’ he said. ‘If people didn’t quite understand, they would at least start to think about it.’ This meant including all the modules that define the life of a building, including Module D, which is the future life of elements after demolition. He said, ‘The opportunity for gaming that and cooking the figures is very high. But you need to start thinking about it.’

He also discussed the industry proposal to introduce a Part Z to the building regulations, which would cover whole-life carbon. ‘Part of the equation,’ he said, ‘is to get government to buy into this. As a special advisor to the Environmental Audit Committee, I am trying to convince them that whole-life carbon is sufficiently mature to be picked up and used by government. It’s a developed methodology. I have been

Governments and others are making decisions based on rhetoric rather than evidence

Without data and consistent data we shan’t make the right choices. We need a way to share our experiences

speaking to a number of government departments who realise that they need to know more.’

Le Gresley said, ‘One of our biggest problems is the transparency, quality and accuracy of that data.’ The latest clay brick EPD includes Module D [cradle to grave] and is collated from a wide variety of manufacturers data, but she is concerned that manufacturers of other materials do not follow the same transparency. Therefore the data is not comparable for architects and specifiers. And it is vital, she argued, that data can be updated rapidly as companies like hers make significant steps to decarbonise processes.

Dr Solomon Adjei, senior lecturer in quantity surveying and construction management at Birmingham City University, said: ‘Regulation is great, but to what extent does it cover everybody down the supply chain? How does it translate to the people on site? For example, RICS Module C [design for deconstruction] is never in the thinking of people on site. How do we ensure that we cover everybody within that?’

The discussion also covered the massive question of retrofitting existing buildings. As Alex Lifschutz said: ‘Refurbishment is where the battleground is. We have 25 million dwellings. How do we upgrade and make sure they last another 200 years?’

This was a wide-ranging discussion, which showed both how much interest, concern and knowledge there is – and how much further we need to go. Fast. It is not just students who need to step back and think about how long their buildings and materials will last, architects and the whole construction industry need to think longer. The last statement should come from Simon Sturgis. When asked what was the most important move for the future, he said: ‘Education, education, education.’ ●



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Design, construction
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Mother was right

Both Jeremy Dixon and Edward Jones were steered towards architecture by their mothers. The pair look back on their triumphs, heroes, breakthroughs and dreams



Pamela Buxton

Jeremy Dixon (b.1939) and Edward Jones (b.1939) studied at the Architectural Association and formed Dixon Jones in 1989. Key London projects include the Royal Opera House, National Gallery, National Portrait Gallery, Kings Place, Exhibition Road and Olympic Way. The practice closed in 2020.

Knowing what you know now, did you make the right decision to be an architect, and would you still be one if starting out today?

EJ Probably not. Back then, the context for schools of architecture was very different, with the establishment of the Welfare State and new projects for schools, public housing and new towns. This gave a sense of the social role of architecture, which today thanks to Thatcher is non-existent. I feel very despondent about the state of architecture now, although it is still possible to feel positively about projects such as private houses where our contribution is appreciated, and very large schemes such as the Olympic Way steps of Wembley (2016-21). I feel rather less positive about commercial work.

JD I have a completely different response. I’d be incredibly pleased to find myself at the Architectural Association today, but in its old form, which was year based with a strong peer group ethic. It was a wonderful transformation for me – a magic moment. It was also an extraordinary piece of luck because I didn’t pass any A Levels, although I enjoyed making things. I took lots of models to my interview at the AA, and they accepted me. I only applied because it had been suggested to my parents that I should do so, on the advice of family friend, Herbert Read, the art critic.

What sparked your interest in architecture?

JD My mother was an artist who took me around country houses and taught me to have a critical, aesthetic eye. But being an architect was something that was suggested to me. I’ve always been interested in the huge role that chance plays in life.

EJ My mother was also very influential. She was a portrait painter, my father was a sculptor and my sister a graphic designer. I was subtly persuaded by my mother to be an architect as it was a profession, although secretly I wanted to go to The Slade School of Fine Art and be an artist. Then in 1957, I



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Intelligence Hindsight

went to New York and saw the Guggenheim and Seagram buildings under construction. I'd planned to switch to industrial design, but after that seminal experience I became pre-occupied with architecture.

How did you two meet?

EJ At the AA. We were part of a group who went on to work at Frederick MacManus & Partners and Milton Keynes Development Corporation, and also collaborated on Jeremy's competition entry for Northamptonshire County Hall (1973).

JD We were close friends and colleagues, but didn't have a proper working partnership between the two of us until 1989, when we both rang each other up at exactly the same time to suggest it, and each found the line simultaneously engaged.

What was your breakthrough project as Dixon Jones?

EJ There was a group of projects, all within walking distance of each other in Central London, including the National Portrait Gallery (1994-2000), the National Gallery (1998-2005) and Somerset House (1998-2000), as well as the Royal Opera House (1984-2000). All involved revising listed buildings and re-presenting them to the city and populous.

Above Royal Opera House, London, Dixon Jones BDP, 2000.

Opposite National Portrait Gallery, London, Jeremy Dixon and Edward Jones, 2000.

Below Northampton County Hall competition (first place, unbuilt), 1973, Jeremy Dixon with Fenella Dixon and Edward Jones.



RICHARD DAVIES



What have been the ups and downs of leading your own practice?

EJ The ups are when you are doing a competition and you're in good company – you feel alive. That's a real plus, even more so if you win, and I think we won a total of 28 over the years. The downs are when you find out in the press that the thing you won isn't happening any more, but no client has rung you up to tell you. Or when a project of yours has been celebrated, but is then taken over by others.

JD I don't mind when our buildings are changed. If they are successful, they have a public life and that engenders change. There's no point being cross about that.

EJ That's a very generous point of view. For me, the feeling of authorship of a project is always alive. So there can be a down, personally, if it's changed.

What were the biggest obstacles to overcome?

JD Competitions are lotteries. There's no point going into one unless you're prepared to lose. But there's also no point doing one if you don't do your best. So you're caught.

EJ We wouldn't enter a competition if there were people who were conceptually our opposite on the jury – there's no point.

JD You need clients with strong willpower to make things happen, with good taste, and with a sense of the challenges of getting something done well – they have to be major motivators.

What buildings are you most proud of?

EJ Personally, of our more recent work, I think the steps at Wembley are splendid, and I'm pleased with the odd private house

for individuals who appreciate what we do.

JD 'The Royal Opera House (started with Bill Jack of BDP) was a unique experience and a wonderful thing to work on. Also, I have a personal interest in Kings Place and its concert hall. I like it when projects that engage with their urban situation mine it, and settle into it, so as to appear as if they've always been there. That is very satisfying.

Do you wish you had had a succession plan in place?

EJ In hindsight, succession would have been an economically prudent thing to have done. But we're not corporate people, so we didn't really consider the question of succession. Also, as we'd always avoided a house style and instead had a style for each job, that made succession not so obvious.



DENIS GILBERT (2)

JD We were overtaken by events. Suddenly we weren't getting on lists for projects - clients with a view to long-term projects looked at us in our 80s and didn't think we were a great bet. We left negotiations with our staff about succession too late and so it didn't happen, as no-one wants to take on a practice with a huge debt.

When you build up an office over time, it's a valuable, complex thing, a precious object. When you end an office and it's disbanded, it's a great loss for us all. We'd like it recorded that we were extremely appreciative of our staff, who were very special people.

Looking back on your work over the years, who have been your biggest influences?

JD When I was a student, Le Corbusier was endlessly fascinating. As a teacher, Alan Colquhoun was very influential and so was Nicholas Taylor, who I heard lecturing on the importance of Lutyens and Edwardian London. Michael Craig-Martin was extremely influential in redirecting my thoughts to a more abstract world of minimalism.

EJ William Wilkins was always there in the background for me - he'd designed my old school of Haileybury College, as well as the National Gallery and University College London.

Above all Jim Stirling has been consistently the most influential and supportive. He was the main assessor on the Mississauga and Venice bus station competitions, and his presence on both juries was a reason for entering.



Above Edward Jones, Fenella Dixon and Jeremy Dixon at the time of winning the Northampton County Hall competition, 1973.

Below left Venice Bus Station competition (first place, unbuilt), Jeremy Dixon and Edward Jones, 1990.

Below right Mississauga City Hall, Ontario, 1987, Jones & Kirkland Architects.



I went to Corb's office, and was rather relieved to find he was away in India, as my French was very poor

I tried to visit lots of the people we held as heroes. I went to see Louis Kahn's Richards Medical Research Laboratory in Philadelphia, and being very impressed, went to his office afterwards. He answered the door himself and I asked to see the drawings. He said no, but said I could come in and ask an important question. I had tea with Mies and when I was in Finland, I went to visit Alvar Aalto. When I was in Paris, I went to Corb's office, and was rather relieved to find he was away in India, as my French was very poor.

Do you have a dream project you'd still like to achieve?

JD I'd love to build a house for my family. I found a wonderful site in my favourite beech woods on the edge of the Chilterns, overlooking the Oxford plain, but it was too expensive.

EJ Having enjoyed producing houses in London, Canada and in France, with my wife Margot, I anticipate with great pleasure producing an ideal courtyard house for my daughter Jemima in Somerset soon. ●



Underfloor heating: How to pick the right system

Underfloor heating is increasingly popular, but which is the one for your project? Tile and stone protection expert Schlüter-Systems suggests what to look out for

With all the factors that need to be considered with underfloor heating systems, choosing the right one can be tricky. Schlüter-Systems gives you some pointers.

Electric systems: This suits the heating of a room or specific area of a house and raises the temperature of the surface. Its main advantages are:

Suitable for retrofit Installation of an electric system is relatively simple and can be performed alongside a routine flooring renovation. Hydronic systems that can be retrofitted and are suitable for tile are a lot more difficult to find and installation is more complex.

Zonal heating Electric systems really come into their own in the provision of concentrated zonal heating. They are a great choice for infusing additional luxury into areas of a project.

Heat on demand Being close to the surface, electric systems are extremely responsive and heat quickly. The exact amount of time taken can vary but they essentially provide heat on demand.

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Above Schlüter-Ditra-Heat-Duo is an all-in-one solution for waterproofing and heating floors.

Below Schlüter-Bekotec-Therm is a hydronic underfloor heating system with an ultra-low construction height.

The system features a studded uncoupling membrane into which heating cables are clipped and securely held in place, ensuring even and consistent heating.

Hydronic systems: This system will heat the air in a room as well as the surface covering. The main advantages of a hydronic system are:

Cost-effective to run Although hydronic systems are more costly initially, they are cost-effective to run in the long-term. Therefore, they are ideal for large-scale coverage and you will often see them used across the whole ground floor.



Designed as a primary heat source Hydronic systems are designed to heat the air within the room as well as the surface covering. They can therefore replace radiators, connecting directly to a boiler.

Can be run using eco-friendly fuel sources As well as being connected to an existing boiler, hydronic systems can be powered by numerous different renewable energy sources, including ground source heat pumps.

Specify with Schlüter-Bekotec-Therm Schlüter-Bekotec-Therm is a hydronic underfloor heating system with an ultra-low construction height. A screed height of just 8mm above the studs of the panels is all that is required, which results in quicker warm-up times as well as considerable material and weight savings in comparison to other wet systems. ●



Both system types have their specific benefits and can offer the ideal solution if you're looking to add a touch of luxury to your home. To find out more about the products and services offered by Schlüter, visit www.schluterspecifier.co.uk



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3: Culture



While tourists and ex-pats flock to Hong Kong's Peak for their classic shot of towers set against the blue of Victoria Harbour, locals on the mainland side are more likely to view the same strait – via a steep climb, using steps that wind up among Kowloon's towers and office blocks – from the summit of Garden Hill. Here, by night, armed with the latest cameras and tripods, budding photographers gather like puffins with Canons on Jiadun mountain, whose concrete-reinforced escarpment drops vertiginously to sea level down past the roof of the colonial-era Garden Bakery to the Sham Shui Po business district, and glimpsed flashes of moonlit water beyond its wall of ten thousand windows.

David Gutierrez
Garden Hill, Hong Kong, 2018
Nikon D810
using Tamron SP
24-70mm lens

Photographer David Gutierrez first sought out the spot at daybreak, a few hours after they had left, when it was populated with a wholly different diurnal demographic. And though the usual appurtenances of health and safety – like guard rails – were not evident, it seems this culture of endless dynasties was taking a more philosophical view of the matter. The real subject, says Gutierrez, was the octogenarian woman performing callisthenics, hanging frozen from a balustrade, the singularity of her stillness only emphasised by the slow, measured Qigong moves of those around; all passing gestural hands through air as if to usher away the sights of the real world and concentrate on the view within. • Jan-Carlos Kucharek

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Culture Leader

'Architecture and development need critical voices from the communities they are building in'



Never stop talking to the community

Architects need critical friends among the public they build for if they are to remain connected, and their work relevant

At a recent gathering of architects B Corp came up. It is a way of telling the world you are on the side of the good. You sign up to it as a company for verifiable proof that, among other things, you 'aspire to do no harm and benefit all'.

But of course most architects do find themselves enemy number one at some time in their professional lives. You see it at the planning committee, or during community consultation when most in the room are suspicious of the project, questioning the size, scale and impact of the design, seeing how you threaten their way of life whether it is bringing cars, noise, more people, the wrong people or taking away views, light or familiar territory.

As I watch an excavator taking sofa-sized scoops out of a local field for phase 2 of a development, I think about all the consultations I have looked up or taken part in over the years. Architects and consultancy consultants turn up with bright drawings and soft-edged renders as the vanguard for the actual physical violence brought by scraping away the earth to lay foundations and queues of lorries delivering clouds of dust. The balloons at the consultation door don't

last beyond planning, though the promising website remains as testament to the art of persuasion and aspiration. Consultation has become a phase and it stops at the planning decision. What's left after that is marketing.

So I am cheered to hear about the other ways that architects are engaging the public with the hope and joy of architecture; cheered by the visits and videos of Open House, the energy of Scotland's Architecture Fringe and the London Festival of Architecture. And there are all those grass roots projects both in schools and out, soon to be recognised by the Inspiring Future Generations Award, set up by Open House founder Victoria Thornton, that will encourage those who help children and young people to engage in and advocate for a better built environment.

Last month a bright and playful little structure, Bringing Home to the Unknown, staked out a piece of ground in Regent's Park in central London with a piece of Becontree. RIBA Rising Star Shaun Adams' POoR Collective has been co-designing with students from the alternative provision school of Mayesbrook Park to put their mark on this distant 'mythical' place that is only 15 miles up the road from their homes in Dagenham. It is a hopeful sign of how architecture can embolden those who society marginalises.

Architecture and development need critical voices from the communities they are building in. They need a public that will engage and can interrogate schemes intelligently rather than fearfully. And by reaching out in other ways architects can make consultation a little bit more meaningful, perhaps coming to a deeper understanding that it is a genuine two-way exchange. And to be on the side of the good. ●

Left Bringing Home to the Unknown in Regent's Park gives skill and voice to the young people of Becontree.



PORTRAIT: STEPHANIE WUNDERLICH

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To Isamu Noguchi, the space that the rope enclosed was the sculpture, not the rope itself

Pamela Buxton looks beyond the lights to varied world of Isamu Noguchi: ribaj.com/noguchi

MACEWEN: DEADLINE APPROACHING

Also on the side of the good are the MacEwen Awards, celebrating architecture for the common good. Enter before 15 November at: ribaj.com/macewen-awards



Closing the door

Will Wiles recalls his journey to a love of architecture, and how Robert Harbison welcomed him in

Harbison brought new encounters with architecture, including James Wines's jokey superstores for Best Products in Sacramento, California.

Etiénne-Louis Boullée's cavernous, faintly atrocious, proposal for a Royal Library under an impossible barrel vault. In a typical dark twist, he spins this image into a nightmare glimpse of infinity, in which every book is a life 'which could lead back into itself, stretching the experience of the whole library to impossible dimensions, immobilising an imaginary reader in front of every book'.

Harbison's project was to expand and enrich the reader's concept of architecture by gathering 'the extremest instances I could find'. In this, he was continuing the work begun in his first book, *Eccentric Spaces* (1977), a study of how the imagination creates, uses and preserves space. An early magnum opus, *Eccentric Spaces* seems to summarise a whole career just as it begins: ruins, gardens, baroque palaces, private dreaming-places, the past, maps, machines, itineraries, the architecture found in novels. It is an enfilade studded with startling thoughts. 'Closing a door is the most elementary transformation of nothing to something.' Rome is probably at its best as a ruin, and when 'complete and glistening ... it must have been as vulgar as any modern suburb or any world's fair.' Railway stations and machines have a common ancestor in the suit of armour: 'Operators of bulldozers and travellers from Euston have no use for suits of metal clothes.'

Harbison called *Eccentric Spaces* 'the record of a struggle to assimilate more and more to the realm of delight'. That was, more or less, what he did for me: to open up a prospect more pleasant than Boullée's infernal library, but no less capacious: here was a world of endless fascination, and its name, loosely, was 'architecture'. Thank you, Robert. ●

Will Wiles is a writer. Read him here and on [ribaj.com](#)



THE BUILT, THE UNBUILT, AND THE UNGOOGLEABLE

Rereading Harbison, as was my pleasant duty before writing this column, my fingertips brushed against a disappeared pre-internet age. Nowadays, architectural oddities circulate continuously on the web, and it's easy to become jaded. How fresh and mysterious *The Unbuildable* felt, and how familiar some of its menagerie has become. But I also recalled the frustration of coming across a glancing reference to, say, Friedrich Gilly, and not being able to simply pull my phone out of my pocket and look him up.

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Growing from mother to daughter and son-in-law too turned McLean Quinlan into a family firm that is expanding its practice, combining vernacular and modern in a detailed, personal-touch approach

Words: Isabelle Priest Portrait: Ivan Jones

This is personal

You can tell Fiona McLean is at home in Chelsea. As McLean Quinlan is without a formal studio in London, the owner of the practice's latest project, Chelsea Townhouse, has kindly offered her house to do the portrait shoot and interview. The other directors, Kate Quinlan and Alastair Bowden, have joined from Winchester where the drawing studio is; McLean from Clapham. The client is milling around, but it's McLean's project; she is noticeably the more relaxed being photographed, chatting to us – a looser posture, more confident and surer demeanour. The client, an agent for behind-the-scenes people working in the film industry, is still effervescing about her redesigned home, even though she's been living between there on and off for 18 months. It was completed in time for lockdown one. She repeats how she genuinely 'would do anything for Fiona'. The portrait photoshoot takes longer than expected because the complex interplay of directional light that

helps create the great architecture of the house causes shadows across the face as soon as you put a body in it.

As Bowden tells me on a video call later, McLean is usually the first point of contact for project enquiries. It comes naturally to her evidently, but it is no doubt also because McLean Quinlan is a different kind of practice. It was set up by McLean, her partner/husband Stephen Quinlan and their friend Peter Ditlef-Nielsen in the late 1970s. McLean continued under the name McLean Quinlan after Ditlef-Nielsen and Stephen left – he is currently a partner at Denton Corker Marshall. It ran like this on residential work and a few other projects like the London Lesbian and Gay Centre (1982) until 2008 when Bowden joined and then Quinlan. Kate Quinlan is McLean and Stephen Quinlan's daughter, Bowden is Kate's husband. Architecture often runs in families, but it's rare that generations work in practice together and is even more unusual to be mother, daughter and son-in-law.



Portrait From left to right, Kate Quinlan, Alastair Bowden and Fiona McLean in their Chelsea Townhouse project, completed in December 2019.

Opposite House at Jackson Hole in Wyoming (2018) for a German and New Zealand couple that had been living and working in California. The house uses local stone on the walls and timber shingles on the roof, the large side openings are mirrored on the opposite elevation so views carry through the building.



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Culture Profile

Between them McLean, Kate Quinlan and Bowden have worked at Basil Spence Partnership, RMJM, Buckley Gray Yeoman, Harper Mackey and InsideOut. They evolved into a family firm partly to have families themselves, working from home until the Winchester studio was set up in 2011. Now there are 12 staff. McLean is the odd one out, the ‘mothership’ as she calls it, in London. That’s what has changed over the past decade. Quinlan and Bowden have enabled the practice to expand and do more of the considered work that had developed the practice’s reputation when McLean did it alone, and in far wider locations.

‘I had always had to limit what we could take on,’ explains McLean. ‘Once we got bigger, we could take on more work, although we are still careful not to take on too much because we would lose what people like about us, the sense of dealing directly with us.’

It makes sense then that families are also McLean Quinlan’s main clientele – after all, they are experienced in making family life work. But it must be nice, as Bowden says, ‘if you are coming to have your house done for your family, to speak to another family’. There is a family of people, but also a tree of clients and projects. In the early days, there was a project called Edwardian House in Ealing in which all except the facade was demolished and a modern house built behind it; the practice recently revisited it with a light refurbishment. It is currently designing a retirement house in northern Spain for a client it had previously worked for on a house in west London.



Above Harbour House in West Sussex has red brick volumes that flank the central knapped flint main part of the house. Views carry through from one elevation to the other to connect the garden to the harbour on the northern side.

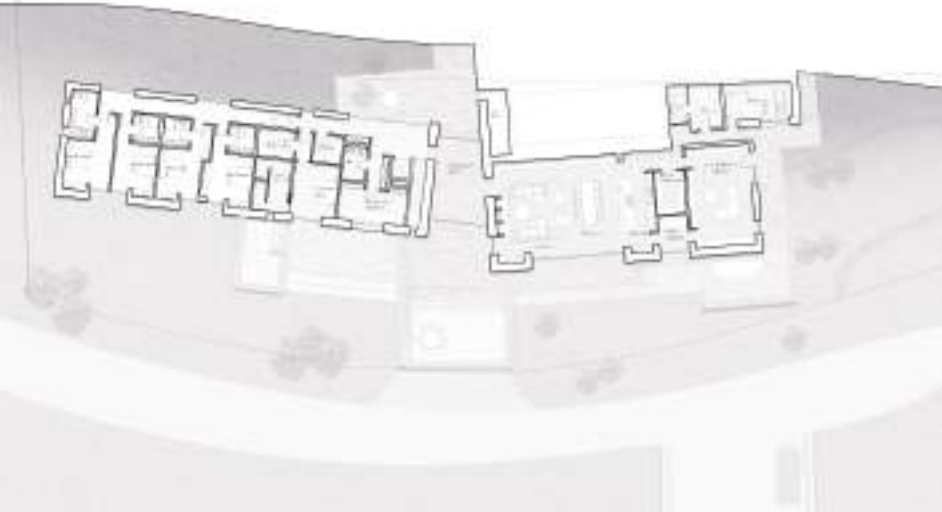
Bottom left The firm’s second project in Jackson, Snake River Cabin, for a French business family. A bunk room is completely lined in hemlock timber which is common to the region.

One project, however, stands out; Devon Valley House completed in 2004. This newbuild intertwined vernacular and modern, and has become a milestone of when and how the McLean Quinlan approach truly emerged. The buildings are crafted and careful, with a warmth that is about getting the scale, materials and light right – ‘often missing in modern architecture’. This is the art honed over years that Bowden and Quinlan have almost mass marketed. Now the whole studio designs to these principles with an evolving toolbox of details that are spun between projects. The studio came in 2011; a particularly smart initiative then was to push its Aloof-designed website. The directors attribute part of the practice’s success to it.

‘It was really different to other people’s, with big images that appealed and made a difference,’ explains Bowden. ‘Now it’s Instagram as well as the website’ – its 2009 Cotswold Barn is still a Pinterest sensation.

This globalised dissemination of work has led to a growing overseas portfolio. There are two projects in Jackson’s Hole in the USA – one for a product designer for Apple, the other for a French family in the recycling business who emigrated there. A two-house project in Portugal is for friends returning from Silicon Valley. All use materials to integrate them into their settings with that modern twist, and executive architects that can more accurately steer the construction process, recruiting the right local skills. Like its UK projects, the team still designs everything to the level of internal wall elevations that detail each finish.

There is another thread, Scottishness, that runs through the practice, detectable in the McLean surname, although the studio doesn’t particularly have projects in Scotland. McLean met Stephen at university





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Culture Profile



Left Cotswold Barn, the early project that defined McLean Quinlan's approach mixing vernacular with modern elements. It has just been rephotographed to show clients how the practice's buildings age well over time.

Right In the garden at Chelsea Townhouse. The project is only 160m² but required 11 party wall agreements.



in Edinburgh; Quinlan met Bowden studying at the Glasgow School of Art. Bowden's father is Scottish but grew up in Winchester so when they moved out of London that's where they headed – it just so happens to have its own hub of architectural practices. McLean is Scottish, but light-heartedly dubs herself originally 'a Chelsea Highlander', which possibly explains the feeling at home on the photoshoot.

Perhaps this also defines the practice. There is a taste for the well-refined in the work. Everything is exquisitely detailed, bespoke made. These are not projects for light budgets. The practice says the level of work required means it can't make projects work for less than £500,000. A lot of enquiries don't go anywhere because the budgets aren't suitable – the team is fortunate to be offered the bigger ones. Many projects illustrated here are circa £2 million. Often they would be second homes in the West Country like Harbour House in West Sussex for a family that loves sailing, but with Covid such commissions are becoming primary homes, requiring more storage.

Is that satisfying professionally? Yes, says Bowden, because you get to be involved in interiors to the level of a door handle, although the practice is keen to work in other areas where the fees would still be realistic because the budget is scaled up, like visitor centres or even mass housing. For now it is doing a Scout hut voluntarily for the club Quinlan and Bowden's children attend, made from shipping containers. It will be interesting to see how the McLean Quinlan finesse carries through. The same goes for a farmhouse with a smaller budget where the firm is reusing materials found on site to contain costs and be sustainable.

Indeed, sustainability is the area that is most driving change in McLean Quinlan's well-adapted aesthetic, yet to be really seen in its recent completed projects. Precipitated partly by the planning process

for a Paragraph 131 home, the directors are rethinking many of the details developed over the past few decades with an ambition to reduce embodied carbon by looking at how bricks can be lower carbon, or avoiding concrete slabs by changing the relationship with the ground and expectations between inside and outside. Devon Villa, 2018 (RIBA Sept 2020), was built to Passivhaus standard, but it sounds like more radical changes are to come and the directors are starting to tell clients that it is part of what they do.

Does the family set-up work?

'Amazingly well,' answers Bowden. 'People always suspect there must be fighting in the background but there's really not, Fiona's been great in letting us come to work with her.' He adds that as a family they are living and building architecture all the time.

So will there be a possible next generation in the family to take it forward?

'Ivy,' Bowden says of his daughter, 'would be a good interior designer, she could be that missing link.'

'Only the other day' says McLean. 'I heard her say: "Who would do a cill like that?" She's only 14.' ●

Below Render of an upcoming house in Nottinghamshire on the edge of a village. Smaller volumes are brought together to reduce its scale in the landscape.



An eye for Details

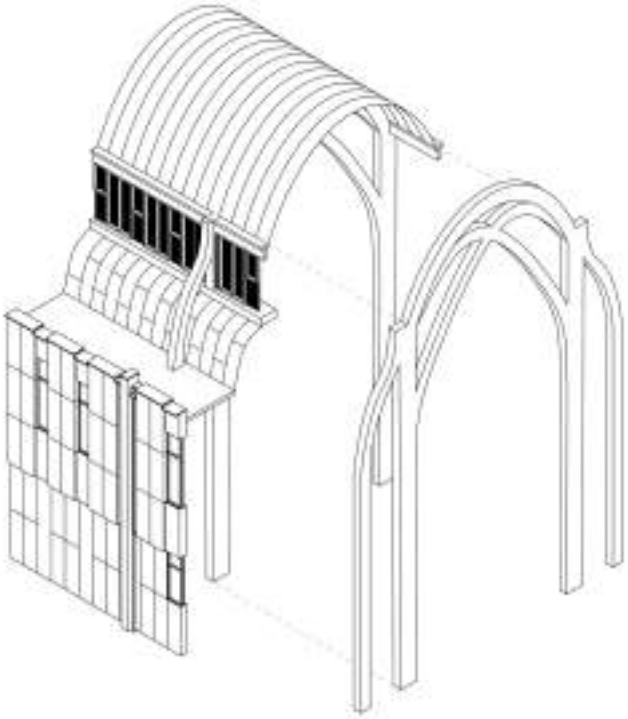
A study of architectural detail through the ages raises fascinating questions. Margate and the New Towns are the latest to fall under the spotlight

What makes a detail ‘good’ or ‘bad’?
What might a detail say about a building, an architect, a place, or a movement in history?
If a building can manifest how we think, how does a detail speak about the whole?
Can you have good details and a bad building?

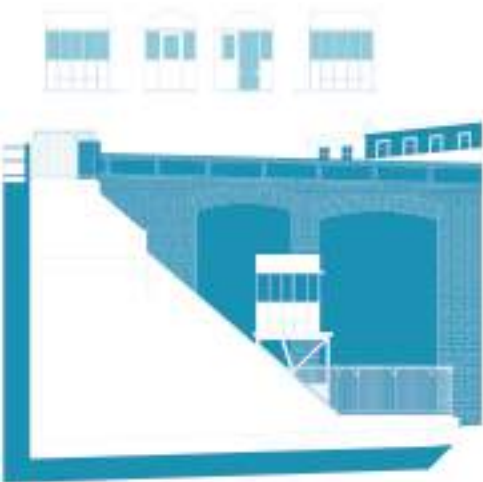
These questions are explored in Details, a publication edited by Wayne Head, director at Curl la Tourelle Head Architecture. The series of illustrated risograph-printed pamphlets interrogates architectural details in a variety of locations across the UK and further afield. Previous volumes have looked at The Barbican and Golden Lane Estate, Radical Essex, Clerkenwell and The City of London.

Details Vol. 6 looks at Margate, a day-tripper destination for 250 years. Margate has re-established itself as a cultural destination following coastal regeneration around the millennium. The Down-From-Londoners have arrived in floods to visit and relocate near the landmarks and landscape presented in this booklet. Exploring the quality and process of craftsmanship behind this town’s great details, we celebrate what has made Margate.

Details Vol. 7 and 8 New Towns is our latest commission, by Stevenage Borough Council and Milton Keynes Council. This series explores the intent, construction, meaning and reality of various details across



Above St Andrew & St George’s is the largest parish church to have been constructed in England since World War II, designed in 1956 by Seely & Paget. In a Festival of Britain style, it resembles a gothic cathedral with its modern reinterpretations of traditional elements, such as a copper vaulted roofs, clerestory windows, concrete flying buttresses and plywood lined barrel-vaulted ceilings. Flint-clad facade panels seem inspired by local vernacular styles.



Below Margate Cliff Railway. Funiculars, a window into a bygone era of seaside luxury, were installed in coastal towns due to the steep topography of urban settlements. Margate Cliff Railway was built in 1913 by Waygood-Otis to carry visitors down to the beach and Cliftonville Lido on a 45° slope parallel to the cliff face, but was removed in the 1970s. In some funiculars water tanks under the floor of the cabin imbalance the car, allowing it to ascend and descend without power.

both New Towns, the first and last post-war settlements to be created under the New Towns Act. Most recently, we held a taster exhibition for one of Milton Keynes’ eco-friendly trailblazer sites, Homeworld 81, to celebrate its 40th anniversary. A travelling exhibition and Stevenage New Town’s 75th anniversary celebrations take place on 11 November. ●

See more information, previous volumes and future updates at:
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Built to better our lot

Andrew Saint’s virtuoso urban history celebrates the grand civic structures built to tackle Victorian poverty in London, writes Otto Saumarez Smith

When the comedian Charlie Chaplain published his autobiography in 1964, many people thought that the appalling depiction of his childhood in late-Victorian and Edwardian London must be exaggerated. It wasn’t. The film star had been born to a music hall performing father who drank himself to death, after which the family fell into harshly bleak poverty, moving in and out of the workhouse. His mother was even sectioned. But Chaplin’s portrayal of London in these years, perhaps seen through the nostalgic lens of a staggeringly successful career in faraway Hollywood, was also lyrical and poignant: ‘This was the London of my childhood, of my moods and awakenings: memories of Lambeth in the spring; of



Above Siemens arc lights at Mansion House, 1881.

Below Bread and soup being handed out during the small hours to the homeless in Trafalgar Square, depicted in the Illustrated London News, 18 October 1887.

trivial incidents and things; of riding with Mother on top of a horse-bus trying to touch passing lilac-trees – of the many coloured bus tickets, orange blue, pink and green, that bestrewed the pavement where the trams and buses stopped – of rubicund flower-girls at the corner of Westminster Bridge, making gay boutonnière, their adroit fingers manipulating tinsel and quivering fern... From such trivia I believe my soul was born.’

I thought of Chaplin a lot while reading London 1870-1914, a City at its Zenith – Andrew Saint’s pithy new social and architectural history of London during the years that the future film star was growing up there. The cover is decorated with one of Charles Booth’s poverty maps, published from 1889, which surveyed every street of the capital, colour-coding them from red or yellow for the homes of the well-to-do, to streaks of sinister black for the ‘vicious, semi criminal’. Booth was a Tory businessman, but even he became convinced that something more than church and charity was needed to deal with London’s poor.

One of the overarching narratives of the book is how growing social concern with poverty resulted in a veritable crusade of municipal and private initiatives. There is a moment in one of Conan Doyle’s novels where Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson are looking from a train carriage window across the slate roofscape of London at the new Queen Anne board schools rising ‘like brick islands in a lead coloured sea’. Holmes proclaims that they are ‘Lighthouses! Beacons of the future! Capsules with hundreds of bright little seeds in each, out of which will spring the wiser, better England of the future.’ There were other capsules of a brighter future going up all over London, and Saint documents the new libraries, town halls, swimming baths, and council estates. For those accustomed to associating progressive politics with functional modernism, the architectural expression



Left Euston Fire Station, the best-known of the LCC's Arts & Crafts fire stations, was designed by HFT Cooper in 1901-2 and is still in service.

Below Sheet 9 of Booth's Descriptive Map of London Poverty, 1898-9, shows parts of Lambeth and Southwark, divided by parish.



of these buildings might come as a surprise, with their picturesquely composed ornamental abundance of swags and putti, in pretty amalgamations of red brick, terracotta, and stone dressing.

Saint's narrative is unashamedly celebratory of the period. As many of the processes he documents reached their culmination in the inter-war period, I am not convinced this was necessarily London 'at its zenith', as the book's subtitle proclaims. Nevertheless, the book affably conveys the prodigious improvements for everyday Londoners in a city evolving multiple new ways of living. This upward trajectory goes beyond worthy advances for the poor. Saint is particularly strong on the burgeoning forms of having a good time, from the skating craze of the 1870s to the proliferation of pubs in the 1890s. The considerable social impacts of new technologies, from electricity to the motorcar, are also perceptively described. The book is particularly fascinating on many pioneering infrastructures of the period, including, inter alia, the department store, the polytechnic, streetlighting, motorcars, or the fire station. Descriptions of buildings Saint loves, such as Westminster Cathedral or Selfridges, are infectious in their enthusiasm.

Saint covers an impressive amount of ground in this concise, copiously illustrated book. Explanations of complex historical processes are admirably succinct. The resulting depiction of London tends to be impressionistic, created out of a multitude of expressive details. The text is far more likely to quote contemporary novels than provide hard statistics or economic facts. Nevertheless, much of the writing is based on the penetrating research Saint did while general editor of the Survey of London, so even when he is making sweeping a generalisation, the reader is confident it is bolstered by unrivalled knowledge of the particularities of the city and its buildings. This is a virtuoso urban history that I think Charlie Chaplin would have enjoyed. It tells the history of many of the places that formed him – not just the institutions that attempted to mitigate the worst of slum life, but also the music halls in which he learnt to perform, the pubs his father drank in, and the trams he rode. The London we leave in 1914, an industrial behemoth at the centre of a global empire, is obviously not the capital city of today, but it is part of Saint's achievement to show the beginnings of many of the processes that continue to dictate the quality of urban life, for better and for worse. ●

London 1870-1914,
a City at its Zenith
Andrew Saint
Lund Humphries,
232pp, £30

Wanderer's Wonder

People have been exploring local areas more than ever. This competition seeks ideas for a playful structure to provide a place to rest and enhance a walk outdoors – with a chance to win £1,000

For our physical and mental wellbeing, daily walks have become synonymous with the pandemic and lockdowns. Many of us have ventured out to explore local environments beyond our front doors more than ever before. We've pounded the streets, parks, paths and fields, and gone on holiday closer to home. We've got to know familiar places better and found new ones along the way.

Wanderer's Wonder is a new competition brought to you by RIBA Journal and the Galvanizers Association. It invites proposals for a fun, playful building or structure for rest and recuperation that would enhance a walk in the great outdoors – rural or urban, near to home or far, in which you could spend a few minutes or stay overnight.

Designs can include any imagined facilities. The structure must use galvanized steel, ideally both structurally and aesthetically. Judges will be looking for sustainability and reuse in line with the circular economy.

Is it a platform that enables a better vantage point? An information kiosk to guide you further? A reinvention of the Scottish bothy? Or a refuge of a different kind on the seashore? Anything goes so long as it's wonderful, brings out the allure of its environment and is a thing of beauty. ●

THE BRIEF

In this ideas competition, we are asking entrants to design a building or structure for shelter, rest and recuperation. It can have any other additional function but should be modular, demountable, reusable and be designed to promote and draw out the beauty of a place. It does not need a specific location but should be intended conceptually for a location in the UK or Ireland with their climatic conditions. While the building will be made up of a palette of materials, we would like to see hot dip galvanized steel as an integral part of the overall material strategy, ideally both structurally and aesthetically, and the structure to be actively sustainable.

SUBMISSION

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

- An explanation of no more than 500 words, describing the building design, stating where galvanized products have been used
- Plans and sections showing structure, build-up and material composition
- Axonometric or any other images

ELIGIBILITY

- Open to qualified Part 1, Part 2, Part 3 architectural students and architects
- Projects must be theoretically sited in the UK or Ireland

ENTER

ribaj.com/wandererswonder

DEADLINE

2pm UK time on Monday 15 November 2021

NOTES

- The judges' decision is final
- The first prize is £1,000 and there are three commended prizes of £250. Shortlisted entries will be notified in writing, with winners announced in the RIBA Journal February 2022 print issue and on ribaj.com
- No correspondence will be entered into by the organisers or judges regarding entries and final decisions

Wanderer's Wonder is produced in partnership with Galvanizers Association. For more on galvanizing and a guide to it and the circular economy, see galvanizing.org.uk

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Rob Fiehn, Mellis Haward and Kyle Buchanan.

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Sessions on Learning from Systems Designers, Green Knowledge Sharing and Participatory Design.

Wednesday 10 November: Joining Forces
Sessions on Practice and Academia Collaboration, Accessing New Sectors, and Empowering Practices to Punch-Up.

Thursday 11 November: Making Friends
Sessions on Collaborating with Large Practices, Digital Collaborative Design Tools, and Setting up an Architects' Collective.

CPD PROGRAMME | 9am - 1pm each day

5-6 CPD sessions per day covering all 10 core CPD curriculum themes.

PRACTICE SPEED MENTORING | 1pm - 2pm
Friday 12 November. Limited Spaces Available

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Culture
President



Nine steps to the future

Simon Allford outlines the key ambitions and actions that will make a 21st century RIBA – leading, collaborating and influencing

As I write I am 40 days in as president, working on a document, 100 Days In, to give a broad update on the challenges we face as an institute, a profession and in respect of architecture. This is in the correct ascending order of importance: the Institute was called into being by the profession and both are servants of the art and practice of architecture.

For the RIBA to get anywhere near where we should be, Council, Board and Executive teams need to work together. And we are. At my first council meeting as president I presented the 'Biennial Plan' of Council and Board. Jack Pringle confirmed Board support for the key ambitions, also clarifying significant operational challenges that need to be addressed. Chief executive Alan Vallance concluded the presentation, describing how the Organisational Design Review, property plan and technology platform would enable speedy, necessary change.

Council will be forming new task and finish expert advisory groups to ensure we can face inwards and outwards in a clear and confident way. Two groups were formed on the day: one to explore how the RIBA can help the profession on PII – a tough nut to crack – and the other to review the implications of the new regulatory framework coming our way.

Back to the Biennial Plan, which will be published soon, and will inform the activities of all those involved in running the Institute. It has nine points:

- Build the 'House of Architecture' – invest in creating a generous and open online and physical entity.
- Make architecture accessible and affordable to all – work ever harder on equality, diversity and inclusion, and gender initiatives. A number of specific tasks were discussed, focussed on increasing our profession's international capacity to drive sustainable development and ethical practice.
- Expand membership by improving levels of support so that we become the acknowledged global gold standard for public engagement as well as practice.
- Collaborate and help lead the construction industry towards net zero. The RIBA will be at COP26, promoting simple and clear Built for the

Environment report recommendations.

- Influence public and private sector clients by promoting best practice to mitigate climate change, and build on the success of the RIBA 2030 Climate Challenge and upcoming Built Environment Summit with member-driven initiatives.
- Inform and engage in the design of the evolving regulatory framework – communicating with government and key regulatory bodies.
- Support practices in developing competence, confidence and cashflow, gathering and sharing practice and cultural data.
- Use Architecture.com to facilitate and promote architectural culture (celebrating and sharing our globally valuable library and drawings collection) and discourse among members, public and government. Specific activity could include creating a physical and virtual public gallery; a members' gallery; and a public affairs gallery to encourage all those with an interest in architecture to engage with the issues of the day.
- Use the funds received from the NBS sale to protect our long-term investments, rebuild our essential infrastructure and invest in the long-term advancement of architecture.

Like most of you, I remain busy in my practice, so I know how much extra effort this will require from all involved. I also appreciate the many offers of encouragement and, even more importantly, engagement. So I am confident that working together, members, Council, Board and staff can create this new model institute: a fit-for-purpose 21st century RIBA – an 'Institute of Ideas' – using technology to help our members meet our historic charter obligations.

We must also make architecture celebratory – and we are. I have taken great pleasure recently in chairing the Royal Gold Medal and Honorary Fellows selection panels, and being part of this year's Stirling Prize jury, chaired by Lord Foster.

Congratulations to Grafton Architects and Kingston University London for Town House, the 2021 Stirling Prize winner.

We are making progress. ●

ONLY ON RIBA.J.COM

Kingston Town House: read more about this year's Stirling Prize winner and all the special awards here

ribaj.com/stirling-prize-2021

ACTION ON THE CLIMATE

COP26 is now in full swing, bringing together global leaders, climate change experts and activists to agree co-ordinated action to tackle climate change. We will be there to drive forward our net zero agenda in various discussions and events. Follow our activity on social media and on architecture.com.

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Obituary

Founder member of HKPA and one of the last of the post-war rebuilders of Britain, expert in precast concrete who helped design the Alton West Estate before moving onto brutalism and housing for nuclear submarines



Stanley Amis 1924 – 2021

Stanley Amis, who has died aged 97, was one of the last survivors of a generation who helped shape the face of post-war Britain. He was widely respected by his peers not only as an expert in precast concrete construction but as a designer of thoughtful – often powerful – buildings, several of which are listed.

Amis was born in 1924 in Virginia Water, Surrey, to Frederick Henry Amis, a radio engineer. In 1942 he gained a place at the Architectural Association, returning after service in the Fleet Air Arm and the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve to graduate in 1950. There he met John Killick and Bill Howell; the three went on to work at the London County Council. They were assigned – with John Partridge – to an extensive housing scheme in south-west London. The result was the Alton West estate, a Corbusian tour-de-force which illustrated their belief that social commitment and architectural image need not be mutually exclusive.

Ratios and proportions fascinated Amis, and the blocks of Alton West were meticulously designed to the square and the golden section. A sense of measure is equally palpable at 80-90 South Hill Park, the Hampstead terrace designed in 1952-3 by Amis and Bill and Gill Howell. Amis was the first of the four to leave the LCC, gaining project management experience as the site architect for Easton & Robertson's Shell Centre. In 1956, the Howells, Killick, Partridge and Amis teamed up with Alison and Peter Smithson to enter the Sydney Opera House competition, one of several 'kitchen table' schemes.

Amis reunited with his teammates in late 1961. Howell Killick Partridge & Amis maintained their reputation for fiercely inventive architecture, and soon attracted the now-unavoidable 'brutalist' tag. Yet what stands out today is their sensitivity to historical context and their treatment of daylight and materials as precious things. Amis was responsible

for Acland Burghley, an LCC comprehensive school with a radiating plan of teaching towers to which is tethered a gem of an assembly hall. It was detailed in the chunky, aggregate-textured precast concrete panels which became HKPA's trademark.

Amis developed a structural aesthetic of interlocking, oversailing members, having affinities with constructivism but deeper roots in traditional Japanese construction. His 1970-2 Faculty of Urban and Regional Studies at Reading University provides a vigorous essay in the manner. Its bristling silhouette in massive blocks of orange concrete was dubbed 'the Lego building' by students. Amis also worked with Howell on a residential addition for Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, where his hand is particularly evident in the common room interior.

With the deaths of Killick (in 1971) and Howell (1974) Amis's centre of gravity shifted west. At Devonport Naval Base he managed a 15-year programme which included a fleet maintenance base and a refit complex for nuclear submarines, dominated by a Brobdingnagian cantilever crane.

Stan Amis was respected by his practice partners for his astute business and management sense, while junior colleagues found him amiable and approachable. Rugby and golf provided a counterbalance to the demands of professional life. Amis was probably the best-travelled of the four partners, undertaking study tours to the US, Japan and elsewhere. In 1946, Amis married Isabel Over and had two sons, Mark (who predeceased him) and Philip. After Isabel's death, Amis married the actor Margaret Wolfit; the couple had a daughter, Lucy. The marriage was later dissolved, and Amis married Thelma Sorensen, who survives him. ●

Geraint Franklin is an architectural historian with Historic England

IN MEMORIAM

George Edmund West
ELECTED 1958, LONDON

Gerald Robert Williams
ELECTED 1968, LONDON

Kurt Alexander Schweitzer
ELECTED 1970, LONDON

George Charles Russell Koester
ELECTED 1992, BEXHILL-ON-SEA

John Cecil Stillman
ELECTED 1947, DORCHESTER

Brian Glyn Roberts
ELECTED 1954, HAMPSHIRE

Antony Victor Harwood
ELECTED 1953, WILTSHIRE

John Trevor Pounder
ELECTED 1971, LONDON

Raymond Dale Warren
ELECTED 1976, HERTFORDSHIRE

John Simon Ford
ELECTED 1994, CHELTENHAM

Robert Farquharson Whittin
ELECTED 1951, DUMBARTON

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RISING STARS

2021





This year’s cohort of nine Rising Stars are agitators, bringing their colourful voices to a grey digital Covid world. Architects are trained how to make their mark, but the pace of change is slow and, for this generation, the constraints of procurement and large-scale projects are the backdrop to making change on the ground and in the minds of the profession.

Judge Bushra Mohamed, a 2020 Rising Star, drew on her own experience to sum up the challenges. ‘It is so difficult as a young architect to be building ... because of access to capital etc. Instead you can have an impact on policies. Buildings aren’t the quickest way to respond to things.’

Their causes are diverse, from youth engagement and promoting an understanding of the human impact of disability to campaigning for conservation. Their methods too are diverse, the punchy posters and inspirational talks underpinned by a dedication inside and outside work to explore and explain. Some Rising Stars have found their tools in systems: the new packaging of services so that tenement owners can confidently and inexpensively find the help they need; or engaging documents to share sustainability expertise and protocols and effect a step change in practice culture.

Those who have struck out on their own in practice are putting their manifestos into built form. This means challenging planning, construction and design norms, pushing yourself and the standard way of working. One Rising Star is at the forefront of reinventing a pop version of postmodernism, another marrying digital innovation and community building in unexpected ways, another reinventing the children’s home with a true emphasis on the idea of home.

Whatever way they have of agitating for change this Rising Stars cohort is going to make itself heard for the issues it believes in. And the world will be a brighter place for it.

Eleanor Young, acting editor, RIBA Journal

Origin is thrilled, once again, to be championing the RIBA Journal’s Rising Stars. We love being involved in this initiative as it’s an amazing opportunity where we can encourage and celebrate such talent coming through as emerging players in the architectural arena.

Like the entrants, Origin is essentially in the infancy in its overall journey and potential. Since establishing in 2001, we’ve certainly made our mark in the fenestration industry by rewriting the norms with our fresh thinking, especially in the last 18 months where thinking outside the box and overcoming obstacles has been paramount to success.

The standard of this year’s entrants has been hugely impressive. There’s definitely a bright future in front of every one of them. We’ve loved working with the Rising Stars, as they have all demonstrated a strong sense of collaboration, diversity, enthusiasm and passion, which has been fantastic to see and be a part of.

Ben Brocklesby, sales and marketing director, Origin

Above Hammering home change with Charlie Butterwick’s community build.

THE 2020 JUDGES



Yasmin Al-Ani Spence
Architect and director, Wilkinson Eyre, lead on Dyson Campus



Bushra Mohamed
RIBA Rising Star 2020 and co-founder of Studio Nyali



Steve Smith
Designer, developer and client for Ghost House and Invisible House



Steve Webb
Webb Yates Engineers and author of series on hacks for embodied carbon structures



Eleanor Young,
Acting editor RIBA Journal (chair)



RACHAEL OWENS



Making organisational change happen with a focus on sustainability

Head of sustainability, Buckley Gray Yeoman
Part 1: 2010 Part 2: 2013

Rachael Owens admits her fondness for the ‘nerdier’ side of sustainable design – calculations, stats etc – but also believes that ‘it’s really important that these are invested in the social side, and make buildings work for people’. It’s clear that this driven and well-informed architect is in her element rendering such complexities useful for others.

Owens is head of sustainability at Buckley Gray Yeoman, a coordinator of the Architect’s Climate Action Network (ACAN) embodied carbon group, and a guest lecturer at the University of East London (UEL). Her passion and deep knowledge of sustainable design is evident in her communication style (even ‘in the way she writes, she is enthusiastic’, commented judge Yasmin Al-Ani Spence).

Owens describes Buckley Gray Yeoman as a practice that ‘is forensic’ in its approach to conserving resources – a quality that suits her own thoroughness. At work, she is part of the practice’s technical panel, a key organiser within its sustainability forum, and is working with the sustainability and wellness team to implement the RIBA 2030 Climate Challenge principles. She devised the practice’s sustainability toolkit – a codified document establishing principles to follow. She is also working towards WELL-accreditation, because ‘fundamentally the reason we work to mitigate the climate crisis is to reduce harm to people’, she explains. All in the job description perhaps, but as Owens’ referee Laura O’Hagan points out, she is also ‘prepared to hold management to account’. In the words of RIBA Journal’s Eleanor Young: ‘She clearly feels strongly about sustainability and demonstrates passion and commitment.’

Data can be daunting, and ‘day to day, architects don’t have the time to read all the information that’s out there’, Owens says. But she relishes making the intimidating implementable by, for example, collating resources, creating visual client guides, editing an internal newsletter and working on a materials/products library cataloguing system which ‘makes the easiest choice the most sustainable one’. Even her UEL teaching focuses on helping undergraduates get to grips with energy calculation tools. ‘It’s about disseminating information and giving people the confidence to use it’, she says. ‘Part

Top right Campaigning poster for embodied carbon regulation from ACAN.

Right Owens has created a sustainability toolkit for her practice.



The Carbon Footprint of Construction

The case for regulating embodied carbon in construction to significantly address the impact of the industry on the climate



Award for public sector & policy makers
Alliance for Sustainability
February 2021

of what I do as a lecturer is to tell the students that they do in fact have power, and that by making sustainable design choices we can drive positive change ... the industry is a huge part of the problem but we can also be part of the solution,’ she adds.

In March 2020 Owens became involved with ACAN’s campaign for embodied carbon emissions regulation. This campaign, and the accompanying report, won an Alliance for Sustainability (ASBP) award. ‘What I love about ACAN is that it is a non-hierarchical, supportive network ... full of inspiring, hardworking and knowledgeable people,’ she says.

What existing building, place and problem would you most like to tackle?

We need to understand, measure and drastically reduce embodied carbon emissions. As professionals we need to have a much better understanding of materials’ carbon footprints and material efficiency. We need to calculate these emissions from RIBA stage 1 in order to understand the impact of certain choices. Secondly, embodied carbon emissions must be regulated at a national level, through the Building Regulations. I am working both to increase the level of knowledge on embodied carbon within the profession.

MAT
BARNES

Emerging fresh design talent with a cheeky sense of postmodernism, influenced by FAT and Venturi, Scott Brown

Director, CAN

Part 1: 2008 Part 2: 2011



What existing building, place and problem would you most like to tackle?

I'd love to be commissioned to design a public-facing arts education building in my hometown of Cardiff. I think there is a real opportunity to represent the rich cultural history of the city through its architecture ... to really represent the people of the city and its cultural diversity.

'Mat Barnes represents a fresh and invigorating voice [with his] bold, witty and irreverent work,' writes his referee, Charles Thomson of Studio 54 Architecture. Indeed, as Barnes himself admits, 'it wasn't until undertaking my Part 2 under Kester Rattenbury and former FAT director Sean Griffiths that I felt like I was in the right profession ... they taught me that architecture didn't have to be limited to a narrow visual taste and that all reference points, low and high, are just as valid.' The influence of FAT on Barnes' practice, Critical Architecture Network (CAN), founded in 2016, are evident, as are traces of the postmodernism of Venturi, Scott Brown.

Barnes' work has already picked up mainstream press accolades, with Mountain View (an Edwardian home extension) included in The Observer's pick of the best five architecture projects in 2020, and Lomax Studio (a new-build artist studio) winning an RIBA regional award. Barnes' active approach to seeking out diverse interdisciplinary collaborations, and experimenting with materials and ideas is a key factor in the success of his output – the Block Shop (a window installation for the RIBA with artist Nina Shen-Poblete) and All That Could Have Been (an installation with artist and joiner, Harry Lawson) being two examples.

The judges praised Barnes' work as 'joyful and well presented' (Yasmin Al-Ani Spence's words) and commended his ability to form a practice, and garner accolades at such an early career stage. As judge Bushra Mohamed commented: 'He obviously has hard graft and leadership skills ... he has produced an amazing lot of work given the time frame ... arguably he is not rising he is already there.'

Left Lomax Studio, New Cross, London.

Top right Shortlisted design for police box in the City of London.

Right An installation at Sir John Soane's Museum in 2020, All That Could Have Been.



HIBA
ALOBAYDI

Editor with a commitment to outreach and volunteering, drawing on her own experience



Assistant editor, Foster + Partners

Parts 1: 2014 Part 2: 2016

Hiba Alobaydi experienced numerous setbacks in her early career. 'It took me a long time, a lot of hard work ... to get to where I am today,' she writes. After seven years spent in peri-architectural roles – including gallery assistant, PR executive and intern at Architecture Ireland magazine – in late 2020 she found her niche as assistant editor at Foster + Partners.

'I don't want it to be so hard for the next generation,' she says. To further this end, she has taken on numerous volunteer roles. These currently involve acting as a young trustee at the Architecture Foundation and devoting time to the University of the Arts London industry mentoring programme. In the past, she has volunteered at the Design Museum, St Paul's Cathedral Architectural Archive and the RIBA. 'Amidst today's dire socio-economic climate, mentoring has empowered me to channel my exasperation into enduring (and inspiring) mentor-mentee relationships,' she writes.

Architecture Foundation director Ellis Woodman, her referee, commended Alobaydi's contribution to ongoing initiatives such as Life Outside Architecture (an events programme that explores the career opportunities outside architectural practice open to those with an architectural education).

The judges were impressed by Alobaydi's commitment to outreach and the range of her activities. 'She is interested in a lot of different things ... and is working to make a change,' commented Bushra Mohamed. 'She has obviously had a hard journey; she is championing diversity and that is great,' agreed Steve Webb.

Right A snapshot of Quickfire Friday from the Young Trustees of the Architecture Foundation, of which Alobaydi is a part.

What existing building, place and problem would you most like to tackle?

Turning a blind eye to the relentless budget slashes risks the manifestation of a dangerously homogenous built environment. I would like to tackle this through a combination of activism, transparency and good old-fashioned empathy so that we do not become divided by design.



AMY
FRANCIS-SMITH

Leading the way on disability campaigning with compelling storytelling that feeds into practical teaching and advice

Architect, Pinnegar Hayward Design; vice president, Birmingham Architectural Association
Part 1: 2012 Part 2: 2019



The last couple of years have brought Amy Francis-Smith remarkable recognition for her work pushing forward accessibility both in design and for designers, including a place on the Shaw Trust's Power 100 list of the most influential disabled people in the UK.

Francis-Smith's understanding of the barriers the built environment erects came early in her life when she had to navigate streets while caring for her mother, who was an intermittent wheelchair and crutch user. She remembers as a child having to drag the wheelchair across gravel or manoeuvre it up steep kerbs.

When she presents to students (she teaches inclusive design at various universities) and fellow professionals, she tries to bring to life these limitations – and to highlight the many things that can be changed with just a small design decision. This is fuelled by her master's thesis on accessible housing. Interviews with hundreds of disabled people referenced phrases like 'prisoner' and 'no dignity' and included examples of people left washing in the kitchen sink, unable to put their children

to bed in upstairs bedrooms and unable to open windows by themselves.

Her activities in this area including sitting on Habinteg's housing advisory board, providing design access consultancy for schemes such as the Royal Society of Blind Children and helping run a pilot course at the Bartlett to bring five visually impaired students into architecture. As a Design Council specialist, she provides expert advice on accessibility, policy and strategy. She is also a design review panel member for Design Midlands.

'It is unique what she is doing,' said Rising Stars judge Bushra Mohamed. 'She uses Instagram, she uses social media really well to get her message across. She encourages the conversation to develop around accessibility in architecture, which seems to have had a huge impact. She is really quite special.'

She is also bringing new life to her adopted city of Birmingham as vice-president of Birmingham Architectural Association (BAA). Gensler design director and RIBA regional chair Philip Twiss offered his support as her referee. 'She is a passionate, effective leader,' he said. 'Through her leadership... BAA has been able to develop a strong relationship and significant financial supporters, ensuring that her ideals are put into action.'

What makes these achievements all the more remarkable is Francis-Smith's own chronic invisible disabilities, including early hearing loss and being bedridden during her master's as she was regularly hospitalised with daily life-threatening anaphylaxis.



What existing building, place and problem would you most like to tackle?

Well aside from the glaring obvious issues with the climate ... fundamentally I believe everybody deserves full bodily autonomy, independence and dignity in our built environment. Sustainable 'eco' design does not just mean solar panels and green roofs. So inclusive design is more than just lifts, ramps and toilets.



HANNAH DURHAM

Caring and committed teacher with
an interest in recorded sound

Lecturer in architecture, Oxford Brookes University
 Part 1: 2009 Part 2: 2012



For years, Hannah Durham has been attuned to architecture's noise. From her Architectural Association student work, *Sonic Wilderness*, to the Studio in the Woods project she co-led for Students, which replicated a forest soundscape, Durham's preoccupation has been to 'unearth the buried voices' – hearing, recording, replaying and amplifying them.

One such achievement (which judges Bushra Mohamed and Steve Webb described as ‘really important, original and amazing’) was an oral history project for the Architectural Association’s XX 100 programme, which celebrated 100 years of women in the AA). Durham recorded 13 female architects’ life stories – including Su Rogers, Eldred Evans, Patty Hopkins and Inette Austin-Smith – for the AA archive. ‘These female architects’ stories weren’t heard, or if they were, it was

Below Su Rogers, one of the women Durham interviewed for the AA's XX 100 programme.



through their husbands or ex partners,' Durham explains. 'But they should be embedded into our collective history.' Now they are.

For the past six years, Durham has taught at her alma mater Oxford Brookes University. Before recently becoming a full-time educator, some of this was concurrent with working at Cullinan Studio, allowing her to link her teaching to practice. Durham's students have consistently exceeded their academic expectations – including during the exceptionally trying pandemic year, 2020-21, when over a third of her studio received a distinction or high distinction mark despite the inevitable struggles. For the past three years, her students have also been nominated for RIBA prizes.

Durham is sparky, animated and bright, so it comes as no surprise that she should find herself the recipient of the students' union's Most Inspirational Lecturer and Unsung Hero awards – recognition given to staff who enliven the student experience.

Durham's teaching style is inclusive. 'I love nurturing individuals and supporting people from different backgrounds,' she says. 'What motivates me is being able to give the next generation the chance to flourish. The future is unknown; we need architects who are creative, inventive and confident to develop their ideas.' RIBA Journal acting editor Eleanor Young said: 'Hannah teaches and cares for students, she has brightly come up with lots of ideas and is very engaging.'

Durham's referee, the university's postgraduate programme lead Scott Sworts, concurs. 'Hannah's teaching results in uniformly good student outcomes,' he says, 'and her collaborative approach to both pedagogy and research is a significant asset to the school.'

With her ability to nurture students, deliver high academic outcomes from them, marry deep theoretical understanding with work in practice, and to give quiet voices a chance to be heard, Durham is worth listening to.

Left The pavilion Durham worked on for Studio in the Woods.

What existing building, place and problem would you most like to tackle?

I aim to improve inclusivity in our architectural field to create a profession that reflects and supports diversity in all its forms, and creates an inclusive built environment. The disparities between the cultures and identities of the architecture profession, as opposed to the broader population, are significant and manifest themselves in important ways, both obvious and insidious. Who becomes an architect, and progresses on into positions of power within the profession, determines not only who writes our architectural history but who feels accepted in the profession, who designs our built environments and how inclusive they are.

CONRAD KOSLOWSKY

A mission to create children's homes that don't feel institutional



Architect, Design Fellow, Conrad Koslowsky Architects
Part 1: 2010 Part 2: 2013

There are many laudable small practices that mix teaching with designing homes and back extensions. Conrad Koslowsky impressed with his work on one particular project over and above these: the Light-house, a new sort of children's home.

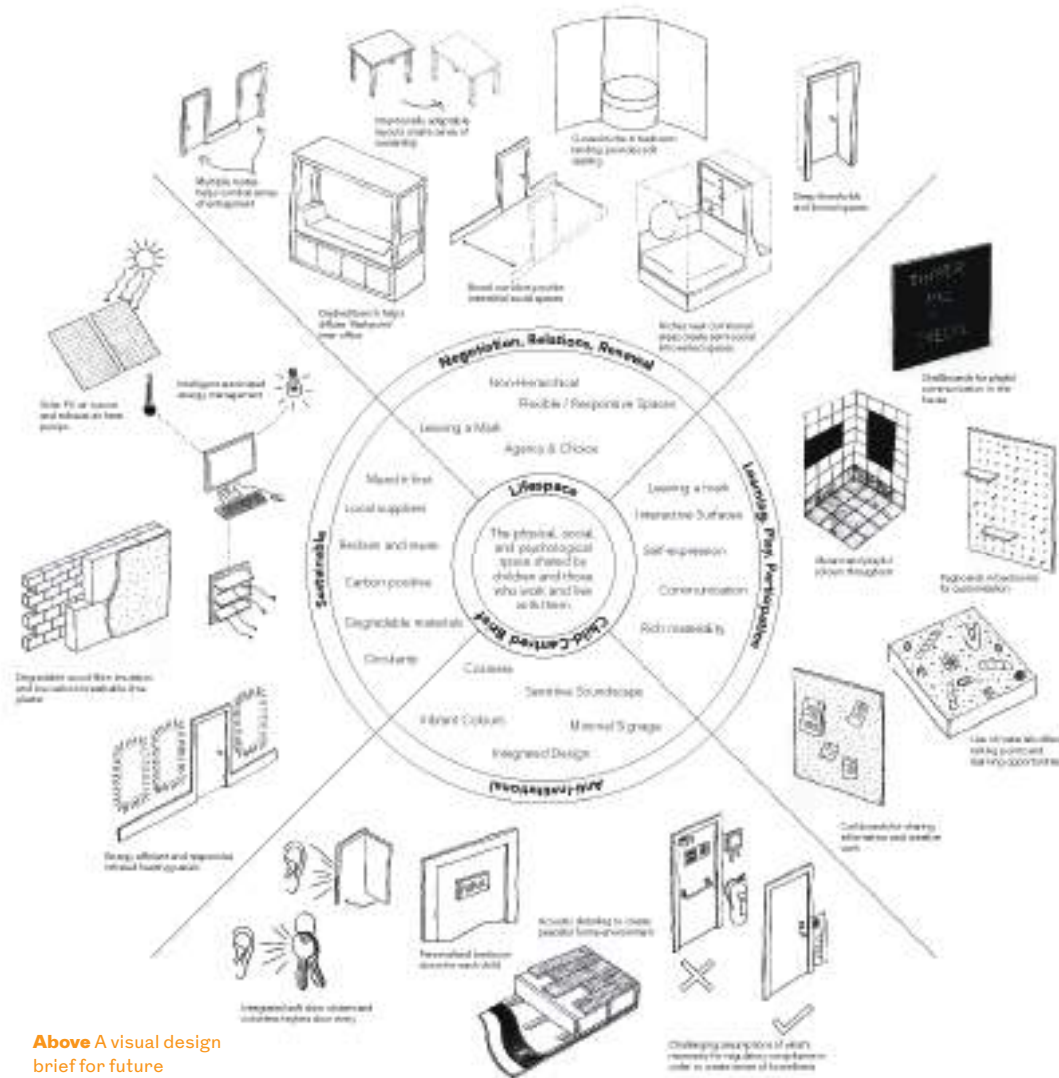
Koslowsky saw the advertisement for a project manager and was able to offer services from straightforward project management to architecture and interiors. In the search for a property, he was able to see the design possibilities. He also takes on financial reporting and keeping the project on track.

For his client and referee, Emmanuel Akpan-Inwang, founder and director of Lighthouse Children's Homes, it was Koslowsky's ability to translate ideas into practice that has made for an outstanding collaboration. 'I have been continuously impressed with his willingness to go above and beyond to understand the philosophical perspective of our organisation and realise this in the design of our first home,' he says.

The Lighthouse focuses on being a home, rather than a 'children's home,' trying to do away with institutionalism. 'There are so many micro design decisions,' says Koslowsky. 'You need to know to challenge the regulatory process and find other ways. It has become a process of understanding the problems of a sector.' For future homes, Koslowsky has drawn up a visual brief – an evocative reminder of the importance of niches, the soundscape and renewal that will deliver the wider aspiration.

Koslowsky's Lighthouse work is set against the pandemic, which lost him four projects and three staff as well as felling him with Covid before the first lockdown. He has since been suffering from long Covid, affecting his breathing and strength. But his two years in practice have left him optimistic.

'I have renewed faith in the social reach of design and am empowered in my teaching to



Above A visual design brief for future Lighthouse homes.

What existing building, place and problem would you most like to tackle?

I visited several elderly care homes during the property search for Lighthouse and was appalled at the institutionalised, cramped, and deleterious houses that many vulnerable adults are subjected to. If children's homes can be designed to be inviting, nurturing, safe and comfortable while also being economically viable, the same must be true for elderly care homes. Our population is ageing at a significant rate and I would love to have the opportunity to work with a client who shared the belief that people should have the chance to spend their last years in well-designed and wonderful homes.

Below Visualisations of Lighthouse Children's Homes' first building in Sutton, London.

instil a sense of purpose in the next generation of architects,' he says.

Judge Steve Smith applauded Koslowsky's work, saying: 'I know that a lot of the care homes are terrible. Any opportunity to improve kids' lives should be rewarded.'

Judge Yasmin Al-Ani Spence was equally appreciative. 'This is what Rising Stars is about,' she said. 'He has got a good reason for doing what he does; he is doing something he feels is right. It has focus.'



ribaj.com

**SIMEON
SHTEBUNAEV**

Working on all fronts to challenge power and make architecture better for young people



Senior lecturer in the built environment, Birmingham City University
Part 1: 2013 Part 2: 2017

'Not so much a rising star as an expanding galaxy,' writes referee RIBA past president Jane Duncan about Simeon Shtebunaev, a doctoral researcher and senior lecturer at Birmingham City University, whose remarkable extracurricular list includes time as an RIBA trustee, a member of the RTPI General Assembly and an ambassador of the Architects Benevolent Society.

Following his MArch from the University of Sheffield and three years at BDP, Shtebunaev has thrown himself into advocating for younger professionals. As judge Steve Smith warmly commented, 'engaging young people is the way forward'.

Shtebunaev helped launch the RIBA Future Architects initiative and the RIBA National Schools programme. He has acted as architectural ambassador in Midlands schools with the Birmingham Architectural Association, worked with the Future Architects Front and advised on the creation of a Commonwealth Youth Network.

'I use my research skills in diverse contexts to build knowledge that can challenge power and make architecture better for youth,' Shtebunaev explains.

In 2018 he was awarded a STEAM PhD scholarship to research the role of young citizens in smart city planning, based on his work co-founding a teenage architec-

What existing building, place and problem would you most like to tackle?

My crusade through life is to teach empathy as a design skill. All of the inclusion campaigns we lead are necessary because as a profession have forgotten to empathise with others. Let young people in and trust them to design the institutions and places they need, because they can!



ture summer school in Bulgaria. He won a grant to engage young people in climate change research, and recently worked with Grosvenor on Voice Opportunity Power – a youth toolkit.

As judge Bushra Mohamed said of his youth engagement and academic work: 'That is the future, and he is original in the research he is doing around it'.

Above and below
Beyond Borders summer school in Bulgaria, structured and co-led by Shtebunaev.



SCOTT
ABERCROMBIE

Heritage cheerleader saving buildings from the grand to the tenement

Associate director, John Gilbert Architects
Part 1: 2010 Part 2: 2011



Above Part of the campaign for Alexander 'Greek' Thomson's Egyptian Halls in Glasgow.

Top right The Tenement Toolbox, devised by Abercrombie, provides a simple way to tackle the condition of Glasgow tenements.

Left As chair of the Alexander Thomson Society, Abercrombie organises annual lectures, among other things.

What existing building, place and problem would you most like to tackle?

For me it has to be Alexander 'Greek' Thomson's Egyptian Halls in Glasgow, for which my campaigning resulted in the establishment of a new body, Save Egyptian Halls, led by Scottish Civic Trust. One of Scotland's most unique buildings by one of her greatest architects, it is category A-listed yet its upper floors have lain vacant and decaying for over four decades. The state of such a prominent and significant building, and its shroud of scaffolding which greets visitors to Glasgow as they exit Central Station, is a national embarrassment. It would be a delight to have the opportunity to find a new and sustainable use for it, and to see it restored.



Abercrombie has encouraged other young professionals to engage in the Glaswegian conservation scene through his position as chair of the Alexander Thomson Society, where he helps coordinate design competitions and organises an annual lecture series (speakers have included Eric Parry and Amin Taha). 'It's mainly about luring big-name architects away from London up here to juxtapose with some of our niche, nerdy local interests,' he says. For three years Abercrombie was the Glasgow Institute of Architects' conservation committee convenor – yet another thing he has saved from oblivion. At work, he devised the Tenement Toolbox, an accessible, affordable condition survey for private homeowners. It's a 'thinking outside the box' solution to the specifically Glaswegian problem of tenements in disrepair. 'Sometimes bits of buildings fall into the street!' Scott explains. 'Action needs to be taken and nobody knows how to fund it. We can't change policy but we can offer a pragmatic way of tackling some of the building maintenance issues and giving people the tools to make the best decisions.'

Abercrombie's genuine concern for sustainability, conservation and Glasgow's built heritage is evident. As judge Bushra Mohamed said: 'In terms of sustainability, making people more interested in reusing the existing built environment is really important ... he is interesting, he is young and he is trying to make conservation more accessible to the younger demographic.'



CHARLIE
BUTTERWICK

Committed to delivering sustainable, cost-effective solutions that his clients can participate in constructing

Co-founder, Architecture Unknown
Part 1: 2015 Part 2: 2020



Charlie Butterwick's clients are effusive in their praise. His practice is a rare find, they write, a company that 'mixes close personal connection, future-led design, environmental ethics and social conscience in equal measure'. Architecture Unknown, the practice Butterwick co-founded, has this vision: to make the public and residents partners in design; to promote shared values and identity; and to design buildings that inspire clients and champion their values. 'By changing how we engage clients, people and communities, life could be better for everyone,' states Butterwick.

What drives his practice is a commitment to delivering his clients a sustainable, cost effective solution they can participate in constructing, thereby promoting dialogue and community cohesion. (In one case, an entire Scout troop chipped in and £20,000 was saved.) Butterwick's willingness to embrace new technologies, such as digitally manufactured building systems and open-source technology such as WikiHouse, signals an attitude to design and construction that is inclusive and open-minded (with 'a touch of DIY SOS', observed judge Steve Smith).

What existing building, place and problem would you most like to tackle?

Community construction has the potential to be a new frontier in modular building that democratises our built environment and brings people together through a new, holistic, hopeful form of architecture. Working on public buildings in deprived communities generates the greatest benefits, enabling regeneration and offering opportunities for upskilling to those who are rarely invested in. We want to inspire young architects and engineers, as well as offer opportunities to the next generation of joiners, prefab specialists and sustainable tech advocates.

Butterwick's generous, ambitious and straightforward approach pleased the judges. Yasmin Al-Ani Spence said: 'He is doing a community project [and in so doing] is changing the structure of how these are done. It is a nice, simple, honest representation of someone who works hard and has a good, solid idea' – noble aspirations coupled with the confidence to innovate.

New home for 2nd Whalley Range Scouts using Wikihouse technology, being assembled (left) and almost completed (below).



THE RISING STARS 2021 SHORTLIST

Will Campion, designer, Bjarke Ingels Group
Oozing sustainable business ideas

Ayesha Kaur, senior architectural assistant, Intervention Architecture
Developing strategies for community engagement in Covid

Luke Jackson, senior architect, Karakusevic Carson Architects
Leading his team on major projects

Tom Parsons
Explorer of digital fabrication

Sohanna Srinivasan, architect, Karakusevic Carson Architects
Drawing together strands of mentoring, teaching and diversity

Joe Worrall, senior architect, JTP
Boosting his practice's wellness through design

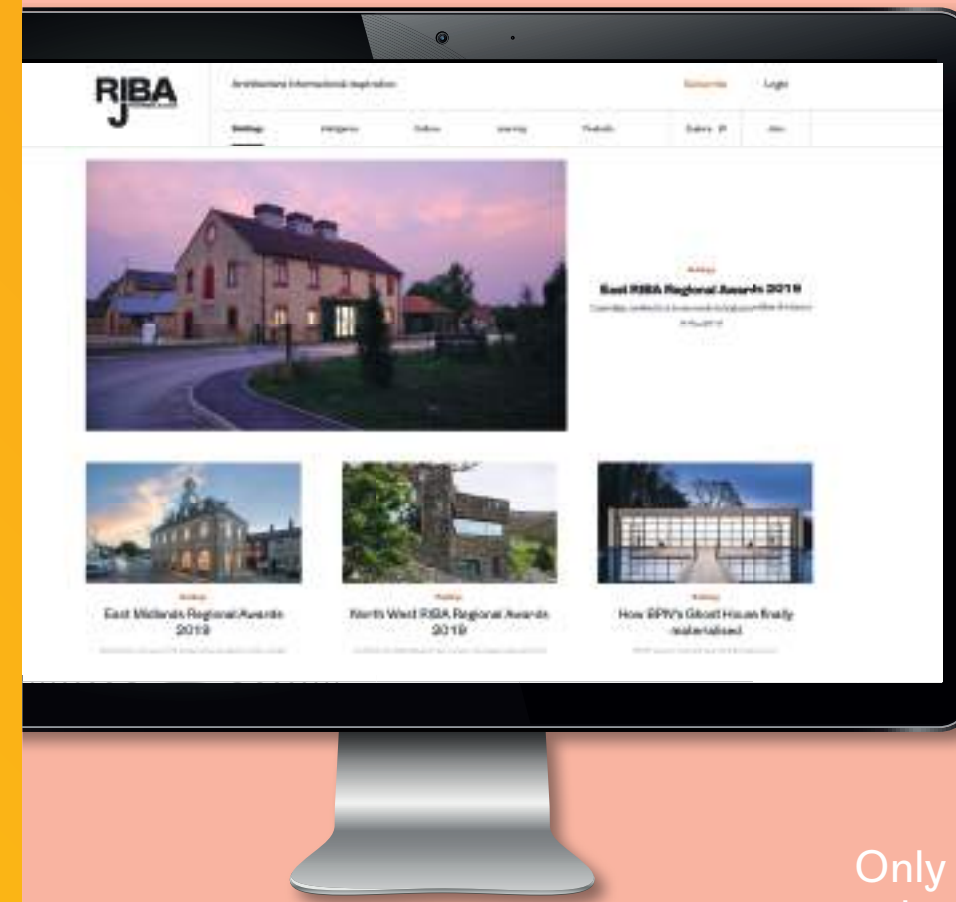
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Eric Parry and Lee Higson of Eric Parry Architects on material innovation, avoiding wallpaper and why Parry gets sore knuckles when he visits site. And the glamorous side of toilet specifications.

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Make our letters mean excellence

I am concerned that the plans for a Global Institute were omitted from Simon Allford's plans (RIBA J September p94). The sale of NBS leaves a considerable hole as the RIBA cannot survive if it continues to spend more than it earns. We need more members.

My proposal three years ago, when I was vice president for the RIBA's International Committee, differed. I think we should ensure the letters RIBA are regarded as an elite, highly regarded qualification. In order to gain membership of the RIBA we all have to attain certain standards of education and knowledge. In my proposal, in order to retain membership we would have to complete 50 hours of dedicated regulated lifelong learning per year. We would then be able to demonstrate to clients, politicians and decision makers that an RIBA architect is the very best.

The RIBA should establish the model for practice so that architectural education does not end in our mid 20s but lasts throughout our lifetime, so that we are always at the front of thought leadership on sustainability, ethics, professional practice, business skills, and other specialisms such as heritage, conservation, healthcare, people movement, fire standards etc. We would also attract significant additional revenue by creating online lifelong learning modules.

I feel strongly that if RIBA membership was seen as a proof of additional qualification, joining would be attractive to architects across the world. It is not now.

Chris Williamson, WestonWilliamson+Partners, London

In need of a plan

Am I the only reader who would like to see more plans and sections? The September issue had no drawings at all, just photographs of completed buildings. They do little to demonstrate buildings' spatial organisation or explain how they are orientated. Likewise sections would better explain how designers manipulated their buildings in relation to the ground.

Paul Wellings-Longmore, Cambridge

Point taken. Our principle of publishing plans and sections of all building studies faltered in the September issue when trying to cover all the 57 RIBA National Awards winners in print. Ed



Above The Scottish Widows building, Edinburgh (RIBA J August 2021, p82) as it currently stands – 'empty, depressing and neglected,' as shot by John Campbell Edinburgh.

Shock shot

In the September edition of the RIBA J, page 89, that photo of Hale Wharf really smacked it home to me. 'Take a look at the photo. What is your eye drawn to?'

For me it was an expression of the dislocation between the reality of living, and the absurdity of the tower block as a place in which to live, surrounded by all Rem K's 'junk space'. Why are architects (some of them supposed to be our best) still designing high-rise flats? Have we learnt nothing from the high-rise slums of the 60s onwards? Can we not counter the beast of neo-liberalism and – yes you guessed it – that modern version of the 'cost yardstick', expressed eloquently in the article on page 79, Restoring confidence.

I worked in [Sydney] Cook's Camden in the early 1970s and it was the best architectural experience of my career. Yes, those buildings were expensive – but what is the expense to society and to those who have to live (or die) in high rise? My architect grandfather designed council flats for St Pancras, Camden and Westminster and they're still there, but he refused to design anything more than five storeys high, declaring that it was alien to family life.

That's the message of that photo, but we continue to ignore it.

Tim Drewitt, past vice president RIBA

Clarification

The figures presented for the operational energy and embodied carbon of the Stirling Prize shortlisted buildings (RIBA J October p8) have now been updated to clarify precisely what they measured: ribaj.com/sustainable-stirling



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White City
Tel Aviv, 1930s

Known as the White City, the area of Tel Aviv populated by buildings in the international style, designed in the 1930s by émigré architects from Germany and central Europe, has acquired the status of Unesco World Heritage site. Photographer Helene Bieberkraut (1896-1983), born in Cologne, moved here in 1934 with her husband, engraver and model maker James Bieberkraut – probably due to the recent rise to power of the Nazi party. Helene had learnt her craft in Munich, where she had her own studio specialising in portrait and

architectural photography. In Tel Aviv she captured the new Bauhaus-inspired architecture, as well as her husband’s models of the same structures. The apartment block in this image, designed by little known architect D Gändler, was one of many built in the decade. They often included various services for the residents, such as childcare, storage areas and postal services. Despite a long period of neglect, most buildings of the White City have survived and retain many of their original features, and many have now been restored. ● Valeria Carullo

Acting editor
Eleanor Young

Acting deputy editor
Jan-Carlos Kucharek

Acting managing editor
Isabelle Priest

Contributing editor
Chris Foges

Sub editing
Alysoun Coles
Simon Aldous

Design
Linda Byrne

Production
Richard Blackburn
Jane Rogers

Head of sponsorship and sales
Richard Tomlin
+44 (0) 20 7496 8329

Account manager, Midlands and North
Sunil Shah
+44 (0) 7501 466 660

Account manager, London and South
John Ward
+44 (0) 7741 265 696

Advertising and digital support
Charlotte Collins
+44 (0) 20 7496 8326

RIBA Publishing marketing
Charmian Beedie

Publishing director
Helen Castle

Telephone
+44 (0) 20 7496 8300
Fax
+44 (0) 207 374 8500
Email
firstname.surname@riba.org

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