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The Awards

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On the cover Old Four Row in Lincoln Nocton, by Daykin Marshall Studio, an East Midlands Regional Award winner

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How SterlingOSB Zero is helping to build greener homes safely

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To build greener homes safely.

At West Fraser we’re committed to making better products for a sustainable future. Our latest generation of OSB3 is made with a super smooth finish and without adding any formaldehyde, so is safer to work with and builds greener homes. There’s zero comparison.

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Welcome to the RIBA Regional Awards special issue 2023, showcasing all 138 projects that have received an award across the 17 regions and nations. As usual, they offer a huge variety, representing the best of British architecture.

Alongside the winners is our exclusive analysis, which details total number, total m², total cost, average project cost per m² and number of projects designed by practices with offices in the region, by region. Sky-rocketing with 18 awarded projects is North London, followed by West London with 13. Wales has the fewest with four, then Northern Ireland and East Midlands each with five. West London has the highest overall spend; its £471.2 million includes Lifschutz Davidson Sandiland’s £171.5 million, decade-long Hanover Square.

This is the first year that average project cost per m² has topped £2000/m². Last year the North East achieved £1,508/m², but the lowest this time is Northern Ireland’s £2,068/m², reflecting rising prices and inflation over the past three years – although all projects were completed before 2022.

More widely, the smallest project is Bromley’s 8m² Swing Bridge by Tonkin Liu. The largest is PRP’s 115,075m² Chobham Manor in Newham. Outside London, Manchester and Oxford are the cities with the most awards (four). Oxfordshire boasts most awards by county on five; Somerset has four – two in Bruton alone. The highest number outside London goes to the South West, with 12, so if you are setting up outside the capital, there might be a good bet; eight were designed by firms with offices in the region too. Northern Ireland’s projects were all designed by practices with offices in the region.

Which firm won the most awards? Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios with a whopping five – two in the South West, and four in education. Hawkins\Brown follows with three and 15 firms have two. There are 46 private houses.

Thank you to the judges, who visited and wrote citations, and the sponsors. Congratulations to the winners. Read and see more, including drawings, at ribaj.com/riba-awards. Enjoy! •

Isabelle Priest

The smallest project winner is Tonkin Liu’s 8m² Swing Bridge in Bromley, London, although it is not as small as the stent it was awarded for in 2020.
Winning projects

East

9

Projects by architects

Projects by architects from outside the region

£171.2m

Total cost of projects

76,035m²

Total GIA

£3,979

Cost per m² of average project

ASHRAYA, HERTFORDSHIRE

KIRKLAND FRASER MOOR FOR PRIVATE CLIENT

Contract value: Confidential  GIA: 507m²

Cost per m²: £1975

Sitting on a gentle slope with long views over undulating Norfolk fields, this house is deeply informed by its site and architectural context, without being traditional in any way. Its facing of flint and reddish Corten steel echoes the flint and red clay of the local vernacular. Bedrooms and secondary spaces wrap the north and east sides, while the main space opens up dramatically to the south and west beneath a sweeping butterfly roof. It is refreshing to see that energy-efficiency measures received the same priority as more obvious fittings and finishes, whose immaculate detailing and workmanship make for a glamorous home.

DUKE STREET RIVERSIDE, NORWICH

HUDSON ARCHITECTS FOR NORWICH UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS

Contract value: Confidential  GIA: 4409m²

Norwich University of the Arts’ brief for a new building called for a visible public statement of its presence in the city centre, and improved public access to its riverfront surroundings. Much thought clearly went into the building’s contribution to its context, through its massing and the brick and metal facades that allude to the site’s industrial history. The triple-height, timber-and-aluminium-lined entrance hall is a fine space for teaching and a grand foyer for the main auditorium. Additional studios are light and spacious. Above are five levels of student accommodation. The architect collaborated with the university to design the graphics throughout, for strong visual consistency. This is a well-thought out, characterful building and strong addition to the riverscape.

CRANMER ROAD, CAMBRIDGE

ALLIES AND MORRISON FOR KING’S COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE

Contract value: Confidential  GIA: 1783m²

Set among finely detailed red brick Edwardian and arts and crafts villas, the new graduate accommodation for King’s College Cambridge comprises two buildings – a modern red brick villa on the street, and a long, two-storey pavilion in the gardens that is a completely new accommodation for King’s College Cambridge comprises two buildings – a modern red brick villa on the street, and a long, two-storey pavilion in the gardens that is a completely new

PONDS ROUGH, MAYPOLE GREEN

NEVER SORO FOR NEVEN AND HANYA SORO

Contract value: Confidential  GIA: 1160m²

This little house was clearly a labour of love for the architect-owner and family. It replaced an old cottage and is positioned to make the most of the views over a pond and a beautiful willow. From the neighbouring green, the building is as unassuming as its predecessor, but the interior is characterised by a new spatial sophistication, craft and workmanship. Joinery is of high quality, but the overall effect is homely and comfortable. Equal care was given to energy performance, with a well-considered fabric-first approach, photovoltaics, a ground-source heat pump and MVHR all working in concert. Mechanical sophistication blends well with qualities that appeal to everyone: materiality, connection to surroundings and careful consideration of how the building will be used. It’s a joy.

Sustainability Award, sponsored by Autodesk

NEVEN SIDOR

ALLIES AND MORRISON

NEVEN SIDOR FOR NEVEN AND HANYA SORO

Contract value: Confidential  GIA: 130m²

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RIBA Regional Awards

East

THE RIVERVIEW, ESSEX
MOLE ARCHITECTS FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
Contract value: Confidential GIA: 326m²

Riverview is the successful result of one of those serendipitous partnerships between an architect and a client who enjoy working together. The house is fairly large, but its volume is skilfully manipulated – with a two-storey range around the north and east sides of a single storey wing and an open courtyard – to avoid overpowering neighbouring buildings and make the most of natural light.

The geometry is complex but it never feels as though the tail is wagging the dog. From outside, the form is coherent, while inside, complexity adds interest without feeling over-busy. Detailing is unfussy but very fine, from the brick pattern and pointing to interior finishes. This is a refined but comfortable home that makes the most of a beautiful setting.

THE BOATHOUSE, CAMBRIDGE
ASHWORTH PARKES ARCHITECTS FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
Contract value: Confidential GIA: 60m²

On the face of it this timber-framed canopy over a dock for a river boat is barely a building at all. It is the care taken over design and construction that made it a clear award winner.

The structure was conceived to allow the client to do much of the work, starting with dredging out the dock by hand. The foundation uses old scaffolding poles as low-tech micro-piles. On top of a timber grillage – incorporating scaffold-levelling jacks to compensate for any long-term movement – stands a frame of British larch which uses traditional Japanese jointing techniques. Curved rafters are clad with beautiful panels of recycled copper. Wooden pins were used instead of metal nails to fix timber boarding. The design successfully minimises impact on the environment while giving pleasure to everyone who passes.

Small Project of the Year, sponsored by Gaggenau

THE DIGI-TECH FACTORY, NORWICH
COFFEY ARCHITECTS FOR NORWICH CITY COLLEGE
Contract value: Confidential GIA: 2725m²

Norwich City College wanted its new home for computer, technical and engineering courses to have a strong, fresh, forward-looking identity. With structure, services and envelope articulated in an almost High Tech manner, it resembles an existing industrial workplace as much as an academic setting. Built in steel, glass, perforated aluminium and concrete, it was carefully planned to use standard parts and enable straightforward adaptation and reuse. Teaching spaces arerationally laid out along a top-lit four-storey spine that slopes down with the slope of the site – a popular place for study and everyday socialising. Indeed the whole building shows how really good architecture can uplift and give pleasure while also quietly and steadily performing its more prosaic function.

Client of the Year

PHIL COFFEY
JIM STEPHENSON

Egham Gateway is a recently completed mixed use development in Runnymede, Surrey. Four distinctive, yet architecturally cohesive buildings combine retail, leisure, residential and student accommodation to connect the space between Egham Station and the town centre.

Alford Hall Monaghan Morris (AHMM) have designed a collection of buildings that rejuvenate the public space while main contractors, John Graham Construction and clients, Runnymede Borough Council ensured the development respected the historical heritage of the area. Taylor Maxwell worked with AHMM, John Graham Construction and Swift Brickwork Contractors Ltd to specify and supply a large number of bricks and pre-cast brick soffits. Wet cast stone window surrounds and other cast stone components were additionally manufactured and supplied by Vobster Architectural.

Since its completion, Egham Gateway has been nominated by British Home Awards for ‘Regeneration Scheme of the Year’ and further recognised by the Brick Development Association (BDA) through its shortlist in both ‘Urban Regeneration’ and ‘Specialist Brickwork Contractor’ categories.

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Photography by Timothy Soar.
In the heart of Derby is a museum representing the heritage of local creative manufacture, sited in what was the world’s first mechanised factory — a grade II-listed former silk mill, rebuilt in the late 19th century. After much stakeholder engagement, what has been created is no ordinary museum — everything is on display and accessible. The spirit of co-production extends beyond the collection to the building and construction itself. An unloved former yard space now forms the main entrance through a full-height glazed screen into a ‘civic hall’, with the mill’s brick wall dominating one side. Upper floors reveal not just collections, but the structure of the museum itself. In between are ‘moments’, orchestrated to offer views of exhibits or the city itself through a new glazed gable window from the top-floor mezzanine.

In a quiet Lincolnshire village is a small collection of buildings by George Gilbert Scott, including a row of four-estate cottages. These date from the 1860s and follow an interlocking L-shaped plan form, with beautiful, eccentric neo-gothic detailing. The end cottage had an insensitive 1970s extension which did not stand itself from the garden, and看向 access to the first floor. The brief was to retain the character of the cottage but to realise its full potential by resolving both problems. The sensitive new addition feels like an extension of the existing building.

The café is warm and welcoming, its windows enlarged to give wide views. Materials chosen for durability and sustainability also give warmth and comfort. A well-detailed though humble building that serves its purpose.

Attention to detail is enhanced by a refined palette of materials. Elegant timber joinery mediates between locally quarried cathedral stone and bronze throughout. The new buildings touch the old lightly, with a subtle shadow gap in a floor tile, or lightweight roofing Flashing delicately tucked beneath an existing one. A diagonal motif found in the cathedral is replicated across the new centre, bringing character to the external cladding.

Leaving the historic cloister through a medieval door, visitors enter a new extension via a modern ‘slype’ or covered walkway, through the ‘interpretation gallery’ with its Romanesque frescoes and into the shop. Past this is the cafe set in the old deanery, which has been beautifully renovated to include fully accessible community rooms, offices and education centre.

Lincoln Cathedral’s new visitor centre, taking advantage of a previously underused yard and former deanery and Minster School at its far end, establishes a conclusion to the visitor experience that complements the cathedral and provides delight all of its own. Leaving the historic cloister through a medieval door, visitors enter the new extension via a modern ‘slype’ or covered walkway through the ‘interpretation gallery’ with its Romanesque frescoes and into the shop. Past this is the cafe set in the old deanery, which has been beautifully renovated to include fully accessible community rooms, offices and education centre.

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Forest Houses revitalises an unloved, brownfield infill site, delivering an uplifting cluster of four homes with views of the adjacent Wanstead Flats parkland. The former builder’s yard has been transformed to create three new homes with distinctive sawtooth roof profiles around a communal yard. These supplement an existing shop unit, which has been extended and converted into a one-bedroom house. The new homes have a single-storey podium of crafted brickwork with exposed internal load-bearing walls of blockwork. Above, the CLT structure is clad externally in corrugated metal in reference to the site’s light industrial past. Bedrooms are downstairs with open-plan living space above, optimising daylight and views towards the park. A full-height wall of glazing is positioned towards the park, with kitchens at the rear of the main space.

The visitor experience links to the biodiverse landscaping via glimpses from the building. New pavilions for educational and conference use create bookends to the gardens, preserving the setting of the early 18th-century buildings. The refurbishment and extensions have helped to animate the surrounding spaces, reconnecting the museum with the local community.

A House for Artists creates an ambitious model for affordable and sustainable housing, providing a flexible live/work space for 12 artists arranged across five floors. In exchange for reduced rent, residents deliver free creative programmes for locals in a street-facing ground floor community space. A sense of community permeates the thoughtful and assured design, which has been delivered with rigour and precision. Each set of three apartments shares a communal outdoor space scaled for eating and working together as well as access. Corridor-free internal arrangements, tall ceilings, and dual-aspect openings facilitating cross-ventilation give a feeling of spatial generosity. Floor plans are designed to be modified if required in response to changing living patterns. Living rooms on one floor can be joined via double doors in the party walls, forming a collective space for shared activities.
16 BROADWAY MARKET, HACKNEY
DEVEREUX & MARTIN ARCHITECTS
FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
Contract value: Confidential  GIA: 258m²

Located on a bustling market street, this mixed-use redevelopment is a playful, contemporary adaptation of a typical Victorian terrace. The architect has refurbished the shop and the duplex flat above it, and constructed an eccentric rear extension to provide a new triplex apartment.

This three-storey, timber-framed addition has a distinctive roof structure clad in light-grey, aluminium, standing-seam vertical panelling. Its concave sides create a funnel-like form pointing skywards, as if in conversation with its barrel-vaulted neighbour, 14 Broadway Market (designed by Peter Barber in 2001). This allows for natural ventilation and daylight, and a mezzanine level extension of the living room.

The architect’s dedication to the use of sustainable building techniques, long-term visioning and flexible approach to developing ideas with the community has been rewarded with a community co-operative serving local people, beautifully integrated into its parkland setting.

THE WILDS ECOLOGY CENTRE, BARKING
JESTICO + WHILES FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
Contract value: Confidential  GIA: 1392m²

This multi-purpose community, ecology and events space acts as a gateway to Barking Riverside, a 10,800 home regeneration project on the Thames. The centre celebrates the post-industrial history of the site – once home to Barking Power Station – and incorporates the development’s innovative underground vacuum waste system within its lower storeys. Gabion walls and weathering steel cladding visually connect to the parkland while providing a robust, durable and low-maintenance skin that will mature and blend into its natural surroundings.

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UCL PEARL, DAGENHAM
PERKINS+WILL, FORMERLY PENROYE & PRASAD, FOR UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON
Contract value: £18m  GIA: 5,650m²  Cost per m²: £3,186

PEARL (Person Environment Activity Research Laboratory) is University College London’s first net-zero carbon In-use building. Located on the industrial outskirts of Dagenham, the laboratory has clear spans of 40m and a height of 10m, offering a blank canvas to test the impact of environmental conditions such as lighting, smell, touch, and sound on people’s behaviours and perceptions. The architect has successfully finessed the design with careful detailing and a clear materials palette to lighten the mass of the building and provide a welcoming environment to scientists and visitors alike. Orientation of the public entrance permits viewing windows deep into the heart of the laboratory. The front elevation is clad in scalloped oxidised steel panels, perforated with a pattern derived from crowd flow analysis and the murmuration of starlings.

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RIBA Regional Awards
London East

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Bedrooms are efficiently tucked away in the basement. Despite its modest scale, this project packs a punch in its design and delivery, meeting challenging spatial requirements and maintaining a sympathetic relationship with its neighbours.
RIBA Regional Awards
London East

WALTHAM FOREST TOWN HALL, WALTHAMSTOW
HAWKINS BROWN FOR LONDON BOROUGH OF WALTHAM FOREST
Contract value: £21.9m GIA: 6984m² Cost per m²: £3,136
The elegant, grade II-listed Waltham Forest Town Hall in Walthamstow (completed in 1942) has been beautifully restored by Hawkins Brown and the civic campus transformed as part of the first phase of a wider masterplan. Internal space has been remodelled to supply flexibility of use, creating open, light-filled spaces for council staff and for community events. Original features have been exposed and repaired alongside complementary new additions. New signage, balustrades, and other detailing have been tastefully designed, capturing the time, spirit and function of the building. At the front of the town hall, Fellowship Square has undergone a complete makeover. The project is a superb example of sensitive and innovative reinvention. By involving the community, using local craftspeople and working with the local museum, the identity of the civic space has been significantly enhanced.

SPRUCE HOUSE AND STUDIO, WALTHAMSTOW
AD FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
Contract value: £410,000 GIA: 132m² Cost per m²: £3,100
This new-build home and self-contained design studio replaces a dilapidated 1960s infill on what was once the high street in the Walthamstow Village Conservation Area. The house is constructed in cross-laminated timber, chosen for its environmental performance, short on-site installation, and its beauty as an internal finish. The facade is reimagined as a shopfront, with the ground floor fully glazed behind slatted timber shuttering. This distinctive design feature continues into the interior with a series of slatted privacy screens offering glimpses through the house to the garden beyond. The elegant outdoor space links the house with the studio, which is constructed using the same timber facade. The success of this project is down to the clear dedication and skill of the two architects.
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**GREEN HOUSE, TOTTENHAM**

HAYHRURST & CO ARCHITECTS FOR PRIVATE CLIENT

Contract value: Confidential  GIA: 2,125m²

Generous five-bedroom family home that is not only ultra-practical and architecturally exciting, but also highly innovative in sustainability. Situated down a backland alley, a generous landscaped courtyard acts as the entrance foyer. The elevation of sliding polycarbonate roofing sheets makes the new house stand out, but the greatest quality of the design is to be found internally.

The jury found the way the rooms interconnected interesting, whether via subtle changes of level, bold or concealed staircases, or the unusual first-floor access balcony that encircles the tall top-lit internal courtyard. The ‘riad-style’ atrium with its exposed CLT successfully delivers passive stack ventilation. Sweeping curtains allow subdivision into more secluded rooms, and the closing off of views of the garden. Bedrooms and bathrooms on the first floor are comfortably cellular.

The project demonstrates how newbuild housing can embrace mass timber, natural daylighting, passive ventilation strategies and renewable technologies under one roof.

Project Architect of the Year, Claire Taggart

**CHART STREET STUDIOS, HACKNEY**

IAN CHALK ARCHITECTS FOR HEYNE TILLETT STEEL

Contract value: Confidential  GIA: 314m²

This is a masterpiece for its restrained and elegant reuse of an abandoned, but still very solid, 1930s former furniture factory. Accessed discreetly from the street through a delightful and intimate private courtyard, each floor is interesting and different in terms of how it is used and tidied out, with a calm that feels appropriate and inspiring. The wonderfully light multi-purpose space at the top of the building and its elegant open kitchen/bar clearly signal that social use feels appropriate and inspiring. The wonderfully light multi-purpose space at the top of the building and its elegant open kitchen/bar clearly signal that social use feels appropriate and inspiring. The wonderful 60s-themed bar is a work of art in itself with its exposed concrete beams and red brick clad walls. Bedrooms and bathrooms on the first floor offer comfort and privacy.

**EDITH IVILLE SCHOOL, CAMDEN**

HAYHRURST & CO ARCHITECTS FOR LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN

Contract value: Confidential  GIA: 1,407m²

Multiple consultations with stakeholders more than paid off in this primary school replacement, which was conceived as part of the surrounding parkland in deprived Somers Town. The building and boundary extend the park, both physically and in perception. The complex and intriguing large white volume is a key community asset, and a marked improvement on the adjacent buildings and the physical and visual contrast they create.

Of great note are the exterior play spaces which surround the school, including a country garden, a potting shed, and fallen logs, all designed to enhance environmental awareness.

The elevation of sliding polycarbonate roofing sheets makes the new house stand out, but the greatest quality of the design is to be found internally.

The jury found the way the rooms interconnected interesting, whether via subtle changes of level, bold or concealed staircases, or the unusual first-floor access balcony that encircles the tall top-lit internal courtyard. The ‘riad-style’ atrium with its exposed CLT successfully delivers passive stack ventilation. Sweeping curtains allow subdivision into more secluded rooms, and the closing off of views of the garden. Bedrooms and bathrooms on the first floor are comfortably cellular.

The project demonstrates how newbuild housing can embrace mass timber, natural daylighting, passive ventilation strategies and renewable technologies under one roof.

Project Architect of the Year, Claire Taggart

**THE KIT KAT CLUB AT THE PLAYHOUSE THEATRE, WESTMINSTER**

CARMODY GROARKE WITH CHARCOALBLUE FOR AMBASSADORS THEATRE GROUP

Contract value: Confidential  GIA: 2,050m²

Carmody Groarke has created a faux Weimar 1920s ambience that completely conceals this 1885 building for an immersive production of the musical Cabaret. An underground pergola takes the audience through a confined basement and past actors’ changing rooms and bars; the project sets the scene even before the curtain is lifted. Most significantly, the classic proscenium arch has been replaced by a ‘theatre in the round’, with cabaret-style tables at the foot of the stage. Despite reducing the number of seats, this gives considerably more valuable space for private dining and interval entertainment. A great example of how critical, light-touch interventions can transform an existing building.

**GORMS ROAD, HACKNEY**

WAUGH THISTLETON ARCHITECTS FOR STOKE (BRITISH LAND)

Contract value: Confidential  GIA: 4,878m²

This six-storey office on the edge of Regent’s Canal is an exemplar of mass timber building: Exposed timber soffits and using cross-laminated timber office to create staircases celebrate the material and will help enable the building to be disassembled, repurposed or recycled at the end of its useful life. The scheme’s sensitive approach to orientation – set back for solar shading on the south elevation with more glazing to the north – demonstrates a climate-focused design.

This straightforward building is largely utilitarian, offering a variety of workspace to small businesses and institutions, including the London School of Architecture. Communal spaces and facilities offer opportunities for networking and relaxation. The low cost natural materials are totally appropriate and highly practical.

**CENTRAL SOMERS TOWN COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND HOUSING, CAMDEN**

ADAM KHAN ARCHITECTS FOR LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN

Contract value: Confidential  GIA: 1,782m²

A flexible community children’s facility and housing units for social rent as part of the regeneration masterplan of deprived Somers Town, near St Pancras station, have been very well received by tenants and the wider community. The ground floor and adventure play space are primarily occupied by a very successful, robustly detailed post-school club for 4–11-year-olds that also welcomes parents to its premises. Internally, Douglas fir glazed partitions create functional rooms and cosy nooks, bringing intimacy and calm to the space.

The tall housing is confident and challenging. Redbrick nooks throughout, with a string of unconventional, swooping inverted arches that enclose the rooftop football pitch. Generously sized flats have large windows with European-style metal roller blinds, for natural ventilation and cooling. This is a key community asset, and a marked improvement on the previous facility.
RIBA Regional Awards
North London

NATIONAL YOUTH THEATRE, ISLINGTON
DSDHA FOR NATIONAL YOUTH THEATRE OF GREAT BRITAIN
Contract value: £2.45m  GIA: 2,260m²  Cost per m²: £1,084
The dilapidated home of this youth theatre has been rejuvenated, creating a functional, collaborative and engaging building that will allow the charity to expand its offering and be more visible and accessible. A new entrance pavilion in elegant green glazed tiles in front of the existing building drastically improves the welcome. A major rehearsal studio was opened up and offices and WCs improved. Following student consultation 90% of the building’s existing fabric has been re-used. The heating is decarbonised, and some new components are built in timber. The jury found the enthusiasm and sense of purpose of the client second to none.

THE SECRET GARDEN, ISLINGTON
SANHE HOPKINS ARCHITECTS FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
Contract value: Confidential  GIA: 70m²
An interesting assemblage extending a Victorian house: a miniature courtyard packed with planting contrasts with a minimal and yet extremely stylish stainless-steel galley kitchen, which leads to a splayed garden/dining room spanning the width of the site and opening out to a larger family garden. All this mitigates the impact of an unexpected new neighbouring exterior on the client’s views to the rear. Natural light pours in from different directions through the ingenious sawtooth roof, and bounces off a mirror-lined wall in the glazed courtyard. The jury praised the unusual treatment of the extension’s roof, clad in brick paviours, its matt surface helping to reduce the overall impact of this new pavilion. This small project is highly crafted and clever – an excellent piece of skill and imagination.

CURZON CAMDEN, CAMDEN
TAKERO SHIMAZAKI ARCHITECTS FOR CURZON CINEMAS
Contract value: Confidential  GIA: 526m²
This cinema is tucked under the railway arches near Camden Market; the first few arches past the corner entrance house a café and the last 30-seat screening rooms. New insertions have a steel framework so the fit-out can be reversed without damaging the brickwork. Inside the arches, exterior and interior are composed and articulated in an unexpectedly austere architectural language. Pinkish rendered facades are slightly recessed so the arches can still be read. A playful and yet sober and sophisticated response to this unusual context.

INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED LEGAL STUDIES, HOLBORN
BURWELL ARCHITECTS FOR INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED LEGAL STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
Contract value: Confidential  GIA: 6,346m²
This project, with its world-class library, sensitively refurbishes a listed 1970s Denys Lasdun building. The services were improved and much-needed secondary glazing introduced, but the main interventions were reorganising the library, administration and academic research spaces, and improving accessibility. The reception has been moved down a couple of floors and views towards Russell Square have been opened up. The fit-out is subtle and at times hard to identify, apart from technical advances such as new lighting and the elegant furniture. Reinterpreted with slight details, the existing service raft respectfully echoes the original, with new services following the previous servicing strategy. Internal partitions were reconfigured and existing paint layers stripped away to express the 1970s concrete structures, before new elements were introduced. This project is a carefully researched labour of love.
**AGAR GROVE PHASE 1B, LONDON**

**MÆ FOR CAMDEN COUNCIL**

Contract value: £23m  
GIA: 6,201m²  
Cost per m²: £3,724

With 57 homes (80% of them for social rent), this is part of a regeneration that is on track to become the UK's largest Passivhaus scheme. It consists of a collection of residential building typologies with a strong urban identity.

The three blocks are arranged around a paved courtyard with shared amenity space. Most flats are double or triple aspect and designed as maisonettes or split-level units, leading to more interesting room layouts and a variety of views within the flats. The external elevations vary considerably according to the layout of the flats and the choice of lift and stair core for each building block.

*The jury commended this high calibre housing. It is a model of low-energy, Passivhaus social housing for the future that will bring greater animation to this new corner of Camden.*

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**THE MEWS HOUSE, BOUVERIE MEWS, HACKNEY**

**SPATIAL AFFAIRS BUREAU FOR RANA BEGUM**

Contract value: Confidential  
GIA: 520m²

Nothing about this house is as expected. Designed for a London-based visual artist and her family, it is composed of two volumes linked by a first-floor bridge. These volumes accommodate not only a busy art workshop and home, but also a compact flat at the top, intended for ‘artists in residence’. Complexity and surprise are the name of the game; every room has a multiple angles and viewpoints that add to the interest.

*Its low-key, mysterious door at the end of a scrappy industrial mews does nothing to announce what is in store. From here are accessed an office, basement studio and the staircase to the first-floor living areas. General quirkiness represents a very individual lifestyle, exemplified by a glass shower cubicle at the end of a long corridor, in full open view – if a curtain is not pulled across. A total one-off, this ‘crazy’ house is inventive and fun.*

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**BLOCKMAKERS ARMS, HACKNEY**

**ERBAMATTES FOR PRIVATE CLIENT**

Contract value: Confidential  
GIA: 345m²

A grade II-listed former pub has been turned into an elegant home for an art-loving family with the removal of additions and bringing together of ground and first floor flats. While the front remains close to its Conservation Area original, the rear is transformed by a sturdy brown brick portico that unifies the facade’s elements and provides a useful transition between inside and out. The tone complements existing brickwork; contemporary details provide a subtle differentiation.

The rear courtyard garden is an exceptionally attractive space with subtle vegetation. Internally, the architect has pieced together a complex arrangement of spaces, tying them together with a continuous white resin floor. The success of this architecture lies in the sensitive interface between the original/restored fabric and its new insertions.

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**RIBA Journal June 2023 ribaj.com**

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**FIS Digital Innovation Award 2023**

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**FireDNA_RIBA_June_Issue_Full_Page_Ad_NOL_AW.indd   1**
LEA BRIDGE LIBRARY PAVILION, WALTHAM FOREST
STUDIO WEAVE FOR LONDON BOROUGH OF WALTHAM FOREST

Contract value: £711,000
GIA: 234m² Cost per m²: £3,038

A linear pavilion extension to an Edwardian public library opens up a neglected garden with an important community facility. It is heavily used by a large variety of visitors, for its subsidised, open-plan café, classes and quiet spaces. Interior spaces are particularly bright and peaceful. The garden elevation is glazed and connects to the outdoors by a narrow covered walkway – the elegant roof of which reduces the chance of overheating. At the end of the pavilion is a well-proportioned room that can easily be closed off from the main space by a large pivot door, lending itself to private hire.

The project is a masterclass in timber joinery, with beautiful cabinetry from fallen trees all around London celebrating the material with different tones and textures. This sensitivity to trees extends to the outside where the pavilion delicately wraps around two existing trees, and rainwater run-off directly feeds into their roots.

CITY OF LONDON ACADEMY, SHOREDITCH PARK, HACKNEY
FEILDEN CLEGG BRADLEY STUDIOS FOR HACKNEY SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE

Contract value: Confidential GIA: 11,800m²

This four- to five-storey academy on the edge of Shoreditch Park is at the heart of a dense residential area in the throes of regeneration. Restrained and formal brick and prefabricated concrete panels signal a quality civic facility. Students enter via a covered colonnade that continues down the side of the building, a place where they can socialise. Internally the school is well-ordered, light and airy, with a central three-storey atrium by the main student arrival point and a grand timber staircase that links to upper floors.

The academy is a good example of a low-energy building, with high-performance facade, passive ventilation strategies, and BREEAM Outstanding status. It has already proved a success with a ‘steady increase of enhanced student behaviour and higher GCSE grades’.

TAYLOR & CHATTO COURTS and WILMOTT COURT, FRAMPTON PARK ESTATE, HACKNEY
HENLEY HALEBROWN FOR HACKNEY COUNCIL

Contract value: Confidential GIA: 4,670m²

Taylor, Chatto and Wilmott Courts stand on the edge of the 1950s LCC Frampton Park Estate. Taylor and Chatto Courts accommodate 16 social-rent and four shared-ownership homes in three two-storied villas, while Wilmott Court’s ‘palazzo’ plan makes a new urban block with 15 shared-ownership and 10 private-tenure homes. While sharing the same DNA – dark red brickwork, hand laid in a wild-bond pattern – these two very different residential schemes are a successful exercise in contrasting variations on a theme while keeping sight of integration into a wider urban context. Internal circulation spaces, in particular Wilmott’s circular stairwell, are well-resolved and inspiring. The jury found it gratifying to be shown around flats in all three courts by enthusiastic, grateful tenants.

THE PEARS BUILDING, INSTITUTE OF IMMUNITY AND TRANSPLANTATION, HAMPSTEAD
HOPKINS ARCHITECTS FOR ROYAL FREE CHARITY, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON (UCL) AND THE ROYAL FREE LONDON NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

Contract value: Confidential GIA: 8,518m²

The Pears Building houses laboratories, offices and a 35-bed patient hotel, and can accommodate 200 researchers from all over the world along with sophisticated medical research equipment. It effectively and stylishly conceals a large part of the eyesore of Royal Free Hospital while clearly defining a pedestrian shortcut. It also takes advantage of the substantial sectional differences between the building’s front and rear, concealing two extra floors of accommodation at the back, while bringing the main entrance directly into an upper floor via ingenious terracing and ramped access.

The central atrium is light and generous, with spaces to promote chance encounters among scientists. Labs are light and impeccably designed. On the top floor, hotel rooms enjoy long views and are in no way reminiscent of hospitals. Materials throughout are simple and robust, chosen to minimise maintenance and ensure longevity.

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The RIBA Journal June 2023
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Borough Yards, London Bridge

SPPARC for Mark

Contract value: Confidential  GIA: 38,859m²

Adjacent to Borough Market, this substantial development of lanes and urban spaces feeds a network of new shops, restaurants, office space and a cinema. The architect thought beyond the initial brief and site, leading to the expansion of the project from a single building to a wider masterplan. This reinvigorated a carefully researched medieval street pattern and regenerated a number of historic railway arches.

Borough Yards creates a playful set of intimate public spaces, lanes, and covered arcades, and is clearly enhanced by quirky digital and physical artwork at building and human scale. Upper floors offer good-sized, high-quality workspace. This network links into the scale and character of the neighbouring market and provides much-needed links to the River Thames to the north west.

Southwark Brick House, Bermondsey

Sato-Jiasal Architects for Private Client

Contract value: £600,000  GIA: 950m²

Cost per m²: £7,191

Massing and daylight constraints have been made an opportunity to design an intriguing project with a joyful, quirky character. Built on a difficult backland site formerly occupied by a garage, the three-bedroom house is sunk into the ground by just over one storey. From the street, it looks like a turret peering over a garden wall, while a slit-shaped courtyard garden brings light into the ground and lower ground rooms. Open-plan living space occupies the top floor. The mass is broken down with steps in the facade articulated with timber, brick, and glass. Inside, a central dedicale glass staircase is topped by a glass roof, drawing light through the plan.

The Fireworks Factory at Woolwich Works, Woolwich

Benelli & Associates for Royal Borough of Greenwich

Contract value: Confidential  GIA: 5,300m²

The Fireworks Factory is a permanent arts venue in a large, grade II-listed building complex at Woolwich Arsenal. The original structure has been celebrated alongside light touch and sensitively considered interventions, enabling flexibility for both current and future uses.

Various layers of non-original construction have been stripped away to reveal the variety and richness of the original fabric. Contemporary interventions include a new entrance and a lobby enclosure serving both the main performance space and an external performance garden.

Complex servicing has been expertly introduced to the main concert hall without affecting the integrity of the cast iron and timber structure. A light, white palette has been adopted for the steel structure to give the building a delightfully bright and airy feel while contrasting with the use of exposed brickwork throughout.

Conservation Award

The RIBA Journal June 2023
BRIXTON HOUSE, BRIXTON
FOSTER WILSON SIZE FOR LONDON BOROUGH OF LAMBETH / BRIXTON HOUSE
Contract value: £18m GIA: 5300m² Cost per m²: £3,396
As the new home of Ovalhouse Theatre, Brixton House works hard to express its ethos as a place of creative theatre that serves as a welcoming, open house for the local community. A strong presence on the street frontage echoes elements of the surrounding area and its industrial heritage. A slight set-back to the west of the site pays homage to a popular mural on an adjacent building, which has been refurbished and incorporated within the development as creative workspace. The theatre lobby features a pink cantilevered staircase, which functions as the main vertical thoroughfare, while a mural by local artist Damilola Odusote wraps around the lift core. A strong emphasis has been placed on the quality of execution, with subtle yet practical details incorporated across the facade design. External lighting brings the building to life at night.

LAVENDER HILL COURTYARD
HOUSING, CLAPHAM
SERGISON BATES ARCHITECTS FOR MARSTON PROPERTIES
Contract value: Confidential GIA: 795m²
Lavender Hill Courtyard comprises nine apartments of various sizes around a courtyard, with a timber-decked terrace on the first floor. A redevelopment of a former sheet-metal workshop, the site is tucked away at the end of a mews. An unassuming entrance opens to the welcoming courtyard, which creates a sheltered communal space and sense of privacy among the busy surroundings. Bedrooms on the ground floor open to communal or private courtyards, while first-floor living spaces open to daylight and views. The construction is well executed, with a simple yet considered sense of materials creating a different character to each apartment. Brick facades reflect the Victorian industrial heritage of the site. The architects engaged with circular economy principles, carefully dismantling the workshop structure so that materials could be reused.

LIGHTHOUSE CHILDREN’S HOME, SUTTON
CONRAD KOSLOWSKY ARCHITECTS FOR LIGHTHOUSE PEDAGOGY TRUST
Contract value: £1m GIA: 538m² Cost per m²: £1,869
Built in the arts and crafts style and latterly derelict, the refurbished home is initially visually unassuming. However, its high-quality, homely interior has a real sense of tranquillity. The former care home now has six generous en-suite bedrooms along with a dedicated sleeping-in room for overnight staff and a flexible apartment on the third floor for two care leavers. Two large living rooms provide entertainment and educational rooms and there is a spacious kitchen. A custom-designed dining table forms the heart of the home. The project is a template for how children’s homes should be approached from a holistic design perspective. Both architect and client deserve credit for making the project such a success for its young community.
The transformation of Studio Voltaire has enabled one of the UK’s leading not-for-profit arts organisations to both increase its studio space and become more public-facing. Before the refurbishment and expansion, the Clapham site was in desperate need of repair and was not fulfilling its potential. Now, Studio Voltaire provides affordable, high-quality workspaces to more than 60 artists—a rise of 42%—together with a new gallery in a refurbished former church hall building and other new facilities. An artist-designed garden leads to a new public entrance with access to the gallery, café, and House of Voltaire retail area. On-site artists now have their own kitchen and social space, production workshop and two live/work units for international and regional residencies. Studio Voltaire is applauded by the judges as being very much a community-led project.

Hackbridge Primary School, Wallington
Archetype for London Borough of Sutton
Contract value: Confidential
GIA: 1,865m²

Set on a wetlands area of Metropolitan Open Land in the London Borough of Sutton, Hackbridge Primary School has been designed to Passivhaus Plus standards and shows careful consideration of both its community and setting. A simple palette of natural, bio-based materials including chestnut has been applied to the façades, and is reflective of the surrounding context and natural landscape. Internally, corridors are lined with birch-faced plywood, with concrete floors of polished, 70% recycled ground granulated blast-furnace slag (GGBS). Large windows create views across the surrounding landscape. Student-centric design has been incorporated throughout. The building’s green credentials are showcased around the school and are used to enrich the curriculum. Hackbridge is a good example of how environmental consciousness can be embedded within our schools and the next generation.

Threefold House, Teddington
Knox Bhanv Architects for private client
Contract value: Confidential
GIA: 316m²

Threefold House expertly illustrates how a redundant and odd-shaped brownfield site can be put back into good use. Hidden at street level, it is built around three planted courtyards that provide daylight, ventilation, and a beautiful outlook for the ground-floor accommodation. Above, a timber-framed bedroom level is clad in dark grey standing seam zinc panels. Every space is well thought through with carefully positioned windows. Judges thought the project made excellent use of the site by creating a dynamic layout that reveals the house as it is explored. This starts at the welcoming entrance lobby, which provides multiple sightlines through rooms from one courtyard to another. The largest, a triangular courtyard, opens out from the sitting room, with a garage and potting area creating privacy from neighbours to the south.
The RIBA Journal June 2023

**RIBA Regional Awards**

**West London**

**BRITISH ACADEMY OF FILM & TELEVISION ARTS HEADQUARTERS, ST JAMES’S BENEDETTI ARCHITECTS FOR BAFTA**

Contract value: £26.6m GIA: 5310m²

Cost per m²: £4,990

Benedetti Architects’ comprehensive refurbishment and extension of the grade II-listed BAFTA headquarters is an ambitious as it is well executed. Retaining and lifting the roof structure by a modest amount has provided an additional floor in an unobtrusive way, and freed up space below for two world-class cinemas, an events space, a youth gallery and training facilities. It has also opened up a topfloor double-height space to bring daylight deep into the building. Newly created spaces below flow seamlessly. Sliding walls enable rooms to be enlarged as required and corridors are conspicuous by their absence. Plentiful audio-visual technology is deftly hidden away. The result is a flexible, accessible building whose focus is on the needs of people and activities that inhabit it rather than the architecture or the institute itself.

**THE HANOVER, WESTMINSTER**

**LIFSCHUTZ DAVIDSON SANDILANDS FOR GPE**

HANOVER comprises five buildings and generous new public spaces on a 0.6ha site in Mayfair. Built over and around the new Bond Street Elizabeth Line station, the project took 15 years to realise. Key to its success was negotiating a revised location for the station footprint to deliver greater value.

A new arcade, courtyard and pedestrian passageway successfully integrate the development into the city and bring active uses into the depth of the block.

The jury enjoyed the diversity of architectural treatments: alongside a new nine-storey building above the new station entrance, a large part of the project involved the restoration of existing built heritage, including historic facades along New Bond Street, now with office space behind.

**CHARGE CARS, STOCKLEY**

**MOST ARCHITECTURE FOR CHARGE CARS**

Contract value: Confidential GIA: 2,800m²

Charge Cars is a manufacturer of luxury electric cars based on the 1967 Ford Mustang. The fit-out of its R&D and production facility has brought a dynamic to a repurposed industrial building. The monochromatic interventions echo the company’s brand, while bespoke light fittings and precise detailing reflect its approach to manufacturing. The factory displays an animating showroom, with a carefully co-ordinated ‘customer journey’ that begins at the front door.

The project also provides employees with an inspiring workplace that provides an abundance of amenities and welfare facilities. Harnessing utility and mastering the detail, this project demonstrates the value that architects confer on industrial settings.

**GREAT THINGS LIE AHEAD, HOLBORN**

**6A ARCHITECTS FOR HOLBORN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION**

Contract value: £10.3m GIA: 415m²

This refurbishment and extension of a gym provides a new facility for the Holborn Community Association, offering an expanded range of cultural, social and sporting activities. The architect’s approach respects a limited budget and builds on the foundations of the previous building in a pragmatic yet harmonious way. Materials are left exposed wherever possible, expressing their function and bringing scale to each of the spaces. Slightly restrained detailing is particularly successful, with small moves adding up to more than the sum of their parts. A collaboration with artist Caragh Thuring was clearly successful, and her influence permeates the building in an integrated way. Artworks add colour and delight, and incorporate the testimonies of local people. The jury particularly admired the architect’s role in shaping the nine-year project, from brief development to securing funding. This is a building that will delight all users.

**THE MARSHALL BUILDING, LINCOLN’S INN FIELDS**

**GRAFTON ARCHITECTS FOR THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE**

Contract value: Confidential GIA: 19,770m²

A carefully proportioned façade of Portland stone and precast concrete is animated with setbacks and terraces that bring the Marshall Building to life. This formal ‘front’ tells the complex organisation of spaces for sport, teaching and research, with a masonry that deftly shifts to address neighbours on the campus.

The jury was inspired by the cohesion between the building’s spatial qualities and its structure. On the more open lower floors, concrete ‘trees’ elegantly display their ‘branches’ as they shift the grid up the height of the building. The frame simultaneously expresses and defines space. On upper floors the articulation of the building’s form brings daylight deep into the plan. The architect has given students an enviable environment in which they will surely flourish.

**COURTALDO CONNECTS – THE COURTALDO INSTITUTE OF ART, WESTMINSTER**

**WITHERFORDWatson MAIN ARCHITECTS FOR THE COURTALDO INSTITUTE OF ART**

Contract value: £26.6m GIA: 5310m²

Cost per m²: £4,990

Witherford Watson Mann’s transformation of the Courtauld Gallery, located in the central section of grade I-listed Somerset House, is the first phase of a project to open up the institution both physically and culturally. The main moves are the insertion of a lift, a reworked entrance sequence including a beautiful new stone stair, and opening up and unveiling vaults below the entrance – a real engineering feat.

Other interventions are immensely subtle. The volume of the ‘Great Room’ exhibition space at the top of the building has been re-located, and a new temporary exhibition gallery carved out of attic. Overall, the jury found this an extremely well judged project, which lets the spirit of the historic building lead the visitor experience, but uses 21st-century creativity to solve some of its inherent complexities.

**THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND, LINCOLN’S INN FIELDS**

**HAWKINS BROWN FOR ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND**

Contract value: £70.1m GIA: 14,394m²

Cost per m²: £5,557

The Royal College of Surgeons of England has a 200-year history in its grade II*-listed home. The renovation of the Charles Barry-designed building – which houses the Hunterian Museum – includes the replacement of warped glass-door additions, enabling a rethink of circulation and services. That has allowed interiors in the original building to be experienced as Barry intended. New emphasis has been given to the point of arrival, with the entrance hall translated into a grand atrium which connects to the newly refurbished museum. The original frontage has been retained, and its portico has inspired the rusticated concrete base of a new rear facade.

The jury appreciated that this is a highly complex project which has been delivered effectively and created the conditions for a more open, flexible, and accessible institution.

**THEATRE ROYAL DRURY LANE, COVENT GARDEN**

**HAWORTH TOMPKINS FOR THE THEATRES**

Contract value: £24m GIA: 11,630m²

Cost per m²: £3,783

The grade I-listed Theatre Royal Drury Lane dates from 1812, with the auditorium rebuilt in 1922. Its recent restoration has proved transformative, opening up the main entrance to make the building fully accessible for the first time and providing legible and coherent circulation that enhances the visitor experience. This was achieved through significant structural modifications, which removed the back of the auditorium and some seating. To reflect the loss of revenue, sightlines have been skilfully adapted to add value to other seats.

Adjacent to the foyer, a former covered passageway has been turned into a restaurant. Despite longer opening hours the refurbishment targeted a 50% reduction in operational energy. With all interventions seamlessly integrated, Haworth Tompkins has preserved the building’s history while creating a very modern theatre.
RIBA Regional Awards
West London

SHOJI APARTMENT, BELSIZE PARK
PROCTOR & SHAW ARCHITECTS FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
Contract value: Confidential  GIA: 29m²
Housed in an imposing late Victorian mansion, a tiny, dark one-bedroom flat has been transformed into a spacious, light-filled home, with carefully integrated storage. Taking advantage of the 3.4m ceiling height, the architect has inserted a sleeping ‘pod’ into a corner of the room. Inspired by Japanese shoji screens, its translucent sliding walls enclose a 2m-high sleeping platform with a large walk-in wardrobe underneath it. What really excited the jury was the human-centred ergonomics of the design, from the natural birch plywood kitchen and joinery to the walls finished in clay plaster, which bring a sense of warmth. Acoustic insulation and double-glazed windows have improved comfort. This is an inspiring project that challenges conventional approaches to micro-living, to maximise space for both everyday life and entertaining.

A HOUSE WITHIN A HOUSE, BELSIZE PARK
DAVID LEECH ARCHITECTS FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
Contract value: Confidential  GIA: 128m²
House Within a House is a highly crafted conversion of two flats into a single family home. Earlier alterations to the two lowest floors of the Victorian townhouse had stripped out any period details and eroded the historical configuration of rooms. With an economy of means, David Leech Architects’ intervention brings a renewed domesticity and a diversity of living spaces within a small footprint. Living spaces are ingeniously split across both floors; a gentle splay at the base of a new stair with a vaulted ceiling creates a joyful procession between them. An inset loggia boldly folds into a corner of the living room. Every detail is lovingly conceived and exceptionally well thought through, with everyday materials elevated to splendid combined effect.

MANBER-JEFFRIES HOUSE, WILLESDEN GREEN
JAMES ALDER ARCHITECTS FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
Contract value: Confidential  GIA: 25m²
This exquisitely conceived extension to a garden flat in a Victorian semi-detached villa negotiates a half-storey drop down to the garden, and relocates the focus to a new kitchen/dining room. Simultaneously expressed as a tall, vaulted volume and semi-sunken space, the extension is both generous and intimate. Its character derives from a repaired brick party wall, and the Victorian garden buildings built against the boundary walls of formal gardens. Everyday materials are used to glorious effect. Internally a steel frame, roof timbers and blockwork are exposed. Externally, red bricks and red clay tiles are detailed with rigour, giving a strong sculptural effect and elevating the ordinary to something joyful.

100 BAYSWATER ROAD, KENSINGTON
GILES QUARME ARCHITECTS FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
Contract value: Confidential  GIA: 418m²
100 Bayswater Road is a grade II*-listed Edwardian villa with a brutalist extension by Alison and Peter Smithson. The house has an interesting social history, and was once home to Peter Pan author JM Barrie. Untouched for almost 60 years, the house was in a state of disrepair. Giles Quarme Architects’ rigorous and sensitive intervention provides 21st-century living accommodation while retaining and enhancing the attributes of the original house and alterations in the 1900s and 1950s. There is exemplary craftsmanship and detailing in the reproduction of unique joinery, and repairs to a rare Edwardian glass floor and the Smithsons’ striking bathroom. New interventions have discreetly opened up and modernised the house, with purpose-made secondary glazing and underfloor heating bringing thermal comfort to this family home for the first time.

Small Project of the Year, sponsored by Gaggenau

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Congratulations to the winners of this year's Awards.
North East

6
Winning projects
Projects by architects with offices in the region
Projects by architects from outside the region
£50.3m Total cost of projects
£2,589 Cost per m² of average project

City Hall, Sunderland

Tailor Hendry Architects for Sunderland City Council

Contract Value: £47m
GIA: 71,480 m²
Cost per m²: £2,402

City Hall is an inspiring new civic landmark for Sunderland. Located on the former Vaux Brewery site, this forward-thinking workplace exemplifies Sunderland City Council’s vision of workplace strategy and is part of its ambitious wider vision for the regeneration of the city and region.

Simple spatial moves mark out City Hall’s transformative approach to public engagement. The council chamber, traditionally hidden from view, occupies a highly visible ground-floor corner facing the public realm. Inspired by the city’s industrial heritage, a matte red central steel stair case links to bridges through the atrium.

Bespoke task lighting references the arc furnaces ‘compelling’, describing it as a great example of how to extend listed buildings sensitively yet confidently.

Project Architect of the Year: David Hunt

St Hilda’s Church and Kirkleatham Parish Centre, Redcar

Chance de Silva for Kirkleatham Parish Church Council

Contract Value: £22.8m
GIA: 244 m²
Cost per m²: £2,557

St Hilda’s is a low-budget gem, intensively used and obviously loved by the community. Compact and hard-working, the design does everything simply and without fuss, achieving a timeless and straightforward beauty through its confident application of materiality, light and space.

The timber clad church and community building strikes a dynamic silhouette that references the nearby landmark of Roseberry Topping. Neatly designed stained glass also reflects the sowing by integrating images of the local industrial heritage, including Redcar Blast Furnace. This beautifully detailed building also incorporates conserved and reused windows from the previous St Hilda’s church. The outcome is a place that uplifts the mood the instant you walk through the door. A long collaboration between client and architect continues with plans to enhance the church’s immediate surroundings.

Client of the Year

Tim Teed, Sunderland

Moiseale Gillatt Architects for the Churches Conservation Trust

Contract Value: £1.2m
GIA: 120 m²
Cost per m²: £1,266

Once on the Heritage at Risk register, the grade I-listed former Holy Trinity Church in Sunderland has been restored and repurposed for community use as the 17Nineteen cultural centre – a name is a reference to the year the church opened. The architect was faced with a huge conservation challenge due to the poor condition of the structure, which had an extensive build-up of moisture in the walls. Rare ‘lack’ pointing has been retained, and new handmade bricks set seamlessly into the exterior walls.

New interventions are designed for functionality and flexibility and executed with a confident originality. These are clearly signalled to ensure that the building’s history remains legible to all.

The design and construction process was community led, involving hundreds of individuals and with tours of the site during the works. The former church has become an educational tool, telling the stories of how people lived in the 1700s when it was constructed. On its visit, the jury was immediately uplifted by the instant you walk through the door. A long collaboration between client and architect continues with plans to enhance the church’s immediate surroundings.

Client of the Year

Gilesgate, Durham

Building Design (Northern) for private client

Contract Value: Confidential
GIA: 1,071 m²
Cost per m²: £2,689

An extension to a grade II-listed Georgian house near the centre of Durham, the project delivers flexible spaces that can adapt to the occupants’ evolving needs as they age. A ‘day room’ living space stretching into the garden can be adapted to become a bedroom and café accommodation if required. Level access is provided throughout, as is a space for a future platform lift in the garden to link to a new upper workshop.

The new accommodation’s outer appearance combines subtle echoes of its context with bold contemporary materials. Grey standing seam metal panels are used for both the roof and the small areas of solid wall. Judges found the project’s clarity, originality and elegance ‘compelling’, describing it as a great example of how to extend listed buildings sensitively yet confidently.

Project Architect of the Year: David Hunt

Newcastle Cathedral: Common Ground in Sacred Space, Newcastle Upon Tyne

Purcell Architecture for Newcastle Cathedral

Contract Value: Confidential
GIA: 2973 m²
Cost per m²: £2,689

Purcell’s interventions help create a sense of openness and welcome, while displaying the layers of history in the grade I listed cathedral’s fabric, helping the client recast its relationship with the city. The project resolved accessibility and heating issues: more flexible, step-free space has helped increase visitor numbers dramatically.

New works have been handled elegantly and with care and craft. Exceptional attention to detail is particularly visible in new jetties and panelling, and the relaxed and lived-in relationship, including 100 relocated stone ledger seats. The clarity and confidence with which the team has tackled this immense challenge belies the sheer scale and complexity of the highly sensitive project.
North West

**7**

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### UCLAN STUDENT CENTRE AND UNIVERSITY SQUARE, PRESTON

**HAWKINS BROWN FOR UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL LANCASHIRE**

Contract value: £3m | GIA: 7,510m²

**Conservation Award**

Designed as an innovative and welcoming campus entrance, the Student Centre and University Square redresses the university’s relationship with Preston to benefit the city centre. The social learning hub consolidates key university services in 8,500m² of civic space. An exciting public route connects the structure, square and gardens to the campus spine. The openness of the building’s design creates an easy-to-navigate layout, with a variety of scales internally from large atrium to small private areas. The rooftop offers calm spaces, complete with wildflower planting, wildlife boxes and beehives, from which honey is collected and sold in the ground-floor café. The saw-toothed facade entwines the square. Art installations punctuate the landscape. The project is BREEAM Excellent and EPC A-rated, and uses CLT and modern methods of construction to deliver environmentally, financially and socially sustainable architecture.

### THE MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF DIGITAL ARTS (SODA), MANCHESTER

**FOLDEN KLEGG BRADLEY STUDIOS FOR MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY**

Contract value: £21.5m | GIA: 5,600m²

Cost per m²: £4,377

The openness of the building’s design creates an easy-to-navigate layout, with a variety of scales internally from large atrium to small private areas. The rooftop offers calm spaces, complete with wildflower planting, wildlife boxes and beehives, from which honey is collected and sold in the ground-floor café. The saw-toothed facade entwines the square. Art installations punctuate the landscape. The project is BREEAM Excellent and EPC A-rated, and uses CLT and modern methods of construction to deliver environmentally, financially and socially sustainable architecture.

### THE MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

**Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios for Manchester Metropolitan University**

Contract value: £15m | GIA: 19,034m²

Cost per m²: £3,839

The openness of the building’s design creates an easy-to-navigate layout, with a variety of scales internally from large atrium to small private areas. The rooftop offers calm spaces, complete with wildflower planting, wildlife boxes and beehives, from which honey is collected and sold in the ground-floor café. The saw-toothed facade entwines the square. Art installations punctuate the landscape. The project is BREEAM Excellent and EPC A-rated, and uses CLT and modern methods of construction to deliver environmentally, financially and socially sustainable architecture.

### CROSS HOUSE

**SCOTT DONALD ARCHITECTURE FOR PRIVATE CLIENT**

Contract value: Confidential | GIA: 72m²

The building’s command of space and light is fantastic, creating an enchanting setting for events. The zinc facade runs seamlessly from the base to wrap the structure’s forms, only interrupted by clear and conscious entrance openings. Movement through the spaces is clear and inclusive. The scale of this project and its attention to detail make for an elegant building which sits in its equally beautiful context.

### l’ECURIE AT DORFOLD HALL, CHESHIRE

**ZOE POLYN VITRY FOR DORFOLD HALL EVENTS**

Located in the grade I-listed Dorfold Hall estate in Cheshire, l’Écurie at Dorfold Hall resurrects a stable building that once stood on the derrick stable yard. Researching into the history of the site by Zoë Polyn Vitry, the new building reflects the scale of the original structure, now offering a flexible venue space reflecting the scale of the original listed building nearby.

Derived from the silhouette of the former stable buildings and the galloped section of the main hall itself, the building has been constructed as a series of sculptural pitched roofs. Consideration has been given to the building’s appearance from various long views across the wider site and the jury found that new and exciting parts of the design were revealed as they walked around the grounds. The venue looks inwards on itself, forming a secluded courtyard which feels private and sheltered for visitors. The building’s command of space and light is fantastic, creating an enchanting setting for events. The zinc facade runs seamlessly from the base to wrap the structure’s forms, only interrupted by clear and conscious entrance openings. Movement through the spaces is clear and inclusive. The scale of this project and its attention to detail make for an elegant building which sits in its equally beautiful context.

### Building of the Year, sponsored by EH Smith

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### Client of the Year

Council House in a quaint street of houses believed to have been designed by architect James Harrison, Cross House is an extended grade II-listed home that at first appears unaltered. The extension is visible but blends seamlessly when viewed from the street. Visitors enter through a reinstated porch and the original hallway to be greeted by an open-plan kitchen/living space enclosed by a 3m-high lattice Crittall window. Simple cross-over design referenced from the original Gothic-inspired front windows has been disseminated throughout the interior into oak wall paneling and kitchen joinery, and picked up via door handles and bathroom tiles, tying the scheme together. With the rear glazing fully open, the level garden access feels like an extension of the extension. Smaller functional spaces wrap around the newly formed courtyard. The openness of the building’s design creates an easy-to-navigate layout, with a variety of scales internally from large atrium to small private areas. The rooftop offers calm spaces, complete with wildflower planting, wildlife boxes and beehives, from which honey is collected and sold in the ground-floor café. The saw-toothed facade entwines the square. Art installations punctuate the landscape. The project is BREEAM Excellent and EPC A-rated, and uses CLT and modern methods of construction to deliver environmentally, financially and socially sustainable architecture.

### Innovation lab and open workspaces as well as creative lighting, sound, music and production studios. The higher-than-average workspaces reflect the scale of the original listing and retain the industrial features that do not require facade openings to the south to reduce solar gain.
TOWER OF LIGHT AND WALL OF ENERGY, MANCHESTER

TONKIN LIU
FOR MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Contract value: Confidential

GIA: 39.2m²

The Civic Quarter Heat Network and Energy Centre provides seven of Manchester’s civic buildings with energy through a 2km network. Tonkin Liu designed the 40m-tall Tower of Light to support and enclose its flues, and the 63m-long Wall of Energy to enclose the centre while showcasing its workings.

Learning from natural geometries, the building’s form is its strength: a super light, thin single-surface using minimal material that is underpinned by Tonkin Liu’s decade of research into Shell Lace Structures.

During the day, polished reflectors inside move in the wind to reflect sunlight into the tower’s chambers. At night, LEDs directed at the reflectors create animated light sequences.

The jury was impressed that the materials and manufacturing were predominantly locally sourced and by the client’s willingness to raise the standards of the public realm.

MANCHESTER JEWISH MUSEUM, MANCHESTER

CITIZENS DESIGN BUREAU FOR MANCHESTER JEWISH MUSEUM

Contract value £3.6m GIA: 842m² Cost per m²: £4,275

This new museum, by Citizens Design Bureau, comprises a gallery, archive, learning space and visitor amenities adjoining a renovated grade II*-listed former synagogue. Located on a busy road, the facade of the 1874 Spanish and Portuguese synagogue, designed by Edward Salomons, stands out alongside the contemporary addition, serving and celebrating the Jewish community.

The two elements, visually separated by glazing, have complementary colour and texture. The extension’s intricately perforated Cor-ten steel facade harmonises with the brickwork, and continues in the material palette throughout. Within the spacious entrance and atrium, old and new elements combine, producing a delightfully functioning and stunning space that is rich in detail. Carefully considered conservation retains the building’s character, while historically accurate lighting and cleverly concealed fixtures have expanded the synagogue’s functionality and the community it serves.

Project Architect of the Year Sophie Kate Marks
Re-thinking how we build starts with better printing

HP DesignJet Series
The RIBA Journal June 2023

CAMPUS CENTRAL, STIRLING
PAGE PARK ARCHITECTS
FOR UNIVERSITY OF STIRLING
Contract value: Confidential GIA: 5,506m² Cost per m² £1,856

This new music centre caters for professional, student and community users alike. It is a considered, well-composed addition to St Andrews’ ancient core, complementing its listed neighbours, with a plan that meaningfully connects to the street and an east elevation that slumps smartly in response to mature tree canopies nearby. Close up the building exhibits unexpected and appealing informality: musical instruments are visibly stored along the ground floor’s glazed edge, an over-entrance balcony providing for ad hoc outdoor performances to the newly defined quadrangle. Alongside suites of rehearsal and practice spaces contained in the building, the McPherson Recital Room main performance space incorporates two world firsts for a chamber hall: a uniformly insulated floor beneath it and a reurbation chamber above, innovations that allow the space to be tuned both spatially and acoustically. The result of the latter is glorious.

CAMPUS CENTRAL, STIRLING
PAGE PARK ARCHITECTS
FOR UNIVERSITY OF STIRLING
Contract value: Confidential GIA: 175m² Cost per m² £2,686

This large, silver-grey house overlooks Loch Awe. The colour is the effect of render using glass from recycled TV screens, a material choice that began as a joke (the client hates television), but has resulted in a curiously beautiful exterior. Aggregate sizes change over the surface to imitate erosion, a response to the exposed siting and harsh weather. The house’s form was developed from studies of historic Scottish architecture and the sculptural works of Eduardo Chillida. Its plan is set around a central hall which, though classically, has a special and intimate feel, with warm light bouncing off a 2m insulaired glass roof. Thick walls with deep reveals create a spectacularly sculptural space and each room has an entirely different character (the barrel vaulted dining room is a highlight), all with carefully curated views of the landscape. This is slow architecture. Fusing ancient and modern at the same time, it is a Scottish brush for the 21st century.

PAPPLE STEADING, HADDINGTON, EAST LOTHIAN
CAMERON WEBSTER ARCHITECTS WITH AN
PARSONS ARCHITECT FOR PAPPLE STEADING
Contract value: Confidential GIA: 175m²

This Category B-listed steading is one of East Lothian’s best agricultural buildings and this project focused on restoration of the adjacent Griese’s cottage with its thatched and bothy range. A palette of soft red sandstone, pantiles and grey slate has been sensitively translated to the interior. The architect has retained the building’s charred timber while creating an imaginative, versatile and sustainable end use. An out of place box dormer on the front of Griese’s cottage has been sensitively relocated to the rear. A joy is the retention as a sheltered open space of the implement shed, with its slender cast iron columns, showing how it functioned in the past. Inside, the cottage now has four bedrooms and, using the range to the rear, a large, light kitchen and dining space with high vaulted ceiling. Two self-contained cottages after the footprint echo the bothy accommodation but are now anything but basic. Papple is a triumph of sustainable re-use which has respected tradition and character alongside flexible 21st century living.

HALF OF ELEVEN, UPPER BREAKISH, ISLE OF SKYE
DUNCAN ARCHITECTS
FOR CLAIRE AND RORY FLYN
Contract value: £795,000 GIA: 101m² Cost per m² £7,700

This is a wonderful example of a light and elegant home for a young family executed on modest budget – the first stage of the regeneration of a croft in Braikievaig, Skye. The single storey timber-framed building has been tucked into the landscape, clad with beautiful slating, which resonates with the tones of the surrounding area. The house is simple in form, in part to ensure ease of construction by the client as self-builders, and works to a very efficient plan, with a build area of 108m² on the croft.

Living room, kitchen and study are a single volume, characterised by exposed timber structure on the ceiling and separated by elegant three-quarter height oak ply joinery. All family spaces benefit from dual aspects, creating a connection to a south-facing courtyard as well as panoramic views up the Inner Sound to the north, allowing direct experience of the dramatic Skye weather.

The RIBA Journal June 2023

The RIBA Journal June 2023
Northern Ireland

5

ST JAMES’ FARM, BELFAST, COUNTY ANTRIM MMAS FOR BELFAST CITY COUNCIL/ST JAMES COMMUNITY FORUM

Contract value: Confidential  GIA: 209m2

This city farm addition is a simple mono-pitch barn forming a protective edge between a residential street and the motorway and organises the farm’s functions. The south wing shelters animals, and the north the farm volunteers. Pasture sits to the motorway side; a community garden and raised allotments on the other. The articulation and materiality draw from established farm tropes. A limited material palette serves different functions: recycled timber boards fixed tight to clad internal heated spaces, or spaced to allow ventilation to the animal pens. A loggia on the north wing adds a decorative flourish that offers a place for people to sit in shelter, chat, and enjoy the sun. The architecture is simple and clearly low budget. However, the building and its setting together address the needs and aspirations of a community, creating a place for safe and sociable interaction between people. As such, it is an exemplar of architects proactively enabling community – which has never been more important than it is today.

Winning projects
Projects by architects with offices in the region
£128.2m Total cost of projects
38,201m2 Total GIA
£2,068 Cost per m2 of average project

£2,068

£128.2m

38,201m2

Cost per m2 of average project

Projects by architects with offices in the region

Winning projects

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Colour shown: Caravan 453

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ribaj.com
HILL HOUSE, COUNTY DOWN

McGONIGLE MCGRATH FOR PRIVATE CLIENT

Contract value: Confidential
GIA: 69m²
Cost per m²: £2,130

This is a rare and bold architectural response to the extension of a 1912 Edwardian house in Belfast, creating a new space at the heart of the house for a growing family. A simple repeated rhythm of brick piers and lintels defines the L shape of the plan, creating a contained extension which is infilled with full-height frameless glass panels. This forms a space which has a seamless relationship between inside and out, and old and new.

A simple palette of brick, glass, painted wood and terrazzo has been used to complement the brick and other materials used on the original house. The use of long, formal bricks with matching mortar gives the framing structure a monolithic appearance but at small scale the brick and other materials used on the original house have been reinvented for the future.

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This stunning house sits on a gentle slope with a breathtaking view of the Solent. The architect’s idea was to carve three large volumes from a single stone mass. The volumes are connected by voids, creating a sequence of enclosed and open spaces. The use of stone and glass creates a dialogue between the old and the new. The architects have inserted large areas of glass into the stone volumes, allowing natural light to fill the interior. The stone volumes are separated by large voids, creating a sense of rhythm and movement within the building. The entrance to the house is a large stone volume, which leads to a central courtyard. The courtyard is surrounded by glass walls, creating a light-filled space that is a focal point of the house.

The extension to Radley College Chapel is a masterclass in architectural design, sitting comfortably within a historic building while being at the same time clearly modern in appearance. The design team has seamlessly integrated the new with the old, creating a strikingly beautiful and functional space. The architects have used traditional materials and techniques, such as stone and wood, to create a sense of continuity with the existing building. The new extension is a testament to the power of good design and the role that architecture can play in creating inspiring and functional spaces. It is a true masterclass in architectural design, sitting comfortably within the historic setting of the college.
RAK-Valet is an award winning bathroom collection designed by Patrick Norguet. Featuring a contemporary and striking design, the range includes freestanding, wall hung and countertop basins, freestanding baths and a range of WC’s and bidet’s.

RAK-VALET

MARSH HOUSE, COOKHAM, BERKSHIRE
KNOX GIBBARD ARCHITECTS FOR PRIVATE CLIENT

Situated in a flood-prone area, Marsh House is constructed using a SIPS system on a galvanised steel supporting frame, which provides the necessary flood protection. The use of the insulated panel system not only keeps the house energy efficient but reduces its embodied energy and eased construction logistics on the riverside site. The layout is considered, with separate wings for bedrooms for privacy. The central, open-plan living spaces are generous and light-filled, with stunning views out over the course of the day and changing seasons.

Minimal hard surfacing, together with natural planting around the building, enhances the floodplain area while increasing biodiversity. A green roof, planted with local wildflowers, encourages insects and wildlife, and bat boxes are neatly integrated into the external cladding. This ecological strategy makes the house more sustainable and creates a harmonious relationship with its natural setting. It must be a joy to live in.

Sustainability Award, sponsored by Autodesk

THE RIBA REGIONAL AWARDS

SOUTH

FARMED, SHIPTON-UNDER-WYCHWOOD, OXFORDSHIRE
TIMOTHY TASKER ARCHITECTS FOR COTSWOLD SEEDS

FarmED is an agroecology education centre showcasing innovative and sustainable farming practice. It is designed to promote and inspire sustainable agriculture methods, and educate the public and, vitally, the farming community in the importance of regenerative farming methods. It is a model of sustainable design, constructed using low-cost agricultural bolted steel frames clad in larch, with sheep’s wool insulation and PV panels. Free-draining overhangs shade extensive glazing and protect external paths and seating, reducing the carbon footprint and creating a comfortable environment for its users. A landscaped courtyard protects from prevailing valley winds. On one side is FarmEAT, an airy barn with a large dining room, kitchen, office and toilets. The opposite barn, FarmED, has meeting spaces for educational events. To the rear a simple structure houses farm machinery, animals and collection points for the farm’s sustainably grown produce.

Buildings are warm, spacious, hard wearing and delightfully detailed and expertly executed, creating a seamless flow to the landscape. It is rare to see agricultural design with this level of finesse.

EDMUND SUMNER
TIM CROCKER
MARTIN GARDNER

The RIBA Journal June 2023

QUATREFOIL HOUSE, OXFORD
HYDE + HYDE ARCHITECTS FOR PRIVATE CLIENT

Quatrefoil House blends Gothic Revival and modernism to create a striking contemporary suburban family home. The brief involved restoration of the historic fabric with upgrades to meet modern living needs; the architect ‘completing the square’ with a fourth volume to the plan as a new rear extension cantilevering over the garden.

The extension’s concrete column cleverly references an adjacent Gothic window, adding a sense of drama to the cantilevered structure. Its ornamentation is notable, with cast bronze tiles providing a bold motif on the facade, inspired by a quatrefoil detail above the property’s entrance. Beautifully manufactured and expertly applied, it brings delight and fun. An eye-catching bespoke timber stair links the home’s different levels. An open-plan ground, with triple-height void, is bathed in light. The home is spacious, the stair inviting exploration while retaining the original’s intimate formality. High-quality bespoke finishes, joinery and lighting create refined opulence, augmented by the addition’s floor-to-ceiling glazing and high-tech retractable skylight. Quatrefoil House is a stunning example of how a contemporary extension can be added to a historic property without compromising character.
RIBA Regional Awards
South

ST HILDA’S COLLEGE, OXFORD
GORT SCOTT FOR ST HILDA’S COLLEGE
Contract value: £18.5m  GIA: 2,871m²  Cost per m²: £6,444

This contextual design uses two buildings of very distinct characters to frame St Hilda’s College’s site, which responds to the meandering River Cherwell. The larger successfully defines the college boundary, identifying its new entrance and creating enclosure for its beautiful gardens. The riverside pavilion is more transparent, which successfully provides a counterpoint to its neighbour’s solidity.

The design signals a new point of arrival and a gives a greater identity to the college. The anniversary building, containing a porter’s lodge and study bedrooms, is crowned with a distinctive tower which establishes a dialogue with the historic Oxford skyline – even glowing at night.

The pavilion building contains a multi-functional hall – with foyer, servery, toilets and support spaces – whose form and layout generates oblique, complex views of nearby buildings, embedding it in the college, not least in its incorporation of a historic riverbank wall into the design.

In its scale, materials and details, the design is a remarkable achievement, transforming St Hilda’s sense of place and creating a welcoming, accessible environment.

VISHUDDHA YOGA CENTRE, OXFORD
ADRIAN JAMES ARCHITECTS FOR VISHUDDHA YOGA CENTRE
Contract value: £554,700  GIA: 154m²  Cost per m²: £3,602

Contemporary exterior treatment blends effortlessly with the surrounding historic context, but its distinctive copper finish sets the building apart. Upon entering, a light, airy atmosphere pervades. The studio, located upstairs, is lofty and bright – an inviting and serene environment to practice in. Downstairs, a large, relaxing social space opens onto a lovely rear courtyard.

Despite the site constraints, the architect has generated a design that is both practical and beautiful, maximising opportunity. Plywood and bare blockwork tally with a robust, resilient design that allows the building to flood if necessary – a condition of the planning consent. Designed to be zero carbon for most of the year, the centre proudly displays its PV array and two Tesla Powerwall batteries. Well-insulated, airtight and with MVHR, it is a comfortable environment for users.

What is remarkable is how the centre’s sustainable aims harmonise with the charity’s yogic philosophy, with low embodied energy and careful control of daylight preventing overheating. Such alignment of values is exceptional.

ETON SPORTS & AQUATICS CENTRE, WINDSOR, BERKSHIRE
HOPKINS ARCHITECTS FOR ETON COLLEGE
Contract value: £21.5m  GIA: 3,669m²  Cost per m²: £5,860

Built on the site of an outdoor pool, this new, fully accessible facility boasts a 25m pool and a four-court, multi-use sports hall complete with associated changing, support and spectator facilities. A central link runs between the two sporting spaces, bringing daylight and fresh air into the building’s heart. A beautifully detailed, cantilevered, precast concrete stair leads to a social teaching space overlooking both, creating a seamless flow of space. The building’s interior is calm, with glulam columns and beams supporting a CLT roof. Brickwork is warm and robust, with ply revetments carefully designed and attuned.

Changing rooms have dual layouts; one for Eton school and another for community use, allowing the facility to be used simultaneously. The pool is available to local state schools each morning, with wider community uses planned. This community aspect combined with functionality, aesthetic appeal and accessibility ensures that the centre should serve both this private and the state schools well into the future.

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**Middle Avenue, Farnham, Rural Office for Architecture for Private Client**

**Contract value:** Confidential  
**GIA:** 176m²  
**Total cost of projects:** £100.5m  
**Cost per m² of average project:** £3,950

Built for the architect’s parents, this house is a light-filled oasis on an ecclesiastic suburban plot. A compact volume is enclosed by a flush envelope of stretcher-bond brickwork staggered by a quarter of a brick. Windows, placed seemingly at random, accord by a flush envelope of stretcher-bond brickwork staggered by a quarter of a brick. Windows, placed seemingly at random, accord

Sitting confidently in a bucolic setting rife with planning constraints, Upper Maxted is a grade II-listed farmhouse dating from 1739. This project rethinks ad-hoc extensions on the rear facade and provides a modern family kitchen and dining room. It cunningly extends the ground floor plan, finding the completion of a circular route one might take around the original fireplace. The new addition is unapologetically of its time, set over three upper storeys, freeing the glazed ground floor for communal spaces — an engineering challenge. The building also provides a boxing gym and a climbing wall that rises through its full height; there is a palpable buzz to the place. Concrete beams sit at first-floor level, with the plywood facades of the ‘street’ and ‘flow’ floors above. These beautifully crafted surfaces twist and writh around the building’s steel structure, creating sweeping curves to explore.

**MIDDLE AVENUE, FARNHAM**  
**RURAL OFFICE FOR ARCHITECTURE FOR PRIVATE CLIENT**  
**Contract value:** Confidential  
**GIA:** 285m²

An adaptable home for a family with grown-up children, its arts and crafts-inspired house shows a great affinity for the house’s external palette of charred timber and copper makes a sensitive modern response to nearby cottages faced in feathered-deposits, and promises continued subtle change as it weathers. Its silhouette provides a sheltering overhang and out with ease. Its circular route one might take around the original fireplace. The new addition is unapologetically of its time, set over three upper storeys, freeing the glazed ground floor for communal spaces — an engineering challenge. The building also provides a boxing gym and a climbing wall that rises through its full height; there is a palpable buzz to the place. Concrete beams sit at first-floor level, with the plywood facades of the ‘street’ and ‘flow’ floors above. These beautifully crafted surfaces twist and writh around the building’s steel structure, creating sweeping curves to explore.

**F51 SPORTS PARK, FOLKESTONE**  
**HOLLAWAY STUDIO FOR THE SPORTS TRUST**  
**Contract value:** Confidential  
**GIA:** 2,150m²

This development provides 141 homes, a restaurant and commercial units next to Worthing’s expanse and beach at a key point on the seaside. It skillfully mediates between a leisure centre, the historic Brighton Road and handsome terraced houses. New Parade Road, extended through the site, is a key organisational device that dictates the position of the scheme’s two components. A courtyard block looks out to the sea, giving many homes a splendid view and forming a sheltered private garden. An elegant 15-storey tower is animated by a gritty spitting stack of balconies. Craft and care are evident throughout. This scheme raises the bar for design in developments.

**RHS HILLTOP, WISLEY**  
**WILKINSON EYRE FOR THE ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY**  
**Contract value:** £3m  
**GIA:** 1,088m²  
**Cost per m²:** £2,928

RHS Hilltop is a state-of-the-art gardening science hub that allows the public to view research in progress. It provides a protected, climate-controlled home for plant and library collections previously located in an inadequate, century-old building, and is also demonstratively welcoming; its form implies open arms, reaching out towards existing structures in the gardens. Laboratories, a library, and multi-functional spaces fitted out with great care are in the building’s outer wings. Behemoths on a double-height public atrium, from which the workings of the building are on show behind security-rated glass. Planting softens crisp facades of pigmented precast concrete and sweet chestnut. Three garden plots surround the building encourage exploration, and have a strong relationship with the architecture through well-located openings that allow visitors to pass in or out with ease.

**Assistant**

**WINNING PROJECTS**

- **Projects by architects with offices in the region**
- **Projects by architects from outside the region**

Total cost of projects: £100.5m  
Total GIA: 33,900m²  
Cost per m² of average project: £3,950

- **South East**

  - **Black Timber House, Rodmell**  
    **HAPA ARCHITECTS FOR PRIVATE CLIENT**  
    **Contract value:** Confidential  
    **GIA:** 176m²

  - **Middle Avenue, Farnham**  
    **Rural Office for Architecture for Private Client**  
    **Contract value:** Confidential  
    **GIA:** 285m²

  - **Concrete House, Tunbridge Wells**  
    **Atelier West for Private Client**  
    **Contract value:** Confidential  
    **GIA:** 176m²

  - **Upper Maxted, Canterbury**  
    **Hollaway Studio for Private Client**  
    **Contract value:** Confidential  
    **GIA:** 43m²

  - **Black Timber House, Rodmell**  
    **HAPA ARCHITECTS FOR PRIVATE CLIENT**  
    **Contract value:** Confidential  
    **GIA:** 176m²

  - **Upper Maxted, Canterbury**  
    **Hollaway Studio for Private Client**  
    **Contract value:** Confidential  
    **GIA:** 43m²

  - **Concrete House, Tunbridge Wells**  
    **Atelier West for Private Client**  
    **Contract value:** Confidential  
    **GIA:** 176m²
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The vision of the local, female-led, not-for-profit company Onion Collective, of Watchet. A combination of gallery, workshops, and community centre, it is local community and initiating the ongoing regeneration of the coastal town. The project is the repurposing and collaboration of the outbuilding. Using the original concrete floor, concrete columns and timber brusses, the new programme is interwoven within the existing, forming a series of spaces that use a palette of simple and honest materiality. The plan of the house is centred on the double-height art studio. A clever change in blockwork bonding on several walls serves as a marker of the Covid pandemic, when construction was halted then resumed. Many of the windows have colourful reveals, referencing the client’s artwork. This is a humble yet inventive repurposing.

Cowshed is part of a welcoming family home, artist studio and office situated in an existing farmstead in Devon. The clients have lived here for 50 years and over the last 15 they converted the farm buildings into a housing community, of which Cowshed is the last. The joy of this project is the repurposing and collaboration of the outbuilding. Using the original concrete floor, concrete columns and timber brusses, the new programme is interwoven within the existing, forming a series of spaces that use a palette of simple and honest materiality. The plan of the house is centred on the double-height art studio. A clever change in blockwork bonding on several walls serves as a marker of the Covid pandemic, when construction was halted then resumed. Many of the windows have colourful reveals, referencing the client’s artwork. This is a humble yet inventive repurposing.

Dazzle is a striking, compact, one-bed treehouse, built as a holiday let, in an established woodland in Dorset. The name refers to the unusual facade treatments that were used to confuse the form of WWI ships. The architect played on the concept to create a distinctive external pattern of natural timber and black and white paint. While the treehouse is clearly visible, the pattern successfully confuses the shape. Careful consideration has been given to the positioning of the treehouse between two mature trees, suspended over a stream. Minimal site impact has been considered by using screw piles and reclaimed telegraph poles. This is a playful and well-associated design sitting confidently in the landscape. Excellent workmanship and timber detailing – especially rooflights and internal marquetry – elevate the project and are a credit to a great collaboration between architect, furniture makers and green wood workers.

Made of Sand is a beautifully considered and delicately crafted two-storey extension that has a transformative effect on a traditional Devon stone cottage. Modest in scale, it creates a dynamic spatial shift from small cellular rooms to more flexible, open-plan spaces directly connected to the landscape. The heavily insulated timber frame is exposed internally and externally. Internally, Douglas fir panel form-wallings as well as being articulated to form built-in shelving and window seats. Handmade terracotta pendant tiles and rust-coloured clay plaster walls seamlessly bring together the existing and new structures in a sensitive manner. Externally, the western red cedar cladding with a playful geometric design brings delight and interest to the elevation. Overall, the collaborative approach between the client, local craftsmen (including cob building specialist), and architect has resulted in a distinctively, tactically rich project that enhances the enjoyment of the existing cottage. Small Project of the Year, sponsored by Gaggenau.
Though small, this 44m² home on a tight urban plot feels surprisingly spacious and light. At ground level is an open-plan living/dining room and kitchen area that opens onto a courtyard, creating a compact but comfortable living space. On the first floor are a bedroom and surprisingly generous bathroom. Off the bedroom, a Juliet balcony incorporates a neatly designed solar shading screen providing privacy from surrounding buildings. Any leftover space is used for storage or sustainable plant.

Key to the project’s affordability was adoption of a modular timber-frame, prefabricated off-site with the assistance of local volunteers who received skills training in return for their time. Use of locally sourced or repurposed waste materials from manufacturers and suppliers was admirable, including the novel use of recycled plastics as external wall cladding along with recycled denim.

Despite its small scale and budget, the house incorporates a number of environmental measures that ensure it lives up to its ‘Snug’ name, with low embodied carbon, low operational energy, good thermal performance and air tightness and very low energy bills.

**BEEZANTUM, BRUTON**

Invisible Studio for the Newt in Somerset

Contract value: Confidential  GIA: 50m²

Beetzantium is an intriguing folly set in the bucolic landscape of The Newt, a country estate in rural Somerset. It is designed to educate and highlight the positive impact of bees on the ecosystem. The structure stands purposefully on the brow of the hill overlooking a new lake. A concave copper slingle roof sits majestically atop the pavilion with oculi windows playfully puncturing the gable ends. A highly insulated timber frame is finished internally with polished oak panelling and copper. A cantilevered picture window over the lake connects visitors with the landscape, while internally-visible active beehives in the external facade give a mesmerising display.

The siting ensures its assimilation with the local bee population while local untreated oak cladding will create new habitats for bees and other insects. Beetzantium is a creative and playful folly that is well executed, materially rich and beautifully detailed in and out.
**RIBA Regional Awards**  
**South West & Wessex**

**UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL SENATE HOUSE, BRISTOL**  
FELDEN CLEGG BRADLEY STUDIOS FOR UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL  
Contract value: £8.1m  
GIA: 2,731m²  
Cost per m²: £2,965

Imaginative reuse of a 1960s administration block on the university campus created a new student social and support hub. A double-height insertion unifies the existing U-shaped plan to create a spacious main entrance and internal ‘courtyard’. A striking coffered ceiling is rigorously detailed, elevating the main atrium space and creating a clear focal point that gives character and identity to the building’s new programme. The carefully restored staircase leads the visitor to the first floor where the existing concrete frame is now exposed. Senate House is a fine example of repurpose and reuse, with cleverly integrated new elements releasing the potential of unloved spaces. The extensive retrofit has been handled with skill and ingenuity.

**ROMAN BATHS CLORE LEARNING CENTRE, BATH**  
FELDEN CLEGG BRADLEY STUDIOS FOR BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL  
Contract value: £4.5m  
GIA: 1,190m²  
Cost per m²: £3,782

Housed in the city of Bath’s historic grade II-listed Roman baths and in a Unesco World Heritage Site, the new Clore Learning Centre strikes a delicate balance between protecting the existing monument and creating a new, spatially complex sequence of learning spaces that reveal and employ underused spaces previously inaccessible to the public. A cramped, single teaching room has been replaced with a series of spacious, light-filled teaching rooms at the upper levels, including an additional lightweight storey on the footprint of a previously removed water cistern. Complicated and complex level changes have been resolved in a rigorous and intelligent way, culminating in the visitor being navigated through the atmospheric and cavernous undercroft level – on walkways woven through the Roman archaeology.

Tectonically and materially rich, the learning centre is a triumph of inventive thinking that has created a series of dramatic spaces that celebrate and highlight the layered history.

**THE ROMAN VILLA EXPERIENCE, BRUTON**  
STONEWOOD DESIGN FOR THE NEWT IN SOMERSET  
Contract value: Confidential  
GIA: 1,302m²

The Roman Villa Experience is a contemporary museum and fully reconstructed Roman villa in the grounds of The Newt country estate. It is sited over the remains of the magnificent Hadspen Roman Villa; the basis for the new visitor experience. The welcoming contemporary museum has a 50m glass facade – with admirably slender window frames – focused on the villa. Inside, a glass-bridged corridor leads the visitor into the planned, partially suspended over exposed remains enable a close-up view. The painstakingly reconstructed and imaginatively reimagined Roman villa is highly ambitious. Materials were locally sourced: 600mm-thick walls are built with local limestone, and the blue and white lias roof tiles were made specially. Impressively, a hypocaust heating system has been recreated. Replica mosaics are well executed, as are details such as the gutters and spouts of the roof. The whole ensemble has been followed through with a notable level of skill and commitment, creating a visitor experience of national interest and importance.

Project Architect of the Year, Nicola du Pisanie

**COVE RIDGE, WOOLACOMBE**  
COFFEY ARCHITECTS FOR PRIVATE CLIENT  
Contract value: Confidential  
GIA: 320m²

Situated unassumingly in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, this new house reinterpret local vernacular dwellings. A crisply detailed hipped slate roof appears to float above the cliffs, with white-rendered walls grounding the recognisable form. Built within the tight confines of a bungalow, a clever plan gives all living spaces panoramic views. Visitors are immediately struck by the openness, scale and volume, as the gable is drawn to the skies beyond. An ingenious ash timber stair cuts diagonally through the plan, creating a dramatic double-height space carved into the roof volume. A rock encompassing the site is captured and celebrated internally and externally, creating a tension that locks the house in place. An unexpectedly rich variety of intriguing spatial moments are expertly animated by intuitive and playful use of light.

**THE RIBA JOURNAL June 2023**

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**PEN Y COMMON, HAY-ON-WYE**

**NIDUS ARCHITECTS FOR PRIVATE CLIENT**

Contract value: £210,000  GIA: 100m² Cost per m²: £2,100

A single-storey extension breathes new life into a 17th-century Welsh longhouse on a remote hillside. Avoiding overdevelopment, the clients have doubled their home’s footprint without harming its charm and character. The extension hunkers into the site to the south, sheltering a newly-formed courtyard. Local materials include untreated larch for the timber frame and stone from a nearby quarry, while salvaged school laboratory fittings were repurposed in the bathroom and utility room. Cladding in random board widths cut waste, with offcuts used for the front door, while the structural slab was polished to become the internal floor finish. Windows are positioned to offer moments of joy throughout, and a large window seat lined with oak reveals overlooks Hay-on-Wye. The extension relieves the smaller ground-floor rooms of the pressure of family gatherings, while upper attic bedrooms serve as peaceful escapes. Judges praised Pen y Common for offering a sophisticated balance of prospect and retreat and of light and dark, where the family can comfortably come together or be apart.

RSAW Building of the Year, sponsored by EH Smith
RSAW Small Project of the Year, sponsored by Gaggenau
RSAW Conservation Award

**RHOSILI HOUSE, RHOSILI**

**MAICH SWIFT ARCHITECTS FOR PRIVATE CLIENT**

Located 70m above Rhossili Bay on the Gower Peninsula, this dramatic cliff-top site offers variable coastal views. The clients sought a home where they could enjoy their love of the area while respecting its exceptional scenic qualities. The architect rose to the challenge, designing a two-storey house that, with its pitched slate roof and white render, appears modest and traditional on the outside. Inside, however, the simplicity is enriched by the warmth, beauty and smell of an exposed cross-laminated timber superstructure. The clever positioning of windows offers moments of intrigue while a generous sunken snug provides sofa-level views out to sea. Judges praised the architect for focusing on a simple and appropriate way of building rather than inventing newness. The result is ‘both modest and exceptional at the same time’.

RSAW Project Architect of the Year, Paul Maich

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and historic canal. The Brick House mews form part of Phase 1 of the Port Loop masterplan in Birmingham. The three-bedroom four-bedroom houses are arranged in a neat, sympathetic terraces around a communal garden and historic canal.

The project’s striking red brick draws inspiration from the surrounding terraces which characterise Birmingham’s residential landscapes. Along the canal, blue-grey brick echoes the tones of the canal infrastructure. Windows and door reveals are lined in reconstituted stone, exaggerating the large apertures that give this scheme an almost Georgian feel in its proportions. This bold typology is ambitious, with spacious, flexible designs that have the potential to transform how we live and interact with our neighbours. Walking through, there is a genuine sense of community.

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Winning projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>GIA (sq m)</th>
<th>Cost per m² (£)</th>
<th>Total Cost (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brick House, Birmingham</td>
<td>43,987</td>
<td>1,351</td>
<td>59,418</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Wolverhampton School of...</td>
<td>4217</td>
<td>821</td>
<td>3,451</td>
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<tr>
<td>Houlton School, Rugby</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>1,304</td>
<td>332</td>
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HOLTON SCHOOL, RUGBY

Van Heyningen and Haward Architects for Sue GP (A Between Urbancivic and Avia)

Contract value: £5.4m GIA: 4,217m² Cost per m²: £1,260

Houlton School is a state secondary created on the site of the former Rugby Radio Station. The scheme sensitively reimagines C Station, the iconic grade II-listed transmitter building, and creates three new school blocks arranged around a central courtyard. The architect has skilfully reimagined the site’s utilitarian character while creating a school fit for the 21st century.

New interventions are expressed in a contemporary way, so that the original form of the station is still legible and celebrated. A contemporary cantileved canopy demarcates the new entrance between the two restored historic buildings that form C Station. A glazed rooflight cube references the form of the original water tank and acts as a beacon for the rejuvenated site.

Client of the Year

Project architect of the Year

The University of Birmingham Exchange, Birmingham

Make Architects for University of Birmingham

Contract value: Confidential GIA: 4217m²

Birmingham’s Municipal Bank, a prominent 1930s neoclassical building in Centenary Square, has been repurposed to create an important city centre presence for the University of Birmingham. Known as The Exchange, the grade II-listed building has been sensitively restored and extended to accommodate a range of different uses including a café in the former banking hall, a gallery and an events space.

The dedication to conservation is exemplary, including restoration of the formal main entrance and the banking hall’s original coffered ceiling, and meticulous renovation of magnificent vaults. Services have been upgraded without compromising the building’s distinctive character. An new entrance, conceived as a contemporary interpretation of a traditional colonnade, provides a gateway to the southern end of the site.

Conservation Award
Built in the garden of the client’s home, this new-build house curves around the perimeter of the north-western end of the plot, sunken into the hill, and is characterised by a curving golden drystone wall.

The four-bedroom home is reached at the end of the driveway, tucked into an enclosed private garden, with a generous courtyard surrounded by wraparound glazing. A subtly sloping roof accentuates the building’s position in the landscape, concealing a two-storey element and providing a larger volume for the living space. The roof and curved plan are dictated by the contours of the landscape and establish the ordering of the internal accommodation.

Living and sleeping areas are kept apart, and the open-plan kitchen/dining space is separated from the living rooms with a fireplace and screen. What could have felt introspective feels generous and light, with views across the trees.

ANNE LISTER COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF YORK
SHEPPARD ROBSON FOR GRAHAM CONSTRUCTION
Contract value: £64m  GIA: 23,280 m²
Cost per m²: £2,749

The project provides 1,480 student residences alongside social spaces across two residential colleges which form a new gateway to Heslington East Campus and are named after LGBTQ+ figures Anne Lister and David Kato. The design arranges 18 residential blocks, nine of which are for Anne Lister College, around interlocking courtyards. Wellbeing is promoted by its landscape setting and a central hub that feels open, inclusive and active.

The overall composition is sophisticated and balanced. The central building is architecturally distinct from the multiple accommodation wings with successful decorative metalwork and an inlaid patterned frieze. Working with Graham Construction, the architect used modern methods of construction, including cross-wall prefabrications, integrated brick finishes, windows, internal walls and bathrooms. The team achieved a level of airtightness close to Passivhaus standard, leading to reduced heat loss, improved acoustics and enhanced fire safety.

Project Architect of the Year Natalia Maximova

Small Project of the Year, sponsored by Gaggenau

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Project Architect of the Year Natalia Maximova

Small Project of the Year, sponsored by Gaggenau
SIR WILLIAM HENRY BRAGG BUILDING, UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

ADP FOR UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Sir William Henry Bragg Building is a new gateway and collaborative research and teaching facility that brings together the faculties of Physical Sciences and Engineering. The existing grade II-listed structure has been retained and restored to provide a new frontage and entrance to the technical laboratory and Engineering. The existing grade II-listed structure has been retained and restored to provide a new building of significant scale that sits well among the existing university structures. The building comes to life as you step inside and are immersed in a three-story animated and active atrium. This is the social hub, bringing the student and community populations together for informal performances and events. The timber structure and finishes provide warmth and the opportunity for the building to age gracefully. Playful detailing makes the building feel relaxed and joyful, with framed views of York Minster. In terms of whole-life carbon, the building is 21% lower than the business-as-usual model. Low embodied carbon materials, such as glulam and cross laminated timber were used, and Passivhaus principles implemented to achieve a BREEAM Excellent rating.

Building of the Year, sponsored by EH Smith

Contract value: £65m GIA: 16,280m² Cost per m²: £3,993

THE RIBA JOURNAL JUNE 2023

Complete insulation systems puts up-to-date comfort in a dream home

Recticel Insulation’s design expertise and product innovation combine to thermally futureproof a stunning home on England’s south-west coast.

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Above left Recticel’s Eurothane® GP 100mm High Performance FIR Insulation being installed.

Recticel Insulation

PRP FOR JOSEPH ROWNTREE HOUSING TRUST

Contract value: Confidential GIA: 12,635m²

PRP for Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust

The brief sought to address existing problems – unsuitable accommodation for older people and under-occupation of the family housing. The project has clear and distinct architectural form, which successfully plays with two- three- and four-storey massing, using a restrained palette of materials. Inspired by the local arts and crafts vernacular, the architectural approach reinterprets key characteristics from the local conservation area. This includes references such as steep roofs, feature chimneys, recessed porch entrances, and consistent use of brickwork and tiles, making the buildings feel both familiar and quietly contemporary.

HUSH HOUSE

ELLIOTT ARCHITECTS FOR PRIVATE CLIENT

Contract value: Confidential GIA: 289m²

New Lodge Community, New Earswick, Yorkshire

HPF for Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust

New Lodge Community is a ‘Lifetime Neighbourhood’ of affordable extra-care apartments, a new 44-bed care home and refurbishment of Folk Hall at New Earswick Garden Village. Walkways, open green spaces and hedgerows protecting small private areas embed the accommodation in the wider area. The brief sought to address existing problems – unsuitable accommodation for older people and under-occupation of the family housing. The project has clear and distinct architectural form, which successfully plays with two- three- and four-storey massing, using a restrained palette of materials. Inspired by the local arts and crafts vernacular, the architectural approach reinterprets key characteristics from the local conservation area. This includes references such as steep roofs, feature chimneys, recessed porch entrances, and consistent use of brickwork and tiles, making the buildings feel both familiar and quietly contemporary.

The extensive public realm incorporates native plant species, removes vehicles and manages site levels, unlocking access to the adjacent elevated St George’s Field (formerly Leas Green Cemetery).

RIBA Regional Awards

Yorkshire

CREATIVE CENTRE, YORK ST JOHN UNIVERSITY, YORK

TATE+CO FOR YORK ST JOHN UNIVERSITY

Contract value: Confidential GIA: 5,000m²

The Creative Centre is a central pillar of York St John University’s growth plans. It combines creative arts learning, research and practice in one building that helps create a sense of enclosure in an emerging campus masterplan.

The building comes to life as you step inside and are immersed in a three-story animated and active atrium. This is the social hub, bringing the student and community populations together for informal performances and events. The timber structure and finishes provide warmth and the opportunity for the building to age gracefully. Playful detailing makes the building feel relaxed and joyful, with framed views of York Minster.

Two more significant strategies for the building’s performance were identified. Firstly, it was designed to exceed the current Building Regulation requirements. Secondly, the building is a pilot for the RIBA Grand Prix (2024) which will ensure high energy performance. Recticel Insulation systems are specified throughout.

Contract value: £65m GIA: 16,280m² Cost per m²: £3,993

Among the existing university structures, spaces, and extended to provide a new building of significant scale that sits well restored to provide a new frontage and entrance to the technical laboratory and Engineering. The existing grade II-listed structure has been retained and teaching facility that brings together the faculties of Physical Sciences and Engineering. The existing grade II-listed structure has been retained and restored to provide a new frontage and entrance to the technical laboratory and Engineering. The existing grade II-listed structure has been retained and restored to provide a new building of significant scale that sits well among the existing university structures. The building comes to life as you step inside and are immersed in a three-story animated and active atrium. This is the social hub, bringing the student and community populations together for informal performances and events. The timber structure and finishes provide warmth and the opportunity for the building to age gracefully. Playful detailing makes the building feel relaxed and joyful, with framed views of York Minster.

In terms of whole-life carbon, the building is 21% lower than the business-as-usual model. Low embodied carbon materials, such as glulam and cross laminated timber were used, and Passivhaus principles implemented to achieve a BREEAM Excellent rating.

Building of the Year, sponsored by EH Smith

Contract value: £65m GIA: 16,280m² Cost per m²: £3,993

THE RIBA JOURNAL JUNE 2023

Complete insulation systems puts up-to-date comfort in a dream home

Recticel Insulation’s design expertise and product innovation combine to thermally futureproof a stunning home on England’s south-west coast.

For the property owner, Chris Potter, building houses which exceeded regulation thermal performance was a crucial requirement. Due to the property’s coastal location, it led to the client requiring a FIR solution for the walls, eliminating the risk of water ingress from wind-driven rain, whilst delivering six-light performance that facilitated the required U-values. Following consultations with Recticel’s Housebuilding and Specification Manager, Jon Parsons, Recticel’s innovative Eurothene®+ FIR board was specified for the walls. Generally used as a full-fill product, the client was granted building regulation approval to employ the 115mm board in a partial-fill capacity. This was made possible by selecting Recticel’s insulated plasterboard, Eurothane® GP, for the property’s interior walls upholding thermal values.

For the property’s 46m² roof, Recticel’s Eurothane® GP FIR board was specified. The lightweight, high-performance board provides a thermal capability of 0.022 W/mK and fits easily between roof rafters to create a superbly flat foundation for a waterproofing finish.

Chris Potter said: “Recticel’s communication and support throughout the project was exemplary. They provided detailed calculations and were extremely helpful in terms of modeling different insulation scenarios and thicknesses. Jon’s expertise proved crucial to my period home being built to a modern standard and high specification.”
Talent should be recognised

RISING STARS 2023

ENTER NOW

We are on the hunt for the movers and shakers of tomorrow. RIBAJ, in association with Origin, is scouting for the built environment’s Rising Stars, those early career professionals making things happen.

Have you set up your practice with a splash? Have you danced your competition to a great win? Have you sourced inspirational local materials? Have you tapped into the circular economy? Have you built up team confidence in contracts and fees? Have you made community consultation a pleasure? Or created a killer campaign?

Whether your talents lie in design, management, clear-sighted thinking or working with teams on site, in education or in forging your own collaboration network, we want to hear from you. Entry is free.

Deadline Wednesday 6 September 2023, 14.00 hrs

Winners will be profiled in the RIBA Journal and on ribaj.com and invited to an exclusive Class of 2023 roundtable.

ribaj.com/enter-rising-stars

Contractor insolvency – contracts
Whole life carbon – sustainability
86
89

WHAT IS YOUR ANTI-GREENWASH CHARTER?

It sets out what we will do to describe upfront and embodied carbon, and how we talk about them beyond the practice.

Why did you call it ‘Tell the Truth’?
We can so easily delude ourselves that we’re taking action when we’re not, so we need to tell the truth.

How did it start?
The genesis of the charter was us writing things down internally, to be more consistent and more precise - move on from the superlatives. It has now evolved into getting others to sign up.

Where does this matter?
Your own website, in pitches, marketing and press communications. It’s across the board.

What have you done to implement your charter?
The most specific change was reviewing our own website and PR text. More generally it is instilling a culture of more substantiated writing and presentations. It’s okay to have headlines, but they must be followed by a validation.

What is the biggest mistake in talking about sustainability?
Not having numbers; data is key. One of an architect’s frustrations is getting behind the big claims and discovering there’s not much there. It’s particularly hard when you’ve seen something incredibly impressive and find it is unachievable.

You’ll question yourself and your own ability, whereas in truth, it hasn’t been done elsewhere. In his book Sustainable Energy Without the Hot Air, David Mackay calls for numbers not adjectives. Net zero carbon claims are one of our bugbears. As an industry we still have numerous definitions, so you have to define how you are defining it. The Net Zero Carbon Building Standard will help here.

Why put in numbers that may be ignored?
We’re doing all we can to end green washing.

“We can so easily delude ourselves that we’re taking action when we’re not”
How to weather contractor insolvency

Neal Morris looks at the dangers for architects in the event of contractor insolvency, and at ways they can limit the damage.

Construction insolvencies are at cyclically high levels as the UK economy continues to flirt with recession, although happily the RIBA’s latest Future Trends survey shows they are off the peak seen last year.

Historically, contractor insolvencies tend to rise as economies emerge from recession, rather than enter it, so now is a good time for practices to arm themselves with an understanding of insolvency processes before they get caught in the fallout.

David Fendt, senior associate in the restructuring and insolvency team at Russell-Cooke, suggests architects need to understand the different forms of insolvency and how creditors (architects among them) are likely to be treated under these different scenarios. These range from company voluntary arrangements, where most often the company earnings are paid into a pot for eventual distribution among creditors, to administration which allows companies to be sold and which includes a moratorium on virtually all legal action for 12 months. An architect employed by a client or contractor would almost always be an unsecured creditor, says Fendt.

Architecture appointments

If the architect is novated to a contractor who becomes insolvent, the architect could not claim against the client for unpaid fees from the contractor.

The architect could seek to negotiate payment of outstanding fees before signing a collateral warranty

practitioners/incoming contractor to be paid any outstanding fees before signing a collateral warranty, to ensure the copyright clause is effective if the project is reliant on the architect’s design drawings and intellectual property (IP).

If the architect has entered into a post-novation collateral warranty with the client (or the client has third-party rights under the appointment), the client would usually have the benefit of a copyright licence in respect of IP which would also usually contain a right for the client to request copies of any documents produced by the architect, subject to payment of any reasonable copying fees.

Lawyer-drafted collateral warranties do not usually make copyright licences subject to payment of the architect’s fees.

However, if the architect has provided collateral warranties to third parties under standard form warranties such as those forms produced by the British Property Federation, JCT and the Construction Industry Council, which do link copyright to payment, the architect should contact the warranty beneficiary to explain that such licences shall not be effective until any outstanding payments due to it under its appointment have been paid and could threaten to claim against them for breach.

The architect could seek to negotiate payment of outstanding fees before signing a collateral warranty, advises Jones.

She adds: ‘Consideration should also be given as to whether there is a project bank account which, dependent on its terms, may enable the architect to be paid for its completed services up to the date of the contractor’s insolvency. However, the use of project bank accounts is still rarely on most projects, especially those in the private sector.’

Always seek legal advice

Jones reiterates the need for legal advice to safeguard in the event of insolvency on a project.

‘I recommend architects to review their appointments to determine if they protect themselves sufficiently, and when presented with an appointment always try to negotiate architect-friendly provisions,’ she concludes.

For more detail on types of insolvency see the longer article on ribaj.com.
Are you ready for whole life carbon assessment?

As whole life carbon assessment moves beyond operational to embodied carbon, Neal Morris looks at what architects know, and what they need to know.

Many small practices are likely to view Whole Life Carbon Assessments (WLCA) as the preserve of leading commercial developers who have committed to greening their portfolios – high-profile, publicly-funded showcase projects and major schemes in London that are large enough to be referred to the mayor.

But designers are being forced to look beyond operational energy for carbon savings, so will need to know how to make Whole Life Carbon Assessments via UK industry-standard RICS methodology. All recent industry definitions and targeting frameworks for low-carbon buildings already assume WLCA (using RICS methodology).

All architects will be familiar with regulated energy calculations for Part L compliance, and increasingly they are starting to consider embodied carbon associated with products, materials and the construction process, often by using one of the embodied carbon calculator tools that have become available.

But, argues sustainability lead at Hawkins\Brown Louisa Bowles, even together these still cover only a fraction of the considerations of a WLCA.

What are the whole life carbon lifecycle stages?

The RICS Professional Standard ‘Whole Life Carbon Assessment for the Built Environment’ instantly became the standard methodology after publication four years ago, supported by other environmental standards.

This industry-standard module is...
The finest quality stonework for your new build projects, hand crafted by Haddonstone. Watch our informal CPD about Haddonstone, cast stone and its uses.

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The RIBA Journal June 2023

Intelligence
Whole life carbon

The carbon emissions estimates that architects may do at design stage become less accurate as you work through the life cycle stages of products or materials. They tend to offer most certainty.

Data is either generic or specific: generic data often relates to material rather than products but is generally averaged from numerous sources of specific data. Specific data can be gained from manufacturers’ Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs).

There are different tools for different levels of access to generic and specific databases. For example, Hawkins\Brown’s open-source tool H\B:ERT uses the ICE generic material database as a default, but can accept EPDs, while others allow a search of EPDs to find the nearest match for your assessment.

Bowles says that as a rule of thumb, the carbon emissions estimates that architects may do at design stage become less accurate as you work through the life cycle stages. However, proposed updates to the RICS Professional Standard aim to combat some of these concerns.

The initial stages of a project (A1-A3) encompass embodied carbon associated with the extraction and manufacturing of products or materials. They tend to offer most certainty.

Data is either generic or specific: generic data often relates to material rather than products but is generally averaged from numerous sources of specific data. Specific data can be gained from manufacturers’ Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs).

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Stages A4-A5 cover transport and construction, and installation calls for input from the project’s contractor on transport, site emissions and wastage. However, estimates at early design stage...
The RIBA Journal June 2023

Intelligence Whole life carbon

The industry cannot move towards zero carbon buildings without taking up whole life carbon assessment

are based on assumptions and defaults. Operational energy use in B6, but Bowles says this calls for accurate energy use analysis that goes beyond Part L compliance calculations, which only cover regulated energy use. Predicting carbon emissions from operational energy use (and B7 water use) relies on a number of assumptions, not least the government’s conversion factors which make assumptions about the speed of grid decarbonisation.

What are the further assumptions in both Use and End Of Life modules?

In practice, Bowles says that there are further assumptions made for some of the other ‘use’ modules, such as maintenance (carbon measurement will often be minimal or subsumed into operational energy use), and repair (again, usually reported in B4 replacement). Refrigerant leakage is increasingly reported under B1 and can be a large emission but requires knowledge about the MEP systems to include. B4 (replacement) tends to be the largest emission and currently relies on a like-for-like assumption. RICS default replacement is available, but sometimes analysts choose to review how the assessment service life versus warranty periods compare.

By the time designers get to the end-of-life modules, while tools make assumptions on these emissions based on the quantum of material within the building, end of life scenarios are being increasingly interrogated based on the circular economy. To justify decisions about how likely a material is to be reused, designers may find themselves turning to a mix of academic discussion papers. The default values suggested are often ‘cautious’, advises Bowles. This is because designers now don’t really have influencing decisions that will be made decades into the future.

It is easy to overstate assumed recycling benefits, such as re-use of steel, which may or may not have to be reprocessed, and crushed concrete, which could be used as aggregate but may simply end up in a hole as sub-base material.

What goes beyond Part L compliance calculations?

While most of the life cycle stages in WLC relate to the measurement of embodied carbon, a full WLC covers operational emissions as well – from energy to water.

For a design stage WLC, predicted operational use energy is converted to carbon and reported in B6. Methodologies exist for evaluating operational energy use at design stage, such as CIBSE TM54 and the Passive House Planning Package (PHPP), but Bowles says designers who want to produce WLCAs may find smaller clients reluctant to pay for such analysis when they discover that operational emissions cannot simply be derived from Part L.

What’s next for WLCAs?

The RICS Professional Standard is about to get a major update with a second edition currently out for consultation (architects can download the draft second edition in full).

Bowles says the 2023 proposals include more consistent guidance on measuring demolitions, refurbishments, masterplans and infrastructure projects.

The absorption of CIBSE’s TM65 into the new edition, which translates into carbon emissions, is seen as a major step forward. But Bowles says TM65 illustrates that trying to undertake WLCAs to the fullest extent possible is still at the leading edge of the industry: ‘It is early stages. Not many MEP engineers are using it yet and the number of architects taking TM65 measurements on board is very small.’

Given that a low carbon building can be loosely defined as one that optimises the use of carbon resources both to build it and use it over its lifetime, WLCAs can be expected to become increasingly mainstream over time, especially as new and improved data sources continue to arrive. Bowles predicts that architects relying on commercially available carbon calculator tools, rather than manual calculation or internal tools, will be adhering to the RICS method anyway as they become more aligned and potentially verified.

Bowles points out that the industry cannot, in any case, move towards zero carbon buildings without taking up WLCAs. In order to meet carbon limits you have to do at least one measurement during design and delivery, and you will only achieve the best result if you iterate analysis with design. Based on the current UKGBC Framework definition, you can achieve net zero carbon in operation by minimising, using on-site renewables or purchasing guaranteed renewable energy, but if you are targeting net zero in construction or whole life you have to use a WLC in order to calculate the cost of any required offset or carbon removal for the embodied emissions. The industry is still waiting for the Net Zero Building Standard to be defined (by the RIBA among others), but it will be aligned with the RICS WLC methodology.

Now even more fire-rated balustrade options from q-railing

As regulation brings the height for glass balustrades even lower, Q-railing is working on fully compliant fire-rated systems that will help designers achieve their ambitions.

Since the changes to Approved Document B in Dec 2018, architects have had to find alternatives to glass balustrades on residential buildings above 18m. In 2022, the Building Safety Act dropped this to 11m for most residential buildings, which for architects and designers means many of their new buildings now fall under the new regulations. Q-railing, wanting to overcome this issue, began to develop a fully tested, A2-s1,d0-compliant laminated glass balustrade system.

Vertical bar systems for every design

Wanting to expand its fire-rated selection, Q-railing introduced an aluminium vertical bar system. These are currently being installed on main contractor projects all over the UK, including TSW’s solo by Galliard Homes and Boatman’s House by NACWL. The beauty of the aluminium vertical bar system is that it’s fully customisable – colours and finishes can be chosen to complement any design. The vertical bars can also be angled to offer privacy without blocking the view – perfect for city living.

Fully compliant balustrades

The specific regulations and guidelines to be fulfilled are BS 4871:2001 and BS 5897:2020. The second of these documents has been in force only since 31 August 2020, so the new products from Q-railing are truly at the forefront of development in this area. Recent testing has been conducted on the vertical bar system to ensure that it complies with UK standards. Q-railing chose a UK-based, URAS-accredited third-party facility to carry out line and point load testing. Architects and specifiers can therefore be assured that the new products fully comply with trusted British safety standards.

Q-railing UK

Q-railing is a global innovator in the field of balustrade systems, providing complete solutions that are instantly recognisable for their quality, unique design and excellent performance. Our international team constantly strives to create the safest and most stylish balustrade and accessories in glass, steel and aluminium.

Q-railing UK

For more information on CPDs, or specification work, contact Q-railing on:
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ukconsultant@q-railing.com
www.q-railing.com

Q-railing

Save energy – meet compliance – celebrate design

Designers who want to produce WLCAs may find that smaller clients are reluctant to pay for such analysis
While not a modern concept in itself, the department store is bound into modernism’s consciousness; the high-volume consumer goods sold in them linked directly to the pure, conflicted notions of craft, utility and mass-production first propagated by the Bauhaus in 1919. Architects Erich Mendelsohn in Germany and Britain’s William Crabtree later helped give contemporary expression to these stores – emulated by European and US architects, and creating a globally recognised aesthetic.

Recent history has been less kind to them, the global pandemic accelerating changes to customers’ shopping habits already affected by the exponential rise of online retailing. That has had a marked effect on urban centres, with traditional anchor stores that contributed to the life of our high streets, such as Debenhams, closing down for good. Even UK stalwart John Lewis has felt the strain, with stores closing in Birmingham, Sheffield, Aberdeen, Swindon and Peterborough. It is even re-considering its Partnership in its ninth RIBAJ competition brief that also makes best use of SterlingOSB Zero in its specific context. Prefabrication or CNC fabrication to create novel forms will be considered. While other materials may form an integral part of any proposition, it is expected the design will make good use of SterlingOSB Zero.

In this ideas competition, the winning proposal will be the one that the judges consider unites the programme for a school and its attendant spaces with the volume, floor plate and site context of the chosen department store in the most exciting and imaginative way. Blue-sky thinking to interpreting the brief is welcomed – if carried out with conviction.

The RIBA Journal June 2023

JUDGES
This year’s judging panel will be Holly Lewis, co-founder of We Made That, Proctor & Matthews Architects’ Stephen Proctor, David Counsell, marketing manager of West Fraser UK and will be chaired by Jan-Carlos Nachterse, deputy editor of the RIBA Journal.

DEADLINE
Entries should be received no later than 14:00 UK time on Monday 3 July 2023.

TO ENTER
Go to ribaj.com/department-4-education-enter
Entries must include the following, laid out on no more than two A3 sheets, supplied electronically as pdfs and uploaded to the official entry website.

• Plans and sections explaining the nature of the school
• 3D axonometric or lateral perspectives conveying the school project at key positions in the building. Supplementary images, eg schematic of structure or programme, that would convey your proposition.
• An explanation of no more than 500 words describing the choice of department store and core ideas for the design concept, siting, layout and internal configuration.

NOTES
The judges’ decision is final.

• First prize £2,500
• Three commended prizes of £500
• No correspondence will be entered into by the organisers or judges regarding entries or winners.
• Shortlisted entries will be notified in writing.
• Shortlisted entries will be invited to the winners’ announcement and prize-giving on 21 September 2023.
• Email any questions to ribaj.department4education@riba.org

Inquiry and passion spur on emerging writers

This year’s RIBA/Future Architects writing competition drew a bumper crop of entries from around the world, writes Chris Fuges. Read the winning entry below.

This year’s RIBA/Future Architects entrants argued passionately for the reform of education to remove barriers to entry, and questioned the structure of the profession. They wrote lyrically – and critically – about fast-changing places, and looked to history for guidance on shaping the future. There were fresh perspectives on technology, regulation and sustainable design. Some were rooted in personal experience, others tackled big issues with far-reaching effects. The best did both.

The jury comprised Financial Times architecture editor Lucy Watson, architect, teacher and writer Nana Biamah-Ofori, and architect Jane Hall, featured book in this month’s Cover to Cover: ‘Fitzgerald’s Immigrants’ by Paul Yakubu (Part II, Architectural Association), which calls for residential architecture that recognises a changing population and the ways housing is occupied. ‘It’s an important topic, sentimentally, said Watson. ‘It’s written from experience – with just the right echo of the past, and it’s thought-provoking and well written so it carries you along.

The winning and commended articles were selected from a 10-strong shortlist of accomplished pieces: Niamh Quigley (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversity; Joseph Istance (Part I, Bath), on design for neurodiversy.
The day we move into this house marks the countdown to our exit. This period of our lives is a continuous negotiation of who we are in this new setting, where we fit in, where our communities are, and how that aligns with our reason to be here — school or work.

As the day winds down and we all return, this architecture gives us no respite. We must negotiate every transient movement; any collective activity, the chores, use of space or just curating our indoor climate. The design emphasises our sense of temporary occupation, forcing us to be strangers, reminding us we are still immigrants.

This is the story of one flat in Fitzgerald House, south London. Originally designed with four bedrooms, its living room was further adapted to make an additional bedroom. All share a single bathroom and kitchen which are about 3m² and 5m² respectively. Its affordability in the economic climate of London makes it an attractive setting for us newcomers in the country. We all move in, putting pressure on its inadequate services while trying to achieve a personalised feeling of home within its diverse sociocultural tenancy.

This story not only resonates with most apartments in Fitzgerald House but also with most forms of tenement housing, as 74% of immigrants in the UK live in the private rented sector. The converted space and shared facilities attract those on a budget, though daily challenges arise from its compact design.

Despite its downsides, a sense of community develops among its residents, bonding over the struggle of navigating its cramped quarters. Though not an ideal living situation, it serves as a temporary home, a stepping stone towards independence and integration in British society.

Since the events of Brexit in 2020, the UK has developed more immigration schemes and policies to attract the workforce of developing countries to meet its needs. While implementing this, it has not responded through design or policy to create housing that fits the socio-cultural character of these immigrants. It is notable that the country has evolved as a multicultural nation; 9% of the population are people of non-British nationalities. The architecture that houses this population must be sensitive to that.

The design of buildings that house asylum seekers and refugees has received considerable attention, and rightly so, but as the government focuses on refining its immigration laws, it must also pay attention to the housing spaces of other migrants, which should respond to their different cultural backgrounds.

Above - Shared facilities in the home can be the site of conflict or an opportunity for integration.

Collaboration with existing ethnic communities is a starting point to guide design for new migrants and introduce a settling template for newcomers. Designers should do more to provide functional private and inclusive community spaces, and examine how the spatial patterns of housing can be enriched through the diversity of their tenancy. Since housing occupancy is directly proportional to its price, a design review of tenement housing as affordable housing is also needed.

What policies could improve the living conditions of multi-ethnic tenement houses? How can design mitigate the language, cultural and religious tension in these residences? What spatial opportunities does architecture gain from multicultural tenancy? As many tenement residences are not initially planned for such use, how can the concept of flexibility also respond to multi-ethnic changes?

These questions should be brought to the forefront of the immigrant housing discourse. They would also inspire a collaborative dialogue between architects and immigrant communities in curating design solutions and developing new housing policies. The results from this discourse would be tailored to the development of new housing types. Such a scheme could put its foreground the living room as a space for socio-integration, to prevent its current routine substitution for bedrooms in tenements. The spatial features of this living room, such as size, furniture and fixtures, would also be designed to adapt to the needs of people with various backgrounds.

Such new policies will help improve the conditions of existing tenement residences, proffer ideas for ethnic communities to develop their environs and build a more inclusive society overall. In that society the houses we live in would encourage me and my housemates to build bonds with our diversity. It is one where no matter what country we have migrated from, the spatial pattern of our residence enables an atmosphere of friendship. It builds a household and we all desire to call it home.

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- Heads    •    Cills    •    Surrounds    •    Copings    •    Cornice    •    Apex    •    Banding    •    String
In Janie Airey’s other role working in lifestyle, corporate and interiors, female photographers abound – but not here. She’s observed architecture’s male dominance since moving into this sphere, but why would that bias transfer, as if osmotically, into the membrane of her discipline?

Airey is certainly not intimidated by building sites, where she shoots frequently; nor by the solitary and sometimes exposed nature of her work. ‘A camera can feel like armour,’ she says, describing how she once breezed in with a cursory smile at security into one of Zaha Hadid’s ‘extraordinary’ buildings to spend the day leisurely tracking its curves. ‘I’ve never felt fearful. You’re too involved in what you’re doing to feel cautious or vulnerable. You do it with confidence – and no-one questions confidence.’

The London Aquatics Centre—another Hadid one—was her first architectural shoot in 2012. It was, she recalls, a stress-free two days recording the park for the ODA before the Olympics began – and a turning point for her. Of course, she captured the famous diving boards but was more struck by this image’s graphic quality; the simple reflection, repeating elements, a black arch nodding to the concrete – like the initial flourish of the designer’s signature.

‘People ask me what it is like to be a woman architect,’ Hadid once related. In a razor-sharp answer – all the more Wildean for its casualness – she’d replied: ‘I don’t know, I’ve never been a man.’ A bit like this image; intimating what’s going on in a non-explicit way: ‘Not seemingly conceptual,’ adds Airey, ‘Subtle but punchy.’ – Jan-Carlos Kucharek

Janie Airey
London Aquatic Centre, 2012
Canon 5D MK IV DSLR
Art puts it all in focus

One eye-opening exhibition room gives Eleanor Young a sudden perspicacious view of the blurry world of design.

This artist’s room made me doubt my eyesight. And it made me think. It was like looking out of the side of my glasses, near objects blurry and unfocused, others crystal clear. The juxtaposition of black and white geometries with bright colour has something of the old TV test card about it. But we are generations of technologies beyond that, past the test cards’ replacement by CEEFAX, into the shapes of QR codes which send us off into the disorientating information jungle that is the web.

The blurry graphics are squintingly deliberate, they pop up in many of Felipe Pantone’s works. But you see a version of this same disjunction in many buildings, places of sharp design focus, places where that has blurred. It is about choosing battles, fighting for only what is important. Its roots lie in contracts and client confidence, personal authority and how much you care. On many projects design focus blurs at the edge of the roof, in others it’s at the loos (if you want to understand a building, to get an idea of its values, then examine the loos).

The unreal nature of Pantone’s room is also a reminder of the way designs are realised, even before the making and construction. The earliest jostling of design ideas, the grappling with the parameters; site, room schedules, ambitions. The easily-lost flash of insight – like Pantone’s squirts of colour – that, if you can just hold onto it, will be the clear spatial focus and a guiding light – generating, connecting, unlocking the rest of the design.

The elements that come clear to the process and those that take working at, being revisited again and again. Pantone’s room has the brilliant dysfunctional confusion of MC Escher’s work – though perhaps Pantone’s QR codes do lead somewhere, unlike Escher’s staircases. It has an all-absorbing, headache-inducing resonance with artist Bridget Riley’s work; your brain cannot compute. Follow the train of thought to more architectural plays on space, distance and reflection – where scale and distance are confused to suggest something is far grander than it is, with follies like Bath’s Sham Castle. Or the layers of paintings in the Picture Room at Sir John Soane’s Museum. Or the complex reflections in the tiny courtyards of Sanei Hopkins’ Secret Garden in North London that take time to unpick.

All this from one room in an exhibition... It is a reminder that a stimulus beyond our own discipline/profession/obsession fires up a different set of neural pathways. We need to get out more...

Below: Felipe Pantone’s installation was on show at the Saatchi Gallery’s Beyond the Streets.
AI brings opportunities as well as a challenge

Much is being made of artificial intelligence and its implication for society’s future. As ever there are doom-sayers and optimists battling for headlines. As a fan of the film Terminator I can heed the warning. The debate will rage on, and as architects are at best servants of selling/offering a service to society we will have to get involved. For now, for us, AI is in its infancy. Progress on BIM in our world suggests we have the knowledge, aptitude and capacity to move fast on AI when we need to do so. We will, of course, be relying on the technical skills of the next generation and the engagement of the wider profession; this is not such a purely technical exercise as BIM.

The government will need to get involved too. Having attended a CreaTech event hosted by the Chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, I’m aware that it’s already on it. It knows this is a vital economic driver/opportunity and that using AI in tenders and regulations could help kickstart the revolution.

Which brings me back to the very current discussions, between the RIBA, ARB, our members and the schools, about educational reform. My own position remains that we are here for architecture first, the profession second and the institute third. Architecture existed long before it was professionalised and will last long after it is re- or de-regulated. The profession matters because it is a generally open, intellectual and practical peer group. The institute matters, and will flourish, as it recognises evermore strongly that its basis is as a learned society that captures and shares knowledge and data; promotes best practice in practice, research, education and intellectual speculation; and hosts an open discourse.

This list of personal priorities does not diminish one or another but it sets up a framework for my thinking. The AI debate further reinforces the need for reflection on the future of knowledge and thought, creativity and craft, skills and learning. Many of you working in schools and practice, along with the RIBA, will already have submitted your response to ARB’s speculations. The RIBA’s response is punchy and rightly so – as we have acquired an institutional memory as well as skill and knowledge through many years of working with our members in academe and practice in a critically important International Validation programme.

My discussions with many of you in many formats have been informative and engaging and have helped shape my own personal position on our future. We need choice and a rich variety of architectural training routes that focus on the art and technology of architecture, its social purpose and commerce and contract. Space, time and architecture still matters: it should be possible to speed up and slow down the education and the time needed to qualify to suit individuals. Education can be provided in academe, practice and hybrid models. Above all, we need these forms of education to help us develop the intellect and knowledge that allow us to continuously evolve so that we are capable of addressing both the uncertain implications and the opportunities offered by AI. These are exciting times!

See the RIBA’s full response to the ARB consultation at architecture.com

Much is being made of artificial intelligence highlights the value of an informed, engaged profession.
Isabelle Priest: Why and when did you start Lina Ghotmeh studio?

Lina Ghotmeh: I started my studio in 2016. In 2006, I began a partnership with Dan Dorell and Tsuyoshi Tane. I had been working at Jean Nouvel on a collaboration with Foster + Partners near St Paul’s Cathedral. I was always looking at competitions and found one for an Estonian National Museum. Estonia had regained its independence in 1991 and joined the European Union in 2003. I identified with this country that had lived through occupation and war. I was 25 years old, and we won. It was a long ride. Coming from Lebanon, you learn to pull things along yourself. People didn’t believe it would get built. We delivered the project 10 years later, but during the collaboration I naturally started developing my own way. I started Lina Ghotmeh Architecture by taking over some of that company.

IP: You were born in Beirut. How has this influenced you and your work?

LG: We are an international team of 25-30 people. We’re in Paris, but we have people from everywhere: Africa, the US, Europe. It’s a microcosm of the challenges of our world.

IP: You were born in Beirut. How has this influenced you and your work?

LG: Growing up, I saw the city destroyed by war. I witnessed what humans can do to places and each other. At the same time, I saw the power of nature, because between the ruins nature spurred, giving beauty and hope. Symbolically and physically, it made one think about architecture not as an act of creating closed spaces but of relationships and porosities. At our Hermès project, which opened in April, you enter a courtyard that’s open. It feels almost like a ruin, which allows it to be used in many ways.

IP: How did you come to be an architect?

LG: At Lina Ghotmeh Architecture, the ‘A’ of architecture is a multiple ‘A’ for architecture, aesthetics, artisanal and artefact. Architecture can envelope multiple disciplines, but the environment has always been at the heart of my practice – what ties us to this world and how can we make sense of what we’re making and make it worthwhile, especially with the pressing environmental crisis.

I was little, submitting her diploma when I was six or seven. I remember her models and Rotring pens. This was from 1980 to 1992 during on-off bombing. Creativity was the place where one could unleash, imagine, dream of another world. I spent so much time drawing. My mum never practised as an architect, she taught design. When I started studying, I was also interested in genetic engineering. I was fascinated by the body. At the American University you can do other courses so I did some in biology. Now, when I think about them, they’re all interlinked. Architecture is an expansion of the body and nature.

IP: What is the role of sustainability in your work?

LG: At Lina Ghotmeh Architecture, the ‘A’ of architecture is a multiple ‘A’ for architecture, aesthetics, artisanal and artefact. Architecture can envelope multiple disciplines, but the environment has always been at the heart of my practice – what ties us to this world and how can we make sense of what we’re making and make it worthwhile, especially with the pressing environmental crisis.
More and more I believe we are climate beings, linked to our geography, the soil, topography, weather and what we eat. We’re rooted in a place in the ways we grow up. The relationship to the climate is strong – mine to the Mediterranean, sun, colours and feeling of intimacy on your skin. I look for in architecture to create places that are warm and cocooning through colour and texture.

IP: How did you go about designing the Serpentine Pavilion?
LG: I was invited in August last year. The design is not spectacular, but subtle, and about interior. We started by looking at the concept of the park and how the Serpentine galleries are separated by the lake. Our perspective was how the pavilion can emphasise nature. Historically, the building next to the pavilion was a tea house so this idea of eating and being together was already part of the space. The table became the starting point. The RIBA Journal June 2023 ribaj.com

The housing does not repeat the footprint. We aimed to restore the dignity of the site.

IP: What has been your turning point project?
LG: Every project is a learning process to push boundaries. However, Stone Garden in Beirut is most personal because it’s in my home town. It tries to critique housing strategies in the city. The project started when I met Fouad El Khoury, a photographer. He had inherited land from his father who was a Lebanese modernist architect. He wanted to develop the site next to the port that was destroyed by war. The question was how a residential building can speak of the memory of the city, and not be just another developer tower.

The facade is a hand-combed render. The photos were taken by Iwan Baan before the explosion. The building does not repeat the footprint. We are in the Mediterranean, so we don’t need glass buildings. The openings are spaces for nature, full of planters. I also wanted the building to emerge from the ground, worked by hand. Beirut is a seismic area, so we couldn’t build using earth. The facade is a hand-combed render. The photos were taken by Iwan Baan before the explosion in 2020. It wasn’t finished, but I’m grateful I had some. The structure was solid, but the windows were blown out. It’s an unfolding building.

IP: What is on the horizon next?
LG: We have won a competition to design a museum in Saudi Arabia that is in partnership with the Pompidou Centre. The project is a cultural oasis in an agricultural setting, so it plays a role in reviving agriculture, intertwining arts and agriculture, building with the earth and local industry. We are also in the process of finishing a logistics building, where the envelope is sculpted by hand.

IP: How do you go about designing new projects?
LG: It’s about materials. Hermès in Normandy is a manufacturing facility for leatherwork. It was a push into how we use local resources, like bricks, and vernacular construction; how to take them forward using technology, our understanding of material consumption and the beauty of architecture. The bricks are made close to site. We did bioclimatic studies on how to reduce the environmental impact, taking advantage of north light and prevailing winds, and using geothermal energy and solar panels. Designers tend to design, then work out the structure. What we did allowed Hermès to be low-carbon, energy-positive and passive with ambitious architecture. We brought back local bricklaying skills that had been lost. The building is on an industrial estate, with hills and nature beyond. We aimed to restore the dignity of the site.
Designing the window between death and life

Identity, authenticity and dealing with grief – in this extract from their book Michèle Woodger and Tszwai So consider the nature of memorials, memory and design

MICHÈLE WOODGER: Memorials are places of communion between the living and the dead, twilight zones between here and wherever souls reside, one-way portals to the River Lethe. Like tabernacles or shrines, memorial sites are numinous places, borderline sacred ground. The most powerful memorial architecture surmounts unavoidable politics with sensitivity and meaning. But at the centre of it all is that alchemic element called memory.

TSZWAI SO: Memorials have a lot to do with identity. Which is why memory loss is destabilising – it entails an erasure of identity. When we erect memorials to ancestors or loved ones we are also doing it for ourselves, for our sense of identity. A gravestone is memorial architecture in its most basic form, and the identifiers on there – ‘our beloved grandmother’ etc – are really important. We want to remember our family members because the personal relationship we had is important to us, sure, but also because our past shapes our identity as the son of someone, the grandson of someone… For public memorials this is scaled up, which is what political scientist Benedict Anderson was getting at in his work on imagined communities. From him we have learned that a community starts as a household, it becomes a village, then a nation; in order to establish and cultivate an identity, so that the collective can work as a unit, you need a narrative. The whole question of narrative building is therefore crucial to nation building. The Chinese author Bo Yang once opined that, although some historians were reluctant to give weight to national myths or narratives, myth was the soul of a nation. ‘If the history of a nation does not include myths, this nation is nothing more than a group of puppets’, he said. Without stories and tales, you cannot have a nation or national identity. Memorials help to fill that space. Memorials bring people together and centre this sense of identity and belonging.

The physicality of grief

MW: Everyone encounters loss in their lifetime, but it is endured alone. On the death of his wife, Joy Davidman, CS Lewis wrote: ‘Grief is like a long valley, a winding valley where any bend may reveal a totally new landscape.’ The emotional pilgrimage begins as a series of cul-de-sacs – truncated conversations – yet wends over time

Above Designed by Gómez Platero Architecture and Urbanism in 2020 this World Memorial to the Pandemic is a testimony to loss, physical separation, the power of nature and the interconnectedness of people. It was imagined for Montevideo, Uruguay – a concave bowl stretching out from the waterfront towards the open sea, accessed by a long thin walkway.
towards something more spiritual. A memorial is like a physical marker on this journey towards acceptance. Grief is a bleak state with no apparent prospects; seeking stability, we reach for something tangible. In wars, natural disasters and terror events, loss occurs abruptly, unfairly, arbitrarily, to a large number of people. This shakes us existentially and raises metaphysical doubts on a grand scale, about nihilism, fate and the existence of justice. A public memorial becomes a focal point where open expressions of mourning are acceptable, and stands as a public recognition of an incomprehensible event.

Authenticity, ego and the architect

TS: Art and architecture both have the potential to be a selfish business, where egos reign supreme. As architects we are creating public spaces that people have to live with. The architect has to understand the limitations of self expression and to reconcile that with the public and the clients, really. ‘If you are obsessed with self-expression or with the ego,’ Moshe Safdie beautifully expressed, ‘then your priorities change. So I think it’s a given that a serious architect… will achieve a kind of self-expression because their being is in it, but it’s a by-product rather than an objective’.

‘The architect has to put the needs of the client, the public, those being commemorated and the context above creative self-expression’

The nature of memorials, so often associated with tragedy, forces the architect to think about existential philosophies, which aren’t usually a preoccupation of day-to-day practice. Those memorials that have come into being through a rigorous, empathetic, sensitive and intellectual architectural process certainly merit closer consideration and appreciation. Adolf Loos wrote that ‘Only a very small part of architecture belongs to art: the tomb and the monument. Everything else that fulfils a function is to be excluded from the domain of art.’ Memorials are a rare typology that blurs the distinction between the disciplines of architecture and art, and like art, memorial architecture can mediate between the sayable and unsayable, the knowable and unknowable.

Left Competition winning scheme for the National Monument, Thunderhead 2SLG/TQ by designed by Public City, with Shawna Dempsey, Lorri Millan and Albert McLeod in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. It is part of a reconciliation project around the discriminatory practices that persisted beyond Canada’s decriminalization of homosexuality in 1969. With education and performance spaces it has an imposing columnar form cut away to reveal a glowing interior that rises like a cumulonimbus cloud. The interior is covered in glass mosaic tiles like a disco ball. It is due to complete in 2025.
Parting shot

Time Life building
New Bond Street, London, 1953

The Time Life building in New Bond Street by Michael Rosenauer was described in The Architectural Review as 'the most lavishly finished building of its kind to be erected in London since the war'. Sir Hugh Casson was appointed as the co-ordinating designer for the interior, assisted by Misha Black of the Design Research Unit. They were asked to create a rich setting that would not overwhelm the casual visitor and to provide a showcase of British contemporary art and design.

The first floor reception designed by Casson and Black fulfils this. Large enough for parties, it has the warmth of a welcoming club, with its scattering of easy chairs and low tables designed by RD Russell. The gold clock at the far end, designed by Christopher and Robin Ironside, sits on an Armillary Sphere, on which are engraved the signs of the zodiac. An American eagle, a British lion and the figure of Time in gilded wood are grouped around it. A wrought-iron sculpture on the far left, entitled 'The Complexities of Man', is by Geoffrey Clarke.

"Office Chic", an exhibition of post-war office interiors, is in the RIBA Library until 28 July. • Suzanne Walser

architectural acoustic finishes

SonaSpray K-13 acoustic ceiling spray in light grey.

dMFK Architects choose fire-rated, recycled SonaSpray for reverberation control throughout their offices.

SonaSpray absorbs sound energy, allowing designers to create productive spaces, free of distraction, where employees can thrive. The seamless and decorative spray finishes, range from plaster smooth to textured.

76 Charlotte Street, London. Killian O’Sullivan Photographer.