

MacEwen Award 2024:

Architecture for the common good

Hope Street offers women a better future

Sunspot rejuvenates Jaywick Sands

Citizens House keeps people close to home

St James' farm brings Belfast together

Local activism saves Aqueduct Cottage

The RIBA Journal

February 2024

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MACEWEN AWARD 07

Inspiring projects with brave clients, inventive design teams and active communities

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Highly commended in the MacEwen Award: Sunspot in Jaywick by HAT Projects. Photographed by Maddie Persent



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1: Buildings



**MACEWEN AWARD
2024**
ARCHITECTURE FOR
THE COMMON GOOD
ribaj.com/macewen-awards

Below St James'
Community Farm in
West Belfast, designed
by MMAS, won a
MacEwen Award highly
commended.

Welcome to the MacEwen Award 2024 special issue. In it are this year's winners – the overall winner, a facility for women in the justice system designed by Snug, three highly commended schemes, an eight-strong shortlist and a special mention that is slightly different to the others but all-deserving.

With geographical locations from Jaywick to Belfast via London and Southampton, it is clear that 'architecture for the common good', is taking place wholeheartedly across the entire UK. There is even more regional expanse in our shortlist too.

From a longlist of 32 entries, the winners were selected by our panel of judges: Je Ahn, founding director, Studio Weave; Stacey Barry, architect, BDP; Kathy MacEwen, planner and daughter of Anni and Malcolm MacEwen after whom the award is named and Alex Scott-Whitby, founding director, Scott Whitby Studio, which won the top prize for Jubilee Pool in 2023, and me, as chair. Depending on the submissions each year, the concept of 'architecture for the common good' evolves to reflect

to the changing needs of the world around us. We saw more housing in 2024 as well as more beautifully revived historic buildings – and possibly fewer inner city, tougher urban schemes. Yet every project contributes to improving its community, local economy, and environmental and social contexts. It's fantastic to see the efforts that architectural practices are going to make ideas happen. In many cases, the projects wouldn't happen without them going above and beyond.

Next year we will celebrate 10 years of the award, and are already looking forward to a bumper crop of entries. In the meantime, thank you to the 2024 judges, the entrants, and our generous sponsor BDP which has supported the awards for many years. Congratulations to the winning roster and enjoy reading. Also do turn to page 62 where we profile Jan Kattein Architects, a practice that is a protagonist of a MacEwen-minded social architecture. We hope you find admiration and inspiration. ● Isabelle Priest

MMAS



Hope and glory

A healing homeliness informs Hope Street, Snug Architects' pioneering scheme to avoid so many women in the justice system ending up in prison, that is the winner of the 2024 MacEwen Award

Words: Eleanor Young Photographs: Craig Auckland, Fotohaus



Left The counselling room at Hope Street has the aura of a chapel with added warmth and comfort from the timber, carpet and acoustic treatment.

Credits

Client One Small Thing

Architect Snug Architects

Employer's agent BECM

Interior designer Focus Design

Landscape architect Harris Bugg Studio

Structural and civil engineer Calcinotto

CLT Subcontractor Eurban

Main contractor Chisolm and Winch

Approved building control inspector Sweco

MEP consultant Mesh Energy

Local planning authority Southampton City Council

Buildings
MacEwen Award – winner

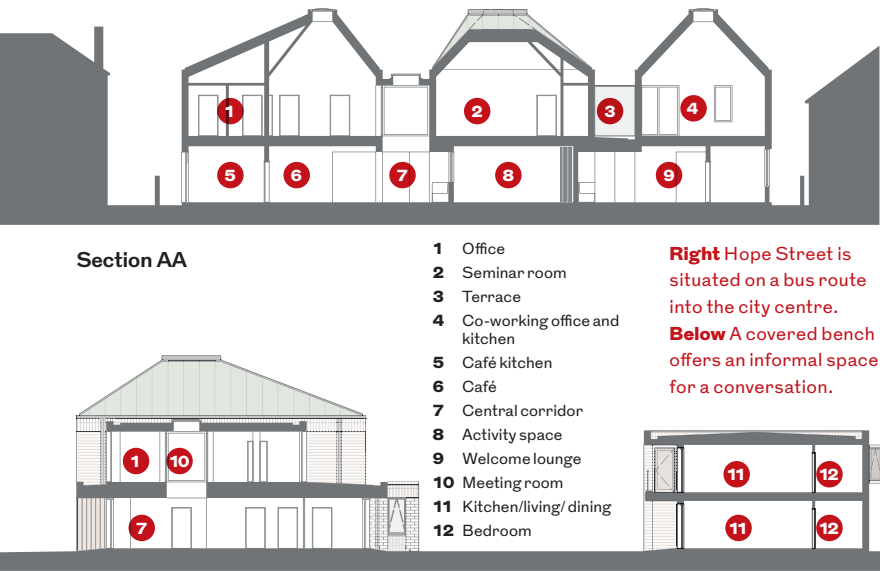
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A home for women in the justice system sounds like it should be a prison. But in fact Hope Street, this year's RIBA MacEwen Award winner, is an alternative to prison. When magistrates look to give community sentences for non-violent offences they have to ensure these can be carried out in a safe place, not a home with abusive partner or a shared house where drugs are in regular use. Without a safe place a custodial sentence in prison is the only option. Hope Street, designed by Snug Architects, is an attempt to create such a place for women in Hampshire. They can treat it like their home, their children can live with them in shared flats around an elegantly planted courtyard, and there is support through trauma care and shared activities in the calm and uplifting communal rooms.

The project is the result of the tireless lobbying, activity, funding and fundraising of Lady Edwina Grosvenor and the charity One Small Thing. They had to ensure the agencies that fed into it where on board. 'It is transformative. It is a bold move on behalf of the organisations involved in the justice system,' said MacEwen judge Isabelle Priest. The judges also commented on the fact that it is unusual for the prize-winner to have this sort of privilege and clout behind it. But it is clear that the charity's activities on the ground – running the women's probation service in the area and previous work setting up trauma counselling – have fed strongly into identifying the need and setting out a clear brief for this pioneering building type.

The tripartite structure of the façade. A glass and timber screen funnels visitors to the main entrance and café.

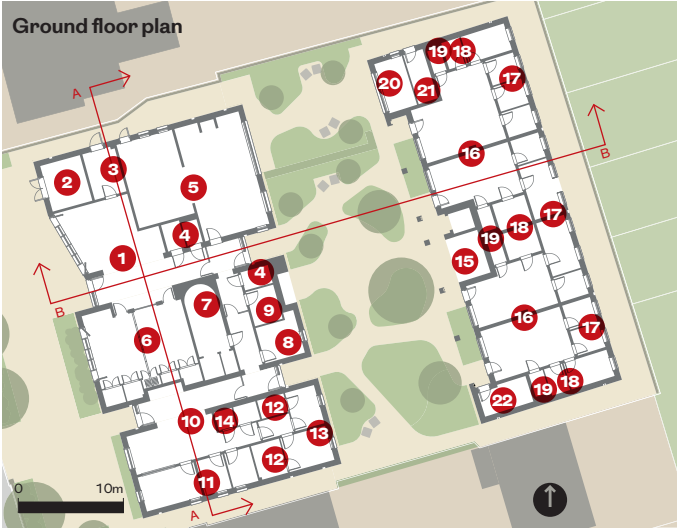




First of the all the building is to be a home and one that rehabilitates women who are likely to have suffered trauma. Lady Edwina was strongly influenced by Maggie's Centres and their emphasis on comfort and hospitality. Efforts to avoid the sense of an institution are clear from the outset, from the café frontage to the understated desk with shelving for informal decorations. The café will be up and running shortly and will provide not only a route into work for the inhabitants of Hope Street but a point where the women and wider community can come together. This is, after all, a place for rehabilitation, a chance to help women avoid being further drawn into crime.

A pair of two-storey blocks look into the courtyard. Away from the street, most protected from unwanted visitors, are the eight shared flats with modest bedrooms around serviceable kitchen and living spaces. Bedrooms open onto the quiet backlands of gardens with angled, obscured windows. The open balcony is timber-lined and overlooks the courtyard, giving more sense of space.

The Hub		
1 Coffee shop	8 Snug	Residential
2 Refuse store	9 Plant room	15 Stair and lift
3 Kitchen	10 Welcome lounge	16 Kitchen/ living/ dining
4 WC	11 Consultation room	17 Bedroom
5 Residents' lounge	12 Recovery suite bathroom	18 Bathroom
6 Activity room	13 Recovery suite bedroom	19 WC
7 Stair and lift		20 Garden room
		21 Store
		22 Refuse store



But it is the communal hub building where the project really comes into its own and moves from creating a safe home to rehabilitation. 'Hope Street is the only project that almost had me crying... we hear of the architect as being a doctor of space and this is an example of architecture that is healing people,' said judge Alex Scott-Whitby. In these communal areas the scale is grander, with larger rooms. The building is conceived as three volumes to fit with the villas alongside it in the spacious street. Its sloping roofs are hollowed out to create dramatic internal volumes with wood-lined soffits up to roof lanterns. That might seem unusually excessive in the offices spaces and even the street-facing seminar room, but the open roof volume makes a remarkable counselling space, bestowing on it the air of a chapel. It is only small but the volume is mostly made up above it, with an anteroom that keeps it very calm and offers an alternative private space in which to decompress if the conversations get too much. Acoustically cocooned with thick carpet, it is all designed to give a sense of psychological safety. 'There is a spiritual element to it,' admits Lady Edwina. Even the staircase leading up to it has a sense of ritual to it.

Staff areas, including a spacious kitchen and secluded terrace, are generous – a deliberate strategy by the charity. 'It is important to have good staff space,' affirms Lady Edwina, who wants staff happy enough to give their best in an often trying role, and to keep them at Hope Street.

Left The brick-lined 'flank' walls of each of the three volumes of the hub create a variety of spaces.

Right A semi-open stair to the first floor flats allows natural surveillance.



The charity One Small Thing emphasises the importance of compassion, empathy and respect. Sensitivity to both those who stay and those who work here is written into the architecture, in diagram and the details. The building is designed to ease the transition from court and police custody suite by welcoming the women through a discreet second front door into an open room where the necessary paperwork can be done in comfort. Baskets hold a selection of bedding and pyjamas for new residents to choose from.

The deep walls and reveals, driven by the CLT structure, are used to give a sense of permanence and that is accentuated by the brick surfaces of what would be the flank walls of each of the three 'villa' volumes, which create clear circulation from the front to the back of the communal building. There are views through wherever possible and timber and brass finishes are used generously, so

Below Inside the café, where all are welcome.



New Hope Street almost had me crying... this is an example of architecture that is healing people



the building reads more as a generous community space than an institution.

Walking into the kitchen and living room it was clear that the first occupants were enjoying the freedom of a spacious kitchen with a shared cooking session. One semi-secluded corner acts as a playroom; space for children is critical to avoiding destructive family separations. And there is a visiting room where members of the wider family can be entertained without trespassing on the personal space of other residents. Sofas, lamps and cork boards to pin up kids’ drawings make the place more homely. These seem like intuitive touches but they are also based on evidence. As a result of consultations with women who had experience of the justice system and guidance the design avoids known triggers for trauma, using things like rounded corners and muted colours. It seems to be making a difference. One of the women told me, happily: ‘This place is totally unexpected, it’s really good and you’re not judged.’

The street-front composition of the building seems to matter the least for its mission. But its three villas, calm buff brick with neat soldier

IN NUMBERS

£7.5m
construction cost

£5300/m²
cost per m²

820m²
hub gja

538m²
residential gja

1358m²
total gja

Above Communal
kitchen, living and
eating spaces.

Below The welcome
lounge where residents
are introduced to Hope
Street, often fresh
from a custody suite.

courses and timber window frames, reveal again the desire for dignity and a productive interface with the outside world. This project got through planning first time. Its unassuming and civil architecture works with the language of housing for justice-involved women to frame it as a good neighbour. Judge Je Ahn of Studio Weave said: ‘It is architecturally refined and deals with difficult thematic issues.’

‘This is just the beginning,’ explained Lady Edwina. Since the project got under way the charity has also bought the house next door, building a nursery for children living in Hope Street and updating the house with well-managed rooms to rent that could give women the next step on the road to rehabilitation. This is a project that should work to help women in the justice system and help avoid the societal costs of sending women to prison unnecessarily. And even if it doesn’t, the scheme has always included a consideration for how it might be reused, perhaps as a women’s shelter or a place for those coming off drugs. But however it evolves, architecture and social purpose work in harmony here, the one enabling the other. ●



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Coastal immersion

HAT Projects’ holistic approach to Jaywick Sands’ Sunspot business centre has brought new livelihoods and liveliness to an isolated and deprived community

Words: Chris Foges Photographs: Jim Stephenson, Maddie Persent

Jaywick Sands is often called the most deprived place in the country. The interwar plotland development on the Essex coast originally provided holiday homes for Londoners in simple chalets crowded along narrow lanes. Permanent residents gradually took over and today the isolated settlement has a tight-knit 4800-strong community, but one that suffers high levels of poverty, ill-health and overcrowding. Flood risk and threatened demolitions have added to the sense of an uncertain future. Against this gloomy backdrop the new Sunspot business centre stands in cheerful contrast, bringing jobs, life and colour

to the centre of the village. Its presence owes much to the commitment of architect HAT Projects.

The Colchester-based practice was initially commissioned to develop a ‘place plan’ for Jaywick, where the history of neglect and unwelcome interventions have made residents suspicious of outsiders’ intentions. ‘All previous masterplans have failed for lack of engagement with local people,’ says practice director Hana Loftus. ‘If the community doesn’t like something they’ll lie in the road to stop it.’

HAT Projects took a more sensitive approach. Instead of public meetings

the architects visited residents at home, making connections through word of mouth. When employment emerged as a primary objective the practice saw the opportunity for a new business hub which could be brought into use immediately, without waiting for full adoption of the place plan. Its client, Tendring District Council, agreed to a feasibility study for ‘long meanwhile use’ on a central seafront site that had been vacant since the Sunspot amusement arcade was demolished 20 years ago.

Reasoning that a conventional survey of agents would show no demand, the architects interviewed local businesses to

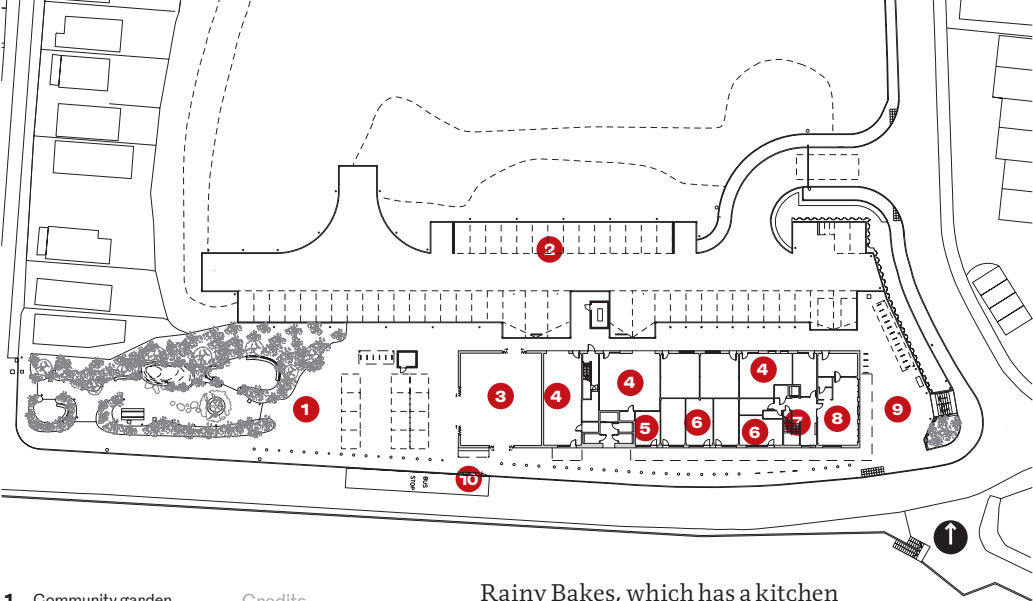


HAT Projects’ place plan improves connections between the village and its greatest asset — the beach.

demonstrate that they could be persuaded to locate in Jaywick. With a business case and economic impact assessment written by the practice, the £4.8 million project won additional backing from the government's Getting Building Fund.

It was HAT Projects' enterprise and skill in fostering the conditions for the project that particularly impressed the MacEwen Award jury. They praised the optimism and confidence it exudes. Judge Je Ahn emphasised the challenge of creating projects of social value from the ground up, without the autonomy of some philanthropic ventures. 'We should be aware of who can achieve what with the means available,' he said, 'and recognise the struggle to make a project like Sunspot in this location.'

Within the 1500m² two-storey building 24 units cater for a broad range of enterprises. There are offices above beach-facing shops, and light industrial units opening onto the car park at the back. A manufacturer of school uniforms has its first premises alongside a barber and a dog grooming parlour. At one end there's a cafe, and at the other, a double-height market hall where small traders can launch businesses at negligible cost. On my visit a decent crowd was circulating between tables of jam and wooden toys and rails of clothes. For



- 1 Community garden
- 2 Car park
- 3 Market hall
- 4 Light-industrial unit
- 5 Public toilets
- 6 Shop
- 7 Office foyer
- 8 Cafe
- 9 Café terrace
- 10 Bus stop

Credits
Architect
HAT Projects
Client
Tendring District Council
Structural engineer
Momentum
Services consultant
Ingletton Wood
Cost consultant
Potter Raper Partnership
Main contractor
TJ Evers

IN NUMBERS

£4.8m
contract cost

1500m²
gifa

Below A translucent arch highlights the entrance to the market hall.
Right Trading inside and outside the hall gives local children a rare view of business.

Rainy Bakes, which has a kitchen upstairs, a thriving cake stall has already proved a stepping stone to a proper shop.

All this is contained within what is, in essence, an inexpensive metal shed, but the practice was determined to add some architectural flair. 'To get people to base their businesses in Jaywick they needed a building to be proud of,' says Loftus. The signature see-saw roofline echoes the street-facing gables of Jaywick chalets. It makes the building look bigger too – important given its civic significance.

Metal awnings over the windows also increase the building's apparent size, like the plumage of an exotic bird. Against a cladding of translucent polycarbonate and pale green aluminium, all exterior appendages are picked out in primary colours with the saturated Kodachrome tints of vintage seaside postcards.

One vivid yellow canopy shelters a bus-stop that HAT Projects arranged to relocate from nearby. Like the inclusion of public toilets, a community garden and a new pavement outside – still a rarity in Jaywick – it's a small, thoughtful touch intended to make Sunspot a magnet for street life. It seems to be working.



Buildings
MacEwen Award – highly commended



Shops are secure, with interiors designed to withstand flooding.

MacEwen
award

Inside, there are practical workspaces with strong character that comes from generous volumes and robust materials assembled to allow future reuse. The deep red exposed steel frame features some surprisingly elegant details. Wisely, the architect focussed its design ambitions on such essentials. 'Structure can't be value-engineered out,' says Loftus, citing the bright-coloured steelwork of London's Billingsgate market as an inspiration. 'That's what we were aiming for: a shed with "attitude" plus a bit of playfulness.'

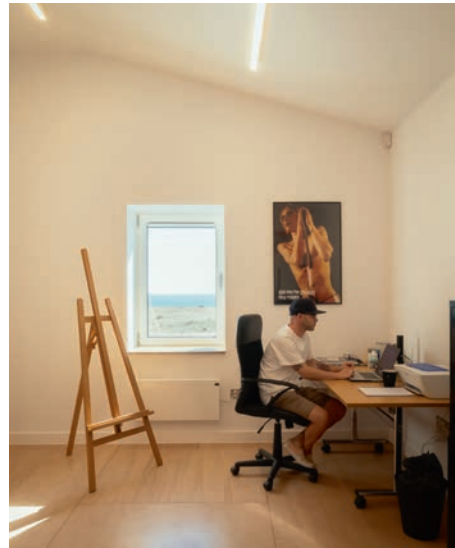
HAT Projects also made a bid to operate Sunspot, drawing on the experience of running its own multi-tenanted Colchester studios. Although that didn't come to pass, the architect was alert to the risk of a lacklustre launch and galvanised a marketing campaign. All the units were let, with around 100 people now working in the building.

In the success of this architect-initiated project the MacEwen Award jury saw an example for similarly disadvantaged places. 'We are going to see more of this,' suggested Alex Scott-Whitby, 'because we need to.' For Jaywick, which still awaits decisions on funding for vital new sea defences, Sunspot is not only an economic lifeline but a tangible assurance that talk of regeneration might be more than hot air. 'There is a lot of scepticism that it will ever happen here,' says Loftus. 'Well, this building happened; and by doing this we've shown people that things can be done.'



This image Offices share a foyer, meeting rooms and a kitchen.

Right First-floor rooms benefit from height and light.





London CLT's Citizens House is a new, stylish way for Lewisham residents to get on the property ladder.

Buildings
MacEwen Award – highly commended

On the money

Archio's Citizens House, much-needed affordable homes, prioritises community input and robust detailing to eke the most from a tight budget

Words: Jan-Carlos Kucharek Photographs: French and Tye

MacEwen
award

19

IN NUMBERS

£2.5m
construction cost

667m²
gfa

£3750/m²
cost inc landscaping

11
one and two-bed flats

‘It was really sketchy,’ says Mellis Haward. During a swift building tour on a reassuringly brisk winter’s day alongside some Lewisham planners, the Archio director describes the edgy condition of the site before its bold, 11-home, white-brick Citizens House stood on it – even before its client, London Community Land Trust, realised the site was there. Wearing an electric blue wool coat, Haward stands bright against the post-war municipal red brick of the Brasted Close estate, where the word hangs in the air for a moment like our breath. She seems too genteel to use it but her choice of urban slang seems very south London – very contextual – and there’s a reason for that.

Lewisham Citizens, part of Citizens UK, which works to create change by

empowering communities, had been actively campaigning in the borough since 2014, acutely aware of the dearth of affordable housing in the area for local people. Luckily, notes Mellis, it was engaging with an area that already had a notable history of community-focused projects, not least Segal’s Walter’s Way and the recent Ladywell housing by RSHP – which might explain the evident pride of planners on the walkabout here. When Lewisham Citizens engaged London Community Land Trust, a non-profit organisation making genuine and permanently affordable homes, they identified 43 potential sites for development and presented them to the council. One was the garages site on Brasted Close estate. While a useful through route for walking to the station,

it was run down and there was active drug dealing and fly tipping – all next to a primary school. Lewisham long-leased it to London CLT in early 2016 and it is a community asset as long as that remains; one and two-bed flats here are offered to buy at 65% of market value, so a few lucky locals (over 1000 applied) are no longer forced out of the borough to buy.

Given the tightness of the site, it seems unlikely that any approach other than a community-led one could have realised the spatial generosity of these 70% keyworker homes, and be so sensitive to the needs of all the existing residents – not least that primary school, whose playground butts up to the ground floor flats, patio and access stair. Lewisham Citizens wanted to hit the ground running in summer 2016

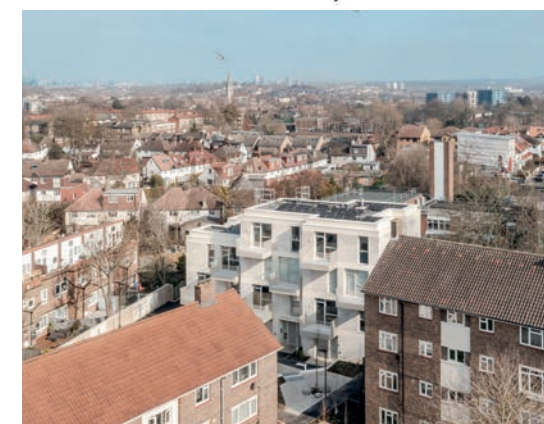


Citizens House looking south. The estate expressed a preference for hard landscaping for community events over more green space or front gardens.

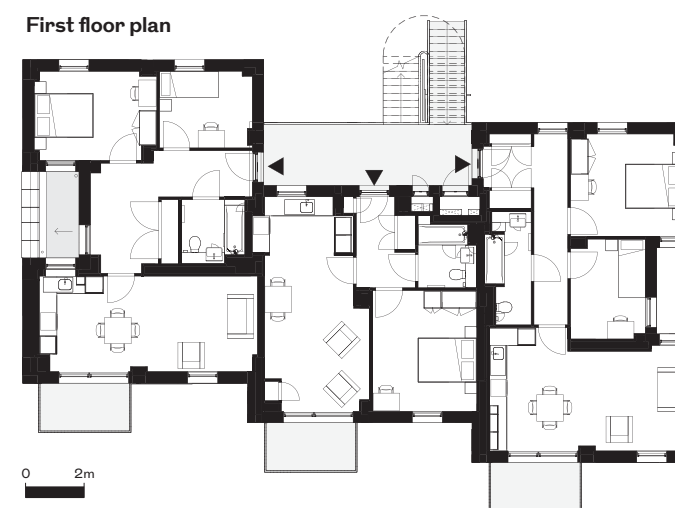


This image The shared stair is a place for resident engagement.

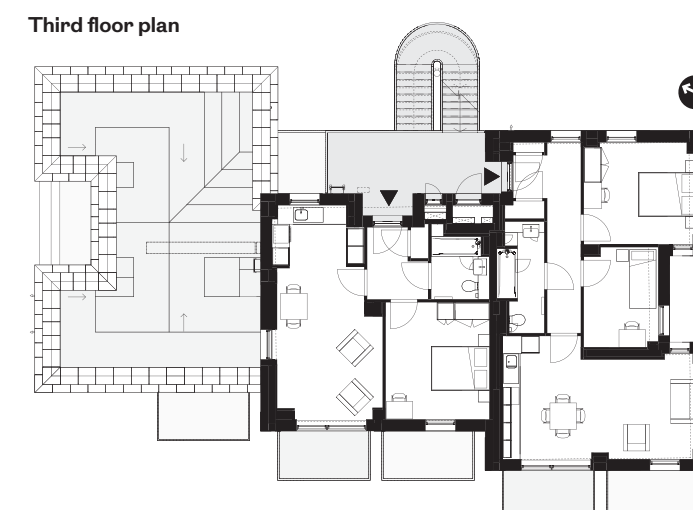
Right The site is on a thoroughfare for the wider neighbourhood.



First floor plan



Third floor plan



Below Detailing was considered, but simple and robust.



and held a 'community picnic' where it picked architect Archio. It in turn followed this up with a 'temporary architect's office' – three days when it set up on the site with tables, paper and a foam cutter to talk to residents about how they thought the new building and its public space could be designed. By the time planning was submitted in 2018 after a further four public workshops and eight steering group meetings, most concerns were ironed out and the application received 107 letters of support – 'the CLT was keen to change the dynamics of decision-making,' says Haward. It did.

Through engagement, the block dropped from four to three storeys on the north side to allay light and privacy concerns from adjacent residents, and the school was satisfied about overlooking. With the public realm placed to the west and its hard

landscaping in similar, creamy brick paviors, the block seems to expand luxuriantly and sunnily into the site; it was clear early on that residents wanted a place to communally gather and play rather than underused front gardens with a perimeter access path.

Value engineering occurred, but because Archio's strategy was to make every penny of its £2.5 million budget work anyway, it was negligible; the building is simple and solid with few flourishes. The desired exposed concrete floor bands were swapped for glazed bricks as soldier courses and the block itself has very little formal articulation. Archio saved that for big bolt-on balconies that stagger between flats to allow for neighbours to talk up and down to each other in a formal reading of what happens in communities the world over.

The practice worked hard on interiors too. Flats, oriented east/

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‘I’ve barely needed to put the heating on so far and you don’t hear other flats’



west, are sunlit and generous, with wide corridors giving residents space to personalise them without feeling cluttered. ‘I’ve got a comment about the insulation and sound,’ says Jerome, who’s let us into his minimalist home, and Haward gasps for a moment. ‘It’s just great,’ he continues. ‘I’ve barely needed to put the heating on so far and you don’t hear other flats.’ With visible relief, she explains that the firm wasn’t trying to reinvent the wheel and that simple ‘Robust Details’ worked just fine for it; clearly for residents too.

With Archio subsuming itself in a wider process of engagement, it is the design’s self-effacing pragmatism that,

Above Flats are spacious and light, with balconies you can actually socialise on.

Credits
Client London CLT
Architect Archio
Campaigner Lewisham Citizens
Project manager BPM Project Management
Quantity surveyor Alistair Russell
Contractor Roof
Grant funding London Housing Fund, Greater London Authority
Finance Big Issue Invest

Below Big bolt-on balconies bring a real punch to the principal facade, creating greater depth for the staggered block form.

Below right The stair brings housing and primary school into direct visual connection.

to the MacEwen judges, was its greatest asset. Alex Scott-Whitby felt it to be ‘a really special building because in the hands of the wrong architect this could have been very, very different’. Je Ahn added: ‘It must be a dream come true for everyone, including the architect. Well resolved and considered, while delivered on a tight budget, it’s a shining example of how good design can have a meaningful impact on a community.’

Resident Trev, meanwhile, who could not normally have afforded the flat they have, is looking forward to spending more time on the balcony with their dog. Sometimes they see a couple of local girls who’ve taken to sitting out front, enjoying the sun and gossiping while on their phones; this is, after all, a space for the whole estate. On my way out of Trev’s I notice a print of the Barbican estate on the wall and Trev tells me they love it. Simple and functional too. ‘Do you reckon this place might feel a bit like it?’ I ask. They laugh as they see me past the sunlit east window to the door: ‘No way – it’s nowhere near grim enough!’ ●



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The cloistered garden side of MMAS' new building for St James' Community Farm creates a hint of civic presence.

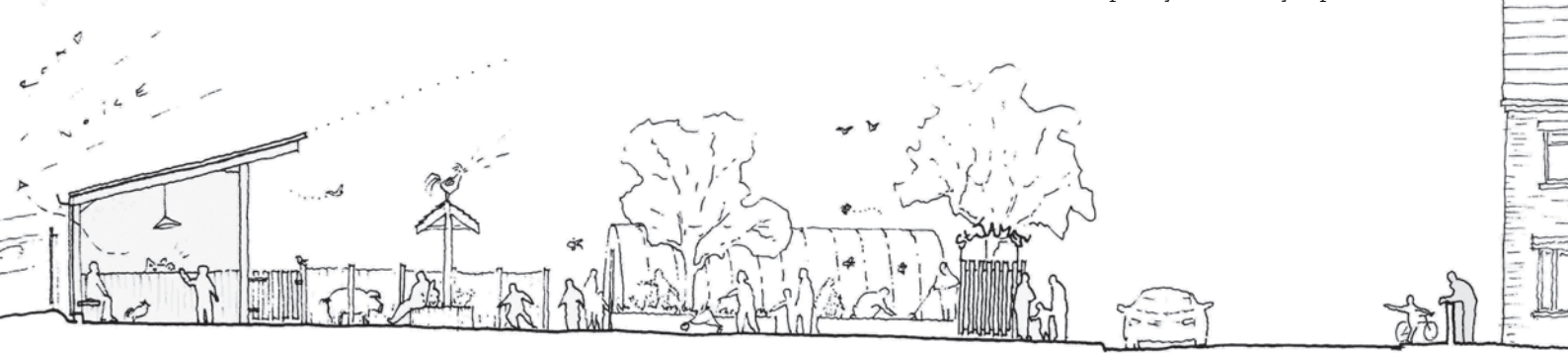


Digging for victory

MMAS' pro bono start and commitment enabled St James' Community Farm in Belfast to grow into a flourishing cross-sectarian neighbourhood asset

Words: Isabelle Priest Photographs: MMAS

Below Sketch section showing the new multi-functional indoor space and its relationship with St James' residential streets.



There are two extraordinary, unexpected consequences of MMAS' project St James' Community Farm in Belfast. The first is that even though its long-awaited transformational new building only completed in 2021, an 11m-long wall mural has already been painted of it – surely one of the clearest pieces of evidence that it has become a feature of life in that part of the city. Cows, hens, pigs and sheep are shown in front of the new, red timber mono-pitched building, which is pretty accurately represented.

Buildings MacEwen Award – highly commended

The other surprise is that even though the farm sits well within the red brick streets and terraced houses of West Belfast, on a piece of land leftover from the construction of the M1 motorway, the scheme has become something of a bridge. The M1 severed Donegall Road and the area in two – nationalists to the west, unionists to the south. The farm has become a positive, cross-community interface between them, especially valuable as the traditional divides of the city are, explains MMAS director Fearghal Murray, 'really stubborn in coming down, and aren't coming down at the expected rate'. For the first time the farm has a full-time volunteer from the other side of Donegall Road too.

Both outcomes have happened naturally. They weren't planned, yet add to the way the farm and its new building have benefited the immediate St James' community – for a phenomenally small £210,000 budget, as this year's

There are always kids and teenagers in St James' Community Farm hoodies mucking in

MacEwen Award judges found. The site has become a public space, as well as a local green space, and a focal point for the neighbourhood. It is open most days and hosts events for all ages. Turn up and you'll find there are always kids and teenagers in St James' Community Farm hoodies mucking in, cultivating plants, repairing fences and feeding the many types of animals that include a llama, two peacocks, a donkey, rabbits and ducks. Most are donated. 'A cohort

of people tends to it,' says Murray. 'It is remarkable in an inner-city neighbourhood like St James'. It is one of the most deprived wards in Belfast.'

The project demonstrates a practice going above and beyond a brief, seeking out opportunity for the betterment of the community. The farm started in 2015 as a takeover of 978m² of redundant land by three local men who commandeered it for themselves and local children, and still run it now. MMAS met them with a selection of their animals in 2016 in the courtyard of the practice's office building in the city centre. The farm had just acquired funding from Belfast City Council to buy and adapt three shipping containers to use as animal keeps and indoor warm space. At the time, Murray and co-director Garreth McMahon were still only a couple of years into practice and in the zone of small residential extensions. They were on the lookout for more public-minded, community work.

The central covered area at St James' with the multi-use indoor space to the right and animal stalls to the left.





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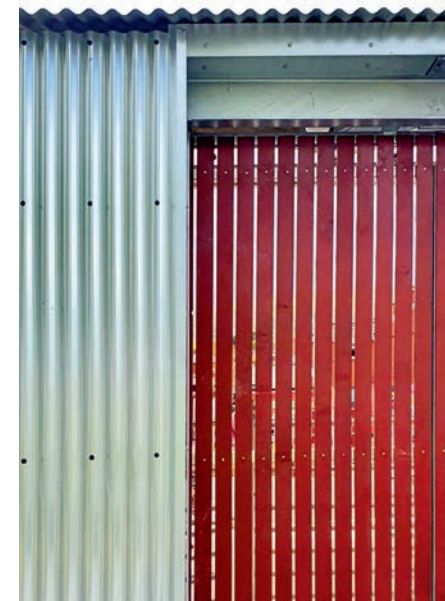
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Buildings MacEwen Award

As two country lads, they questioned the appropriateness of shipping containers and their value for money once insulated, clad and converted. Initially, they offered their services pro bono to prepare a concept, plan and strategy document that client St James' Forum could take to gain interest from additional funders. That raised enough to appoint the practice, and the planning application was submitted by the end of the year.

In the design of the building, the motorway is again an intrinsic presence. MMAS wanted to create a degree of protection from its noise and pollution. The building is therefore a single, mono-pitched roof that slopes down towards the M1, forming the perimeter around the original boundary of the site (Ulster Wildlife has since given the farm some land behind that is being used for animal pens). On the other side, the roof soars upwards, opening as a generous colonnade facing the residential streets, hills and sunsets. Although Murray describes it as a 'simple, humble building', the gesture of the colonnade with its V-shaped columns particularly impressed this year's judges. 'I really like that moment



Above A robust outer shell of galvanised corrugated panels combines with softwood cladding stained red to recall local agricultural buildings.

IN NUMBERS

153m²
total gfa

£210,000
contract cost

£1387
cost per m²

Below left The building is 1.5m higher than the residential streets, gaining views towards the hills beyond.

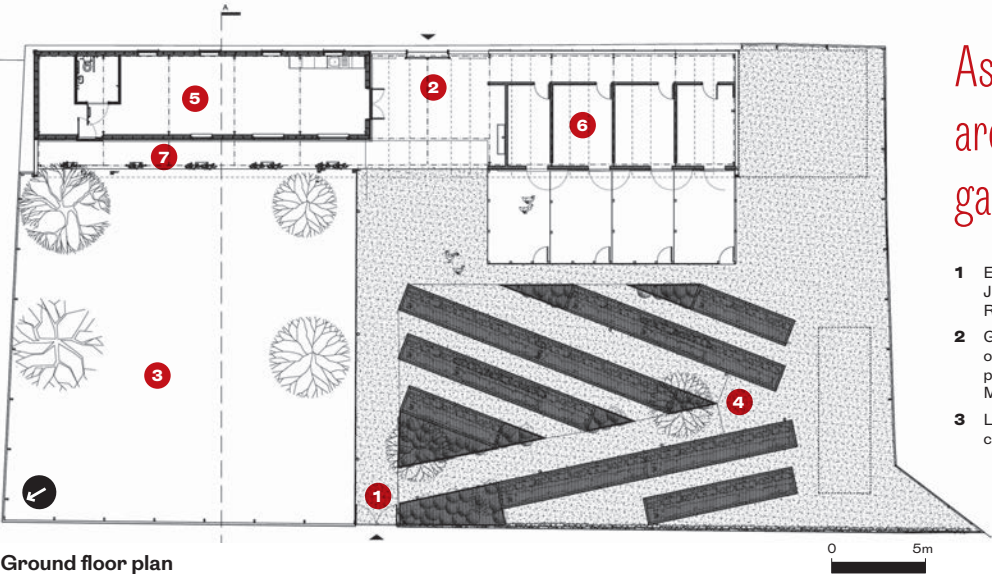
Below right Animal stalls. The steel portal frame has a timber secondary structure to make it softer and more inviting.



of overhang,' said last year's winner Alex Scott-Whitby, 'with the diagonal, Y-shaped structure forming the space outside.' The colonnade presents as a cloister next to the lawn and garden, and helps elevate the building to more than just an agricultural shed, which was always MMAS' ambition.

Nevertheless, the beauty of the building is that it is also just a portal frame – albeit somewhat bespoke, made by steel fabricators nearby. MMAS has implemented a balance of refinement versus cost in the way the beams of the overhang taper to the edge, in the joint detail of the frame with the diagonal columns, and the way the internal bracing picks up on the colonnade feature. Internally, the galvanised steel structure is deliberately combined with a timber secondary structure to soften the design, bring in natural elements and give clarity to its expression. Purlins double as shelves.

In plan, the project culminates in one long building with a multi-functional indoor warm space at one end and animal stalls at the other, built with fair-faced breeze blocks for flexibility. In between is a covered



Ground floor plan

open yard for events. A sliding screen entrance towards the motorway forms a gateway that welcomes passersby and commuters from a path connecting the nature reserve Bog Meadows to the south with the city centre. Originally there had been a third component for a men's shed club. This was lost because the site was once part of a match factory, and decontaminating the ground ate up a significant portion of the budget.

All these parameters, as well as the transfer of the land to the council which took a couple of years, meant progress

Credits
Architect MMAS
Client Belfast City Council and St James' Forum
Structural engineer Design ID
Services engineer Stephen Clarke Consulting
Quantity surveyor Project QS
Main contractor Earney Contracts

Below The warm indoor space, its portal frame and a red-painted durable concrete floor.

Below right View from the expanded paddock behind the farm on the path connecting Bog Meadows to the city centre.

As well as the animals there are herb and vegetable gardens and cherry trees

- 1 Entrance from St James' residential area, Rodney Parade
- 2 Gateway into covered outdoor space from path along M1 to Bog Meadows
- 3 Lawn planted with cherry trees
- 4 Diagonal raised planters that form an accessible path
- 5 Indoor multi-use space
- 6 Animal stalls
- 7 Colonnade

was inevitably slow. The project was due to go on site when the pandemic hit and got delayed to November 2020. 'We came to be seen as the responsible party for making stuff happen – particularly as when we met the group they had something ready on a plate,' says Murray.

However, the farm is now in full swing. This is the only urban farm in inner Belfast. There are a couple on the outskirts that are more commercial, but what the volunteers and design team have created at St James' is unique. As well as animals there are herb and vegetable gardens and cherry trees, and the community is growing into the space and its new-found interests. The building itself has enabled the organisation and instigated meaningful change. What could be more deserving of a MacEwen Award highly commended? ●



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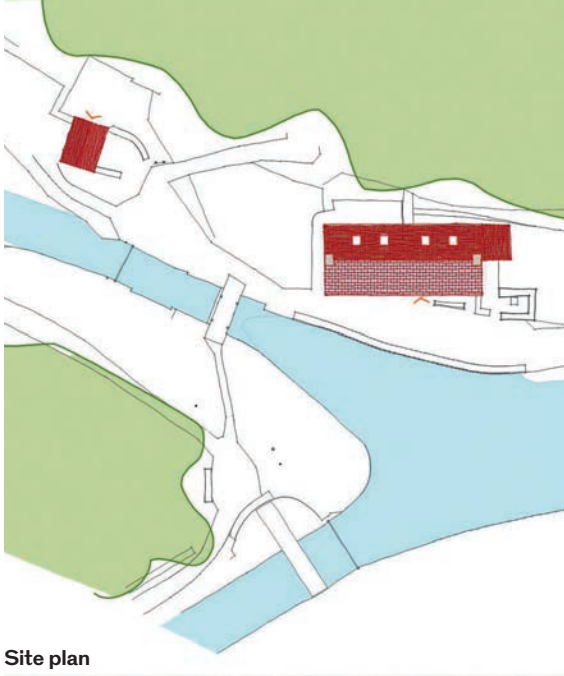
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Where there's a will

Volunteering, donation and reused materials found a way to help James Boon Architects turn ruined Aqueduct Cottage into an asset for Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

Words: Hugh Pearman

Below Aqueduct Cottage, pictured in 2021, part-way through its restoration, a decades-long community project.



I first encountered the remains of Aqueduct Cottage in 2014. The rocky wooded hillside it stood against was engulfing it. Its roof and gable-end chimneys had long gone, along with its windows and door. Cracks ran across its surviving stonework. Ferns grew in the soil and rubble inside. In summer it was all but invisible among the trees; in winter it appeared like a ghost. And now look at it: authentically restored and open to the public thanks to the efforts of a steadfast group of volunteers trained up in the craft skills needed to bring it



Historic photograph of Aqueduct Cottage, when it was occupied along a thriving waterway.

back from dereliction, helped along by cash and materials donors. It now serves as a public gateway, information centre and events space for the woodlands stewarded by the local wildlife trust.

The cottage had been abandoned for 40 years. It stands at a key point in the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site, marking a junction on the late 18th century Cromford Canal south of its eponymous aqueduct spanning the River Derwent. It sheds light on the area's history: vital information supplied just in time by its few surviving last inhabitants helped guide the restoration.

Close by, an original steam-powered pumping station for the canal is kept in working order. The preserved terminus buildings of the later Cromford and High Peak Railway, from where some of the earliest trains were cable-hauled up steep inclines, sit on the wharfside further north. A mile or so beyond that, at the canal end, you are steps from Richard Arkwright's Cromford Mills, birthplace of the cotton-spinning industry.

Aqueduct Cottage was built around 1802 by industrialist and landowner Peter Nightingale, great-uncle of healthcare pioneer Florence, to guard the entrance to a canal branch to his factory at Lea Bridge. Lock gates separated the waters of the two canals, with people employed to superintend the junction.

The key player in the restoration was Derbyshire Wildlife Trust (DWT). It had taken on the 30ha Lea Wood in 2012, gifted by locals who had bought it 15 years earlier to protect it from building. The ruined cottage came with the land. Following an options appraisal by Mansel Architects, the DWT formed



IN NUMBERS

£90,000
contract cost

80m²
gifa



The junction on the Cromford Canal where Aqueduct Cottage stands.



a steering group and a partnership with the equally active Derbyshire Historic Buildings Trust (DHBT). It took the ambitious decision to go for full restoration despite the lack of significant grant funding, making maximum use of volunteers, recycled building materials and historically appropriate techniques.

Planning permission came in 2019, and work began on the envelope in time for the Covid pandemic. Conservation builder Andrew Churchman was alone on site for periods, sometimes helped by his young son. Access was tricky – no road leads to this off-grid place – but the canal reprised its historic role, with roof timbers delivered by volunteer-run narrowboat from Cromford Wharf.

Once re-roofed in massive re-used local stone tiles (and re-used Welsh slate to the rear) the cottage was ready for more volunteers, trained by craftspeople including Churchman. Leading the group was DWT’s energetic voluntary project manager Ron Common. Architect James Boon supervised design.

And so, complete with its flanking terraced gardens, steps and paths, the thing was done. By now it was followed on social media by supporters worldwide. Aqueduct Cottage opened to the public in March 2023. As an information and activity centre for the DWT, ground floor interpretation relates to local wildlife and history. An open plan activity room upstairs is used for arts and educational events. These help pay for the cottage’s maintenance along with guided tours and exhibits.

The MacEwen Award evaluation

Above left The restored interior after a light-touch restoration on a light budget.

Above right Crowds visiting the cottage for its open day in March 2023 – a new life after 40 years of desertion.

Below The multi-purpose upstairs space can be used for events, exhibitions, training, interpretation and more.

Credits
Architect James Boon Architects
Early stage options appraisal Mansel Architects
Structural engineer James Thomson, GCA Consulting
Builder for first phase and skills training Andrew Churchman
Volunteer project champion and works manager Ron Common
Approved inspector Simon Betteridge, Approved Building Control

panel found it fascinating. ‘Something about this got me from the first page,’ said last year’s MacEwen winner Alex Scott-Whitby. ‘You can tell there is a really strong relationship between all these different groups. It rescues something and there is a generosity in this project that really gives back to its community, which is powerful.’

Kathy MacEwen said: ‘I fell in love with it, with the story of it. For £90,000 it is amazing, everybody working so hard to make an exquisite building out of a total ruin that has become an asset.’

The other panellists remarked how many people had been committed to the project over a long period to make it work, with BDP architect Stacey Barry – herself a canal restoration volunteer – noting from experience how ‘really passionate people’ are needed to carry such ventures through.

I can vouch for that. As an irregular external onlooker, it’s been a privilege to see people carefully and lovingly take the building from near-death to new life. ●

Everybody worked so hard to make an exquisite building out of a total ruin that has become an asset



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The new normal for fire safety

Better accountability, competence, information keeping and safety: these are central tenets of the new regime being driven by the Building Safety Act. They amount to a ‘new normal’ for the construction industry, said Jane Duncan, RIBA past president and chair of its expert panel on fire safety, speaking at the seminar ‘Fire safety in design and construction’ last November. The event was organised by RIBAJ in association with manufacturer Hilti

Illustration: Toby Morison

A focus on competence across the industry is seen as central to raising safety levels. Duties for clients, designers and contractors are enshrined in the new Part 2A of the building regulations, which applies not only to high rise residential development but to all projects in England that are subject to building control approval. ‘This is all the building regulations, all the functional requirements,’ stressed Dieter Bentley-Gockmann, director of legal and technical services at EPR Architects and author of the new RIBA Principal Designer’s Guide. Competence applies to both

individuals and their organisations, Bentley-Gockmann explained, with that of individuals centring on ‘making sure you’ve got the skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours to undertake the design that you’re doing’. Both individuals and organisations ‘should only act within the boundaries of your competence,’ he cautioned. Higher risk buildings (HRBs) – residential, care homes and hospitals of at least 18m in height – are subject to the new regulatory framework overseen by the building safety regulator (BSR), the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). The framework’s gateways 2 and 3, which came into operation last October, necessitate BSR approval before construction and at completion. To secure a completion certificate, the client needs to provide ‘sufficient evidence and assurance that the building, as built, satisfies those functional requirements,’ explained Neil Hope-Collins, BSR operational policy lead, HRB building control authority, at HSE. On the question of what evidence should be collected and when, Hope-Collins said the design phase was where ‘the hard work happens’. That’s because, he continued, ‘at this point you have a design and you’re confident that the design, when built, will satisfy the functional requirements and you are

What we’re doing hasn’t changed but how we’re doing it will... more collaboration and communication will be needed in future



SPEAKERS (above, left to right)
Dieter Bentley-Gockmann director legal and technical services, EPR Architects
Maria Caulfield operations director, Sweco Building Control
Jane Duncan RIBA past president and chair of RIBA Expert Advisory Group Fire Safety and founder of Jane Duncan Architects
Neil Hope-Collins Operational Policy Lead, HRB, Building Control Authority, Health and Safety Executive
Benjamin Ralph partner, head of fire safety, Foster + Partners
Olga Katsanova MEng, EMBA, head of technical DD&E marketing for Northern Europe, Hilti
Alan Winterburn associate director, Fire Engineering, WSP UK

confident that you know what evidence to collect through the construction phase in order to be able to put yourself in the best position at the end.’ Manufacturers are working to help the industry better plan, install and manage compliant details and raise competence levels. Hilti has long provided support in overcoming the challenges around passive firestopping in building projects, introducing tools like its Firestop Selector for specifiers. Early engagement with manufacturers can help optimise firestop designs and detect clashes and so minimise late design changes and substitutions, said Olga Katsanova, head of technical



DD&E marketing for northern Europe at Hilti. ‘We need to think upfront about firestopping and how competence levels can be raised,’ she added, hinting at the company’s plans for new training support. Change is potentially far-reaching, as seminar speakers explained. More than 4,500 practising building control professionals need to be assessed and certified by April, and regularly reassessed thereafter as competent. Maria Caulfield, operations director at Sweco Building Control, said, ‘It looks like the industry will lose 40% of building inspectors within the next 12 months,’ as many leave or retire

rather than struggle to meet new requirements. In light of statistics like these, the seminar audience wanted to know more about how the new regime will affect client relationships, broader industry culture and, ultimately, fees.

BE PREPARED
Jane Duncan’s advice to architects still looking to get to grips with the new regime is:

1. Review the legislation’s impact on your practice
2. Update your processes and procedures
3. Understand the limits of competence
4. Liaise with your insurance broker
5. Think about your fees

Alan Winterburn, associate director of fire engineering at WSP UK, said that from a fire engineering perspective, costs at RIBA stage five and six had increased. ‘It’s a lot more significant because people now want a lot more from the process,’ he explained. ‘What we’re doing hasn’t changed, but how we’re doing it is going to change,’ said Bentley-Gockmann. ‘We need to be thinking about time and resourcing in terms of what does the design process now look like? What does the procurement process now look like?’. More collaboration and communication would be needed in future, he argued. Agreeing approaches and costs with the client was acknowledged to be potentially challenging. Benjamin Ralph, partner and head of fire safety at Foster + Partners, said: ‘One thing we’ve learned is that there are probably going to be a lot more difficult conversations than there were in the past.’ That has prompted the practice to invest in specialist training. HSE’s Hope-Collins was optimistic about the longer term. ‘In the fullness of time, I don’t think it will cost any more than it costs now,’ he said. ‘I think it might well be cheaper, because there will be less messing around redoing things through the construction process.’ For now, however, he acknowledged that, ‘getting there is going to be difficult’. ●

Hilti is on hand to help specifiers through the complexities of passive fire protection. hilti.co.uk



MacEwen Award shortlist

More inspiring projects with brave clients, inventive design teams and active communities reached the MacEwen Award 2024 shortlist

Words: Michèle Woodger



The Gathering Place, a viewing point over the River Ness in Inverness.

The Gathering Place, Inverness
KHBT in collaboration with
Sans façon for the Highland Council
Contract cost: £228,000
GIA: NA (external circa 150m²)

This public space intervention on the River Ness takes the form of an interrupted circle, with a thin ribbon of Clashach stone extending into a minimalist pier – a platform to observe the theatricality of the river and countryside.

On one bank, the narrow pathway projects into the river, an interrupted section of the circle's circumference. On the opposite bank, a curved bench

continues the circle's broken perimeter, allowing passers-by to enjoy views upstream in the direction of Loch Ness and back towards Inverness Castle.

The judges praised the elegance of this project and its success in making a statement while deferring to the drama of its natural surroundings ('It wouldn't be out of place in Norway,' noted judge Alex Scott-Whitby). They were also impressed that a seemingly simple infrastructural intervention could tread so lightly. 'It is unique and offering something original,' observed Kathy MacEwen.

Clashach stone originates in nearby Moray, and local labour also reduced the

environmental impact of the project while fostering community bonds. The site is a much-loved part of the city and its users are diverse; any intervention must cater to these requirements. 'Meticulous planning and collaboration with environmental and flood risk management experts ensured that there would be little to no impact on wildlife, trees and the river's natural habitat,' the architect explains. 'The Gathering Place is a special place to connect and to contemplate. The piece is truly intergenerational, a place to pause and reflect on the joy of human interaction within the amphitheatre of the river,' said client David Haas of The Highland Council.

'It is brave in its proposition,' commented judge Je Ahn. 'It offers people a way to experience the river... it is beautifully done.'

Inclusivity has been a huge focus of the project, ensuring the appropriate accessibility for all users. The scheme is also a success with its client, who explained: 'The Gathering Place is inspired by the people of the city connecting to form a single view which instilled the value of the river to its people... the wonder of the River Ness, with the mystique of the river's history, provides a world class feature connecting people and place.'

ROBERT FORMEROD (2)

ribaj.com

Buildings
MacEwen Award – shortlist

The Barn, Brockwell Park Community Greenhouses, London
Feilden Fowles Architects for Brockwell Park Community Greenhouses
Contract cost: £412,000
GIA: 103m² renovated greenhouse, new build 140m², total 241m²

The Barn – a new community hub for Brockwell Park Community Greenhouses (BPCG) – has been a huge success for its client. 'This space means that we can now run activities all year round; activities that will benefit our local community... we can make the most of our beautiful garden throughout all seasons,' enthuses Steph Prior, operations and programme manager of BPCG, a community charity. Judge Alex-Scott Whitby has first-hand experience, as a regular visitor to this neighbourhood facility. 'I think it's a really special building – it has made a really big difference, enabling [the BPCG] to flourish,' he corroborates.

The new flexible and adaptable barn replaces a dilapidated potting shed. It reactivates a corner of the site in Brockwell Park, offering a double-height event and teaching space connected to one of the existing greenhouses and an event space overlooking the garden. It provides an accessible WC, storage and back-of-house facilities, housed in a low-tech but robust building (crucially, it



The design uses many lessons from Feilden Fowles' Waterloo City Farm.

EMILY MARSHALL (3)

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is insulated) which facilitates improved services with its high-quality, year-round architecture. It is, as the architect describes it, 'an enabler', allowing the 200 volunteers to make better use of their time and skill. It is now able to welcome 45,000 people a year, doubling pre-Covid figures. Participants to the children and family programme have doubled to 5000.

An economical timber frame plus standardised components (akin to Feilden Fowles' Waterloo City Farm) enabled the team to redirect a limited budget towards high-quality details. The design prioritises flexibility and allows the space to be adapted over time, and the judges viewed the repetition of details from the former project, as a necessary and sustainable approach. 'It may be really similar to what they have done before,' observed Je Ahn, 'but it should have cost double!'

Community engagement in the design and construction is evident: 'Steady dialogue between design team and client, openness to discoveries made on site, and ideas from the BPCG resulted in changes to materials choices,' says the designer. That impressed Isabelle Priest, who commented that the project was 'strong on how many people have been involved with it.' Ahn added: 'They have put a lot of sweat equity in it. The architectural quality is really high.'

Above The old potting shed has become a new barn with kitchen and education spaces.

Below Two greenhouses plus demonstration gardens allow Brockwell Park Community Greenhouses to run its programme all year.



The RIBA Journal February 2024

A place to pause and enjoy human interaction, designed by KHBT with Sans façon.





More's Meadow Almshouses, Great Shelford, Cambridgeshire
Haysom Ward Miller Architects and Emily Haysom Landscape Architecture for Great Shelford Village Charity
Contract cost: £4.4m GIA 1680m²

Cambridge is an exponentially expanding city, surrounded by necessary greenbelt. However, in local villages such as Great Shelford there is still high demand for homes that are affordable. The Village Charity campaigned for planning consent for the development of 21 modern almshouses on a greenbelt exception site (3.5ha owned by the charity), which was granted on the basis of the support of villagers. The trustees, all volunteers, led the community engagement and worked closely with the Parish Council and other interested parties.

‘This project is really opened up to the community,’ said judge Stacey Barry. ‘It is also an interesting example of development and procurement.’

The resulting development is a mix of one, two and three bedroom homes arranged in three curved terraces surrounding a central green; this accompanies landscaping to 2.5ha of charity-owned land, the provision of allotments, communal gardens and enhanced public access. The site sits on the edge of the village and comprises a meadow with 250 new native trees. Terraces curve in section and plan to enclose the car-free green, with the intention of achieving a sinuous,



Above More's Meadow Almshouses surround a new central green. **Below** There are 21 affordable homes which mix one, two and three bedrooms.



landscape-inspired effect. The homes enjoy high environmental standards, including MVHR, ASHPs, triple glazing and high levels of insulation. There has been a strong emphasis on biodiversity enhancements, permeability and access for people and nature, which the judges praised.

Illustrating the heartfelt adoption of the space by the residents who now live there, the architect said: ‘We’re astonished at how alive the central green has become. The space has become a live-in play park. Children... treat the space as their own; it is buzzing with activity and life. The success of this scheme has made us realise that the buildings are not the principal designed object, but are the frame, the foil which forms the backdrop to the public realm and the community it contains and defines. This is housing as impetus for building community.’

Je Ahn added praise for the merit of the social idea.

RICHARD FRASER (3)

Haysom Ward Miller Architects' design includes the provision of allotments, communal gardens and public spaces.



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**The Paper Garden,
Canada Water, London**
Jan Kattein Architects
for Global Generation
Contract cost: £200,000 GIA: 225m²

The Paper Garden at Canada Water, on the site of the former Daily Mail printworks in a rapidly developing area, is an educational community building and garden built for Global Generation – a charity creating educational and leadership opportunities for young people, and ecology projects for schoolchildren and families.

The project is consciously low-carbon, combining cordwood walls (a construction method using short length timber logs pruned in Epping Forest, bedded in lime mortar) and an insulated cavity wall for thermal performance. Oak for the corner quoins was donated by Network Rail, the floor is made from 200 doors locally reclaimed from a demolished police station, while the actual doors and windows are rejected stock donated by Scandinavian manufacturer Nordan. Plywood construction hoardings were also re-used in the construction. The building comprises 60% reused materials and easily exceeds the LETI (Low Energy Transformation Initiative) 2030 target.

Jan Kattein Architects employed its trademark approach of community

Above The Paper Garden was praised for its community programme, low-budget and use of 60% reused materials.

Below Jan Kattein Architects sourced materials including rejected window stock and reclaimed doors which showed the potential for a construction circular economy.



involvement by rallying 3000 volunteers to join construction of the building and garden, to help meet the straitened budget of £200,000. ‘Our gardens are “gardens of a thousand hands” that are collaboratively created with the community, children, young people, businesses and construction companies, [making] spaces where these different worlds can come together,’ confirmed client Alice Hardy. ‘Jan Kattein Architects designed a building and a construction process that our community could grow alongside. Often a young person will come in and proudly point out the part of the classroom they helped build!’

This collaborative construction approach impressed the judges, with Je Ahn describing it as a true ‘barn raising’. Alex Scott-Whitby expressed a belief that this level of success could only achieved thanks to Kattein’s particular approach and experience in this sort of project: ‘Had another architect been involved it wouldn’t be such a rich project’ he asserted.

There is a ‘generosity’ to this project and an ‘exciting’ quality, Ahn continued, which comes through in the warmth of the design of both the building and gardens – a view certainly corroborated by its clients who describe it as a ‘truly magical space’.

See profile, page 62

JANKATTEINARCHITECTS (2)

Buildings
MacEwen Award – shortlist

**Sheerness Dockyard Church,
Isle of Sheppey, Kent**
**Hugh Broughton Architects with
Martin Ashley Architects for Sheerness
Dockyard Preservation Trust**
Contract cost: £5.7m GIA: 875m²

The Isle of Sheppey is a place of contrasts. Sitting in the Thames Estuary between Kent and Essex, it is strangely disconnected, with nature reserves and marshy flatlands incongruously juxtaposed with three prisons, caravan parks and a busy, working port. Views across the water are highly industrial.

The Naval Dockyard had employed 2500 people before it closed in 1960, the resulting economic decline rendering Sheerness one of Britain’s most deprived coastal communities. Yet at the entrance to the port is George Ledwell Taylor’s 19th century grade II* listed Dockyard Church. Deconsecrated in 1970 and fire-damaged, it was on Historic England’s ‘Heritage At Risk’ register. In 2016 the Sheerness Dockyard Preservation Trust began a community consultation; to address economic deprivation it was decided to create a subsidised business incubator. ‘We wanted the restoration of Dockyard Church to be beautiful and inspiring – bringing excitement and opportunity to a deprived and overlooked area of north Kent,’ explained client William Palin of the Trust.

Above Restored for the community: George Ledwell Taylor’s listed Dockyard Church on the Isle of Sheppey.

Below The interior has been designed as a communal hub and workspace for young entrepreneurs.

Below Hugh Broughton Architects restored the roof using steel and inserted a mezzanine.



After a seven-year process involving £9.5million of investment from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Kent Foundation (which assists young entrepreneurs) among others, the revived church offers a popular café and displays of the 19th century Dockyard Model. It is managed by Island Works – which established the business incubator and hosts community meetings, craft fairs, networking events and the like.

Architectural interventions to the interior include preservation and reuse of the original fabric alongside structural repairs and contemporary additions. While new steelwork was required to support the fire-damaged tower, a natural ventilation strategy and energy-efficient lighting were introduced, with walls left exposed so their thermal mass could regulate temperatures. Glulam flitch trusses support a new roof, itself highly insulated. Where possible, all labour and materials were sourced in north Kent, even the apprentices. ‘If you look into it, it is remarkable to deliver such a project in that place,’ commented judge Alex Scott-Whitby, observing a high-tech ‘Hopkins influence’ on the interior.

‘The building needed to be a beacon of hope which would act as a catalyst for wider regeneration. The result exceeded all our expectations,’ commented Palin. ‘This project does feel really hopeful,’ concurred judge Stacey Barry.



DIRKLINDNER (3)



Maindee Triangle, Newport, Wales
KHBT Architects & Designers
for Maindee Unlimited
Contract cost: £139,668
GIA: 55m² (400m² public space)

It is not every day that a WC makes it into an architectural award, but KHBT Architects’ conversion of the public conveniences in Maindee – Newport’s most densely populated area – has transformed ‘an abused and unsafe site’ into an environmentally and socially beneficial community space. ‘The community is diverse and social isolation within ethnic groupings is common. Class A drugs sales remains a local issue,’ explains the client John Hallam of Maindee Unlimited – a charity supporting the local community and businesses via sustainable built environment improvements. ‘The Triangle’s democratic spaces are proving something of an antidote to decades of neglect [and residents] are starting to see the space as something shared, and perhaps even important.’

KHBT’s thorough site analysis revealed a diverse and fragmented space demarcated by high walls and clearly marked out greenery and planted areas. The architect sought to maximise the potential of these zones. New additions are given a distinctive appearance of typical yellow shuttering plywood panels, which now define the Triangle’s identity. And the community of Maindee

Above A garden as a focus for the community: KHBT’s Maindee Triangle.

Below The WC building has become a multi-functional community space and the site given a distinctive yellow and grey identity.



Buildings

MacEwen Award – shortlist

has been actively engaged throughout, providing valuable input and design direction, and maintaining the new community spaces with care.

The derelict toilet building, now the multi-functional community space, is punching way above its weight, with First Minister Mark Drakeford opening the site to the public. ‘It was a tiny budget for a tiny site,’ commented Stacy Barry. ‘I really loved that the residents are seeing it as something shared.’

‘I understand the challenge of doing something in that location,’ added Je Ahn. ‘It is brave, there are challenges and the budget is a shoestring.’

Sustainability has been a key feature of the project including a rainwater harvesting and SuDS system. Rainwater from the building’s roof is used for on-site toilets and for watering plants. Elevated planters, used for community growing and planting events, mitigate the risk of flooding by absorbing excess water. ‘This project delivers bang for its buck,’ said Alex Scott Whitby. ‘There was agency from everybody, the whole team has got something out of it.’

‘It is amazing what they have done,’ concluded judge Kathy MacEwen.

JOHANNES MARBURG

Mayfield Park, Manchester

The Mayfield Partnership and Studio Egret West for LandsecU+I

Contract cost: Confidential
GIA: 2.6ha

At its heart, the 2.6ha Mayfield Park is a beautiful and safe oasis... a place for everyone, providing a lush, biodiverse and healthy amenity for the whole community,’ said developer Sam Jarrett of LandsecU+I.

It would be easy to dismiss this entry as token green space in a huge commercial development, but to do so would deny that it has ‘lots of benefits,’ said judge Stacey Barry. Sadly, developers are rarely this generous with their green space provision; as Isabelle Priest neatly summarised: ‘The incentive not to do it is very strong, and Manchester has few city centre public parks or even trees.’ Je Ahn summed up the political reality: ‘From a London point of view this sort of project is a given but is often not the case elsewhere – it is not as easy to pull off. Could this set a model for other cities?’

Mayfield Park is the first part of a wider regeneration of brownfield



Above Mayfield Park in Manchester mixes green and blue habitats to bring wildlife into the city centre.

Below The park is a new 2.6ha green space, constructed first as part of a wider brownfield scheme.

land in central Manchester which will comprise homes, workplaces and retail. The developer chose to deliver the park before the commercial development. Mayfield Park forms ‘part of a commitment to weave this previously disused area into the fabric of the city and create a destination for the local and wider community’, it said.

The park itself mixes green and blue

habitats, including wildflower meadows and part of the River Medlock – one of Manchester’s founding rivers. The aim of this regeneration is to provide the neighbourhood with environmental, social and health benefits, including reduced air pollution, increased access to natural space and facilitated mental wellbeing. Moreover, the intervention uncovers 70m of the river that had previously been culverted or hidden by high walls, generating wet-dry habitats.

Mayfield Park has also been designed accessibly, with zones connected by 700m of accessible paths. The space is truly intended to provide for the people of Manchester; amenities include a bespoke play yard and the ‘MayField’, an open space for community and charity focused events. Additionally, 150 new construction jobs were also created in relation to the project.

As Ahn aptly commented: ‘If [shortlisting] for this award makes the rest of the country sit up and start making this sort of deal with developers, then it will be worth it.’

‘It has ambition, and is a change of tack on behalf of the council,’ added Priest. ‘It is an attractive park too.’



RICHARD BLOOM (2)



The Blue Market, Bermondsey, London
Hayatsu Architects and Assemble for
The Blue Bermondsey BID
Contract cost: £850,000
GIA: mostly external, Big Local Works
refurbishment was 150m²

Despite gentrification, the characterful south London district of Bermondsey retains strong links to its industrial past. Long established social housing jostles with new apartment blocks and smart post-industrial conversions.

The Blue is a historic marketplace, but the closure of many factories and Surrey Docks in recent years left it drab and disconnected. The client was a coalition including Greater London Authority, Southwark Council, and community organisations Blue Bermondsey Business Improvement District, Big Local Works and Community Opportunity.

The architect's local engagement led to the project's success. Russell Dryden of client The Blue Bermondsey BID said: 'The design team worked shoulder to shoulder with local people and partners with diligence... to accommodate our ambitions, shining a light on the heritage and history of a landmark place.'

The designer sought to make the market more locally specific in character

and materiality. Interventions included improved connectivity, better wayfinding, and stronger links to the high street. An approach called 'Made In Bermondsey', saw designers engage local craftspeople, including joiners who made timber benches, metalworkers who made gates, signage and cycle barriers, and carpenters who built the principal structures. 'There was a brave client and incredible community engagement,' said judge Scott Whitby. 'This project offers a template of how architects can work to make a change, and fills you with a little bit of joy.'

Alongside new electrical infrastructure and storage and canopies for traders, the most distinctive placemaking intervention is the Clocktower, clad in hand-embossed tin can discs to reflect Bermondsey's manufacturing history. Recycled materials included demolition aggregate cast into a new drinking fountain, and concrete bollards stained and reused as seating. 'It is an incredibly crafted thing,' said Je Ahn. 'Commissioning all the different makers is difficult to pull off.'

The project is 'a turning point in the area's fortunes and a once in a generation opportunity to empower and strengthen the local community,' said the client. 'It is thoughtfully and beautifully done,' concluded Kathy MacEwen. ●

Above The Blue Market in Bermondsey was an enormous collaboration between local authority and community partners as well as Hayatsu Architects and Assemble.

Below The project involved countless local makers and craftspeople, a feat that Je Ahn felt is 'difficult to pull off'.



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Closing the gap between decarbonisation goals and actions

Design and make companies are prioritising decarbonisation to undo climate damage, providing a model for others to step up climate change initiatives, writes Joe Speicher, CSO at Autodesk

This is an excerpt from an article published on Design & Make With Autodesk, a site dedicated to inspiring construction, manufacturing, engineering and design leaders. Read the full article here.



- Decarbonisation is defined as disaggregating economic activity (that is, construction and manufacturing) with greenhouse gas emissions
- Together, the built environment and manufacturing are responsible for approximately 58% of global greenhouse gas emissions.
- In its special report on decarbonisation, Autodesk has taken a deep dive into the actions companies are taking to decarbonise – and digital tools are a requirement.



Discover the 2023 State of Design & Make Annual Global Report | Autodesk
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I believe climate change can be solved. I know this is a controversial statement, but it's true. Almost all the technological innovations needed to reduce carbon emissions across the global economy already exist. The real challenge lies in helping the design, manufacturing, construction and asset-management industries to adopt the technologies and processes necessary to deliver the right data to the right decision-makers at the right time.

Doing this will address the second challenge: the high costs associated with adopting innovations. Industries must invest in strategies that reduce these costs – carbon removals, battery storage, environmental product declaration (EPD) databases, and so forth – so they can be easily incorporated by all.

Historically, built environment and manufacturing processes yield a high degree of greenhouse gas emissions. Together, they are responsible for roughly 58% of total global emissions per year (about 38% and 20%, respectively). Greenhouse gas emissions lead to higher temperatures associated

with climate change which eventually increase the frequency and severity of climatic events. As people know all too well, forest fires, hurricanes, typhoons, floods and the risks associated with increasing temperatures have significant impacts on the lives of all humanity. When society is not doing well, business doesn't do well, so it's in everyone's interest to prioritise addressing this issue.

Autodesk's customers design and make things in the physical world. The design and make industries – including architecture, engineering and construction (AEC) and design and manufacturing (D&M) – are under increasing pressure to decarbonise. Decarbonisation is essentially the removal of greenhouse gas emissions associated with anything, whether it's an asset or process.

In construction, this could mean calculating embodied carbon in building materials during the design process to make better choices for the life of the asset. In manufacturing, it could be handing tasks to artificial intelligence-powered tools to automate processes, which can speed up time to market, cut energy use and reduce errors and waste. Using the power of technology is the most meaningful and cost-effective way to achieve this. Technology allows designers, manufacturers, construction professionals and asset owners to measure carbon emissions and make data-driven decisions that improve sustainability at both project



and operational levels.

Autodesk faces an unprecedented opportunity to rise to the occasion and serve our customers' needs, so we have decided to dive deep into this issue. The result is the 2023 State of Design & Make Special Edition: Spotlight on Decarbonisation, a report that details sustainability insights from more than 600 industry leaders.

Getting in the right mindset

The first important finding in Spotlight on Decarbonisation is a significant disconnect between what businesses need to do and what they are able to do today. Decarbonisation is acknowledged by 89% of companies as important to their business. But there's a sizable gap between the acknowledgment of that need and action on the ground.

Above Employees at construction-technology company Factory_OS in Vallejo, California, assemble modular homes at the company's warehouse.

In manufacturing, decarbonisation could mean handing tasks to artificial intelligence – powered tools to automate processes

The disconnect is fuelled by a lack of awareness about how to use digital tools to measure carbon emissions and how to get started on a decarbonisation journey. Nearly 80% of companies reported that the availability of decarbonisation tools is low. And only 47% have a process in place to discover those tools. There's an awareness problem as well as an implementation challenge.

To begin to bridge this gap, there must be a shift in mindset. There are rewards for companies that choose to prioritise sustainability. They include using sustainability as a competitive differentiator; reducing the costs associated with energy and material usage; and, ultimately, managing the risks associated with inaction. This journey is long and requires buy-in at all levels of the organisation. ●



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2: Intelligence

**MATERIALS
PASSPORTS MAKE
REUSE MEANINGFUL**
RACHEL HOOLAHAN,
ASSOCIATE, ORMS

Orms has extensive experience of working with existing buildings, and four years ago we began to look at how waste could be reduced by using materials passports – digital identity documents that help architects to understand the materials in a building, enabling their reuse. Like your own passport, they describe a material and store information on the travels it has made. We published our research in 2021, and established a working group with other organisations to trial the approach. Now, with Ana Rute Costa of Lancaster University, we have published a policy paper based on those findings plus additional data and interviews.

The paper consolidates industry developments and recommends eight key policies for local authorities who want to know what they could ask for, given their limited resources to check lengthy documents. We suggest that from 2025 materials databases should be created for all projects. To give design teams the resources to get started the appendices contain detailed tools and handbooks. We've introduced hierarchies to the structuring of data which align to existing methodologies in architectural practice, and offer an Excel spreadsheet as a template – although paid-for platforms may be the best solution for larger projects.

Building databases does have an initial cost, but material reuse might save on capital expenditure. And planners often look more favourably on schemes with enhanced sustainability objectives. Small practices might make a meaningful start by focusing on a single material.

We need more debate about the best way to passport, and further testing of our approach, particularly by practices outside London. In time it will be important to firm up common standards for materials passports, and perhaps share databases at a national level, creating liquidity in the market for reused materials. Current work includes asking manufacturers to start taking back and refurbishing materials, which might require greater standardisation. These changes would be transformational, but as architects we believe we have the power and the responsibility to do something different. And every practice can start now – even if it's with a single material. Do something, and do it meaningfully. ●

'Material reuse might save on capital expenditure... planners often look more favourably on schemes with enhanced sustainability objectives'

Below Rachel Hoolahan. Download the policy paper at orms.co.uk/insights/materialspassports/policypaper/



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Intelligence
Building Safety Act

Building Safety Act needs design that's right first time

Responding to changes in the Building Regulations, here's how architects bring design certainty to the front of the process by engaging suppliers and clients early

Words: Dieter Bentley-Gockmann



Health, safety
& wellbeing



Design, construction
& technology

Architects involved in the procurement and programming of projects are already feeling the impact of changes to the Building Regulations, which passed into law in October 2023 following the Building Safety Act. Those working on higher-risk buildings (HRB) are particularly affected. This is deliberate.

Judith Hackitt identified systemic failures perpetuated by procurement processes that seek to design and construct buildings faster and more cheaply, at the expense of quality and safety. Hackitt stated that 'improving the procurement process will play a large part in setting the tone for any construction project. This is where the drive for quality and good outcomes, rather than lowest cost, must start.'

The government has made it clear that implementation of amendments to the Building Regulations is intended to create a legal framework, with statutory duties and sanctions, that drives the behavioural changes envisaged by Hackitt. This intention is clearly being championed by the Building Safety Regulator (BSR) charged with responsibility for overseeing the new regime on the government's behalf.

The impact of regulatory change on the time, cost, quality triangle for procurement is already affecting projects seeking building control approval under the new regime, especially those involving HRB work, subject to the gateway approval process. The combined impact of the 'hard stop' stipulated for BSR approval of the design of HRB work before construction starts, the strict statutory procedures for managing change control during construction, and the potential programme implications of having to seek BSR approval for changes, are leading many to question whether some common procurement routes are still fit for purpose.

Forms of procurement

Industry leaders and commentators, including clients and contractors that are alert to the changes, are starting to assess whether the time and cost advantages typical of design and build or construction management procurement will continue to be realised under the new regulatory regime. In fact, Neil Hope-Collins of the Building Safety

Above Early engagement with the supply chain: how do we move to design it right first time? Riverlight at Nine Elms in London; RSHP with EPR Architects as executive architect.

Regulator has said the industry needs to recalibrate procurement mindsets from 'design and build' to 'design then build'.

At EPR Architects, we are discussing this change in mindset with all our clients. At the start of new projects we make sure our clients are aware of their new duties – in particular their client duty – to ensure that we, and all designers on the project, have enough time and resources to fulfil our duties. Emphasising the team's need for enough time to prepare and co-ordinate design, relating to the Building Regulations, is vital to secure building control approval before construction starts.

Right first time

We are advising our clients and their project managers of the procurement and programming changes we consider necessary to discharge our collective duty ensuring the regulatory compliance of projects. We are discussing the risks and opportunities of adopting a 'design it once and design it right first time' approach to all our projects, not just those involving HRB work. Explaining the need for our design to comply with the Building Regulations and producing evidence that it does for the building control authority requires a team effort, including advice, support and design by specialist subcontractors and suppliers.





Left Working the procurement and programme issues through with clients is critical. Royal Docks West is a 20-storey tower in the Royal Victoria Docks, Newham, London by EPR Architects for Mount Anvil.

Early engagement with supply chain
In many instances, we will be unable to do this unless our clients engage the supply chain sufficiently early in the design process, ideally during RIBA Work Stage 3 Spatial Co-ordination but certainly by the time Stage 4 Technical Design begins in earnest. So we are discussing with clients the advantages of earlier contractor involvement, using pre-service contract and direct supply agreements between our clients and trade contractors, to ensure we have access to the appropriate expertise before preparing a Building Regulations approval application. We also explain the advantage of retaining this expertise during the construction phase to avoid costly and time-consuming design changes during RIBA Work Stage 5 Manufacturing and Construction.

Rebalance project programmes
To maximise the potential of this design collaboration we anticipate a need to rebalance some project programmes, extending the pre-construction period to accommodate a longer design phase before building control approval and the start of construction. For more technical complex projects and those involving HRB work, more time is likely to be required for all the designers to

complete their design and ensure it and the design interfaces are properly co-ordinated. This includes time to prepare and co-ordinate documentary evidence of compliance with the Building Regulations for approval by the relevant authority. This more rigorous design process should shorten the construction period, as it should result in fewer errors or omissions in the construction information and fewer changes during construction.

Resistance and risk
Not surprisingly, we are meeting with some resistance, particularly from those less familiar with the details of the new regime, who are not convinced current procurement practices need to change. This is more common for non-HRB work, where the new

To maximise the potential of this design collaboration we anticipate a need to rebalance some project programmes

regime remains more flexible when it comes to the process of seeking design approval before construction. However, if a business-as-usual approach to procurement leaves too little time to complete our design, or to properly consider proposed variations to it, before the construction of enabling works, then there is a foreseeable risk that the completed work will not comply with the relevant requirements of the Building Regulations. This risks the relevant building control authority exercising its increased power to impose sanctions, including stop notices and instructing the opening up and rectification of non-compliant work, leading to more cost and project delays.

As Hackitt acknowledged, some will fear that the regulatory changes will slow down project delivery, but as she states in the foreword to her report: ‘There is every reason to believe that the opposite will be true. More rigour and oversight at the front end of the process can lead to significant increases in productivity, reduction in ongoing costs and to better outcomes of all in the latter and ongoing stages of the process’. ●

Dieter Bentley-Gockmann is director of legal and technical services at EPR Architects and author of the RIBA’s Health and Safety and Principal Designer’s guides



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RIBA Journal/Future Architects Writing Competition 2024

If you have something to tell the profession about, this is your chance to reach your audience. Make your name as a communicator – and win a prize

Are you a future architect – a student or early-career professional working towards qualification? And do you have strong views about the state of the built environment, whether that's how it is or what it could be? If so, the RIBA Journal is giving you the chance to have your say, with our writing competition run in collaboration with RIBA Future Architects, a community established to inform and inspire emerging architects.

The annual competition is open internationally to entrants studying for Part 1, Part 2 or Part 3, and aims to showcase the voice of the next generation.

This year you are invited to write an article about any building, place or project to shape the spaces we live in. What does it say about the processes and ideas that go into making architecture, or the contexts in which architects work? We are looking for bright, original pieces of 800–1,000 words that shine a light on topical issues, and could be published in the RIBA Journal.

You could tell us about an architectural experience that has changed the way you think, or work that we could all learn from. Do you know of projects that demonstrate exciting

new approaches, or offer fresh perspectives on the practice of architecture? Where does design contribute to tackling the problems we face, from social injustice to climate emergency? What do you value in buildings? Should we revere the exquisite detail or, in a world of constraints and compromise, celebrate ordinary buildings that have their priorities straight and succeed despite the odds? What's your take on co-design, place-making or attempts to codify beauty in buildings? Choose any building, place or design project that allows reflection on current themes in architecture, and bring it to life in words.

Entries will be evaluated by an expert panel comprising writer and architect Nana Biamah-Ofosu, editor Hiba Alobaydi and journalist Lucy Watson, chaired by RIBA's contributing editor Chris Foges. The best articles will receive cash prizes and be published by RIBA Journal. We look forward to hearing from you. ●

For more details and to enter go to: ribaj.com/intelligence/ribaj-future-architects-writing-competition

How to retrofit houses to reduce overheating

Rajat Gupta looks at strategies for retrofitting to improve homes' resilience to the changing climate



Sustainable architecture



Design, construction & technology

Summertime overheating in new-build, existing and retrofitted domestic building stock is a growing public health issue in the UK and will worsen as global temperatures rise, with more frequent, intense and long-lasting heat waves.

In summer 2022 an unprecedented 40°C heatwave caused 3,271 deaths in England and Wales. By the mid-2030s, 90% of the UK's housing stock could be susceptible to overheating. Our Building Regulations do not require buildings to pass the overheating criteria for predicted weather in future years. Flats are particularly at risk, partly because of their smaller size.

There are several strategies for building resilience and reducing the risk of overheating in existing homes. These include reducing heat build-up within the microclimate of the building, minimising the impact of direct solar radiation on it and limiting internal heat gain. Here we look at three passive solutions.



Natural ventilation

Opening windows to allow airflow and heat escape can be effective, especially when cross-ventilation can be used. However, concerns over noise, security, bugs, smells and dust need to be considered. The ability to purge heat at night is a necessary feature of natural ventilation in the summer and can be especially important in thermally massive buildings. Passive cooling is more effective when coupled with other methods such as shading or cool envelopes. In existing buildings, operable skylights in the loft can provide a stack effect to exhaust heat buildup.

Shading

This is by far the most effective passive method of reducing overheating. Shading can be achieved through balconies, simple overhangs, fins, louvres, PV arrays and awnings. The primary goal of a shading product is to reduce unwanted solar energy – heat – from entering a building or room, so external shading is significantly more effective than internal. When designing shading, there are other energy-related consequences to consider, such as not blocking natural ventilation, or beneficial solar gain in winter, or minimise daylight exclusion.

Balconies can provide both shading and refuge when buildings get overheated

Above Moveable shutters allow occupiers to make the most of a change while avoiding some of its limitations.

For example, balconies can provide both shading and areas of refuge when buildings get overheated, while the angle for shading direct sunlight is also the most effective for capturing energy via photovoltaics. This sort of movable shading gives the user more control over benefits and potential limitations.

Green and cool surfaces

Increased surface reflectance of the exterior face of the fabric, including the roof and walls, is a highly effective way to reduce the transfer of heat through the fabric from direct solar radiation. Planted green surfaces can also slow this, and release heat through evapotranspiration. Green and reflective surfaces have the added benefits of reducing heat in the microclimate around the building.

Active solutions such as inexpensive fans increase comfort and, at low speeds, can help de-stratify warm air. Heat pumps can reverse refrigerant flow and insulating hot water pipes can stop them contributing to heat build up.

To prevent excess summer deaths, especially among the most vulnerable, it is vital that climate resilience and retrofit efforts are also integrated so that avoidance of summertime overheating becomes mainstream. ●

Rajat Gupta is professor of sustainable architecture and climate change and director of the Oxford Institute for Sustainable Development, Oxford Brookes University

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3: Culture



Toby Pear
Homework,
Hampâté Bâ,
Niamey, Niger (2022)
Apple iPhone 12 mini

According to Toby Pear, senior architect at architectural NGO Article 25, the African state of Niger not only has the world's highest fertility rate but one of its youngest populations. Its 28 million people survive on less than \$700 per capita, which puts it very near the bottom of the global GDP index. Its heat-seared, landlocked geography in part accounts for its dire economic circumstances. 'There's barely any primary industry to speak of, apart from the uranium ore, which former colonial power France controls,' explains Pear. Perhaps that's why he adds, 'but it's also one of the most beautiful countries I've worked in.'

After 'intensely rewarding' classroom-building in Mumbai as part of his diploma in Maurice Mitchell's 'Architecture of rapid change and scarce resource' unit at London Met, Pear returned to work in India. Part III and money security needs drove four good years at London

practice Jestico+Whiles but his vocation, new technical skills and earlier hands-on experience led him to architecture charity Article 25.

Inspired by the heat-busting 'double roof' designs of Francis Kéré, Collège Amadou Hampâté Bâ, in Niger's capital Niamey, is a thing of beauty. Air flows between its metal skin and brick ceiling vaults cut classroom temperatures by around 8°C but while Pear loves the metal form, he has grown pragmatic. The roof's cost, while low, is not viable at scale and he concedes that concrete is likely to yield the savings he needs. Meanwhile, red Laterite walls and brick vaults deliver a stunning effect for next to nothing. Excavated from nearby by masons from Burkina Faso, Pear says they worked out where the seam lay purely from which plants were growing on the surface and how water ran off it; a singular, primal beauty in the sourcing as much as in the end result. ● Jan-Carlos Kucharek

To read more on Article 25 or find out how your practice can contribute to its work, go to www.article-25.org/more-than-a-building

RIBA Academy CPD

February–April 2024

FEBRUARY

Thu 1 Feb, 9am–4pm	RIBA CPD Expo – Sheffield
Fri 2 Feb, 9:30am–10:30am	RIBA CPD Hour – Wet Room Solutions, WEDI Systems
Mon 5 Feb, 12pm–1pm	RIBA CPD Hour – Waterproofing Design Strategies to the New British Standard 8102:2022, Newton Waterproofing
Wed 7 Feb, 12pm–1pm	Cover to Cover – RIBA Climate Guide
Mon 19 Feb, 12pm–1pm	RIBA CPD Hour – Roofing Risk Management: A Considered Approach to Solving Flat Roof Issues, Polyroof

MARCH

Fri 1 Mar, 9:30am–10:30am	RIBA CPD Hour – What sound can do for your designs, Quiet Mark Certification
Mon 4 Mar, 12pm–1pm	In Conversation With – Topic 1 – Prioritising Community through engagement
Mon 4 Mar, 12pm–1pm	RIBA CPD Hour – Advantages of Sensor Sanitaryware, The Sanitaryware Company
Tue 5 Mar, 1pm–4:30pm	Conservation Webinar Series – Module 1
Wed 6 Mar, 12pm–1pm	Cover to Cover – Thrive: A Field Guide for Women in Architecture
Thu 7 Mar, 9am–4pm	RIBA CPD Expo – London
Thu 7 Mar, 1pm–2pm	Horizons 2034: The Future Now
Fri 8 Mar, 9:30am–10:30am	RIBA CPD Hour – Sustainable Choices in Decorative Coatings, Dulux Trade
Mon 11 Mar, 12pm–1pm	RIBA CPD Hour – Secondary glazing: the retrofit solution to building sustainability, Selectaglaze
Tue 12 Mar, 12pm–1pm	In Conversation With – Topic 2 – Managing Health and Safety in architectural design
Tue 12 Mar, 1pm–2pm	Specialist Conservation Series – Sourcing historic support information: ICOMOS Education and Training Guide
Wed 13 Mar, 1pm–4:30pm	Conservation Webinar Series – Module 2

Thu 14 Mar, 2pm–4:30pm	RIBA Conservation Register – Spring 2024
Fri 15 Mar, 9:30am–10:30am	RIBA CPD Hour – Colour in the built environment, Dulux Trade
Mon 18 Mar, 12pm–1pm	RIBA CPD Hour – Designing for Dementia, Dulux Trade
Thu 21 Mar, 1pm–4:30pm	Conservation Course – Module 3
Thu 21 Mar, 1pm–2pm	Horizons 2034: The Environmental Challenge
Fri 22 Mar, 9:30am–10:30am	RIBA CPD Hour – Fire & Smoke Access Solutions CPD, Profab Access
Wed 27 Mar, 1pm–4:30pm	Conservation Course – Module 4

APRIL

Wed 3 Apr, 1pm–4:30pm	Conservation Webinar Series – Module 5
Mon 8 Apr, 12pm–1pm	RIBA CPD Hour – Colour and Contrast for Inclusive Design, Dulux Trade
Wed 10 Apr, 12pm–1pm	Cover to Cover: The Re-Use Atlas 2nd edition
Thu 11 Apr, 9am–4pm	RIBA CPD Expo – Belfast
Mon 15 Apr, 12pm–1pm	In Conversation With – Topic 3 – Demonstrating the value of sustainability
Mon 15 Apr, 12pm–1pm	RIBA CPD Hour – Why Class A2, W1 membranes as part of a facade system, Serge Ferrari
Tue 16 Apr, 1pm–2:30pm	Principal Designer Course – Module 1 Series 1
Thu 18 Apr, 1pm–4:30pm	Conservation Webinar Series – Module 6
Tue 23 Apr, 1pm–2:30pm	Principal Designer Course – Module 2 Series 1
Wed 24 Apr, 12pm–1pm	In Conversation With – Topic 4 – Introduction to Part O & Key Design Considerations
Thu 25 Apr, 1pm–2pm	Horizons 2034: The Economics
Mon 29 Apr, 12pm–1pm	RIBA CPD Hour A CPD Guide to Posi-Joists, Posi-Rafters & Metal Webs, MiTek Industries Ltd
Tue 30 Apr, 1pm–2:30pm	Principal Designer Course – Module 3 Series 1

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Culture
Leader

‘How often does 20% of a population put in comments on a planning application, let alone get involved in consultations for their area?’



Politicians, can you hear us?

Listening and acting on local views on neighbourhoods would be more useful than inventing more systems, says Eleanor Young

A community-minded person set up our street’s group chat in the first lockdown. Now it communicates snow-clearing parties at the grit bin, old jigsaws are swapped and plumbers recommended. Characters emerge: the bird spotter, the evangelist, the activist.

If there was to be a street vote the activist would lead the charge. She knows the rules, the soil, the local councillor is Mandy to her. I don’t know if Michael Gove had her in mind when he put street votes into the levelling up and regeneration legislation. I ponder this as the consultation on street vote development orders closes, with its tantalising question of whether only voters in the ‘street area’ can put forward a development order. If so it would need a minimum 20% of those voters.

How often does 20% of a population put in comments on a planning application, let alone get involved in consultations for their area? I imagine this hugely devolved process coming down to door knocking by activists, like collecting for charity but with more explanation and persuasion.

On the upside I am reminded of Theis and Kahn’s initiative on their 19th century east London estate to apply for a standard design licence for houses to extend upwards so neighbours with growing families could stay put rather than have to move out for more space. It was a brilliant plan for those with capital and the patience and energy for rooftop extension – though it took 10 years and then the local authority asked for applications by six houses at a time or preferably the whole street. Theis and Kahn themselves moved out. Perhaps, for terraces at least, this development issue has been dealt with by the embrace of extending upwards (particularly with Create Street’s favourite, the mansard roof) in the revised National Planning Policy Framework.

On the downside I think of the huge three-year

effort put into a neighbourhood plan by a group of Essex locals that was rejected at the last hurdle by the planning inspector. The character they sought to keep has been destroyed, with historic hedges rooted out and pedestrians pushed onto tarmac paths as more traffic to bland new homes made the old lanes impossible to walk. Should they have pooled financial resources and paid a lead individual – ‘someone with expertise in preparing development proposals such as an architect’ – to put it together as the street votes consultation suggests. Would it have been bulletproof?

There is already a democratic mediation process for development: it is our planning system, problematic though it can be. Putting it into the hands of The People should be exciting but more often is the recipe for disillusionment. The Liberal Democrats want ‘more democratic engagement in Local Plans’ while Labour has promised an ‘immediate blitz’ on planning reform if elected, with the choice on whether to deliver houses (in particular) removed but giving communities voice on the ‘how’. Please politicians, stop with the invention and resource the system and engagement by plan makers, so it works better.

In the meantime, jigsaw anyone? ●



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Building upwards is embraced by the revised NPPF, as used here by Andrew Kong Studio.

STEPHANIE WUNDERLICH PHOTO: LUKE O'DONOVAN

Paolozzi and friends

Centenary exhibition shows another side to Paolozzi with his design collaborations spanning lush fabrics and psychedelic plates, writes Chloe Spiby Loh

In 1971 the head designer of luxury French fashion label Lanvin wrote to Eduardo Paolozzi, thanking the Scottish Italian artist for a recent collaboration. The letter has a scrawling script that is informal and friendly, displaying a natural conviviality between artist and designer. Lanvin had adapted Paolozzi’s 1967 ‘Moonstrips Empire News’ screenprints into textile designs featuring clashing patterns of bold geometric shapes in saturated hues of orange, pink, blue, and green. Samples of these lush fabrics feature in the free Paolozzi at 100 exhibition at the National Galleries Scotland: Modern Two in Edinburgh, but it is the letter and its accompanying envelope from their archives that the show’s curator, Kerry Watson, is keen to show me. Unassuming and simply addressed in typewritten print to ‘Monsieur PAOLOZZI’, this tiny envelope evocatively captures the singularity of the artist as a totem of Scottish art in the 20th century. Paolozzi was born in 1924 to Italian parents who ran an ice cream shop in Leith, the historic port in the north of Edinburgh. ‘Where he came from shaped the artist he became,’ Watson explains. ‘He had a down to earth approach.’ He was obsessed with popular culture, compulsively filling scrapbooks from an early age. The exhibition begins in the 1940s with him studying in London and Paris, when he met artists such as Jean Dubuffet, inventor of the term art brut. Two key early works, ‘St Sebastian I’ (1957) and ‘His Majesty the Wheel’ (1958-9), show the influence of the raw and expressive qualities of art brut. Made by directly imprinting scraps of metal into wax slabs that are then cast in bronze,



Above Eduardo Paolozzi, Moonstrips Empire News, 1967. This was adapted into a textile for haute couturier Lanvin.

Paolozzi at 100
National Galleries of Scotland: Modern Two, 73 & 75 Belford Road, Edinburgh, EH4 3DR. To Sun 21 April 2024

they are abrasive in their materiality and defiance of traditional sculptural techniques. During the 1950s Paolozzi became a founding member of the Independent Group with others including architects Alison and Peter Smithson. Along with the artist Nigel Henderson, Paolozzi and the Smithsons worked together repeatedly, and were hailed by Reyner Banham as central to the New Brutalism movement. A 1953 photograph in the exhibition shows each outdoors with a different chair. Three have sleek steel frames by Charles and Ray Eames; Paolozzi’s scrappy wooden bar stool is striking in comparison. It is photos like these on show in the exhibition that give us a sense of who Paolozzi was. He is already well known in Scotland. ‘There are a lot of Paolozzi fans,’ says Watson. The vast archive of his work at the National Galleries of Scotland is one of the most accessed for research, while a reconstruction of his studio is already on permanent display. But Watson wanted to

show people something new. ‘It’s not meant to be a retrospective,’ she says; the intention is to highlight under-represented parts of his archive. One of these lesser-known aspects drawn out in the exhibition is Paolozzi’s design collaborations from the 1960s to 1970s. The project with Lanvin is included here, alongside a sumptuous series of fine bone china plates for manufacturer Wedgwood between 1968 and 1969. The plates resemble psychedelic microchips, with striped sections of giddy gridded squares and circles that make your eyes bulge. These two commercial collaborations are just a small selection from a lifetime of friendships and collaborations with designers and architects that produced some of Paolozzi’s best-known

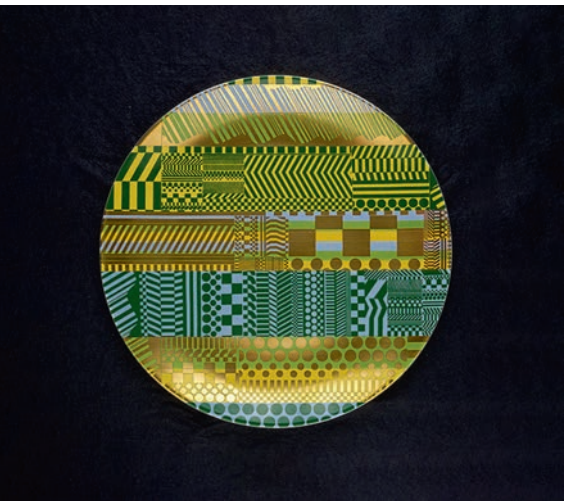
Right Eduardo Paolozzi, Variations on a Geometric Theme, one of the plates he worked on for Wedgwood, 1968-9.

Below Eduardo Paolozzi, Moonstrips Empire News, 1967.



public realm works. His imposing bronze sculpture ‘Newton’ outside the British Library in London was commissioned by long-term friends Colin St John Wilson and MJ Long. Another lifelong collaborator was Terence Conran, who commissioned his enigmatic ‘Head of Invention’ when he founded the Design Museum in 1989. Paolozzi’s most widely-seen public commission is his 1986 mosaic mural at Tottenham Court Road Tube station in London. It is a well-known landmark on the Underground and has been cited as a favourite work of art and a repeated source of inspiration by the designer Adam Nathaniel Furman. Less well-known is a mural in Cosmic House, commissioned by Maggie Jencks for her West London home from Paolozzi. Maggie’s daughter Lily Jencks remembers Paolozzi being ‘incredibly generous’ in giving art, especially to the first Maggie’s Centre for cancer care, which opened in Edinburgh in 1996. Clearly, Paolozzi had a collaborative instinct and a gift for forging lasting friendships. The exhibition photos convey a sense of his idiosyncrasies and his charm, which – with his generosity – give us an insight into the fondness with which he is held in Edinburgh. In 1994 he gave a sizeable donation to the National Galleries of Scotland with strict obligations to have a permanent representation of his work on site, leading to him become ‘part of the fabric,’ explains Watson. This forthright act shows a conscious concern for legacy, and taken with his breadth of public realm works shows Paolozzi to be a subversive and savvy artist who has guaranteed free public access to his art for generations to come. ●

Chloe Spiby Loh is a creative producer and curator working at the intersection of architecture and the arts



Bright spark

Social architecture is a driving force for Jan Kattein, whose schemes to revive and regenerate bring a burst of human colour to some lost and gloomy sites

Words: Isabelle Priest

Portrait: Ivan Jones



Jan Kattein had worn his red trainers to the photoshoot at Angel Yard for this profile. They provided the perfect match to the reclaimed London bus that's used as a meeting space at the entrepreneur hub. When we got to the site a man was busy spraying one of the walls – left white by Kattein's team to save costs – with a multi-coloured graphical artwork that matched his scarf too. It was an overcast day in early January, but the photographic opportunities with Kattein, poker-faced with his grey coat and colourful shoes, verged on the surreal and fantastical – like scenes filmed in a studio for Wes Anderson. Except that Angel Yard is in prosaic Tottenham, with 1960s residential blocks looming over the low-rise redevelopment of former garages.

Kattein was one of my unit tutors at the Bartlett 15 years ago. Those were his early days of tutoring. The unit was based around an imagined place called Slowtown, which had burgeoned into a city called East. Already Kattein was leaving a trail of students with their own approaches, particularly to colour, light-heartedness and flexibility. Architecture then was only tentatively becoming less static, more temporal. Look inside the workplace units at Angel Yard and, like Kattein at the centre of the frame, it is the people who occupy the building – the bubble tea shop, gift card illustrator, lashes salon, hairdresser and another architectural practice – that make it zing. The same goes for Kattein's previous scheme, Blue House Yard in nearby Wood Green – only in Tottenham the creatives are mixed in with start-up solicitor and accounting firms, among others. Everyone is under the age of 30 when they sign up. Kattein describes this approach as 'leaving room to let stuff happen', whether that's in the design process or the final result. Under the timber and polycarbonate-covered courtyard there, people have started to put out picnic benches and decorate outside their doors.

Kattein's work is convivial with a modest, humble heart. His eponymous 10-strong practice, based in a former off-licence in Islington, is a prolific producer of this work. RIBA could seemingly publish a project from Jan Kattein Architects (JKA) every few months. It's not often we commend a practice rather than a project in our MacEwen Awards. Peter Barber Architects is previously the only one in nine years. JKA, for even more social architecture, is the second.

The close association with Barber does, in fact, have roots. In the late 1990s, Kattein was a student in Barber and Ben Stringer's unit at the Bartlett. After graduating (via a first year at

Kattein describes his approach as 'leaving room to let stuff happen' – in the design process or the final result

Southbank University), Kattein joined Barber in practice as the second employee, then returned after his master's (Jonathan Hill and Elizabeth Dow were two of his tutors during that). At Peter Barber, Kattein worked on projects for St Mungo's homeless charity, housing next to Barking Station and Hackney Council on the Haggerston Estate West – his 'first experience of public consultation' where he encountered genuine concerns about regeneration and the role of architects.

Kattein has lived in London since he was a student, boldly deciding to 'discover the world' after having spent a year aged 16 on an exchange in Putney, Vermont. However, he grew up in Bonn, then the capital of West Germany and the seat of government after 1990. He is curious and creative, completely serious yet quirky and inventive, and seemingly unobstructed by conceptions of convention in whether things should happen. 'Why not submit your starter home design for planning?' he encouraged me in my second year. One of his prototypes during his PhD experimented with using donkey dung to power Blackpool's famous lights. Eventually, Kattein went part-time at Barber's to be a workshop technician at the Bartlett and 'make stuff again', then quit both to become a stage designer for the Prinzregententheater in Munich. This shift makes sense when you consider JKA's output, which is a lot about making strategic interventions with minimal resources that can become a performance platform. Kattein did around 20 stage sets for opera and classics all

Below Night shot of Café Roj (2022) on Duckett's Common by Turnpike Lane Tube in London.

Bottom Blue House Yard (2018), a creative meanwhile-use project in Wood Green, London.

Below right Aberfeldy Street – high street regeneration and workspace support (2020) in Poplar, east London.





Top The Paper Garden (2023) in Canada Water (see page 40). **Above left** Design for Green Campus, Ramsgate, Kent. **Above right** Angel Yard (2023), regenerated garages, north London. **Above** Postcards from the Future (2013), a stage set where plants grew in donated shoes. **Below** Wilderness Street (2022), an urban landscape for growing in Ilford, London.



Culture Profile

'Then there's the question of whether a project needs an architect or building. We need to unpick existing systems'

up by investors and developers, and people who were in it for the money and not for the culture or the greater good.'

JKA's work is almost exclusively in the public sector and realm – even though, he admits, 'the work was premature in speaking about social stuff; social projects were not a bestseller at the time'. Early on it led to intense high street work, starting significantly with Leyton around the London Olympic Games 2012. That project ballooned into three phases totalling £1 million. Now the studio has done 30.

'There isn't a recipe or formula,' he insists. At a point JKA looked a bit stuck, until it realised it could reframe the work into a portfolio demonstrating the many sectors involved – a nursery, interiors, night-time economy, public realm – and expand that way, including into libraries like Thornhill. Nearly all projects since Blue House Yard have a volunteer build component too, which the practice has instigated and oversees (see page 40: The Paper Garden, shortlisted for the MacEwen Award 2024).

If Kattein found himself on discussions around social architecture early, what is next? 'We're trying to be really serious about air quality and carbon. People recognise the built environment as a culprit. At Angel Yard 60% of fabric, including foundations, is retained. Then there's the question of whether a project needs an architect or building. Existing building systems are designed to eliminate uncertainty, for example building control. That doesn't work in a circular economy. We need to unpick the existing systems for alternative approaches.'

Changes to Greater London Authority funding have seen JKA widen its work outside the capital – a library in Wrexham and a campus for sustainable marine companies in Ramsgate. The latter is a newbuild; he has qualms about the carbon investment. Meanwhile, he has a book being published in April about Londoners making London, bringing visibility to people who have done amazing work in their communities, mostly not architects. It demonstrates what activists, regeneration professionals and architects can do, reinventing places and buildings for the common good – not forgetting the equivalent flavour of red trainers or a multicoloured scarf shot through. ●

Culture President



Beyond boundaries

Muyiwa Oki celebrates Royal Gold Medallist Lesley Lokko, who reinforces the power of architecture to influence social progress

In the intricate tapestry of global architecture, Professor Lesley Lokko emerges not just as an educator, but as a force reshaping the narrative and pushing the boundaries of the discipline. Her recent accolade of the Royal Gold Medal is not just an honour – it's recognition of an architect whose influence transcends conventional limits.

Lokko's African Futures Institute (AFI) in Accra, Ghana, is testament to her commitment to reimagining architecture through education. Beyond the conventional confines of academia, the AFI stands as a beacon of innovation, challenging established norms and reimagining the Global South as a crucible for future rapid urbanisation. In Lokko's hands, architecture becomes a collaborative endeavour, fostering inclusivity and celebrating the contributions of women from the African diaspora.

Under Lokko's curatorship, the 2023 Venice Biennale marked a pivotal moment in architectural history. Titled 'The Laboratory of the Future,' the event not only united diverse African architectural expressions but also ignited a profound discourse on decarbonisation and decolonisation.

However, Lokko's impact extends beyond prestigious events and accolades. Her involvement in London's New Architecture Writers programme underscores her commitment to dismantling barriers for under-represented professionals. In a field often criticised for its lack of diversity, Lokko's advocacy and actions are a refreshing departure from the status quo.

The RIBA Annie Spink Award for Excellence in Architectural Education, conferred upon Lokko in 2020, acknowledges her enduring efforts to bridge the gaps between race, identity and architecture. Her seminal work, 'White Papers Black Marks', continues to resonate more than two decades after its publication, a testament to the enduring relevance of her ideas.

Lesley Lokko is not just an architect; she is an agent for change. Her vision challenges the very essence of architecture, democratising it

and making it accessible to all. Architecture, in Lokko's hands, becomes a cultural dialogue, centred on ideas and content rather than mere function.

The decision to award Lokko the Royal Gold Medal was guided by the discerning honours committee which I led. Comprising the 2023 RGM recipient Yasmeeen Lari, Ivan Harbour, Neal Shasore and Cindy Walters, the committee exemplifies the RIBA's commitment to recognising excellence and fostering inclusivity in the architectural landscape.

As we celebrate Lokko's legacy, we are reminded that architecture can be a powerful instrument for social change, critical exploration, vivid critique of the established norms, and an inspiring practice that shapes what the future can and should be. ●



AWARDS SEASON IS COMING

Did you enter the 2024 RIBA Awards? Following meetings with local jurors up and down the country, later this month we'll be revealing the buildings that have been shortlisted for our Regional Awards. Make sure you keep an eye on our channels from 8 February to see which projects are in the running. You may recall that last year's cohort included a silk mill museum, the world's first multi-storey skatepark and a Roman villa reconstruction – and of course there's a future Stirling Prize winner in the mix. Watch this space.



Lyttelton Theatre, Royal National Theatre
South Bank, London, 1976

Sixty years ago, Denys Lasdun was appointed as architect for the new Royal National Theatre on the South Bank and 13 years later in 1976, the Lyttelton (a proscenium style theatre) became the first of the three theatres at the National to open. Interestingly, the auditorium seating was designed without a central aisle so that audiences could be placed in the best area for seeing the stage. The access steps seen here leading down into the auditorium were positioned on either side of the seating.
Note how photographer Donald Mill has

focused on the fine board-marked concrete which was to become such a characteristic of the National Theatre, and an aspect that Lasdun was very particular about. So much so, that there is a wall in the ground floor foyer showing the results of different shuttering techniques, with examples of board-marked concrete ranging from the highly textured to the very smooth. Mill, an architect and keen architectural and landscape photographer, worked for Lasdun from 1962 until his death in 1981 and photographed many of Lasdun's projects. ● Suzanne Waters

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