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2026 ISSUE 4

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IN 2026 ACROSS
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Cover image: DaeWha Kang Design's courtyard at The OWO hotel, Westminster, shot by Kyungsub Shin



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BAROMETER

It is RIBA Awards season again, with 2026 marking 60 years since the prizes were initiated. Eleanor Young takes heart from the latest tranche of winners from around the UK, which show a profession seeking solutions amid today's puzzles and pressures

After 60 years of visiting and celebrating the best buildings through RIBA Awards, it is impressive that you in the profession always come up with projects which surprise and delight. The RIBA UK Awards offer a remarkable snapshot of the output of UK architecture. Every year RIBAJ publishes the awards in print and online. Here the flip book – a taster – and on ribaj.com, the detail.

I was energised by the words of one jury chair, Sam Goss of Barefoot Architects, himself a RIBA Award winner in 2025 for the Hazelmead cohousing scheme in Bridport, Dorset. He has drawn on visits to 17 shortlisted projects to take back lessons and ideas to Barefoot's team in the studio.

Goss identified how the best buildings went into context, going deeper than planning ever required, to continue the story of place – often giving new ways to experience old places. They are also designed for longevity, and with an openness to change.

In the South West, which he toured, many of the projects reused and reworked existing buildings, with clients and architects not longing for a

tabula rasa but asking what could stay. "And in doing so," he said at the awards ceremony, "they produced architecture that was richer, stranger, more meaningful, and more sustainable."

My mind jumped to award winners in Oxfordshire and Suffolk which build in, on, under or around un-precious barns, in the sort of surroundings that are unlikely to get a listing anytime soon. Oxfordshire's House in a Barn (p63) by Artel31, and The Drift in Suffolk (p27) by Leap Architects and Corinna Dean both have a certain unresolved awkwardness as the domestic makes itself at home in the steel structures, but also an enjoyable abundance of contingent spaces.

Carrying the past forward, while opening up new futures, is the primary condition of architecture today, Goss argues. His sense of the importance of time, and of the existential pressures of sustainability, chimes with some of Reinier de Graaf's powerful 14-point manifesto that we run in this issue (p16). The OMA partner argues that the profession should adopt a more activist mindset to escape marginalisation. We also invited Lee Ivett, head of the London

School of Architecture, and Jo Sharples of Manchester's Editional Studio, to give us a sense of direction on education (p8) and on small practices (p12).

All three of our guest essayists share a focus on serving the greater good and looking to create a brighter future, with sustainability and climate adaptation at the profession's core. This year's swathe of awards demonstrates that these are not lonely voices in the desert but are drawing on the values of a profession, which even under economic stress is designing for better places.

More detail on RIBA Award winners

In these pages are a digest of architects' own descriptions of every award-winning project. Visit ribaj.com/awards to see the longer citations written by the jury chairs of each region and nation, and all the images and drawings. You can also view the sustainability data for the Sustainability Award winners of each region in England and Wales.

Thanks to RIBA UK Awards sponsors Lumion and dormakaba, to all sponsors who contributed region by region – and, of course, to all the volunteer jurors. ■

NATIONAL SERVICE

Below: Education, argues Ivett, should be outward facing and collaborative. The Ripple Effect, a Lancashire community space, was prefabricated by master's students and co-designed with local people.



Architecture aspires to serve the public. To do so, education must shift focus from the canon and from vague future notions, and engage with our present, argues the head of the London School of Architecture



LUCY STRANGE

WORDS
Lee Ivett

Architects work at the service of people. We are engaged to make real the dreams, desires and aspirations of others, but our role as a societal servant, assisting those that might need us the most, has been reduced to one aiding those who probably need us the least. Within this context, opportunities to produce the architecture we teach are becoming rarer; and preparing students to practise within this context serves to perpetuate an industry that is environmentally unsustainable, socially exclusive and structurally unjust. I believe that my new role as head of the London School of Architecture, within the University of the Built Environment, provides a unique context within which to radically rethink how education is accessed and delivered.

When I studied architecture I was given design briefs such as 'A House for An Art Lover' – but it turns out there are not nearly enough art lovers needing houses. For a long time architectural education perhaps became more concerned with making images, atmospheres, compositions and theory

than with making buildings. I'm interested in a rebalancing of what we emphasise within the study of architecture, such that the opportunity to apply our concerns as architects becomes more likely, not less.

It is imperative that we educate our students to be in praise of policy, production and plumbers, as well as shadows, and to value systems, craft and labour alongside concept and representation. Too often, the discipline looks either backwards to the canon or forwards to speculative futures, allowing the present to pass us by. Climate breakdown, social inequality, economic precarity, technological acceleration and institutional instability are no longer emerging challenges; they are the everyday context within which we all live our lives. Yet architectural education too often remains organised around assumptions that no longer hold: linear pathways, delayed responsibility, narrow definitions of intelligence, and a belief that architecture can somehow be insulated

from the systems that determine whether it can be realised at all.

For that reason, architectural education must teach not only how to design buildings, but how to create and navigate the conditions within which good architecture becomes possible. Design matters, but it matters even more when the social, cultural, economic and political conditions exist that appreciate its value and empower its enactment. This requires a fundamental shift away from inward-looking disciplinary concerns towards public value, accountability, and long-term social outcomes. At the LSA we have Design Think Tank modules that look to address contemporary and emerging concerns in collaboration with practice, the public sector and the third sector. The Design Think Tanks are less about singular authorship and more about strategic agency: knowing when to intervene, when to facilitate, and when to reshape the systems within which decisions are made.

Architectural education excludes many capable people through cost,

length, geography and cultural norms. It privileges endurance over aptitude and conformity over relevance. I am aware that the model I am advocating for is simply not possible within the current UK system of higher education. Schools of architecture within larger academic institutions are under acute financial pressure, and will simply be unable to retain or create the level of human, spatial and technical resource that's required for an aspirational syllabus.

Schools compete for students, for rankings, and for esteem, and this competitive logic discourages resource sharing, experimental delivery models and collective responsibility. There is also a persistent concentration of architectural study options within major cities, which limits accessibility and reinforces both geographic and social inequality. Education should fit around people, not require them to suspend or relocate their lives in order to participate; a student of architecture in Preston should have the same level of access to the brightest minds and cultural critical mass as a student in London.

The defining work of the coming decades is reimagining what is already

there: retrofit, reuse, a renewal of public space and infrastructure, maintenance and stewardship. We need to teach a worldview that treats existing buildings as a resource through which change can be made, rather than as a problem in need of fixing or replacing. I would also propose that every year in every single architecture course has at least one adaptive reuse brief, and that we establish more degree programmes, at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, dedicated to reuse and retrofit.

Future architects must also be literate in both analogue and digital forms of making. They should understand materials through touch and assembly as well as via simulation and data. They should be capable of laying bricks and writing prompts; of engaging with craft and with code; we need modules that equip our students with emerging digital literacies as well as workshops and time on site to test and build at a scale of 1:1. As educators, the digital and in particular the rise of AI is not something we need to panic about; and to be honest I don't sense fear from my students in relation to AI, only a feeling of opportunity. My students' main fear is to what extent the

industry will offer them the opportunity to practise in a way that aligns with their ethics, knowledge, skills and ambition.

The future of architectural education must be hybrid, networked, granular and collaborative and offer opportunities to learn simultaneously within practice, the site and the academy; online and in person. Architecture should remain demanding and rigorous but must also be civic, adaptive, and attuned to the realities of the world it wishes to shape.

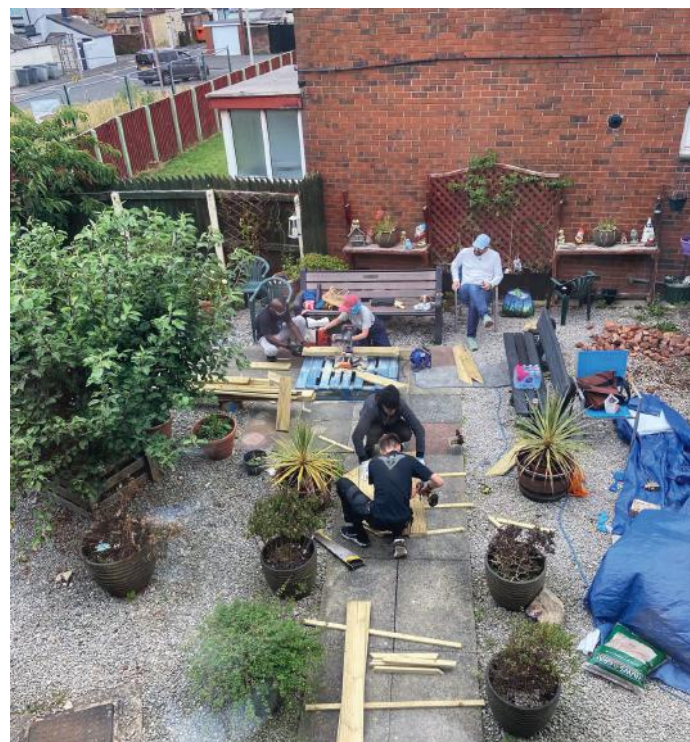
If the only people who care about architecture are architects, then it fails in its duty and its purpose. So for architectural education to matter, we must equip people not only to design buildings, but to create the conditions within which good, responsible, and meaningful architecture can be made. I see it as a public capability, offering not merely an educational resource but also one that is hyperlocal, civic and committed to extending its privilege of knowledge, skills and resource into the communities of people and place that need them the most. ■

Lee Ivett is head of the London School of Architecture and founder of research studio Other People's Dreams

Below: The LSA's Dalston Pavilion held free public workshops in 2024, in collaboration with local organisations.



Below: Making Revue Public Square, by Other People's Dreams, brought together communities in Blackpool.



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Left: Jo Sharples, co-director of Manchester-based Editional Studio.

Opposite: Editional Studio has explored 'play-on-the-way' with three primary schools collectively designing play proposals for the high street, a project with Emma Martin and Mimi Dearing.

What pressures and opportunities – from climate to community, academia to AI – are facing small studios, and how can they navigate them?

WORDS
Jo Sharples

GROUND LEVEL



MIMI DEARING

thermal fabric upgrades as they prepare to shift towards renewable energy. This is a welcome shift that's really taken hold over the last five years through the unavoidable confrontation of rising energy bills. It has meant the increasing uptake of retrofit measures by private homeowners who previously would not have considered this a priority. Even so, recently we've seen retrofit projects for clients with high environmental aspirations having to drastically reduce these works because of spiralling material costs and a lack of skilled contractors. This is making retrofit unaffordable for even relatively wealthy clients, which suggests further support is needed both financially for clients, and to upskill the retrofit workforce.

Increasingly though, we wish for regulatory control around the embodied carbon of materials to reinforce our ethical position. Conversations seem to have stalled and we are falling behind more progressive countries, illustrating the necessity of regulation since the industry isn't capable of containing its carbon-consumptive self. If we are to have any chance of meeting our climate targets, regulation around embodied carbon is an inevitable change we must prepare for. Given the often sliding timescale of projects, even the proposed phasing-in of Part Z targets will mean we can make the argument for low-carbon materials quickly on most projects. Ongoing global instability has the knock-on effect of unpredictable supply chains and material costs, which is a convincing impetus for more locally sourced natural materials. An announcement around controlling embodied carbon feels eventually unavoidable.

Our focus on sustainability isn't going anywhere despite the efforts of elites and billionaires, and the sidelining by much of the political establishment. Most of our work is with existing buildings, trying to retain and upgrade as much of the fabric as possible with natural materials. We will continue to have honest, sometimes hard dialogue with clients, consultants and builders about the impact buildings have on climate, even at the smallest scale.

Academia and practice drifting apart
With day rates from many universities across the country being around one third of professional equivalents, it has become a almost impossible to teach

Policy backs community-driven design

Community-led design is, to us, a welcome shift that is increasingly supported nationally, through recent policy announcements such as Pride in Place funding with £20 million regeneration pots for areas most in need, putting spending in the hands of community boards. In my own region, that is being echoed by the council's Our Manchester Strategy, which highlights active citizen participation in shaping communities as one of its core priorities. As a small architecture practice, we see being able to apply our skills, to get involved and aid early conversations about placemaking and design within our neighbourhoods as incredibly positive. We can help to open up the design process, and try to raise expectations and ambitions around what might be possible, using our own experiences to provide tangible proposals for conversations to progress.

At Editional Studio, we've made a conscious shift over the last few years to undertake more work in the neighbourhoods where we live and work, which so far has had huge benefits. We've been working on Our

Longsight Community Plan, a long-term collective strategy to improve our local high street for Manchester City Council in collaboration with a network of community organisations. The intention is to make piecemeal, creative improvements undertaken by local artists supporting community wealth-building and fostering local talent. It's a slow process that takes huge effort to undertake in a truly collective way, but is one of the most rewarding projects we've been part of in recent years.

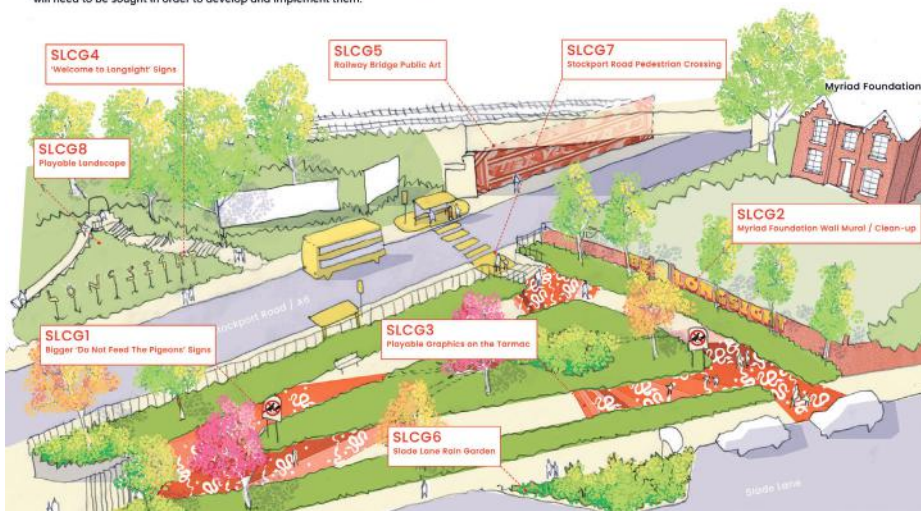
Working in your backyard has its own pressures, with issues you can't just walk away from at the end of the day, and the fact of becoming inextricably entwined in your own community. But it provides a deeper understanding of local skills and people that isn't possible as a 'helicopter architect' working in far-flung places.

Sustainable design pushed to the fore

As a result of the atrocious conflicts we are witnessing across the world, the importance of energy reduction and insulating ourselves from current and future energy crises is becoming self-evident. Many clients are wanting to surpass current regulations around

Longer Term Projects

Longer Term Projects are more complex to implement, requiring collaboration between multiple partners. They are more expensive to deliver; specific funding will need to be sought in order to develop and implement them.



while running a small practice. After five years running a master's design studio at Sheffield School of Architecture and striking over the pitiful pay, I gave up my position. I was a devoted teacher. My students presented their research to practitioners at Futurebuild in 2023 and two won the national award for Student Sustainability from the Architects' Journal. Upon leaving, I was told my design studio consistently had the highest number of applicants and my departure had been a blow to the school. Adding salt to the wound, universities are investing in endless bland building projects. There is money; institutions are just not using it to pay staff fairly.

As well as my own position becoming financially untenable, I felt increasing guilt at being part of a system that has off-puttingly high tuition fees – and punitive interest rates upon completion – for anyone not from the most secure backgrounds. I am quite sure I would not have studied architecture if I'd been faced with the financial prejudice that comes with being a student today. The implications of this add huge pressure: students are no longer able to leave room for experimentation, or trial and error, because of fear of wasting a huge investment at the start of working life.

Besides teaching, we have previously been recipients of RIBA's Research Fund, and highly commended by the William Sutton Prize, as well as publishing joint practice-led research with Karakusevic Carson Architects, and with Canopy

Housing around retrofit. Research has always informed our practice. It allows a broadness in thinking that is not always possible when at the coalface of design and delivery. We are seeking out other research partnerships and fellowships that are willing to pay adequately for our expertise and thinking. More recently, we have been asked to partner as external architecture consultants on a large-scale, university-led research project, which may offer a more financially viable way of incorporating real-world experience into theoretical spheres of knowledge, helping to positively influence policy to have meaningful and useful outputs and to join these too-often disparate worlds.

Rethinking social interaction and AI

It is news to no one that AI slop and ever-more vapid social media content are being used to fulfil the role of actual interaction. In late 2025, we shut off our social media. Four months in, we've had to completely shift our mindset as to how we approach finding work and promoting our business. We're publishing *The Edition* – a quarterly zine featuring articles from thinkers we admire and interviews with adjacent practitioners we're interested in learning more from, spotlighting other people doing good work. The spring edition will feature Phin Harper, Barnabas Calder and Canopy Housing's Til Wallis, who we've been working with for the last few years. We're coupling this with hosting more events at the studio and generally making a

conscious effort to get out and about, and meet people IRL.

So far, although time consuming, there are clear benefits. We want to seek out meaningful relationships for collaboration, and it is helping us maintain our critical thought, as well as protect the authorship of our work and expertise. As a measurable result in this short time, we have published one article per month in the architectural press. We are growing more conscious of what we share online and have had discussions with large multinational companies who are putting up paywalls before sharing any in-depth analysis or work – ensuring pay for their expertise. We are resisting using AI in our work due to its unbelievable energy consumption in a period of environmental collapse, and are instinctively wary of its touting as the answer to everything – though we can see it as a potentially useful tool when used sparingly and appropriately. One thing it is no replacement for is creative, considered, contextual, specific, analytical thought. This is what architects are good at, and where they must retain their value. Don't share it for free. ■

Jo Sharples is a co-director of Editorial Studio, Manchester

Top left: The Our Longsight Community Plan is co-designed with local artists and residents; one part is Slade Lane Community Garden.

Top right: Colourful games for children to play en route to the shops, designed by Editorial Studio with local artist Nadia Sultana.



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WAKED UP





ADRIENNE NORMAN

The OMA partner and Architecture Against Architecture author sets out a 14-point manifesto for reforming a profession that, he argues, is on a fast-track to irrelevance

Opposite: “Welcome unions,” says de Graaf. In the UK, architects can unionise with Unite through SAW, founded in 2019 and seen here demonstrating at the offices of BIG.

What should we do? The more frequently the question is asked, the more difficult it becomes to answer. What can we do? Our field seems mired in a deep crisis of relevance. Measured against the major issues of our time, the ‘constructive’ role of architecture is at best marginal. None of the ‘sustainable solutions’ we devise can remotely claim to help prevent global warming. The housing crisis has yet to be solved by architects, and much of our work contributes to the opposite. The political relevance we attribute to our projects is routinely proven to be nil.

Practising architecture today has two flavours: foregoing principles for work, or foregoing work for principles. Big firms serve the rich and powerful; small ones run small jobs uncorrupted by the greed of capitalism. Less and less is there an in-between, and a divided profession seems to nullify any hope of a realignment.

The loss of status is predictable. No longer the creative demiurges magically

conjuring up brighter futures for an audience waiting to see the light, we increasingly witness a world in which architects are being set straight.

Architecture, as we know it, may be coming to an end. Construction moratoriums to help save the climate, assertions of the rights of architect-employees, the public demise of former icons of the profession, belated recognition of underrepresented groups, user participation, an ever larger number of non-practising architects, unease about artificial intelligence, ever-tighter scrutiny of professional ethics, and so on.

The profession has only itself to blame. For far too long, it has been in denial. The larger societal issues that impact architecture – like any other profession – were none of our business. That is, until the world made them our business. Time has finally caught up with architecture, only to expose it as being out of touch.

Are we capable of a much-needed introspection? Are we strong enough to endure the merciless outing of our futile concerns and ingrained biases? Can an old craft put itself at the service of a new relevance? To this end, I have proposed a 14-point manifesto.

1 End the fixation on figureheads.

Architecture is held captive by a focus on individuals. The principle prevents the fair crediting of work, limits career prospects, and makes the continuity of firms perpetually uncertain. Promote practices, not founders.

2 Welcome labour unions. Don't believe the tough talk – poor working conditions reflect the weak state of the entire profession. A stronger profession begins with strengthening the position of the workforce. Recognise architecture as labour and organise accordingly.

3 Collectivise practice. Architecture is a collective endeavour. Hardly ever is that reflected in the ownership of practices. Equity aside, collectively owned practices are likely to spark unprecedented creativity. There is no greater incentive to work than working for oneself. Transfer all ownership to employees.

4 Retire at 67. The profession grants careers longer than most. Many of the world's most renowned practitioners are well over 80. The more careers are prolonged, the less likely new ones will come to fruition. Align the retirement age to that of other professions.

5 Abolish authorship. All architecture is indebted to all architecture that came before. Imitation is to architecture what generic medicine is to healthcare: a gift to humanity. Abolish copyrights, royalties and other counterproductive forms of intellectual property.

6 Rely on AI for matters of taste. We design buildings – or so we think. More commonly we broker arbitrary choices of finishes, fittings, textures, colour palettes, or (worse) moods. Embrace AI – not to think for us, but to help us think more clearly, and rid architecture of the burden of frivolous decisions.

7 End the distinction between theory and practice. Changing practice begins with education. Architecture schools are

populated by teachers with little field experience. Each year new graduates face the same crisis when entering the real world. Time for shock therapy: make construction labour a mandatory part of education – for students to graduate; for teachers to qualify.

8 Free architecture from the concept of art. The more we insist that buildings are works of art, the more they risk being treated as such: a high-risk asset class. While the value of architecture skyrockets, the economy of architects pales in comparison. Stop all reference to architecture as art. See buildings for what they are: utilities.

9 Cut the middlemen. Property speculation thrives on the unknown. The less known the users of buildings, the more emphatic the wishes quoted on their behalf. Increasingly, users are taking matters into their own hands. The results challenge what we are being told in their name. Work for those who use your work, not the third parties who pay for it.

10 Stop building until the existing stock runs out. We are building more than all previous generations combined. And yet, more homes do not lead to more affordable homes. More than a means to provide shelter, construction serves as a lucrative means of investment – not to house people, but cash. Stop building, and the dirty secret will expose itself.

11 Pardon all things built. Too many buildings are demolished in the name of current standards – no more than a flimsy excuse to reap greater profits from the land they occupy. Anything can happen in any space; let one purpose give way to the next, however unexpected. Stop demolitions and discover the great miracle of architecture.

12 Plan for obsolescence. No purpose to 'built for purpose'. The more bespoke the building, the sooner it proves out of date. To preempt, or to plan the obsolescence of buildings, that is the question. Design new buildings with expiration in mind.

13 Adapt to climate change; stop claiming to mitigate it. Climate change concerns all of us. It's not if, but when our current way of life will become untenable. Sustainability is merely another word for business marginally better than usual.

It is time we face the music and imagine ways to coexist with the inevitable. Let climate change inspire architecture to embrace true innovation once more.

14 Work not to have clients; have clients to work. Architects go where their work leads them, serving corporate CEOs, benevolent dictators and eccentric billionaires. Without an agenda of its own, architecture's mission is equated to that of its clients. Can architecture be more than a response to a need? Stop hiding behind powers to be. Bite the hand that feeds us!

Contemplating change is easy, forging change is not – I'm under no illusion. If architects decide to stop designing new buildings tomorrow, the world would not stop building them. It will take more than a pardon of the built environment to stop the sledgehammers. Architecture will be art as long as there are those willing to regard it as such. Eternity will haunt the act of building as long as buildings continue to appreciate in value. And climate change will get lip service as long as the economy lets us get away with it.

Each of the 14 recommendations above makes perfect sense, yet each can be dismissed as impossible to implement. In the real world, the political power and popular sway of architecture are limited. Still, one wonders: does the lack of likely implementation raise questions about the recommendations, or does the self-evident nature of each recommendation raise questions about their combined lack of implementation?

No one depends on architects to realise buildings, yet no building is the same without an architect. Architecture does not invent building; it invents consciousness. Could our discipline re-emerge as a form of conscientious activism? There are more of us than ever, working across more disciplines and more sections of society than at any point in history. Our trade represents a unique body of knowledge. Our utter dependence on powers that be provides us with intimate knowledge of those powers. We must use that knowledge. The time has come for architecture to become a form of politics in its own right. Architects of all countries unite! ■

Reinier de Graaf is a partner in the Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) and author of *Architecture Against Architecture* (Verso Books, 2026)

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Above: Architects stay on after a CPD to discuss current projects and explore new finishes.

Left: The 'Everything you need to know about engineered surfaces' CPD – along with lunch – is ready to start at a leading architectural practice.





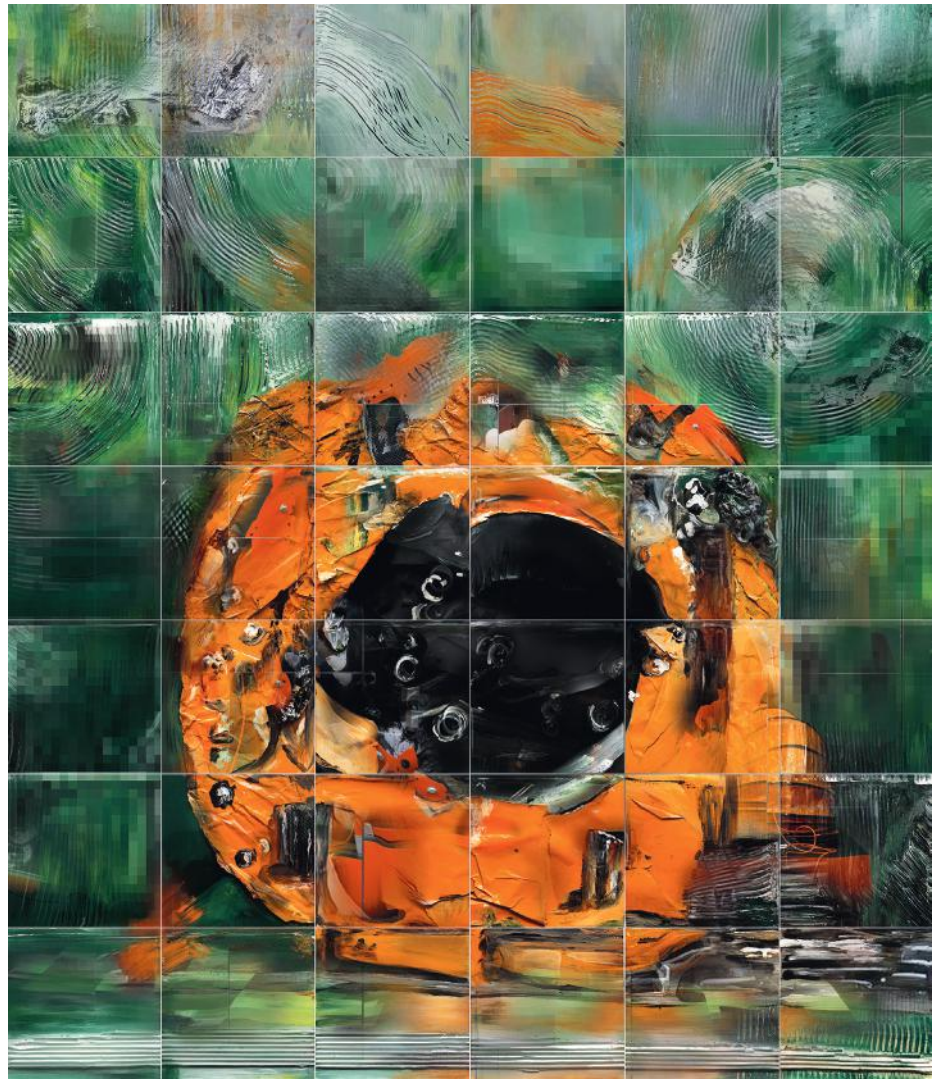
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FUTURE REFLECTIONS

Felicity Hammond
Model Collapse, 2025
Instagram: @flisshammond



What does data do? It's a question artist and academic Felicity Hammond asked when beginning a project using AI as an iterative intermediary for her own output.

Last century, the photograph and its veracity were tools in governments' wielding of power and societal control. Now, Hammond thinks AI has shifted the power to individual image-makers and the social media giants who profit from viral propagation; and was keen to interrogate these "entanglements with technology".

Fascinated by how data and geological mining both seem bound by a sense of intrusive extraction, Hammond's project, a "hybrid camera and mining device", lurched from virtual to real and back again. She scaled up a 1m² image yielded from an AI prompt, and then fabricated it in steel plate: a 3m-wide orange "recording machine" with a central camera, which sat in a gallery space snapping visitors – and itself – in a mirror opposite. The photos it took were run back through AI, becoming

more painterly by degrees as it attempted to resolve 'reflected' imperfections.

Hammond took this output, breaking the machine's image of itself down to generate 42 life-size panels she then hand-painted. She photographed each one, reassembling them as a huge C-type print (above). Her "feedback loop" culminated after two years in an "end of life service": a funeral procession held in Edinburgh for the crated-up machine parts, which were then consigned to a repository.

Hammond has no fears for the future, despite referencing German filmmaker Hito Stiyerl's essay Mean Images on AI's corrosive societal potential. She was struck more by Stiyerl's noting that the AI process is ultimately "all about the average". Despite the hype, "generative AI seems a flawed technology", Hammond says of her experience. Depending on your perspective, it's a view that ranges from the reassuring to the deeply unsettling. ■

Jan-Carlos Kucharek



The depth of board to achieve an R-value of 6.250m²K/W – rounded up to the nearest standard depth.

The world's **thinnest** inverted roof insulation just got thinner.

U-value chart

Depth of insulation required

U-value req. W/m ² K	Quantum® (mm)	Extruded (mm)	Expanded (mm)
0.15	60	220	235
0.14	70	230	255
0.13	70	250	275
0.12	75	270	295
0.11	80	290	320
0.10	100	320	355

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- BBA Agrément Certified 20/5769.
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- Can be used within a system that meets Broof(t4) fire requirements of Building Regulations Part B.
- Suitable for zero falls under hard or soft landscaping.

Sample range of U-values based upon a typical roof terrace construction with a 200mm concrete substrate and product Lambda value as noted.



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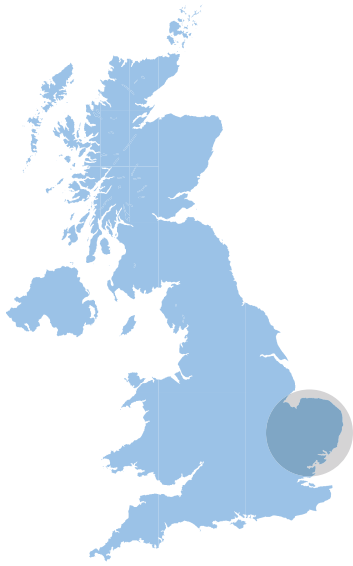




8 Bishopsgate, London

The U-value on the various roof terraces was kept to an overall 0.25 W/m.K despite some of the features on the roofs making this difficult to achieve. **ProTherm Quantum** ensured level threshold access and minimised the depth under the BMU track and plant machinery.

ProTherm
Quantum[®]



EAST

13
WINNING
PROJECTS

£222.9M
TOTAL COST
OF PROJECTS

36,564M²
TOTAL
GIA

£7,643
AVERAGE PROJECT
COST PER M²

3
PROJECTS BY PRACTICES
WITH STUDIOS IN THE REGION

10
PROJECTS BY PRACTICES
WITHOUT STUDIOS IN THE REGION

RIVER WING, CLARE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

WITHERFORD WATSON MANN ARCHITECTS FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 818M²

The River Wing is the first major addition to Clare College Old Court since the 1780s. It houses a 68-seat café, open to all college members. Associated works upgrade existing back-of-house spaces and improve access and escape. Located on perhaps the last buildable plot of this dense city centre site, the building sits behind the main block for part of its length, and between two garden walls for the rest. The integration of this addition to a Grade I-listed building, visible from Cambridge's famous Backs, was highly sensitive; equally, construction access to this narrow, landlocked site was exceedingly difficult. In response, the new construction is a structural skeleton in laminated oak; circulation is a series of vertical stacks beside the chimneys and gables of the 17th-century brick wall; and the café is a trellis-like structure between the garden walls.



PHILIP VILE

BEAM, HERTFORDSHIRE

BENNETTS ASSOCIATES FOR EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
VALUE: £24M GIA: 3,312M² PER M²: £7,500

BEAM is a multi-arts cultural hub hosting live performance, film and community activities across a series of auditoria and events spaces. Located in the historic centre of Hertford, on the banks of the River Lea, the project involved the partial reuse and extension of an earlier theatre dating from the 1970s. The auditorium, stage, fly tower and backstage accommodation were retained and transformed, and an extension added with three cinema screens, a studio theatre, multi-purpose spaces and an all-day café/bar. BEAM is an exemplary piece of sustainable theatre design, focusing both on the decarbonisation of operational energy and on reducing embodied carbon. The adaptive reuse of existing structures was combined with the use of cross-laminated timber panels to create the new extension. The building has been a pilot project for the emerging UK Net Zero Carbon Buildings Standard.

[Sustainability Award](#)



HUFTON + CROW



FRED HAWORTH

PEMBROKE MILL LANE, CAMBRIDGE
 HAWORTH TOMPKINS FOR PEMBROKE COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE
 VALUE: £40.5M GIA: 7,275M² PER M²: £5,866

This project is Pembroke College's most significant expansion since the 14th century, turning a dense site in the historic city centre into a cohesive, accessible campus. Alongside retrofit of existing and listed buildings are new social, teaching and residential spaces arranged around biodiverse gardens. Timber-framed structures, gas-free energy systems and climate-resilient landscapes are part of a holistic sustainability approach that considers people's needs as well as energy efficiency. The scheme gave Pembroke an opportunity to accommodate a range of collegiate and public activities; six retrofitted and six new buildings grow its built footprint by one third. By opening up cultural infrastructure, embedding public art and landscape into the urban fabric and restoring historic architecture, the development shows how a disparate group of buildings can be reinterpreted to create a coherent, outward-looking collegiate quarter. Building of the Year sponsored by dormakaba Project Architect of the Year sponsored by Lumion, Hannah Constantine Conservation Award

RUBICON, CAMBRIDGESHIRE
 ALISON BROOKS ARCHITECTS FOR UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE AND THE HILL GROUP
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 11,719M²

Rubicon is an operationally net-zero residential development at the southern edge of Cambridge's 150ha Eddington urban extension, and forms a threshold between the neighbourhood and wetlands beyond. Combining warehouse loft and collegiate court styles, it comprises four interlocking S- and L-shaped buildings bookended by a courtyard block. Of the 186 homes, 35% are university housing while 65% are market-sale. Incorporating coworking commons, sunlit courtyards and bicycle-friendly apartments, the design responds to today's working and transport habits. Urban-facing courtyards connect with landscape-oriented ones, stitching together contexts and reflecting the site's edge condition. Drawing on 19th-century mills bordering rural settings, the scheme uses hand-glazed bricks, curved corners and an undulating roofline to evoke a sense of historical continuity.



HUFTON + CROW

TTP CAMPUS, CAMBRIDGESHIRE
 SHEPPARD ROBSON FOR TTP
 VALUE: £51M GIA: 10,386M² PER M²: £4,910

Set within the rural landscape of Melbourn, this new technology campus rethinks the relationship between science labs, offices and social spaces, reflecting the client's values of non-hierarchical, collaborative working. The scheme was shaped by a year of intensive briefing that fostered trust and a determination to challenge preconceptions. The design evolved into three buildings embedded within their setting: the Exchange is a circular social hub for decompression and debate, offering 360-degree views across the landscape; the Hive is a revolutionary 'plug-and-play' building, on a modular grid of 15 x 15m, bringing labs and workplaces together in new ways; the Tech Barn provides world-class facilities for large-scale engineering and prototyping. The result is a functional campus that is flexible and sustainable as well as expressive and uplifting: a place where brilliant minds can flourish.



HUFTON + CROW



THE APPLE HOUSE, HERTFORDSHIRE

OKRA FOR THE SERGE HILL PROJECT AND TOM STUART-SMITH STUDIO
VALUE: £700,000 GIA: 150M² PER M²: £4,516

Set within a previously neglected orchard in the grounds of the client's home in St Albans, the Apple House is an innovative social enterprise, with a year-round community programme offering participation in horticulture and environmental stewardship to local schools, youth groups, mental health charities, residents and designers. The building is deceptively simple but materially sophisticated, combining a glulam portal frame with local materials and craft. The spruce frame is infilled with hempcrete: carbon-neutral blocks made mostly of hemp and lime. Large openings connect multifunctional spaces to the landscape on multiple axes, framing a woodland to the south, a vegetable garden to the east and an extensive plant library to the west. At first glance, this appears as a modest agricultural building, with a 45-degree pitched roof of black corrugated metal. Closer inspection reveals a highly crafted, hardworking, impeccably detailed piece of site-specific architecture. Client of the Year

BODNEY BEACH HOUSE, NORFOLK

NAPIER CLARKE ARCHITECTS
FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL

Bodney Beach House centres on a charming 1855 property, in a National Landscape near Holkham Beach. It was built to house the signalman for the West Norfolk railway line, and while trains are long gone the architects sought to preserve the building's character, allowing history to enrich their design approach. Reusing the existing structure, keeping new development to one storey, and nestling buildings into the landscape helped the client secure planning consent. The historic house was repaired; now three buildings surround a generous courtyard garden, built from Gault stock brick, Bath stone and timber, echoing the materials of nearby Holkham Hall. These are the main three-bed home; a two-bed guest house and a workspace with landscaped steps leading to a roof garden looking towards the beach.

A HOUSE AT FAIRMEAD, ESSEX

SERGISON BATES ARCHITECTS
FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 381M²

This new house at the edge of Epping Forest is conceived as an ensemble of good rooms shaped for quiet moments, family life and celebration. Set on rising ground beside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, it responds sensitively to its bucolic location. The robust, adaptable and accessible home offers rich interiors, each with its own character. Arranged as a contemporary villa drawing on local Georgian precedent and Palladian proportion, the series of rooms extends to include a porch, outhouses, walled garden and yard. A double-height hall anchors adjacent rooms which radiate from it, each stepping in plan and registering on the facade as carefully proportioned gables. Clay block walls provide thermal capacity and comfort alongside triple-glazed windows and solar powered ground-source heat pumps.

LONG BARN, HERTFORDSHIRE

TAS ARCHITECTS
FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 161M²

Long Barn is a single-storey dwelling in a secluded location. Formed of two off-site manufactured timber-framed barns, it is arranged around a courtyard garden with views of beautiful mature gardens and trees beyond. The site lies in the curtilage of a Grade II-listed Lutyens house, the clients' home for 40 years, and within an emerging green belt. The clients wanted the new home to be a sustainable and sensitive contribution to the site and surrounding area, to enable them to remain living within the garden they had nurtured for 40 years while downsizing into a more practical home designed for later living. Natural materials that reduce carbon emissions and promote inhabitants' wellbeing include glulam timber frames, with an impressive exposed timber structure and vaulted ceiling in the open-plan living space.





FOXGLOVE HOUSE, HERTFORDSHIRE
KIRKLAND FRASER MOOR FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 248M²

Foxglove House replaced a small stable block in the grounds of an existing farmhouse, within the Chilterns National Landscape and greenbelt. The clients wanted a low-carbon house with spectacular views of the Chiltern Hills. The design of Foxglove House gave importance to the landscaping, and prioritised low-carbon construction and operation and the use of local craft and low-processed materials. Designed for two people but zoned to accommodate up to eight, the low-slung home is entered via a sheltered, sunny courtyard that divides it into two environmentally separate wings, creating visual connection while promoting privacy. With the main framed views facing north, the courtyard is a sensitive and effective way of introducing sharp south light into the heart of the dwelling. Complex geometries are skilfully brought together in the layout, creating variety within a coherent form that feels simultaneously ambitious and modest.



FIONA'S STUDIO, HERTFORDSHIRE
EDWARD MCCANN ARCHITECTS FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 36M²

The conversion of a former garage built in the 1980s into a painter's studio was commissioned for artist Fiona Stevenson. The retrofit of the existing building is a response to her primary needs, namely good levels of natural light, and space to spread out and produce, as well as to showcase her work. A prominent polycarbonate lantern brings in diffuse light and the dappled shade of mature trees, and provides an elevated airy structure above the working floor. The existing brickwork has been insulated and clad externally, with interior finishes left exposed as a 'crude' industrial aesthetic suited to its purpose. Although small, the building is a piece of architecture that elevates the artistic practice undertaken within.

THE DRIFT, SUFFOLK
LEEP ARCHITECTS / CORINNA DEAN FOR MARCUS LEE AND CORINNA DEAN
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 130M²

This adaptive reuse project turned four derelict farm buildings – from a listed 15th-century barn through to 1960s structures – into a home for the architects. While planners were focused on the restoration of the barn, the architects chose to leave it largely untouched while making gutsy restorations of the less precious, agri-industrial buildings. The steel-framed grain store forms the main two-bedroom home; a connected former grain silo functions as guest accommodation; and a tall covered area framed with an open concrete portal creates outdoor living space. A rewilding approach has been taken with the surrounding woodland, meadow, and pond, with the planting of floating reed beds, dead hedging and other biodiversity measures to improve wildlife habitats.

Small Project of the Year



MORE'S MEADOW, CAMBRIDGESHIRE
HAYSOM WARD MILLER FOR GREAT SHELFORD VILLAGE CHARITY
VALUE: £4.4M GIA: 1,680M² PER M²: £2,619

This scheme of 21 one-, two- and three-bed almshouses is arranged in three curved terraces around a central green, kept car-free by limiting vehicle access to near the site entrance. It is set within 3.5ha of greenbelt land, and includes 250 new native trees, a meadow, new allotments and a community garden, all open to the public. As a rural exception site, trustees felt that it was vital to gain community support, with the brief developed via a lengthy engagement process. The buildings have sinuously curved, sedum-covered roofs creating variety in home types, presenting a striking form and softening their relationship with the surrounding landscape.





EAST MIDLANDS

5
WINNING
PROJECTS

£39.6M
TOTAL COST
OF PROJECTS

6,224M²
TOTAL
GIA

£4,062
AVERAGE PROJECT
COST PER M²

2
PROJECTS BY PRACTICES
WITH STUDIOS IN THE REGION

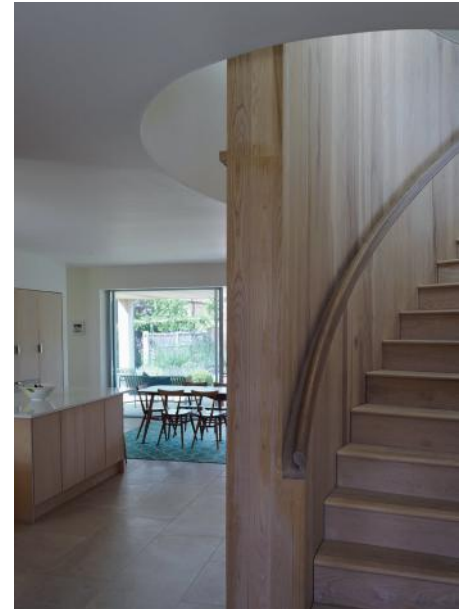
3
PROJECTS BY PRACTICES
WITHOUT STUDIOS IN THE REGION



DESIGN AND DIGITAL ARTS BUILDING, NOTTINGHAM

HAWKINS/BROWN AND CPMG ARCHITECTS
FOR NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 5,547M²

The Design and Digital Arts (DaDA) building at Nottingham Trent University (NTU) is a gateway facility for the city centre campus. Created to support emerging digital arts disciplines including film, television and animation along with UX, games and graphic design, it reflects NTU's ambition to be a world-leading art and design school. Aiming for BREEAM Excellent status and an EPC A-rating, DaDA exemplifies sustainable, future-ready design. It transforms a previously redundant site into a vibrant hub for creativity and collaboration, offering flexible learning environments that adapt to technological change. The building enhances student experience, fosters cross-disciplinary interaction and strengthens NTU's role in shaping the creative industries. Its striking architecture contributes positively to Nottingham's urban fabric while supporting NTU's net-zero carbon targets. This is a confident and well-resolved project – urban, expressive and socially engaged – that demonstrates how architectural ambition can be realised within the constraints of a demanding site.



GARDEN HOUSE, LINCOLNSHIRE

JONATHAN HENDRY ARCHITECTS
FOR MARK AND CLAIRE FORT
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 239M²

This project, in Walesby on the southern edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds, is informed both formally and materially by its village context. Its form is similar to the eclectic older buildings that define this part of the Wolds, with a tall, pitched roof and dormer windows that sit on robust rubble-stone walls. The entrance has a recessed loggia, lined with oak planks. Internally there is a dramatic curved staircase, while a circular rooflight draws daylight into the plan. Inside spaces have views out to the garden, which includes a studio for one of the clients. Project Architect of the Year sponsored by Lumion, Jonathan Hendry



AMBER COTTAGE, DERBYSHIRE
 CHILES EVANS + CARE ARCHITECTS
 FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL
 GIA: 69M²

Amber Cottage was built on a tiny site, occupied by the ruined remains of a small stone storage barn. It stands in the centre of a Peak District village near the boundary of the Derwent Valley Mills UNESCO World Heritage Site, an industrial landscape of strong historical and technological interest. The project is the result of careful negotiation with the client, neighbours and planners, resulting in a cottage that looks as if it has been there for centuries, but with a crisp contemporary roof and fenestration. Material choices have been crucial, from reusing the stone from the site to specifying an aluminium roof that is exactly the same colour as the corrugated iron one the barn had prior to its collapse. Use of a highly insulated timber frame has contributed to the creation of a low-energy home for its invested, retired client.

Building of the Year sponsored
 by dormakaba
 Client of the Year



RORY GAYLOR

OLD RECTORY, LINCOLNSHIRE
 BRISCO LORAN FOR
 LETTIE AND JERVOISE ANDREYEV
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 240M²

Revived from a state of advanced dereliction, the Old Rectory is a family home in the Lincolnshire village of East Barkwith. The project, for two NHS workers, encompassed the retrofit of the gabled 1860s-built house, a reworking of a flat-roofed 1960s block, and the construction of a kitchen hall across the stony footprint of a lost 17th-century wing. At the heart of the project, and consistent with the work lives of its initiators, is an attitude of care that celebrates the capacities of repair, reuse and renewal over the blinkered fix of demolition. The end result is a thoughtful and measured intervention that restores coherence, enhances its setting and, above all, shows how a well-considered design can bring a neglected building back to life.
 Small Project of the Year



RACHAEL SMITH


COURTYARD HOUSE, LINCOLNSHIRE
 MOLE ARCHITECTS FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 129M²

This meticulously crafted new-build home sits on a narrow, north-south site that presented challenges: a busy road to the south, garden views to the north, and a restrictive covenant protecting neighbours' amenity. The design responds with a modest, tranquil courtyard at the heart of the plan to draw daylight into the building, provide effective cross-ventilation and enable north-facing living spaces to enjoy garden views. Two pyramidal skylight-topped roofs create dramatic vaulted interiors while reducing overshadowing, preserving outlooks, and ensuring the courtyard stays private. A highly insulated timber frame, clad in brick and with a zinc roof, offers a modern take on the local vernacular. Thermal performance exceeds expectations, with electricity use well below predicted Passivhaus levels.
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LONDON



PLASHET ROAD, NEWHAM

LEVITT BERNSTEIN FOR LONDON BOROUGH OF NEWHAM
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 6,272M²

Levitt Bernstein worked on Plashet Road with Newham Council to deliver its first Passivhaus-certified housing. It provides 65 affordable homes and a nursery around a shared courtyard, forming the heart of the new community. The project aimed to create spacious new homes that met the highest sustainability standards and fostered a strong sense of neighbourliness. Designed to Passivhaus principles, the homes provide excellent comfort, are ultra-low-energy and low cost to run. Generous daylight, natural ventilation and careful orientation contribute to a healthy living environment. Twelve mature London plane trees have been retained around the site's perimeter, allowing the new homes to be set within a green, sheltered edge. The massing, proportions, detailing and materiality of the new building create a contemporary and contextually coherent design. A rich and soft material palette of brick and concrete, with texture and variety in colour, brick patterning and details drawn from adjacent buildings, enhance depth and shadows within the facades.

[Sustainability Award](#)



UCL EAST, MARSHGATE, NEWHAM

STANTON WILLIAMS FOR UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 12,064M²

Marshgate is based on a radical and ambitious academic vision – a new type of academic building and campus designed to support the cross-disciplinary thinking needed to tackle the global challenges of our time. Its complex brief incorporates entirely new interdisciplinary programmes while promoting innovation and collaboration. It does this by dissolving traditional boundaries between the arts, sciences and technology and by actively engaging local communities and businesses in the university’s activities. The design prioritises collaborative space, which promotes interaction and the exchange of ideas, together with high levels of adaptability. The building’s robust material and tactile qualities and the long-life, loose-fit approach, reflect activities within the building and the industrial legacy of the site, while providing a strong, sculptural form. At the heart of the emerging UCL East campus on the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, the building delivers on University College London’s vision for spaces that are open, accessible, sustainable, flexible and genuinely public.

Building of the Year sponsored by dormakaba

UCL ONE POOL STREET, NEWHAM

LIFSCHUTZ DAVIDSON SANDILANDS FOR UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 17,400M²

One Pool Street (OPS), UCL’s first building on its Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park campus, was described by the client as a university within a single structure. OPS has 552 student dwellings in two towers above a three-storey podium. Here, arranged around a daylit atrium, is teaching and research space plus facilities shared with the public, including a cinema/auditorium, library, workspace, café and shop. These overlapping uses create a hub of activity. The building overcomes conventional barriers between living, research faculties, enterprise and outreach, welcoming all-comers into the light-filled atrium through a single portal. A landscaped roof terrace enlivens the base of the towers. Mixed-use and highly flexible, OPS conforms to the architect’s mantra of stylish, accessible, hard-working and adaptable buildings. It is a highly sophisticated building that has the student living experience at its heart.



JACK HOBHOUSE (2)

THE FEATHERSTONE BUILDING, ISLINGTON

MORRIS+COMPANY FOR DERWENT LONDON
 VALUE: £60M GIA: 14,703 M² PER M² £3,764

The Featherstone Building is an industrial-inspired workplace in the heart of the tech cluster around Old Street. The design reinterprets the Victorian warehouse vernacular to respond to the area’s vibrant mix of historic typologies, and rapid new development. The building addresses the high demand for flexible, modern office space, and combines site-specific architectural references with advanced engineering and cutting-edge construction techniques. Featuring generous floor-to-ceiling heights, openable windows for natural ventilation, and an embedded concrete cooling system to reduce operational carbon, the design prioritises occupant comfort and sustainability. Flexible floorplates allow subdivision or vertical connection of tenancies. Accessible external spaces include terraces and a top-floor communal pavilion. This is a resilient, architecturally rich landmark building.



HUFTON + CROW

NORTON FOLGATE, TOWER HAMLETS

ALLFORD HALL MONAGHAN MORRIS, STANTON WILLIAMS, MORRIS + CO, DSDHA AND EAST FOR BRITISH LAND
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 34,807M²

Occupying a prominent position on the City fringe, this office-led development is one of the most complex projects delivered by British Land. It regenerates a derelict, unsafe group of sites, improving the streetscape and setting of the Elder Street Conservation Area. Norton Folgate comprises three urban blocks with the retention of a significant number of historic buildings, six new buildings and new public realm. The masterplan employs a building-by-building approach to the retained existing buildings, using restoration, refurbishment, extension, remodelling and facade-retention to breathe new life into the architecture, alongside sensitively designed new buildings. It sets new standards for retrofit, refurbishment, and redevelopment in central London.



SADLER'S WELLS EAST, NEWHAM

O'DONNELL + TUOMEY FOR SADLER'S WELLS AND LONDON LEGACY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 8,238M²

Sadler's Wells East provides a dedicated space for contemporary dance in London, combining a generous stage for performers with an intimate audience experience and flexible public spaces. Open all day, the venue aims to foster creativity and engagement, with a focus on new dance, education and access for Stratford's diverse community. As well as an adaptable 550-seat theatre for mid-scale dance productions, it houses a flexible dance theatre and six purpose-designed studios for its choreographic school and hip-hop academy. Sited at the entrance to East Bank, the building bookends the terrace of cultural buildings and public spaces that faces the Olympic Park. At upper levels, the studios wrap around the fly-tower. Below podium, the stage door and get-in share direct access from Carpenters Road. The form is influenced by dance notation, where alternating black and white feet are shown in a static diagram of movement.

NOELE GORDON HOUSE, NEWHAM

MÆ FOR NEWHAM COUNCIL

VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 1,646M²

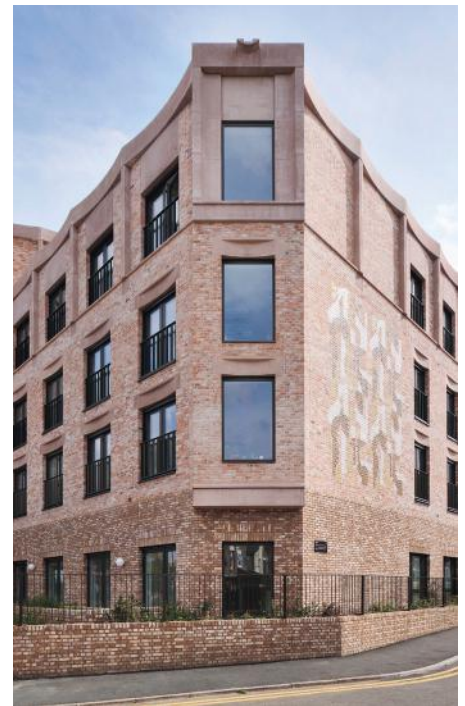
Noele Gordon House reimagines a high-street setting on Barking Road in East Ham with an exemplar mixed-use and affordable later-living development. The scheme provides 75 homes for older residents, all at London Affordable Rent, alongside a new community health centre. The homes offer high-quality accommodation to local tenants, helping free up existing under-occupied homes for families on Newham's waiting list. Designed in line with HAPPI principles, ensuring adaptability and accessibility, the two sculpted residential blocks of seven and nine storeys are connected by a shared residents' lounge and landscaped terrace. The project combines a fabric-first, low-carbon design with a strong civic street presence. The residents, architect and client all chime with enthusiasm and optimism for this vision of communal living, no doubt because it is designed so intelligently and delivered with such remarkable economy.

HEMPCRETE MEWSHOUSE, NEWHAM

CATHIE CURRAN FOR PRIVATE CLIENT

VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 155M²

A test case in hempcrete, this self-build house uses the site of a derelict garage on an east London lane to explore a sustainable, adaptable, scalable approach to modern domestic – and reasonably priced – architecture. The typical London terraced townhouse typology was revisited to take account of modern lifestyle trends and the constraints of living on a chaotic mews, where garages operate alongside other small businesses. Being a self-build project without responsibility to an outside client provided the opportunity to experiment with new, environmentally friendly construction methods, including constructing the house in hempcrete blockwork, which hadn't been used in an urban context or above two storeys in the UK before. Easy conversion into two separate apartments has been factored into the structural and services design. Both units would have their own external space and front door to the street, prioritising flexibility.



458 FOREST ROAD, WALTHAM FOREST

GORT SCOTT FOR POCKET LIVING

VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 3734M²

Forest Road provides 90 affordable, one-bedroom homes for first-time buyers in Walthamstow, on a site opposite Lloyd Park and the William Morris Gallery. The triangular site has contrasting contexts, with Victorian terraced houses lining streets on two sides and the arterial Forest Road as its main frontage. The scheme sensitively negotiates these differing characters with a sculpted massing that steps up from three to five storeys on Forest Road, reinstating active frontages on all sides that were part of the historic urban grain. Communal spaces have been thoughtfully integrated into the design to foster a sense of community and wellbeing among residents.

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HUFTON + CROW

ECOPARK SOUTH – NORTH LONDON HEAT AND POWER PROJECT, ENFIELD

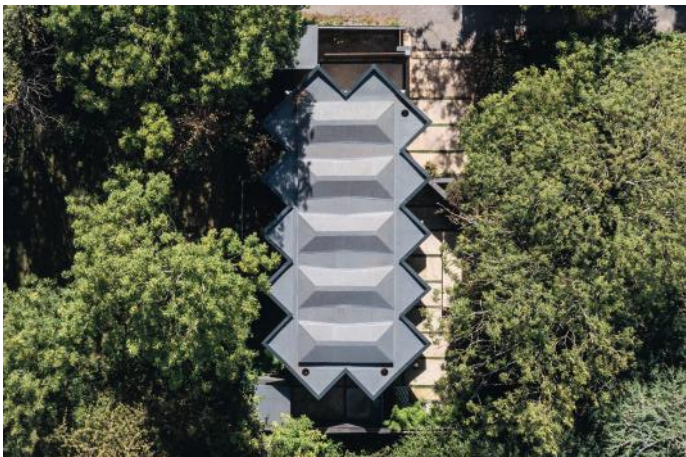
GRIMSHAW FOR NORTH LONDON WASTE AUTHORITY
 VALUE: £164M GIA: 2,190M² PER M²: £9,956

EcoPark South forms part of the North London Heat and Power Project, transforming Edmonton EcoPark into a model for urban waste infrastructure as civic architecture. The project rethinks the typical recycling centre, which is often hidden from view and disconnected from the public. It consists of two main facilities: the Resource Recovery Facility (RRF), which separates recyclable materials from council waste and provides public recycling services; and EcoPark House, a civic pavilion offering visitor education and a permanent home for the Edmonton Sea Cadets. Processing waste for over two million households across seven London boroughs, the RRF includes the Recycling and Fuel Preparation Facility and public-facing Reuse and Recycling Centre. EcoPark House operates entirely off-grid through photovoltaic panels and ground-source heat pumps. Together, these facilities demonstrate how essential infrastructure can become a place of civic engagement and education, fostering communities who understand and actively participate in reducing urban waste.

ARBOUR HOUSE, HARINGEY

ANDREI SALTYKOV AND PARTNERS AND LACEY & SAG FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 207M²

Arbour House, on a former workshop site, faced major obstacles: restricted access, planning opposition and a long history of dereliction. Yet its greatest asset was clear: a pocket of land surrounded by woods in the heart of north London offering a rare opportunity to create a home that feels both protected and connected to nature. The pavilion-like house and its plot were conceived as a holistic object. The section follows the site's slope with a continuous split in floor levels arranged around three separate flights of stairs in the middle. The sun's path drives the linear plan: a morning side with bedrooms and lightwells to the east, and an evening one with social spaces and a garden to the west. The undulating timber roof extends to create a strong visual rhythm and a nod to the site's semi-industrial history.

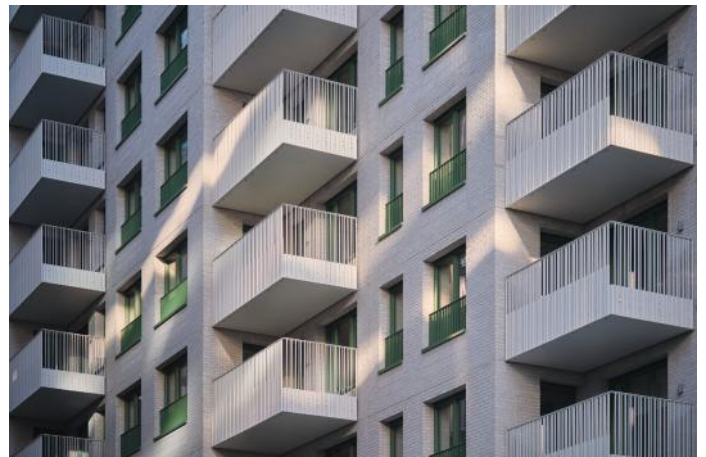


FRENCH+TYE

CAPELLA, ISLINGTON

ALLIES AND MORRISON FOR KING'S CROSS CENTRAL LIMITED PARTNERSHIP
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 19,919M²

Capella is one of the final buildings that concludes Related Argent's King's Cross masterplan. The design of this 14-storey, L-shaped apartment building – which contains 120 market-sale flats and 56 social-rented ones – relates closely to its context, completing the enclosure of Lewis Cubitt Park to the east and providing an endpoint to Keskidee and Chilton Squares to the north and south. The intentionally picturesque building form and tenure-blind facades look towards the park with a terrace of five different towers. A further two towers at each of the building's ends address the different scale and geometry of its adjacent squares. The staggered plan of the south facade offers those flats views towards the park, while at roof level, five two-storey houses have private gardens. A simple palette of materials in white and green shades provide a gentle backdrop while close up, the sinusoidally surfaced concrete panels – complemented with a cream brick and delicate metalwork – provide a richer reading.



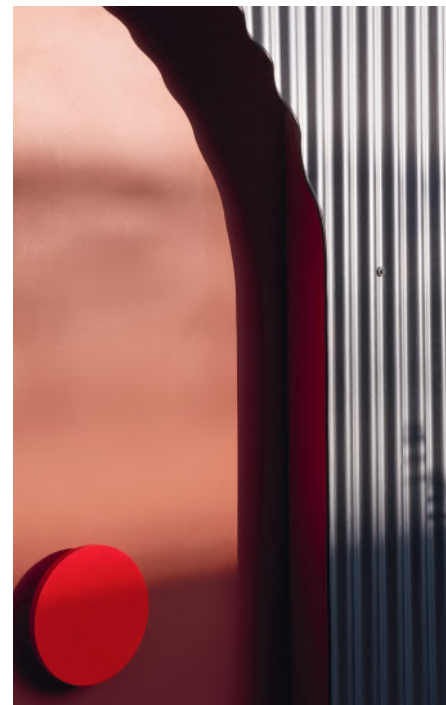
CHRIS BEARMAN



THE BLOOMING SHED, ENFIELD
 BETWEEN ART AND TECHNOLOGY (BAT)
 STUDIO FOR NORTH LONDON NHS
 FOUNDATION TRUST
 VALUE: £40,000 GIA: 30M² PER M²: £1,356

This kinetic garden pavilion was designed by BAT Studio for Chase Farm Hospital and created in collaboration with the local NHS trust to support mental health and wellbeing. It provides a flexible, non-clinical space in the hospital's community garden for therapeutic activities, meetings and community events. Built on a former shed's concrete base to cut waste and carbon, it uses a timber frame with tactile plywood and softwood interiors wrapped in corrugated steel. The Blooming Shed's key feature is a sliding polycarbonate facade that enables it to 'bloom' open, dissolving inside/outside boundaries. Low-cost, low-carbon materials combine with BAT Studio's fabrication to create a spirited space rooted in its context. It shows how a simple, resourceful scheme can enhance wellbeing and access to nature-based care.

Small Project of the Year



ROWAN COURT, HARINGEY
 SATISH JASSAL ARCHITECTS
 FOR HARINGEY COUNCIL
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 4,576M²

Rowan Court is a scheme of 46 low-carbon social-rent homes for Haringey Council on a constrained Seven Sisters site. It transforms former garages and leftover land into a cohesive extension of an adjacent 1970s council estate, providing 31 apartments, 11 townhouses, four wheelchair-accessible homes, and four intergenerational maisonettes. Rooted in contextual brickwork and robust detailing, the architecture defines streets and new public spaces while strengthening pedestrian connectivity. Sustainability is central at Rowan Court: all homes are fully electric, powered by air-source heat pumps and photovoltaic panels, achieving 81% on-site carbon reduction, and are at least dual aspect. The development demonstrates how small, complex sites can provide for exceptional, climate-resilient, inclusive council housing that repairs urban fabric and uplifts surrounding communities.



HIGHBURY HOUSE & STUDIO, ISLINGTON
 MAICH SWIFT ARCHITECTS FOR
 PRIVATE CLIENT
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 372M²

This project converts a former factory space behind a north London Georgian terrace into a home and studio, reuniting divided units into a cohesive domestic setting. The front elevation maintains its neighbours' rhythm and character, while the rear is substantially remodelled with reclaimed materials. New internal structural elements stabilise the building and interface with its existing arrangement, making for a variety of room dimensions. Interiors feel contingent and layered, aligning with the building's history of occupation. Light and spatial variation are brought into the centre of the deep plan via double-height spaces, rooflights and internal galleries. The project enhances thermal performance through natural and renewable materials and, in combination with active technologies, showcases robust, comfortable and environmentally responsible architecture.

RECIPROCAL HOUSE, CAMDEN
 GIANNI BOTSFORD ARCHITECTS
 FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 283M²

In 1968, Norman Foster extended a former coach house behind a pub in Hampstead with a lightweight structure of steel, concrete and large-span glazing. It was one of Foster Associates' first built structures, and its simplicity, directness and economy of means clearly expressed the firm's future approach. This project retains that work but replaces the coach house, essentially extending the extension. It evokes elements of Foster's treatment of the coach house and the original roof forms with angled facades, but also responds to the extension in its clarity and careful calibration of space. Reciprocal House offers a mature approach to working with existing buildings, showing how careful analysis, restraint and good judgement can yield a project both respectful and confident.





LION GREEN ROAD, CROYDON
 MARY DUGGAN ARCHITECTS WITH
 RUFF ARCHITECTS FOR BRICK BY BRICK
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 12,260M²

Lion Green Road is an inventive and landscape-led residential scheme in Coulsdon, London Borough of Croydon. It delivers 157 dwellings over five blocks, with an equal mix of affordable and private homes. The blocks, between four and seven storeys, are arranged like pavilions throughout a richly planted landscape – each one carefully calibrated to respond to the undulating topography and contrasting residential contexts. Apartments are arranged in a pinwheel pattern around a central core, ensuring every home is dual-aspect and enjoys generous daylight. Three shades of brickwork provide variation across the faceted facades, with a unifying projecting brick detail adding texture. A variety of shared outdoor environments traverses the site, from children’s play areas to seating zones and dedicated growing spaces, creating meaningful public benefit and fostering a strong sense of community.

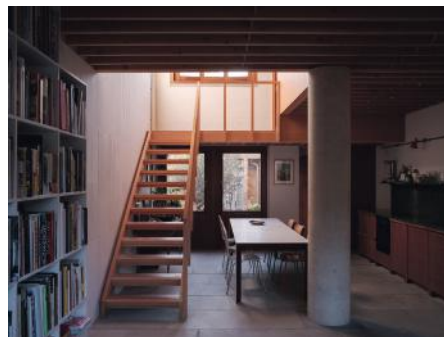


REDCROSS WAY, SOUTHWARK
 SANCHEZ BENTON ARCHITECTS
 FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 136M²

This family home replaces an ageing 1980s council house by the entrance to Borough Market. With a new gate into the market due to open, the clients were concerned about increased tourist footfall along their street and the lack of privacy their existing house offered. The project retains the original ground-floor slab to minimise embodied carbon, and proposes a number of thresholds to the street that build physical and psychological distance from passers-by, while also navigating the original step in the terrace of homes. Reclaimed materials were used throughout, with the main structure made using UK-grown Douglas fir. Attention to volume, materiality and tactility creates an almost cinematic experience as one moves through the interior spaces.

THE TANNERY, SOUTHWARK
 COFFEY ARCHITECTS FOR LONDON SQUARE
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA 8,000M²

Once a centre for the tannery trade that defined 19th-century Bermondsey, The Tannery at Rich Industrial Estate is a mixed-tenure community of new homes and a hub for creative charities and artist studios. Within a wider masterplan, three new buildings and urban realm anchor the essential role of mixed-use and creative spaces. Their layout completes a new public route and courtyard along New Tannery Way, and a private landscaped courtyard for residents. The scheme’s standout feature is a ‘bar of light’ within The Tannery’s new build that bisects the courtyards. This consists of dual-aspect homes on the second to fifth floors, wrapped in white perforated aluminium shutters and sitting upon a brick base holding two-storey townhouses. Carefully framed vistas strengthen both enclosure and connectivity, resulting in a design that delivers delight and surprise – and a distinctive civic character.



HAROLD MOODY HEALTH CENTRE (HMHC), SOUTHWARK
 MORRIS+COMPANY FOR LONDON BOROUGH OF SOUTHWARK/NOTTING HILL GENESIS
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 4,015M²

A landmark neighbourhood health centre forming part of the Aylesbury Estate regeneration and aligning with the NHS 10-Year Plan for England, this project shows a people-centred, community-first approach and a civic investment in public health, wellbeing, and equity. It brings together GPs, community healthcare and a nursery, creating an integrated hub. A light-filled atrium, generous circulation and natural materials promote dignity, calm and accessibility, while flexible, futureproof spaces support evolving needs. Sited in a new public square, HMHC is both an important piece of local infrastructure and a welcoming social anchor. Extensive stakeholder collaboration ensured it responds to diverse user needs, setting a new benchmark for high-quality, resilient healthcare provision.

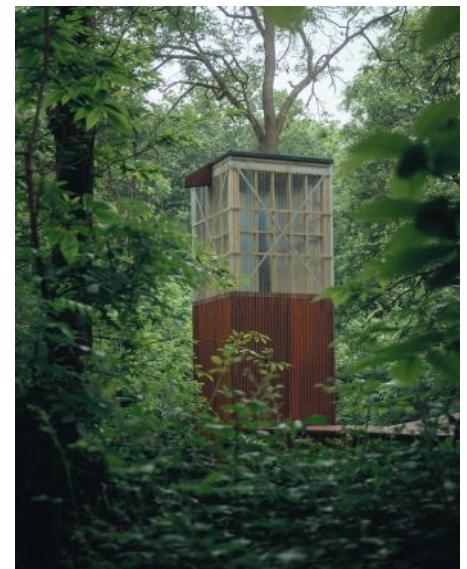


CANADA WATER PLOT K1, SOUTHWARK

MORRIS+COMPANY WITH WHITE INK FOR LONDON BOROUGH OF SOUTHWARK

VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 9,324M²

Canada Water Plot K1 is a high-quality, tenure-blind affordable housing development, designed to reflect its distinctive position between dense urban fabric and the natural landscape of Russia Dock Woodland and Stave Hill Ecological Park. Seventy-nine homes are organised around a central courtyard, creating a strong sense of community and place while making the most of dual-aspect designs, daylight, natural ventilation and long-distance views. The massing responds sensitively to neighbouring buildings, with the architectural expression contrasting a robust red-brick outer facade and a lighter, woodland-facing interior. A lightweight metal access deck provides circulation, private amenity pockets, and opportunities for community interaction. All homes are carefully planned to meet contemporary living needs, with generous entrances, flexible layouts and high-quality private and shared outdoor spaces. The landscape strategy enhances biodiversity through green and brown roofs and planting linked to woodland habitats. The project delivers sustainable, inclusive, and durable homes that foster pride, connection and healthy living.



THE CLEARING AT LESNES ABBEY WOODS, BEXLEY

WONKY FOR LONDON BOROUGH OF BEXLEY
VALUE: £140,000 GIA: N/A

The Clearing is a multifunctional education space, supporting woodland management along with events teaching the importance of conservation and demonstrating traditional woodworking skills for volunteers and local schools. Situated on the last stop of the Elizabeth Line, Lesnes Abbey Woods is an 88ha public park and ancient woodland in the London Borough of Bexley. The council appointed WonKy to co-create the outdoor space with its future custodians and users. The focal point is a large parachute that acts as an all-weather classroom and meeting place in the woods. It is stored and dried in a Corten steel square tower which also houses monitoring equipment for birdsong and environmental conditions. In a resourceful bit of specification, The Clearing used an old shipping container, decommissioned military parachute, and chestnut and oak coppicing from the surrounding woods, optimising the budget while minimising its carbon footprint.



LONDON INSTITUTE FOR HEALTHCARE ENGINEERING, LAMBETH

HLM ARCHITECTS FOR KING'S COLLEGE LONDON

VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 3,198M²

The London Institute for Healthcare Engineering (LIHE) is a state-of-the-art research and innovation hub within the Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital campus in Lambeth. It brings together clinicians, academic researchers and industry partners, and aims to foster collaboration and accelerate medical discoveries. A primary circulation scissor stair, visible from nearly everywhere in the building, encourages spontaneous interaction. Each level has a mix of work and interaction spaces, combining open-plan areas, breakout zones and partitioned offices. Flexible floorplates are designed to accommodate evolving team dynamics. LIHE has achieved BREEAM Excellent and EPC A ratings, and meets the London Plan's net-zero carbon target for all new developments, with a minimum of 35% onsite reduction in regulated carbon emissions.

**ORU SUTTON, SUTTON**

SAMUEL CHISHOLM STUDIO AND TAKERO SHIMAZAKI ARCHITECTS FOR ORU SPACE

VALUE: £9M GIA: 3,484M² PER M²: £2,583

This mixed-used commercial development occupies parts of a former BHS department store on Sutton High Street, and offers socially conscious coworking space, retail and hospitality. The brief called for the adaptive reuse of the building with accessibility and affordability at its core, bringing community back to the high street. Most space was on the upper levels, where the main challenge was to bring light and air into the deep plan – resolved via new courtyards – and to introduce coherence to how rooms connected, achieved by a single route running up from the ground-floor entrance to the fourth floor. The strategy for adaptation was to ‘do less’ when making changes to its fabric, driven by sustainability aspirations and economic constraints. Over five floors, the premises now offer coworking, yoga and fitness studios, a nursery, event space, retail units, a café and a large rooftop community garden.

**THE BRENTFORD PROJECT – PHASE 1, HOUNSLOW**

ALLFORD HALL MONAGHAN MORRIS, HOWELLS AND MACCREANOR LAVINGTON FOR BALLYMORE

VALUE: £150M GIA: 28,018M² PER M²: £1,263

Regeneration of a 5ha waterfront site has created a vibrant mixed-use destination. The strategy was to retain buildings of historical value and reintroduce wharf- and shed-style buildings with an industrial aesthetic. Linking Brentford High Street to the waterfront reinstates lost connections and creates a new street pattern echoing historic working yards. The project sees the refurbishment of two heritage buildings fronting onto Brentford High Street, alongside a new mixed-use development including 107 homes. Along the high street, two three-storey buildings frame refurbished shops and an existing pub. The south of the plot has a more industrial feel with a single brick-arched plinth housing a supermarket, retail spaces and residential entrances. Two retained brick warehouses are among a group of buildings housing 144 apartments set over retail and restaurants.

**WESTMINSTER CORONER'S COURT, WESTMINSTER**

LYNCH ARCHITECTS FOR WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL

VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 498M²

The project includes the renovation of the Grade II-listed Westminster Coroner's Court and a two-storey barrel-vaulted extension with much-needed extra facilities, including office space for 12 members of staff, a jury room, second courtroom and family room. The two-storey, stone-clad CLT extension to the west of the existing building is accessed via a glazed link. The vaulted ceiling of the new courtroom echoes the character of the top-lit Victorian court, while the Jura limestone cladding's subtle banding relates closely to the brick and Portland stone in the original building. The curved zinc roof, with standing seams in a precise rhythm, contrasts with the stone. The scheme features courtyard gardens for contemplation and relaxation, and stained-glass art by Sir Brian Clarke.

**THE EMORY, WESTMINSTER**

RSHP FOR MAYBOURNE

VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 10,150 M²

London's first all-suite hotel unfolds as a new kind of contemporary retreat: a modern, discreet alternative to traditional luxury hotels. Formidable constraints lay hidden beneath the site: Piccadilly Line tunnels pass within 6m of the basement to the north, and the existing operational basement of The Berkeley lies to the south. Rather than limiting the design, these pressures shaped its distinctive architectural identity. A multidisciplinary team crafted a stability frame that minimises the number of columns interfacing with basement structure, allowing elastomeric bearings to hush the constant tremor of passing trains. Above, a suspension system of rods and hangers frees each floorplate from columns, enabling generous, flexible suites that rise to a sculptural rooftop. Interiors by renowned designers include reconfigurable suites, refined finishes and a wellness centre set within the subterranean levels. The rooftop hosts a bar and cigar lounge with panoramic views.



PARK LANE STABLES RDA, TEDDINGTON
 ARCHITECTURE:WK
 FOR PARK LANE STABLES RDA
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 80M²

This project shows how architecture can deliver profound social impact even at a very small scale. Architecture:WK's scheme has successfully reclaimed and adapted a modest row of stables providing horse-riding opportunities for disabled children and adults. The brief's core requirement was to repurpose the ancillary ground-floor flat, developed in the 1980s, to provide welcoming facilities including a community space with 'cuddle horse' stall, a private consultation room and an accessible WC within a thermally upgraded and serviced space. Rather than overt architectural gestures, the project is defined by careful spatial choreography and savvy reuse, enabling the building's history to remain legible and for it to function efficiently and comfortably in contemporary use.



ARDING & HOBBS, WANDSWORTH
 STIFF + TREVILLION FOR W.RE
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 15,295M²

This refurbishment of the Arding & Hobbs department store, on a prominent corner site near Clapham Junction, is an exemplary retrofit and extension that testifies to how thoughtful design can reconcile heritage, sustainability and contemporary urban life. It offers characterful workspace for around 1,000 people on the upper floors, and a landscaped roof terrace with panoramic views over London. Mixed retail and leisure uses occupy the basement, ground and first floors – including a gym, an Italian deli and a large corner café/restaurant, plus a pre-existing clothes shop – inviting a cross-section of the public to visit the renovated building.



SLOANE STREET, KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
 JOHN MCASLAN + PARTNERS FOR CADOGAN
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: N/A

This site has been reimagined as a people-focused, ecologically rich 'green boulevard' extending 1km between Knightsbridge and Sloane Square. The work of a multidisciplinary team, it is the street's biggest change in almost 250 years. Formerly dominated by traffic and crumbling pavements, it now offers an elegant, welcoming and climate-responsive public realm that integrates with a leading luxury retail destination and thriving community. The scheme widens pavements by 23%, introduces over 100 new trees and extensive seasonal planting, and establishes generous amenity zones that encourage dwell time, sociability and safe movement. A palette of Yorkstone paving, handcrafted granite planters, brass detailing and Arts-and-Crafts-inspired lighting reinstates a sense of place rooted in heritage and craft.



URBAN NATURE PROJECT, NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM, KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
 FEILDEN FOWLES FOR NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 550M² + 185M²

The NHM's 2ha gardens have been made over from underused asset to oasis. Responding to the need to better understand the UK's changing urban nature, this project unites geology, horticulture, palaeontology, interpretation and architecture to enhance biodiversity, accessibility and research. Two new pavilions with learning spaces, a lab, volunteer and gardener facilities and a café are integrated into the landscape. The Nature Discovery Garden extends woodland, grassland and wetland habitats while the Darwin Centre and Courtyard explore 'future nature' via pioneer species, water reuse and resilient planting. Project Architect of the Year sponsored by Lumion, Matthew Glen



THE GRAND COURTYARD AND PAVILION AT THE OWO, WESTMINSTER
 DAEWHA KANG DESIGN FOR THE HINDUJA GROUP
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 150M²

A stone's throw from Trafalgar Square, this project is part of an effort to make Whitehall a more open and inviting district. A hotel and residences occupy the Grade II*-listed Old War Office (OWO), with the outdoor quadrangle offering an opportunity to give the project a more public face. The client's vision for this as the main urban arrival space has seen the transformation of the former car drop-off and loading area. A restaurant pavilion of glass and mirrored stainless steel activates the space, balanced by a large water feature that introduces a biophilic counterpoint to the existing stone architecture. Supported by Historic England, the architect developed a fresh pattern for the courtyard's cobbles, bringing old and new into a cohesive composition.

Integrated Access Requirements: Security Meets Aesthetic Design

Whatever the access requirements of your project, we ensure fast, informed advice and support. Selecting the right type of solution for a project can have a significant effect on usability, standards compliance, fire safety and building aesthetics.





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UNCLE WEMBLEY GARDENS, BRENT
HOWELLS FOR HUB LIVING
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 20,330M²

Adding a distinctive backdrop to an area undergoing regeneration, Wembley Gardens' elegant square-plan towers provide affordable homes for rent and are helping redefine Wembley's town centre, acting as a catalyst for further investment. Like early-20th-century neighbours such as Olympia and Park Lane, the buildings are sleek with horizontal openings, and balconies offer light and views. Warm white brick banding evokes high-speed linear movement, conjured by Wembley's Art Deco and 'streamline moderne' styles. This contrasts with dark ribbon glazing and metalwork detailing, ensuring the project looks as good from the street as from a speeding railway carriage.



NOTTING HILL AND EALING HIGH SCHOOL JUNIOR SCHOOL, EALING
HAWKINS\BROWN FOR GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST (GDST)
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 2,699M²

This new junior school is an environmentally responsible facility providing high-quality teaching environments. Its layout is simple: two pitched-roof buildings connected by a central block to create a clear, welcoming entrance. Various forms and materials, including vibrant green glazed brick, hit-and-miss brickwork and a central rooftop lantern, contribute to a dynamic exterior that responds to its context. The site includes 14 junior-school classrooms, additional sixth-form classrooms, specialist teaching spaces, a light-filled library and a large multifunctional hall. Outdoors is a science garden, forest school area, play area for reception pupils, and playground for other years. This outside space has been key to making learning a hands-on experience.



GODOLPHIN AND LATYMER SCHOOL, HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM
WALTERS & COHEN ARCHITECTS FOR
GODOLPHIN AND LATYMER SCHOOL
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 1,193M²

The brief for this project was to improve undersized dining and underused library facilities at Godolphin and Latymer School. The economically and environmentally savvy design retains much of the ground slab and ground-floor cloistered facade, with a 1960s single-storey building above being demolished to make way for a new two-storey library. The result is more dining capacity connected to the existing dining room, a well-used library on two floors, improved site-wide circulation and accessibility, newly freed-up spaces, and a sixth-form centre integrated with the rest of the school for the first time.



PADDINGTON SQUARE, WESTMINSTER
RENZO PIANO BUILDING WORKSHOP (PARIS) IN COLLABORATION
WITH ADAMSON ASSOCIATES (LONDON) FOR SELLAR
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 63, 617M²

This project redefines the public realm on Paddington station's southeastern side. It introduces a 5,450m² piazza in place of a narrow arrival road, connecting the station to a new underground ticket hall beneath an 18-storey mixed-use development in the plot's northern corner. This civic space enhances pedestrian movement, reconnects streets previously severed by infrastructure, and provides a step-free entrance to the Bakerloo line alongside an expanded ticket hall. The development includes 32,500m² of Grade-A office space, 33 retail units, cafés and restaurants, as well as a publicly accessible rooftop terrace with panoramic views of London.



SPACE HOUSE, CAMDEN

SQUIRE & PARTNERS, ATELIER TEN, PELL FRISCHMANN, DONALD INSALL ASSOCIATES, GUSTAFSON PORTER + BOWMAN, GARDINER & THEOBALD AND BAM FOR QUADREAL AND SEAFORTH LAND
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 35,972M²

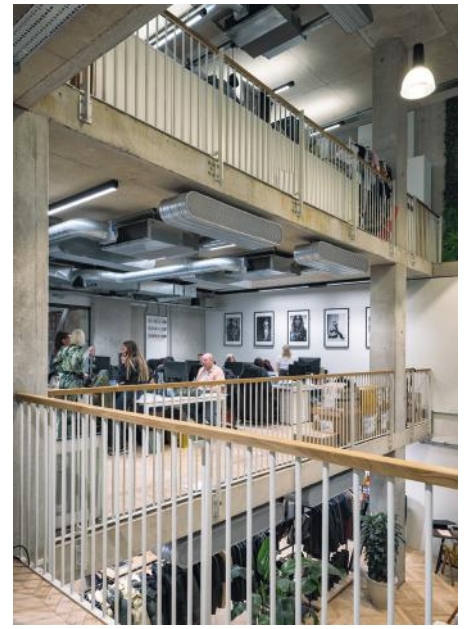
A symbol of the 1960s commercial property boom, Space House is a Grade II-listed modernist icon designed by Richard Seifert and Partners, featuring a cylindrical tower with a precast cruciform facade sitting on Y-shaped columns, a rectilinear block and a connecting bridge. Squire & Partners' retrofit removes layers of later interventions while adding a rooftop extension to accommodate nearly 24,000m² of workspace, ground-floor retail spaces and an improved public realm. The building's strongly articulated facade has been sustainably restored to respect its character. By harmonising conservation with public access, sustainable practice and civic ambition, the project turns an important listed building into a dynamic third place that fosters connection, creativity and pride of place – an exemplar of heritage-led regeneration with lasting public benefit.
 Conservation Award



SPID THEATRE, KENSAL HOUSE COMMUNITY ROOMS, KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

STUDIO SAM CAUSER FOR SPID THEATRE
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 301M²

The refurbishment of the Grade II*-listed Kensal House Community Rooms restores the social heart of Maxwell Fry and Elizabeth Denby's pioneering 1937 modernist estate, designed as an 'urban village' with nurseries, workshops, gardens and social rooms at its base. The Community Rooms had fallen into disrepair: dark, damp, inaccessible to wheelchair users and pushchairs, and stripped of much of their historic fabric. Working with youth theatre charity SPID, the residents' association and RBKC, Studio Sam Causer led a five-year transformation funded by the National Lottery, the Mayor of London and Arts Council England. It reinstates lost features, including the steel-framed fenestration, repairs original concrete fabric and reorders the plan. A new lift, staircase and ramped corridor now provide intuitive and dignified access for all, while discreetly integrating modern services to enable the building, reopened in 2024, to function as a 21st-century community theatre.
 Client of the Year



ARTHUR STANLEY HOUSE, CAMDEN

ALLFORD HALL MONAGHAN MORRIS FOR WESTBROOK PROPERTIES
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 7,555M²

Located in the Charlotte Street conservation area, this project has reinvented Arthur Stanley House, a decaying 1960s office block. It celebrates the original TP Bennett building alongside its 21st-century additions. New and old are left exposed and presented within the floorplates to show the building's development over time. The client and design team both saw value in working with the existing building, which had a rich palette of materials including London stock bricks, terracotta and dense aggregate concrete, which new additions could complement. The design was also driven by a low-carbon approach: 70% of the original structure was retained, and extra care taken during demolition to preserve original bricks to be reused on the upper floors as the building height increased. Internal finishes have been pared back to expose brickwork and concrete as a self-finished material, and the new extensions all have concrete brick facades, which have a third less embodied carbon compared with typical clay bricks.





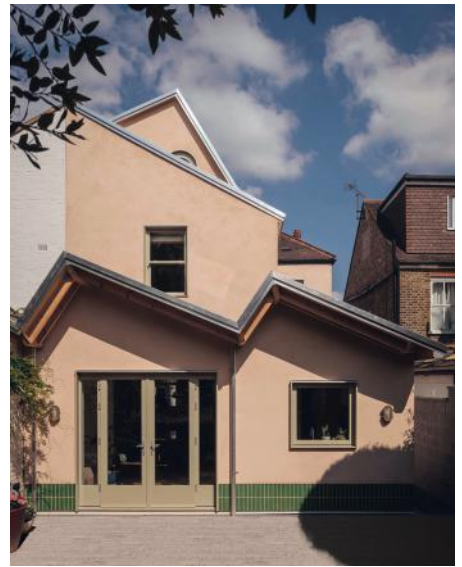
GREENSIDE ROAD, HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM
 MADOR ARCHITECTS AND TRICIA GUILD
 FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 262M²

The brief for this home for a couple sought to integrate disabled access and hospital-standard care suite requirements for one of the clients – who has been quadriplegic since an accident 10 years ago – into a new residence converted from a former industrial car spray paint workshop. The site lies within a conservation area, where the building is virtually invisible from the street, being formed largely from roofs spanning between the walls of the surrounding buildings in an ad-hoc manner, and having an awkward stepped connection to the street. Despite the structure lacking any outside space, the brief sought to create connections with the outdoors as far as was possible.



HEBRON HOUSE, HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM
 PAUL ARCHER DESIGN FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 161M²

This carefully crafted project shows how a traditional London Victorian home can be adapted to meet the demands of modern living while embracing sustainable design principles. It entailed a deep retrofit to improve energy performance, enhance spatial efficiency and provide a healthy, comfortable living environment. The project prioritises sustainability using breathable wood-fibre insulation, which enhances thermal efficiency without compromising the original structure, and integrates an air-source heat pump to replace gas-fired heating and hot water. Additionally, the inclusion of a mechanical ventilation with heat recovery system ensures excellent indoor air quality while minimising heat loss.



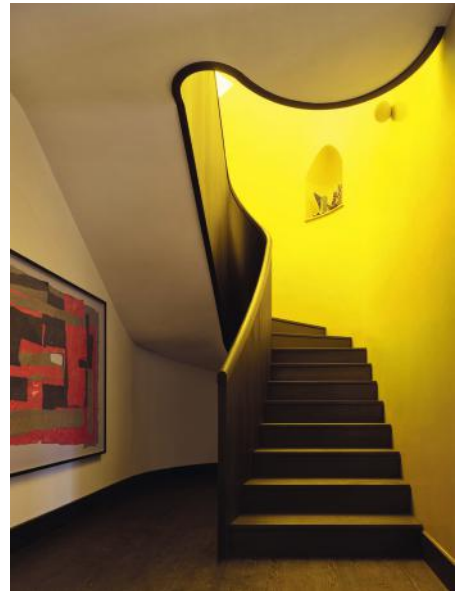
TWIN PITCHES, EALING
 ATELIER BAULIER FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
 VALUE: £447,000 GIA: 190M² PER M²: £2,352

Bought in probate, Twin Pitches is the retrofit and extension of a run-down Edwardian semi. The brief called for remodelling and futureproofing for a family of four with two teenagers. A rear lean-to made way for a new wraparound extension, with an outrigger flank wall opened to create the bright, generous kitchen dining area. An opening was cut in the roof to insert a volume housing an extended stairwell and an extra bedroom. The new forms take cues from the existing roof slopes, the ground-floor extension's sawtooth profile echoing the upper levels. Natural materials and low-carbon methods were used throughout, including screw piles for the extension foundations. A heat pump complements the high-performing fabric.

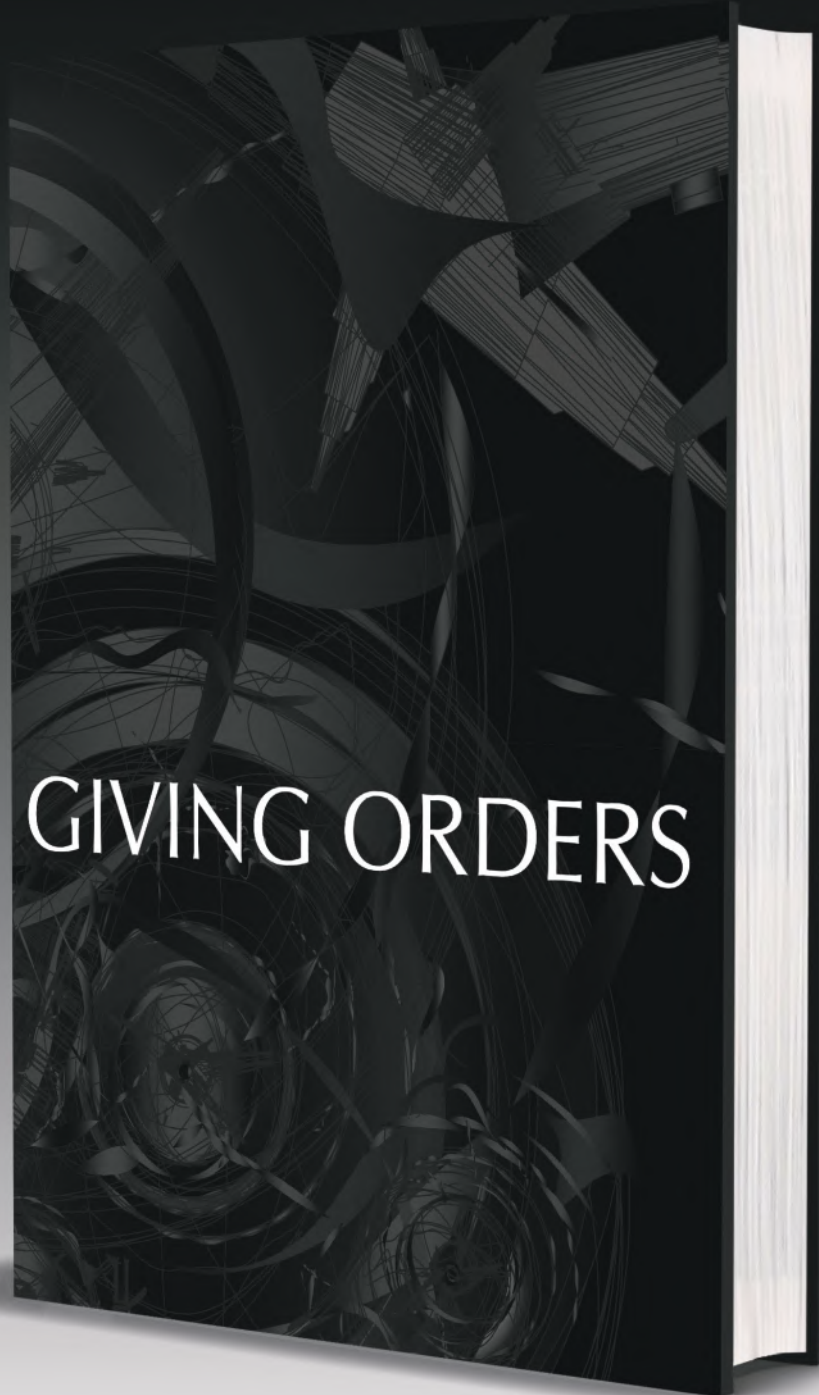


SMART'S PLACE, CAMDEN
 DAVID KOHN ARCHITECTS FOR CRISPIN KELLY
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 213M²

While many rooftop extensions extrude the plan of their host building or are secondary in character, this two-storey apartment above a former Victorian warehouse treats the roof space as a new ground plane. It responds to surrounding rooflines, while its plan recalls pre-modern town houses, with an arrangement of living rooms with projecting bay windows. Rooms are arranged as an enfilade of polygons – bays, apses, squares and pentagons – each one with views across richly planted outdoor terraces. Interiors include undulating ceilings for improved acoustics, wall niches for the client's ceramic collection, and striped wainscoting. The colour of materials varies throughout which, combined with coloured light, completes this rooftop retreat's bold, unexpected character.



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NORTH EAST

5
WINNING
PROJECTS

£13.2M
TOTAL COST
OF PROJECTS

2,805M²
TOTAL
GIA

£3,058
AVERAGE PROJECT
COST PER M²

3
PROJECTS BY PRACTICES
WITH STUDIOS IN THE REGION

2
PROJECTS BY PRACTICES
WITHOUT STUDIOS IN THE REGION



MONO HOUSE, NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE

SCOTT DONALD ARCHITECTURE FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 223M²

Mono House is a replacement single-storey dwelling in a small rural village just outside Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Because of the poor quality of the previous bungalow's 1970s fabric and the need to increase the floor area significantly, a sustainable new-build construction was selected as the best solution to meet the client couple's brief. Located at the end of a row of houses with open country views, the new house recedes quietly from the road, with a shadow-like external palette of dark grey handmade Danish brick and a horizontal band of charred larch cladding. In material terms, it has more in common with its agricultural neighbours than with nearby houses. What sets Mono House apart is its unwavering commitment to detail – in equal parts exquisite and understated. The rigorous adherence to a seemingly simple, though technically challenging, set of rules brings harmony and serenity to the whole building.

Building of the Year sponsored by dormakaba

LOCOMOTION NEW HALL, DURHAM

AOC ARCHITECTURE FOR THE NATIONAL RAILWAY MUSEUM

VALUE: £7M GIA: 1,964M² PER M²: £2,241

Locomotion New Hall, a new collections building for the National Railway Museum's Shildon site, shows how a world-class museum can also offer sociable infrastructure for its local community. It is an innovative addition to the 1km-long museum campus, transforming a redundant industrial site, activating the landscape and connecting contemporary display halls, historic railway structures, a public park and surrounding neighbourhoods. Conceived as an open-access collection store, the building combines the material efficiencies of ubiquitous industrial sheds with a white-cube gallery's calm simplicity, enabling greater enjoyment of the museum's collection. By displaying a national collection in a publicly accessible landscape, New Hall improves the museum site and supports its role in the regeneration of Shildon, the world's first railway town.

Project Architect of the Year sponsored by Lumion, Hannah Stringer

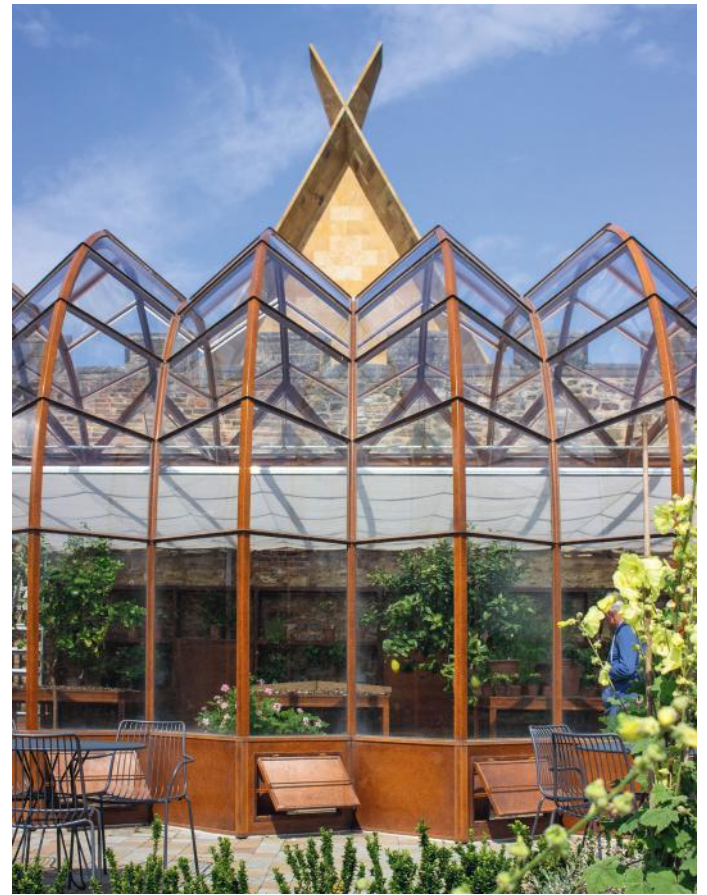
[Sustainability Award](#)





THE LIMEWORKS, NORTHUMBERLAND
 STUDIO-NORTH FOR JAMES AND KATIE KEMP
 VALUE: £378,500 GIA: 167M² PER M²: £2,266

Dating to the 1800s, this site was known for its lime quarrying and burning industry before transitioning to farming as the trade declined. The project began in 2019 with a site meeting to explore James and Katie's vision: to reinvigorate the farmstead into an architecturally striking getaway where visitors could relax and immerse themselves in Northumberland's beauty. The project involved renovating a stone granary and a metal-clad outbuilding into two holiday cottages. Over a two-year self-build period, the design evolved via collaboration with local tradespeople, sourcing materials from across the North East. The Lime Works welcomed its first guests in 2024, offering a blend of historic character, contemporary design and Northumberland charm.
 Small Project of the Year
 Client of the Year



WALLED GARDEN, AUCKLAND CASTLE, DURHAM
 MAWSONKERR ARCHITECTS FOR THE AUCKLAND PROJECT
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 51M²

Set apart from the town by a stone wall and gateway off the Market Place, the grounds of Auckland Castle unfold as a sequence of spaces, from the south-facing Walled Garden to wild parkland. The former is key to the castle's transformation into a visitor destination. Designed with landscape architect Pip Morrison, it offers a feast for the senses through a productive lower and sensory upper garden, anchored by a new glasshouse on the line of historic hothouses. This featherlight structure operates as a space for propagation and growing. Its form complements the solidity of adjoining stonework, echoing the proportions of garden wall crenellations. Together with a sunken maintenance building and repair of the Grade II-listed walls, these elements revive the garden's character and open it to new audiences.
 Conservation Award

NEWCASTLE COURTYARD HOUSE, NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE
 MILTIADOU COOK MITZMAN AND MUSSON BROWN ARCHITECTS
 FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 400M²

In 2019, Miltiadou Cook Mitzman was commissioned to design this low-energy courtyard home, replacing an outdated, thermally inefficient property. Offsite manufacture began in 2020 using cross-laminated timber, speeding construction, lowering carbon and minimising waste. The home engages with its Edwardian context via red brick, stone and Corten steel, with contemporary geometry and detailing. At its heart is a courtyard framed by garden rooms and self-supporting pergolas. The scheme is designed to Lifetime Homes Standards with ground-source heating, whole-house ventilation, photovoltaics and a planted roof.



NORTH WEST

6
WINNING
PROJECTS

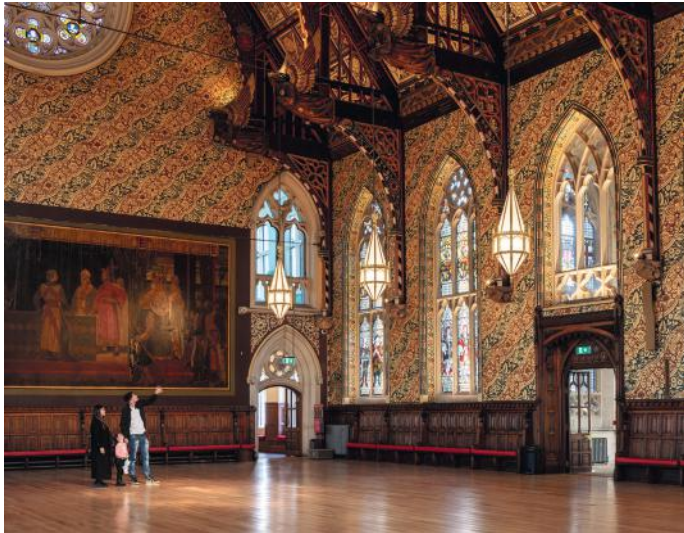
£152.6M
TOTAL COST
OF PROJECTS

49,159M²
TOTAL
GIA

£2,789
AVERAGE PROJECT
COST PER M²

4
PROJECTS BY PRACTICES
WITH STUDIOS IN THE REGION

2
PROJECTS BY PRACTICES
WITHOUT STUDIOS IN THE REGION



ROCHDALE TOWN HALL, GREATER MANCHESTER

DONALD INSALL ASSOCIATES FOR ROCHDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 6,653M²

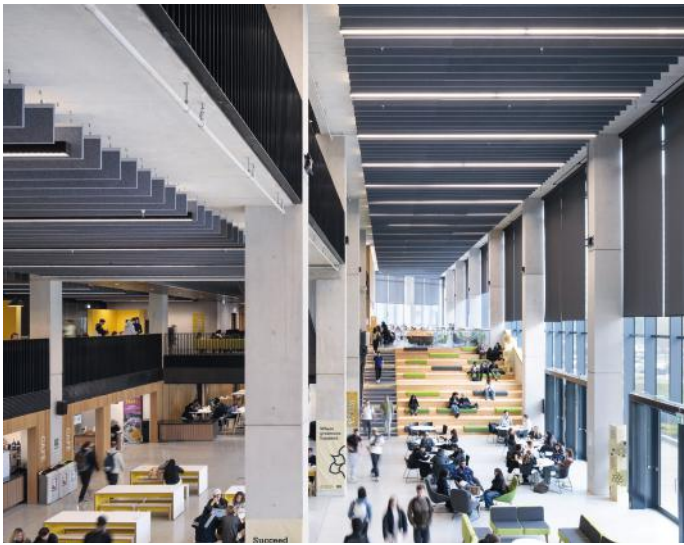
Rochdale Town Hall reopened to the public after a major transformation, combining meticulous conservation of historic interiors with bold interventions to improve physical and intellectual access. Historic England describes this Grade I-listed Victorian gem as “rivalled in importance only by those contained within the Palace of Westminster”. Visitors can now access previously unseen spaces – such as the Bright Hall – and the surrounding public realm, once a car park, has been reimagined as the UK’s largest pedestrianised town square. Environmental and social sustainability sit at the heart of the scheme. Energy-efficient systems, roof insulation and air-source heat pumps reduce carbon emissions by approximately 190t annually. The project has created around 1,200 volunteer, training and job opportunities and its on-site heritage skills studio embeds training within the community. The Town Hall now stands as a symbol of civic pride, heritage-led regeneration and inclusive design. Project Architect of the Year sponsored by Lumion, Rebecca Mills Client of the Year sponsored by Shackerley Conservation Award



BYRE HOUSE, CUMBRIA

MAWSONKERR ARCHITECTS FOR BEN PAWLE AND ROSIE DIAS
(WITH ASSISTANCE FROM THE CLIENTS)
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 277M²

Byre House is a home, studio and landscape ensemble for a young family returning to the Cumbrian hills. It proposes a modern model for rural living: enabled by digital connectivity yet deeply rooted in agricultural memory. The design embraces the farmstead’s “logic of addition”, repairing a historic stone barn as the home’s social heart while extending a T-shaped wing for private life. This composition is underpinned by rigorous environmental ambition; the highly insulated, airtight fabric ensures the home is robust in both performance and character. Through subtle level shifts and framed views, the architecture choreographs experiences that evolve with the seasons. Agricultural materials are reinterpreted with refined detailing at flashings and reveals to bring a quiet precision to the whole. Byre House demonstrates how historic enhancement and high-performance living can be woven together with richness, humility and enduring quality. [Sustainability Award](#)



THE DALTON BUILDING (FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING), GREATER MANCHESTER

BDP WITH 5PLUS ARCHITECTS FOR MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 33,168M²

The Dalton Building is a welcoming gateway for students, staff, visitors and the community. On a prominent urban site, it reconnects campus and neighbourhood, creating an open civic frontage that strengthens the university's presence. A flagship teaching and research facility, it unites scientists from all departments to foster cross-disciplinary collaboration, and celebrates science by making it visible. Transparent facades, open circulation routes and views into laboratories allow the faculty's work to be seen and understood. A low-carbon, comfort-led environmental strategy underpins the design. Exposed thermal mass, natural materials and optimised daylighting reduce embodied and operational energy demands while creating bright, calm interiors. High-efficiency building services prioritise long-term energy performance, ensuring a resilient, sustainable building for the future. Building of the Year sponsored by dormakaba



FOUNDATION, CHESHIRE

BDP FOR TRAFFORD COUNCIL & BRUNTWOOD
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 8,721M²

Foundation is a transformative redevelopment of the former Rackhams department store in Altrincham, delivered by Bruntwood and Trafford Council and designed by BDP. The scheme reimagines a redundant retail building as a vibrant mixed-use hub, combining flexible workspaces, co-working areas, retail, dining and leisure amenities. The project works with the existing building – retaining the concrete frame and much of its fabric – and demonstrates a pragmatic approach to reuse at scale. Central to the design are a lightweight two-storey extension added on top of the retained rooftop car-park slab, a light-filled atrium, and a striking living wall that enhances biodiversity and visual identity. Sustainability underpins the project, with adaptive reuse reducing embodied carbon, an all-electric energy strategy, and future-proofing measures aligned with net-zero goals. Foundation revitalises the high street, improves connectivity, and fosters community engagement, setting a benchmark for urban regeneration and adaptive reuse of large, ageing retail buildings.



KEMPSTON STREET, MERSEYSIDE

STUDIO MUTT FOR TRY + LILY PROPERTIES
VALUE: £220,000 GIA: 173M²

Studio MUTT has created its own home and a creative space by refurbishing a 20th-century hat factory in Liverpool's Fabric District. It originally had long brick facades, small pillbox windows and uninsulated interiors. Internal brick and blockwork has been painted warm white to increase light while preserving texture. A central utility block splits the space into front and rear studios, enabling flexible use, while roof ventilation holes became mirror-lined rooflights. Externally, the scheme improves the factory's presence, creating a recognisable contemporary workspace. Kempston Street shows how underutilised, unlisted factories can be sensitively adapted. It functions as a studio, archive and creative testbed, and a replicable model for the Fabric District, balancing environmental upgrades, spatial flexibility and a strong identity. Small Project of the Year



BANK BARN REIMAGINED, LANCASHIRE

GAGARIN STUDIO ARCHITECTS
FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 167M²

Bank Barn is a new dwelling within an abandoned field barn on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Such barns are a fundamental part of the character of the landscape, yet in recent decades they have been in decline as agricultural practices shift. The National Park seeks to transform barns into environmental assets that contribute to the local community and economy. Keeping as much of the fabric as possible, the conversion enhances the context and character of the host building, while celebrating local craft. The existing structure remains entirely legible. Within this robust shell, Gagarin Studio has crafted a refined and spatially rich domestic setting, with light and views drawn through a sequence of connected spaces that vary in character and scale. A palette of timber, metal, concrete and existing stone creates a unified and composed interior that sits comfortably within the building's agricultural character.

origin

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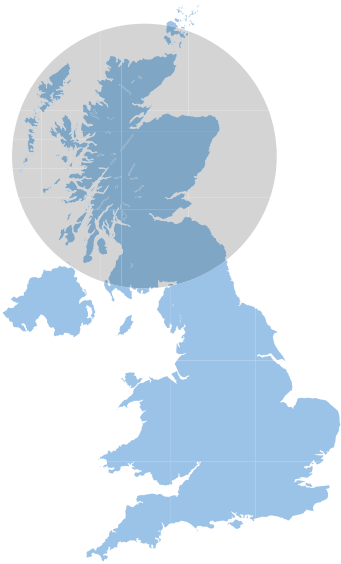


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SCOTLAND



10
WINNING
PROJECTS

£278.4M
TOTAL COST
OF PROJECTS

59,578M²
TOTAL
GIA

£5,474
AVERAGE PROJECT
COST PER M²

7
PROJECTS BY PRACTICES
WITH STUDIOS IN THE REGION

3
PROJECTS BY PRACTICES
WITHOUT STUDIOS IN THE REGION



PAISLEY CENTRAL LIBRARY, PAISLEY
COLLECTIVE ARCHITECTURE FOR RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL
VALUE: £4.2M GIA: 1,075M² PER M²: £3,907

Built in 1876 and modified in the 1960s, the existing library on a former townhouse plot on Paisley High Street needed structural upgrading, notably to support increased loading and fire-safety guidance. The renewed building pairs exposed brick walls with considered steel insertions, reflecting the city's energy and grain while providing a calm and welcoming interior environment. Strategically placed apertures encourage visual connections, inviting exploration and discovery. Interior spaces are full of light, variety and spatial richness – ranging from lively social zones to quiet, contemplative corners – that supports multiple uses, with visitors arriving from early morning. It shows how underused high-street buildings can become destinations, and that libraries can move beyond being repositories of books to be inspirational hubs for learning, engagement and social connection.

NEILSTON LEARNING CAMPUS, GLASGOW

BDP FOR EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL
VALUE: £24M GIA: 4,154M² PER M²: £5,772

Neilston Learning Campus demonstrates how architecture can support learning and social interaction while maintaining connection to its context. At the heart of the school lies a generous central area, enabled by slender steel columns that provide for a large, unobstructed span. Both prominent and configurable, it fosters collaboration and creativity. Innovation in pedagogy and social engagement is evident in two mini amphitheatres – one for drama, one for science – which provide students with flexible zones for performance, experimentation and informal learning. Covered play areas, generous outdoor routes and considered exterior spaces extend the learning environment, promoting active lifestyles and engagement with nature for both students and the wider community. At Neilston Learning Campus, careful design, spatial clarity and a focus on social and educational value produce a building that is inspiring, enduring and socially vibrant, and acts as a model for contemporary learning spaces.



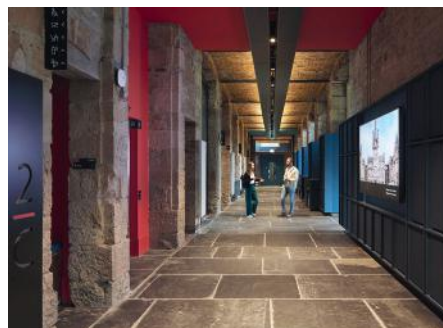


TARLAIR OUTDOOR POOL PAVILION, MACDUFF
 STUDIO OCTOPI FOR FRIENDS OF TARLAIR
 COMMUNITY GROUP
 VALUE: £1.8M GIA: 166M² PER M²: £10,843

Set in a dramatic coastal landscape in Aberdeenshire, this Art Deco complex is the best-preserved of only three surviving examples of outdoor seaside pools in Scotland. The refurbishment combines careful conservation with a modest, well-considered extension reinforcing the original baths' character. Internal upgrades improve usability and comfort while preserving the historic atmosphere, ensuring the building feels familiar yet renewed. Ongoing restoration of the deep-water and diving pools reflects sustained commitment to bringing the entire complex back to life, creating a destination for recreation and community engagement. It also offers huge potential to further interact with its context via hill-sourced water management strategies, offering integration of built form with natural systems. Tarlair Pools grew from a love of wild swimming, turning a personal obsession into a project of wider community benefit. It now welcomes visitors from early morning and provides space for leisure and enjoyment. It's an exemplar for clients and architects, showing how good stewardship and close attention to context and detail can reinvigorate heritage to create socially and environmentally relevant architecture. RIAS Gilmour & Aitken Client of the Year Award

EDINBURGH FUTURES INSTITUTE, EDINBURGH
 BENNETTS ASSOCIATES FOR THE UNIVERSITY
 OF EDINBURGH
 VALUE: £120M GIA: 21,000M² PER M²: £5,714

This project integrates complex interventions with existing fabric of the Grade A-listed 1870s Scottish Baronial Royal Infirmary building. Widening the spine circulation preserves and enhances the original building, aligning the new concrete structure on the same grid and providing generous, dynamic new connecting staircases. Corner turret escapes, structural reinforcement and subtle insertions display technical mastery while preserving historic integrity. Interiors combine clarity, fine detailing and careful materiality. The scheme offers a visually compelling, technically exemplary and socially significant piece of academic architecture. RIAS/TCM Capital Innovation Award RIAS/Laurence McIntosh Award for Architectural Interiors



PARKHEAD HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE AND COMMUNITY HUB, GLASGOW
 HOSKINS ARCHITECTS FOR NHS GREATER
 GLASGOW & CLYDE
 VALUE: £52.3M GIA: 10,743M² PER M²: £4,866

Local healthcare and community services get a huge boost from this hub's clear, human-centred architecture. External volumes are legible and well-defined, reflecting careful organisation of internal spaces. The plan optimises circulation while connecting healthcare functions with ancillary facilities. Consulting rooms are generous and flexible, with no hint of the institutional feel sometimes associated with NHS facilities. Abundant natural light and considered planning ensure accessibility, comfort and legibility for staff and users. It is a piece of civic architecture that is simultaneously functional, engaging, and community-focused, showing how design can transform everyday services into inspiring spaces.





ST ANDREW'S DRIVE PHASES 2 & 3, GLASGOW
JMARCHITECTS FOR SOUTHSIDE HOUSING ASSOCIATION
VALUE: £22.4M GIA: 10,648M² PER M²: £2,103

St Andrew's Drive combines clarity, innovation and architectural ambition. The masterplan arranges clusters of blocks around central shared greens and SuDS areas, encouraging interaction among residents of its 100% social housing, who benefit from equitable access to well-designed homes. The stacked maisonette typology smartly negotiates a sloped site and optimises daylight, with circulation, entrances and communal spaces thoughtfully designed to balance sociability and privacy. Provision for renewable energy retrofitting ensures the scheme can remain resilient over time. It exemplifies how developments with a social purpose can achieve architectural excellence while creating enduring, vibrant communities.



USHER BUILDING, UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH, EDINBURGH
HASSELL FOR UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
VALUE: £50M GIA: 11,111M² PER M²: £4,500

At this population health research and innovation hub in Edinburgh's BioQuarter, light-flooded interiors are designed to inspire and engage, with careful attention paid to spatial sequence and legible connectivity. Winter gardens on the north and south sides offer visual drama and areas for socialising; conference rooms overlooking the volumes provide flexible workspace that promotes collaboration, interaction and learning. Details such as delicate balustrades and articulated slab edges offer subtle rhythm and texture, elevating the spatial experience and reflecting a rigorous attention to craft. The building, designed with longevity and adaptability in mind, balances civic ambition, technical innovation and human-centred design.



IORRAM, PLOCKTON, LOCHALSH
BAILLIE BAILLIE ARCHITECTS FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
VALUE: £210,000 GIA: 38M² PER M²: £5,526

This innovative Highland new-build project shows how a well-thought-out approach to construction and form can turn a small home into a rich, spatially nuanced environment. A standout moment is the seamless skylight above the bath area, achieved via precise placement of timber beams – a simple gesture that elevates the everyday experience into something extraordinary. A grounded, heavy base contrasts elegantly with razor-sharp roof edges, creating visual tension. Material choices are key to the building's success: locally sourced Douglas fir, clay blocks and traditional clay-and-lime harling provide this functional yet highly poetic home with a tactile connection to its context.

RIAS/CTI Timber Award
RIAS/Luths Services Sustainability Award

THE CANNA HOUSE PROJECT, ISLE OF CANNA
LDN ARCHITECTS FOR THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 526M²

This 1865 Category B-listed house holds an internationally significant collection of Gaelic culture. The project set out to conserve and present it in its postwar 'heyday' while creating conditions to protect the archive. This involved extensive structural and services repairs and specialist conservation: some delicate items could not be removed, so work – including structural modifications – had to be done by hand to minimise vibration. One wing was reduced to its shell and rebuilt to create a thermally stable archive at first floor, with original rooms conserved below. Environmental performance was improved with a novel system that regulates humidity rather than temperature, cutting energy use. RIAS/VELUX Architectural Heritage Award



PRESTON TOWER, DOOCOT & GARDENS, EAST LOTHIAN
GRAS FOR EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND AND PRESTONPANS COMMUNITY COUNCIL
VALUE: £1.2M GIA: N/A

This restoration of a historic ruin in a formal community garden in Prestonpans has made light-touch interventions – including a staircase, deck, and detailed apertures – to enhance usability while respecting historic fabric. Parts of the tower date to the 15th century, with the surrounding park loved by the community. Repairs have been carried out in pale, sharp sandstone; clearly showing what is original and what has been intervened on. The restoration shows careful stewardship of heritage, improving access and enjoyment. RIAS/Equitone Project Architect Award, Natasha Huq

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WALES



5
WINNING
PROJECTS

£17.6M
TOTAL COST
OF PROJECTS

5,524M²
TOTAL
GIA

£3,518
AVERAGE PROJECT
COST PER M²

3
PROJECTS BY PRACTICES
WITH STUDIOS IN THE REGION

2
PROJECTS BY PRACTICES
WITHOUT STUDIOS IN THE REGION



PANTYBARA, CARMARTHENSHIRE

RURAL OFFICE FOR NIALL AND HELEN MAXWELL

VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 127M²

Pantybara is a revival and reinterpretation of a Welsh farmstead in Carmarthenshire, created with a thorough understanding of context, a willingness to experiment, and an inbuilt flexibility that has allowed the project to shift with its owners' needs. The contemporary home, set within an extraordinary garden, is a highly successful fusion of architecture and landscape design. It consists of a new-build farmhouse adjoining a single-storey range of repurposed former agricultural buildings. This elongated arrangement references the traditional Welsh tŷ hir or longhouse, before opening out to form a wedge-shaped plan at the western end. Each elevation overlooks a garden: a courtyard to the north, raised terraces and a pond to the west, and a woodland garden to the south. The facade offers a play of motifs and details, while internal details such as woven fire surrounds (echoing the wicker hoods of Welsh bythynnod or bothies) underscore the deep respect for context and love of craft evident throughout.



ST BEUNO'S JESUIT SPIRITUALITY CENTRE EAST WING, DENBIGHSHIRE

CHAMBERS CONSERVATION FOR ST BEUNO'S JESUIT SPIRITUALITY CENTRE

VALUE: £2.125M GIA: 890M² PER M²: £2,387

St. Beuno's is a Grade II*-listed building largely built in 1848 and situated in a National Landscape. Still owned by the Jesuits who built it, since 1980 St Beuno's has been a spirituality centre, welcoming over 2,000 guests each year. Chambers Conservation has been working with the client since 2017 on a multiphase project, which started with a long-term strategic masterplan and conservation plan. The East Wing phase consists of a new conference room with capacity to hold all the residents (70 bedrooms), with four accessible bedrooms for guests, breakout rooms and a new entrance with lift access to the main chapel. As well as extensive conservation works to the historic fabric, the phase has introduced a new catering kitchen, while converting the former kitchen into a dining space and servery. The investment demonstrates the powerful effects of thoughtful intervention, and will provide considerable support for the building's future.

Project Architect of the Year sponsored by Lumion, Robert Chambers

SEVERN VIEW PARK, MONMOUTHSHIRE
 PENTAN ARCHITECTS FOR
 MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
 VALUE: £8M GIA: 2,261M² PER M²: £3,500

In Portskewett, Monmouthshire, Severn View Park is a pioneering facility designed to redefine dementia care. Commissioned by Monmouthshire County Council and completed in March 2024, the single-storey building offers 24 residential bedrooms for people living with dementia, and eight short-term rooms for rehabilitation and respite care. It is split into four households, each with direct access to a landscaped courtyard garden, offering sensory zones and activity spaces. At the centre, a pitched-roof village hall acts as a hub for residents and local

people. The design prioritises familiar, comforting environments, supporting memory and independence while creating emotional connections. Staff and residents share domestic life, with open-plan kitchens at the heart of each household. The project exemplifies a shift to social and economic sustainability, with generous communal spaces and natural lighting, and strong links to the surrounding community. Building of the Year sponsored by dormakaba Client of the Year



CRAIG AUCKLAND / FOTOHAUS

PORHMDADOG HOUSE, GWYNEDD
 STROM ARCHITECTS FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 441M²

This replacement dwelling sits on a sloping coastal site with long views toward the Irish Sea and Snowdonia. It responds to exposure, orientation and the shifting character of the landscape, offering moments of openness and shelter. The ground floor, built from locally sourced slate, has the main living spaces and forms a sheltered courtyard. Above, a Corten steel volume is rotated five degrees to align with wider coastal views. Vertical fins along the glazing provide privacy, shading and environmental protection. Materials were chosen for durability and ability to weather well. The internal plan is calm and clear, with living spaces below and bedrooms above. The house feels contemporary yet rooted, shaped by rather than imposed on its context.



JAMES SILVERMAN

IORWERTH JONES, CARDIFF
 PENTAN ARCHITECTS FOR CARDIFF COUNCIL
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 1,806M²

In Llanishen, Cardiff, this scheme of 20 new council homes occupies a 0.5ha site, formerly a healthcare facility. Commissioned by Cardiff Council, it has a mix of two-, three- and four-bed properties designed to exceed Welsh Government design quality requirements. Homes are built from attractive, durable materials such as textured brickwork and reconstituted slate roofs, and have widespread environmental measures. Detailing is simple and robust, elevated by thoughtful touches such as bay windows. Internal space standards are generous. This development shows what can be achieved when an engaged client and project team decide to raise the bar and enhance the quality of residents' daily lives, while creating something of long-term value.



PENTAN ARCHITECTS



NORTHERN IRELAND

2
WINNING
PROJECTS

336M²
TOTAL
GIA

2
PROJECTS BY PRACTICES
WITH STUDIOS IN THE REGION

0
PROJECTS BY PRACTICES
WITHOUT STUDIOS IN THE REGION



QUEEN'S QUAY KIOSK, BELFAST

MMAS ARCHITECTS & OGU ARCHITECTS FOR BELFAST CITY COUNCIL WITH MARITIME TRUST
VALUE: £395,600 GIA: 10.5M²

This new public space, canopy and kiosk, on a post-industrial riverside site, activates an empty urban riverfront between the city and historic docks, creating a contemporary civic and social node that echoes a vibrant industrial past. A frame of two tall colonnades defines its public realm, the proportions and detailing recalling the iron structure of the former station. This formality is softened by bright yellow 'sails' that billow in the breeze, referencing Victorian shopfront awnings and lending a sense of event: below them runs a programme of live DJs, markets, workshops, talks and rallies. Two staggered Corten-steel kiosks sit within the cruciform columns, offering various spatial enclosures and aspects. Folding shutters and sliding doors double as display cases for temporary exhibitions that transform the structure into an open-air gallery. Since opening, this has become a landmark community gathering place; movable and demountable, it can also be deployed elsewhere, bringing people together in spaces that otherwise lie empty, awaiting a more certain future. Small Project of the Year



HOUSE TOLLYMORE, COUNTY DOWN

MCGONIGLE MCGRATH FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 325M²

Set into a riverbank in the shadow of County Down's Mourne Mountains, this house has six parts, expressed as arranged forms that touch each other lightly. Open corners loosely define outdoor space that runs as courtyards between masses, emulating the flow of water around boulders in the river below. Transition from road to garden and on to the river is handled by a stepped plinth. On it, each volume retains a level datum at roof line, as floors drop with the plinth. Openings, to south and west, display a discreet presence to the road but on the garden side embrace both river and views. Monolithic brick walls and windows topped with locally quarried granite gravel aim to make the house read as a grouping of stones in the landscape. Building of the Year



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– Tim Boxford, Executive Director, Maber Architects



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SOUTH

10
WINNING
PROJECTS

£117.4M
TOTAL COST
OF PROJECTS

31,755M²
TOTAL
GIA

£5,238
AVERAGE PROJECT
COST PER M²

2
PROJECTS BY PRACTICES
WITH STUDIOS IN THE REGION

8
PROJECTS BY PRACTICES
WITHOUT STUDIOS IN THE REGION



SOUTH BARN, ISLE OF WIGHT
STUDIO WEAVE FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 149M²

Situated on the Isle of Wight, the rough charm of this family home comes from being embedded in a working farm. A generous, open-plan kitchen and living area forms its heart. Along its north-northeast elevation, a double-height expanse of glazing introduces soft morning light and frames long romantic views across the surrounding farmland. The design follows a light-touch approach, guided by sustainability and a deep respect for the existing building. Minimal changes were made, ensuring the barn's agricultural identity remains intact while adapting it for modern habitation. The architectural approach amplifies the character of the structure rather than replacing it. Original materials are celebrated and left visible, preserving elements that reflect the building's 50-plus-year history. Subtle interventions create uplifting, high-quality spaces while maintaining the simplicity of the barn's past.

Small Project of the Year

THE BRANCH COMMUNITY CENTRE, OXFORDSHIRE
CLEWS ARCHITECTS FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 567M²

St Mary's Church in Chipping Norton had a bold vision to reconfigure and extend a nearby derelict Grade II*-listed NatWest Bank into a centre for the local community. With an ever-growing programme of social services and outreach needing more flexible space than the church could provide, The Branch Trust was formed to develop the new facility in the town's heart. The brief was to sensitively adapt and extend the bank to provide a place flexible enough to meet the growing needs of a community suffering from rural isolation. The challenge was to deliver a fully accessible community centre within the constraints of the historically sensitive structure and setting. The design ethos was to reaffirm the significance of the building's original ranges by replacing later rear extensions in an improved configuration. This involved reconfiguring of all floor levels to match the main range.

Project Architect of the Year sponsored by Lumion, Alex Stevens
Client of the Year
Conservation Award



LORENZO ZANDRI

ANDY MARSHALL



HOUSE IN A BARN, OXFORDSHIRE
 ARTEL31 FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 273M²

This contemporary rural dwelling near Swindon transforms a redundant agricultural structure into a refined, environmentally responsive family home. The project rethinks the traditional barn conversion by working within the existing frame rather than filling it. The result is a layered composition of living spaces that move fluidly between enclosure and openness, warmth and exposure. Artel31 developed the scheme in collaboration with landscape designer Nick Bulley and interior designer Rachel Tilley. Together they shaped a home that responds to its setting through careful integration of architecture, landscape and interior. The project shows how adaptive reuse can yield an end result both deeply rooted in context and progressive in its response to sustainability, climate resilience and the changing patterns of domestic life. Building of the Year sponsored by dormakaba Sustainability Award



CHARLES EMERSON (2)

CHALK RIVER HOUSE, HAMPSHIRE
 OLIVER LEECH ARCHITECTS
 FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 518M²

This new home on the banks of the River Test is composed of three volumes that frame views of the river and landscape. Natural materials, including handmade bricks, lime render and pre-weathered timber, help the house nestle into its rural setting. Calm, flowing spaces connect seamlessly to the outdoors, with generous glazing creating a light-filled, tranquil retreat. By combining modern construction techniques, such as an offsite panelled timber frame system, with sensitive, locally rooted materials, it achieves a balance of efficiency, craft and contextual appropriateness. The result is a home that feels timeless yet forward-thinking, embracing both sustainability and a deep connection to place.



JIN STEPHENSON



HUFTON + CROW

THE SPENCER BUILDING, CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD
 WRIGHT & WRIGHT ARCHITECTS
 FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
 VALUE: £11.8M GIA: 952M² PER M²: £12,342

Set in the heart of Oxford's Corpus Christi College, this project provides a purpose-built home for its collection of manuscripts and early printed books, bringing them together for the first time in a single, environmentally controlled setting. It offers step-free access to the Grade I-listed Old Library, a milestone in the College's 508-year history. The project combines reuse of significant retained fabric with new, carefully crafted interventions suited to a highly sensitive site framed by the medieval city wall, listed facades and Old Library. The building achieves full Passivhaus certification, a rare accomplishment for a library within a heritage context. The result is a sustainable, inclusive and contextually rich addition to the collegiate landscape.

RIDGEWAY HOUSE, OXFORDSHIRE
 CHARLIE LUXTON DESIGN
 FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 456M²

On an escarpment overlooking the Vale of White Horse, this low-energy family home remodels an existing farmstead and makes the most of its elevated site and expansive views. The clients sought a home closer to ageing family members and providing flexible accommodation. The scheme renovates a 19th-century brick barn and combines it with new-build elements as a coherent home. Landscape regeneration underpins the design strategy, reconnecting the house to a revitalised ecological setting. Delivered via a traditional contract, the project linked the architect with structural engineer Nathan Varndell and landscape designer Bestique, working with local contractors to integrate architecture, landscape and heritage.



ED RS AVES



MANOR FARM BARN, HAMPSHIRE
 BHB ARCHITECTS FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 400M²

BHB Architects' project sought to return a Grade I-listed barn with 500-year-old oak framing, which was on Historic England's Buildings at Risk register, to a structurally sound and weathertight condition. It questioned and reassessed traditional carpentry repair techniques via the reasoned, partial dismantling of the historic building. This enabled a notable increase in the retained amount of medieval timbers, through the detailed repair of each frame and its joints across the wider bay-and-aisle construction. The architect undertook calculated, subtle structural repairs including augmenting existing timbers by adding new oak sections; repair work incorporating discreet stainless steel mechanical fixings; and concealed steel strap repairs with demarcated timber pellets. Extensive early-stage research and detailed site assessment both pre-tender and during construction saw the tithe barn brought back into its original use as a grain and machinery store.

WOODLAND QUAD, WELLINGTON COLLEGE, BERKSHIRE
 MICA FOR WELLINGTON COLLEGE
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 3,735M²

Woodland Quad at Wellington College is a progressive expansion of the historic Crowthorne campus, creating a new character area that combines living and learning – sustainable construction within an immersive woodland landscape. The project consists of a co-ed sixth form boarding house, a day house and an energy centre. The buildings employ mass timber construction, low-carbon materials and a ground-source heat pump array combined with new efficient heating sources to the establishment's historic Main College. Their footprints sit over previous development to maintain tree planting. The structures' curved and serrated forms respond to the surrounding Scots pine woodland, maximising light and views while reducing visual impact to the historic south terrace. Woodland Quad is a key move within the college's 25-year estate masterplan, enabling decant, refurbishment and a new approach to co-educational living. It establishes a contemporary yet contextually grounded architectural language, delivering significant wellbeing, environmental and operational benefits for both current and future students.



RICHARD CHEVERS



WILL PRYCE

THE GRADEL QUADRANGLES, OXFORD
 DAVID KOHN ARCHITECTS FOR NEW COLLEGE OXFORD
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 5190M²

This major expansion of one of Oxford's oldest colleges, a significant addition to a historic cityscape, addresses undergraduates' residential, study and pastoral needs. The Gradel Quadrangles contains 94 student bedrooms, a shared study space and a recital hall: an important benefit to Oxford, which lacks state-of-the-art performance venues. The project also has classrooms, an assembly hall and a dining space for the adjacent New College School, plus a landmark 21.5m tower. It extends a tradition of architectural innovation at New College, where the first planned university quadrangle was built in 1379, followed by the first open-sided quad in the 17th century, by including Oxford's first ever curved quad. Sinuous elevations frame a series of landscaped spaces – departing from the typology's closed, quasi-monastic origins, and seeking a more open and welcoming contemporary interpretation that shifts the relationship between university and city.



ANDY STAGG

PLANT, HAMPSHIRE
 FEILDEN CLEGG BRADLEY STUDIOS WITH GRANT ASSOCIATES, TWELVE ARCHITECTS AND STUDIO KNIGHT STOKOE FOR LONGSTOCK CAPITAL
 VALUE: £20M GIA: 19,515M² PER M²: £1,025
 Designed by Arup Associates and completed in 1977, the Grade II-listed Mountbatten House and roof gardens had since seen little modernisation. The scheme revitalises this Basingstoke landmark into a Grade A workplace aligned with BREEAM Outstanding and WELL Platinum standards. It combines sensitive fabric upgrades, comprehensive building services replacement and landscape restoration. Removing partitions and suspended ceilings restores the structure's clarity and connection to the gardens. Upgraded MEP systems free floor area, while new high-performance curtain walling improves daylight and thermal efficiency.

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Project: Noah's Ark
Architect: Squire & Partners
Photo credit: Bridgman & Bridgman LLP



SOUTH EAST

6
WINNING
PROJECTS

£39 MILLION
TOTAL COST
OF PROJECTS

6,009M²
TOTAL
GIA

£5,290
AVERAGE PROJECT
COST PER M²

3
PROJECTS BY PRACTICES
WITH STUDIOS IN THE REGION

3
PROJECTS BY PRACTICES
WITHOUT STUDIOS IN THE REGION



CASA BASSA, SURREY

FRANCESCO PIERAZZI ARCHITECTS FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 66M²

This adaptable retreat on the outskirts of Guildford was built on a site formerly occupied by garages. Commissioned by clients who recently refurbished their adjacent house, the building can flex between guest suite, teenage hangout, office and gym. Its architecture is inspired by the clients' work in AI, translating binary code into a vertical rhythm: timber goalpost frames, zinc and charred timber cladding, battens and porcelain tiles composed as fields and seams, solids and voids, ridges and valleys. A sculptural stair leads to a green-tiled open-air antechamber, while concealed doors disappear within the timber skin. A taller mansard-like roof forms a double-height entry and yields four varied elevations responding to the site. Behind the dark exterior, a loft-like interior is zoned by simple kitchen and storage volumes. Material reuse—including steel girders and the footings of the garages—and a high level of insulation underpin this low-carbon build as well as celebrating the site's history.

Small Project of the Year



CLAY RISE, WEST SUSSEX

TEMPLETON FORD FOR MICHAEL FORD AND HELENA FORD
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 193M²

Clay Rise is a self-built multigenerational rural home in West Sussex, shaped by local heritage, craft, and landscape. Inspired by the region's clay tiles, Arts and Crafts ideals, and local sculptural influences, the design blends tradition with organic expression. A sweeping clay-tile roof, conceived as an uplifting and joyful addition to the area, unfurls over a base of locally handmade brick. Inside, natural materials and flowing forms create a peaceful living environment, carefully crafted through close collaboration between architect, client and local craftsmen. The project had its genesis 25 years ago and was passed down from father to son. As such, there was a deeply personal connection for the architect, who left his job to build Clay Rise as a home for his family. The stacked plan, with the annexe at ground level and parents' home above, is deceptively simple but retains the flexibility to adapt as the family's needs inevitably change over time.

Project Architect of the Year, sponsored by Lumion, Andre Ford



HIGH HOUSE, EAST SUSSEX
 BAKERBROWN STUDIO FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 712M²

High House is built on one of the highest points of the South Downs, on the site of a large bungalow lost to fire in 2017. The new low-carbon home nestles into the south-facing sloping meadow with incredible views across to the Seven Sisters. The house and guest annexe appear as a pair of single-storey chestnut-clad barn structures on a Downland meadow which accommodates much of the house. BakerBrown Studio, together with Local Works Studio and Braden Timber, undertook a local area resource-mapping exercise to locate useful materials on site and nearby: chalk and clay spoil was reprocessed into plaster for internal walls, while burnt bricks and blocks were used for windowsills and copings, ash dieback timber was turned into glulam structure, and sweet chestnut was used for cladding.



IVAN JONES

ST RAPHAEL'S HEALTH & WELLBEING CENTRE, EAST SUSSEX
 ADAM RICHARDS ARCHITECTS FOR MAYFIELD SCHOOL
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 2,77M²

This facility represents a new type of school building, combining medical treatment with counselling and teaching. The innovative brief is matched by the architects' approach to design and layout, and to sustainability – this is the world's first new building to use stone bricks in combination with a cross-laminated timber structure. Its sculptural form subtly reorders its surroundings. From the north, a protecting wall visually gathers existing buildings on the hill behind, creating a gateway to the school and establishing an edge to the wider landscape. To the south, a new planted courtyard is defined by a long, canopied bench, behind which is a cloister-like circulation space. The building's treatment and counselling rooms overlook a "secret garden", making contact with nature a key part of users' experience. The warm, inclusive and welcoming interior spaces are used by as many as 10% of the school's pupils each day. Building of the Year sponsored by dormakaba Sustainability Award

BROTHERTON LOCK

THE RICHARD CAIRNS BUILDING, EAST SUSSEX

KRFT ARCHITECTURE STUDIO AND NICHOLAS HARE ARCHITECTS

FOR BRIGHTON COLLEGE

VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 3,354M²

The Richard Cairns Building is positioned at the heart of Brighton College's 19th-century campus, between George Gilbert Scott's Main Building and the Home Ground playing fields. The building and landscaping engage with their Victorian Gothic neighbours through thoughtful use of materials, massing and proportions. This hybrid school building unites performing arts with a sixth-form centre and classrooms. By elevating the new theatre hall over a public ground floor with café/foyer and sixth-form centre, the building engages with the surrounding campus on all sides, and a generous, daylit central void brings all functions together.



STJUN BOLLAERT

SALTDEAN LIDO MAIN BUILDING, EAST SUSSEX

RH PARTNERSHIP ARCHITECTS FOR DEREK LEAVER,

SALTDEAN LIDO COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY

VALUE: £8M GIA: 1,407M² PER M² £4,825

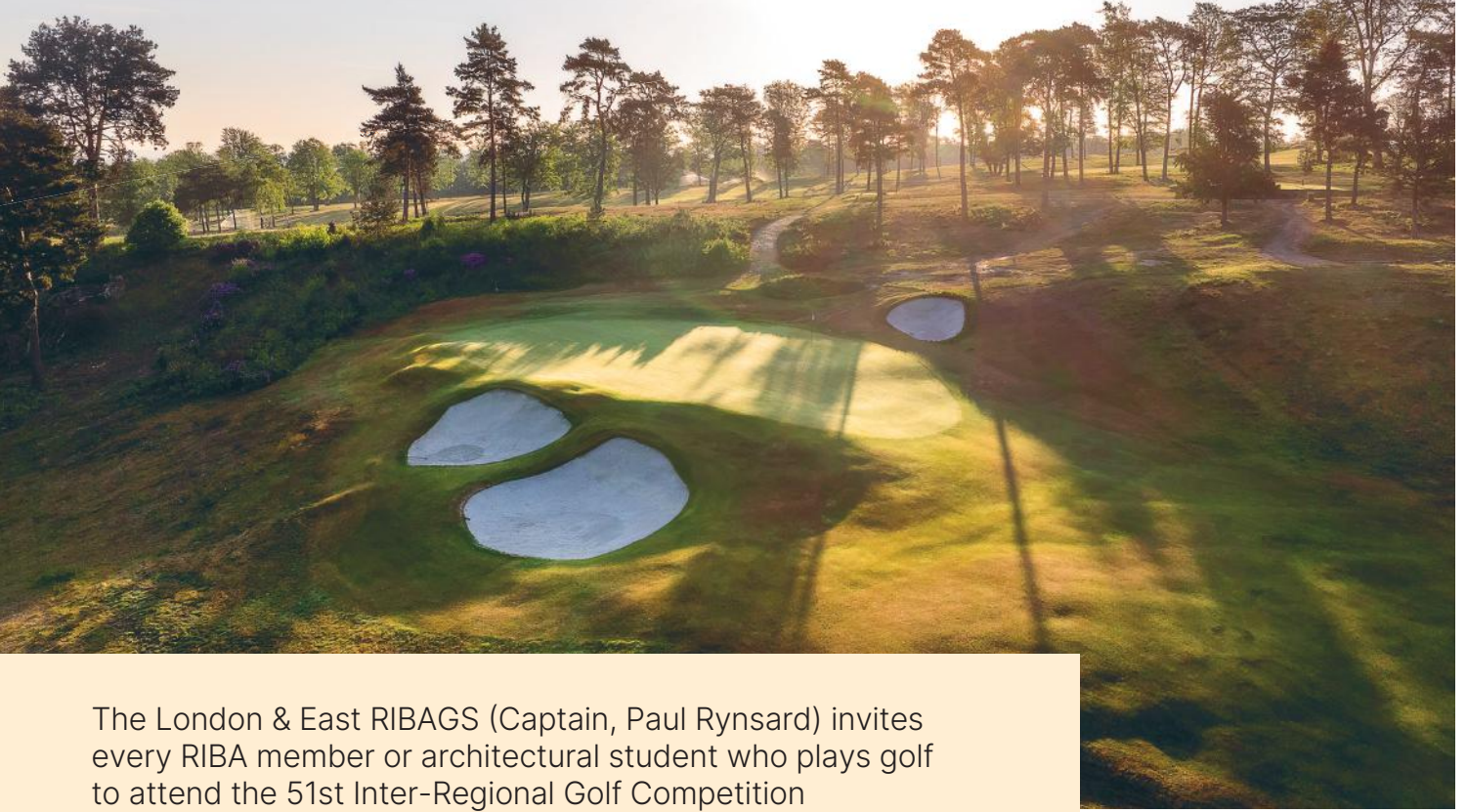
Originally designed by Richard WH Jones and opened in 1938, Saltdean Lido is one of the finest examples of interwar outdoor swimming pools. It is the only Grade II*-listed lido in the UK, described by English Heritage as one of the "Seven Wonders of the English Seaside", and forms an iconic landmark on the coastline. The lido had been threatened with redevelopment into flats, but was saved by local residents and the Saltdean Lido Community Interest Company. Works included significant repairs to the 1930s concrete structure, replacement of the external leaf of the later 1960s and 1970s extensions, and extensive modifications, repairs and improvements to establish a sustainable future for the building. Reimagined as a year-round destination, the lido offers activities ranging from dog swimming to Sunday markets. The once-derelict building now features a café, library, Art Deco restaurant and ballroom, gym, multipurpose dance studio, offices, plus a range of heritage exhibits and community rooms.

Client of the Year



RICHARD FRASER

RIBA Inter-Regional Golf Competition 2026



The London & East RIBAGS (Captain, Paul Rynsard) invites every RIBA member or architectural student who plays golf to attend the 51st Inter-Regional Golf Competition

Event Details

Date	6 and 7 September 2026
Time	Sunday afternoon and all day Monday
Venue	The Addington Golf Club, Surrey
Format	Team and Individual Stableford and Individual medal
Sunday night	Buffet dinner
Monday night	Dinner, prize-giving and announcement of 2027 venue

Half-way house refreshments will be provided.

The Addington Golf Pro shop will run the competition scoring and results.

Hotel

We have arranged accommodation for all participants at the Hampton by Hilton Hotel, Croydon. There is discounted car parking in Ruskin Square multi-storey car park when using the hotel. Coach shuttle transfers are provided for all participants to/from the hotel and golf club on Monday. The hotel is 20 minutes from the golf course.

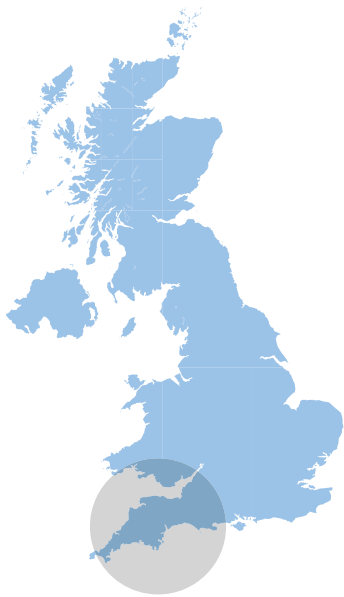
The cost is £325 per member playing which includes green fees, two nights B&B hotel accommodation in a double occupancy room, and all meals and coach transfers.

There is a £50 supplement for anyone requiring a single occupancy hotel room.

If you are part of a RIBA regional team, please confirm your participation with your regional captain, otherwise contact Geoff Alsop email: geoffalsop@gmail.com tel: 07789 430493

In partnership with





SOUTH WEST AND WESSEX

11
WINNING
PROJECTS

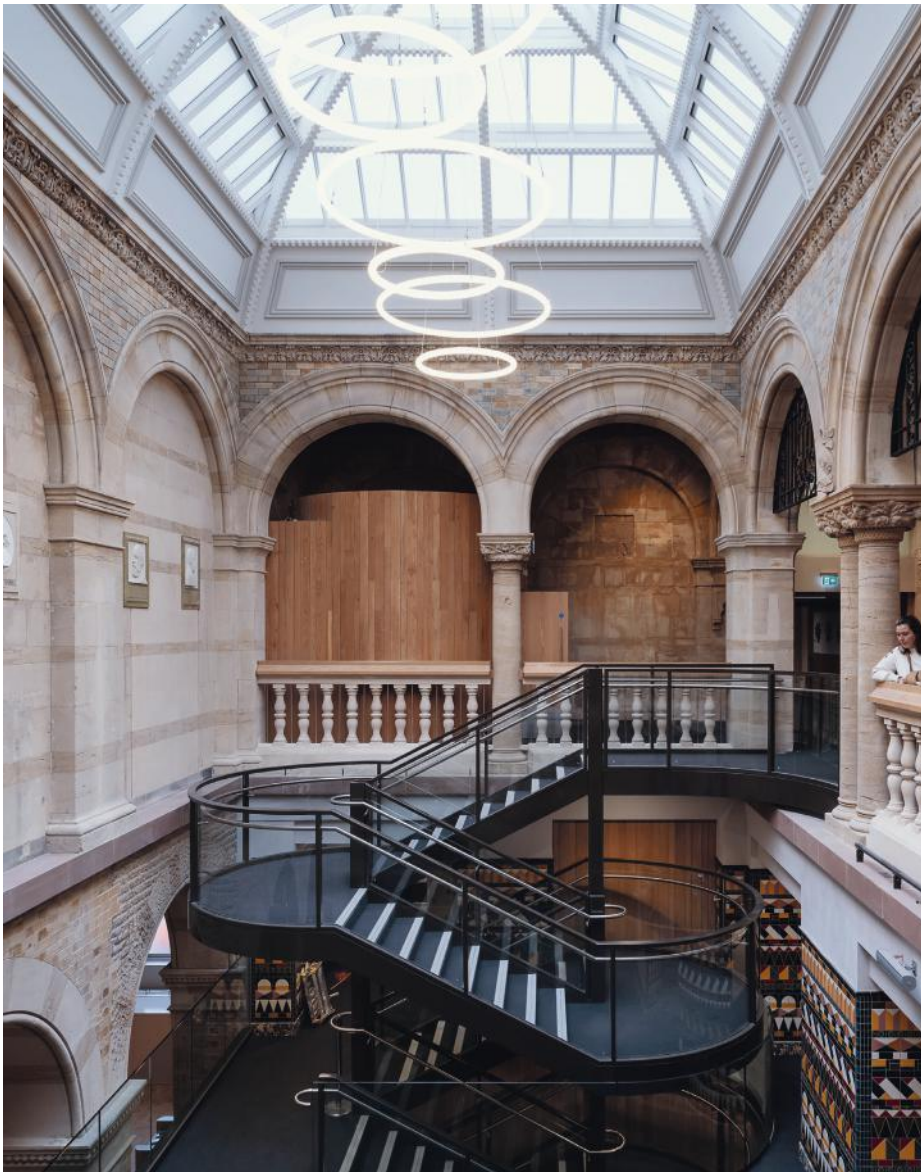
£287.1M
TOTAL COST
OF PROJECTS

100,895M²
TOTAL
GIA

£6,743
AVERAGE PROJECT
COST PER M²

5
PROJECTS BY PRACTICES
WITH STUDIOS IN THE REGION

6
PROJECTS BY PRACTICES
WITHOUT STUDIOS IN THE REGION



BRISTOL BEACON, BRISTOL
LEVITT BERNSTEIN FOR BRISTOL CITY
COUNCIL AND BRISTOL MUSIC TRUST
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 8,362M²

Levitt Bernstein's renewal of the Bristol Beacon has transformed the city's emblematic music venue and education hub to showcase music of all kinds, delivering world-class acoustics with significantly improved accessibility. The project has repaired, conserved and reinvented the Grade II-listed building, celebrating its Bristol Byzantine architecture while adapting it for contemporary audiences, first-class productions and modern operational needs. Building on Levitt Bernstein's delivery of the new-build foyer in 2009, this final phase completes the Beacon as a unique centre for music that delivers a diverse and extensive programme of events across three high-quality and adaptable halls. It includes an entirely new professional concert hall for 1,800 to 2,100 people built within the Victorian walls, restoration of the smaller second hall, and a new third venue, recording studio and practice rooms converted from the previously unused cellars. The building now meets very high acoustic and technical standards that attract the best national and international artists and orchestras. The Beacon is not only central to the music scene in Bristol but also strengthens the city's reputation as a major national and international cultural destination.

Building of the Year
sponsored by dormakaba



ASSEMBLY, BRISTOL

ALLFORD HALL MONAGHAN MORRIS
FOR AXA REAL ESTATE & BELL HAMMER
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 62,977M²

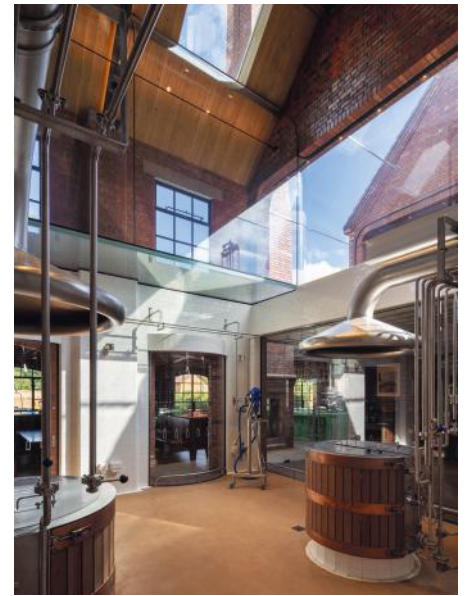
Transforming a long-vacant site adjacent to the city's inner circuit road and Floating Harbour, Assembly is anchored around a waterfront park, positively engaging with the city, bringing colour to the skyline and linking the waterside with a restored historic street, Cheese Lane. A hierarchy of three buildings shapes the space, unifying the campus while each having a distinct character. Building A holds the street edge, protecting the waterfront park from the clamour of traffic. It spans Cheese Lane to create a lofty entrance portal into the campus. Building B, the smallest at seven storeys, enjoys a waterside setting while Building C, the tallest at 14, brings sculptural height over the public realm. The campus champions sustainability, cutting embodied carbon via exposed structures and minimising material waste through efficient construction, which delivered a 26% saving on carbon emissions compared with other new-build office developments in Bristol.



PURDOWN VIEW, BRISTOL

STRIDE TREGLOWN FOR UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND (UWE BRISTOL)
VALUE: £7.8M GIA: 26,000M² PER M²: £3,000

Purdown View is a 900-bed student housing scheme within the University of the West of England's Frenchay campus. As the UK's largest Passivhaus development, it is a key asset in helping UWE Bristol achieve a zero-carbon campus by 2030. Sustainability is only part of its story though: Purdown View aims to support student wellbeing by tackling social isolation on campus. Stride Treglown experts from architecture, sustainability, planning, landscaping and interior design collaborated to create a place where students can find their feet – and their people. Three buildings contain a range of room types, from en-suite and shared bathroom cluster flats to studios. Social/study hubs, a cinema, a flexible studio, games areas and a bookable kitchen/dining room are distributed across the development. Outside, the buildings are seamlessly connected to the surrounding landscape by active green spaces that drastically increase the site's biodiversity and enhance wellbeing.



THE CREAMERY, SOMERSET

STONEWOOD DESIGN FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL
GIA: 830M²

Stonewood Design has given a century-old former creamery a new lease of life that returns the site, next to Castle Cary station, to dairy production. The building is a local landmark thanks to its striking chimney, and in its new incarnation has become a cheesemaking facility, including an associated shop and café/restaurant. The original creamery's proximity to the station reflected its use of the railway network. Now, more than a century later, the relationship has been recast. While dairy products from locally sourced milk are again being made there, in its new format the building is also a gathering point for visitors and people travelling to and from Castle Cary. It serves as a rather deluxe, unofficial railway waiting area with screens displaying live train times. But if customers would rather gaze at mozzarella cheese being stretched, that's also possible: the building design provides views from the café right into the factory floor.



THE BUTTERMARKEt, REDRUTH

ARCHITECTURAL THREAD FOR REDRUTH REVIVAL
VALUE: £3.4M GIA: 768M² PER M²: £4,427

The Buttermarket is a heritage-led regeneration of a neglected Grade II-listed site. Its five buildings and market courtyard were refurbished, creating an accessible, welcoming venue for food traders, artists, small businesses and community events – fostering economic and cultural activity. Through careful conservation, targeted demolition of insensitive additions, and creation of a new market-hall structure, the project – within a UNESCO World Heritage Site – celebrates Cornwall's industrial past and pilots innovative, sustainable construction. Project Architect of the Year sponsored by Lumion, Claire Fear Client of the Year



STABLE HOUSE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE
TAW FITZWILLIAM ARCHITECTS
FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
VALUE: £325,000 GIA: 180M² PER M²: £1,805

Stable House is a low-energy, self-built, rural family home replacing a redundant stable block and caravan on the edge of a Gloucestershire Cotswold village. The design follows the combined footprint of the former stables and resident caravan, dividing the building into three simple shed forms, clad in corrugated metal and charred timber and looking over a central courtyard. Driven by a modest budget, the design reflects the agricultural character of the site and the practicalities of a self-build. Following a fabric-first approach, the timber frame system was developed to avoid the need for any structural steel while incorporating high levels of natural insulation. Shaped by landscape, necessity and its occupants' hands, Stable House is a testament to patient, grounded making. It shows how thoughtful design and process can deliver a highly energy-efficient, resilient home within modest means.



THE PAVILION AT COWLEY MANOR, CHELTENHAM
DE MATOS RYAN FOR EXPERIMENTAL GROUP
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 245M²

The new bedroom pavilion, at Grade II-listed Cowley Manor, houses five generous rooms with a variety of interconnected family suite options. It carefully reinstates a striking masonry pavilion on the site of a long-lost grand ballroom from 1900. The stone-clad, internally timber-framed pavilion playfully borrows from the past to create something meaningful for the future. It has a modern identity, distinct from the body of the main house yet suitably subservient. The design embodies an elemental construction methodology, driven by a low-tech, simple-is-best philosophy. Early-stage material selection was based on embodied energy, carbon footprint and locally sourced materials that were chosen to be durable, maintainable and recyclable at the end of their usable life. Cotswold stone was quarried and worked from only three miles away. Historic stonework forming the perimeter of the terrace enclosure around the new pavilion was repaired and restored with best-practice conservation methods. The Douglas fir structural frame was prefabricated as components using traditional carpentry techniques and modern fabrication methods. Conservation Award



HOLLY TREE COTTAGE, DORSET
SITE OFFICE FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 143M²

This project involved the refurbishment and extension of an existing two-bedroom cottage and its outbuildings in the Dorset National Landscape. The client, who was using the cottage as a holiday home, had been looking to occupy it more permanently and so needed extra space and a more comfortable environment for living. Previous designs by other architects had proposed to knock down the entire building and rebuild a larger facsimile of the original. Site Office set out to do the opposite and retain as much of the existing as possible for reasons of sustainability as well as a sense of place, which for client and architect was dependent on the original cottage in all its idiosyncratic detail. The approach embraced the use of breathable low-carbon materials to improve and extend the existing house forming a more open living arrangement downstairs, as well as two new bedrooms and an extra bathroom upstairs. Two new lean-to structures sit on the south and north sides of the building to soften the transition between inside and out, and five outbuildings of various shapes and sizes – three new and two existing – provide 'satellite' spaces to retreat to in the garden. Small Project of the Year





SKY HOUSE, WILTSHIRE

KLAS HYLLÉN ARCHITECTURE FOR PRIVATE CLIENT

VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 267M²

Sky House nestles within a secluded hollow on a hillside in southwest England, commanding breathtaking views. To the south the land drops steeply away, leaving the horizon dominated by sky: a constantly shifting canvas of English weather that the design seeks to capture and celebrate. The project is a deep retrofit of a tired 1970s dwelling, its once-confusing layout reorganised into two clear volumes – living spaces and bedrooms – linked by a glazed connection that frames light and views. Externally, the house is finished in Creeton limestone, whitewashed larch and a rough slate roof, each material chosen for texture, durability and ability to engage with shifting light. Within its protective new envelope of super-insulated walls and triple-glazed windows, the house offers exceptional thermal performance. Sky House is part of a new generation of exemplary environmental retrofits in the UK: projects that prioritise reuse and recycling to dramatically cut carbon use compared with new construction. With an embodied carbon figure of 266kgCO₂e/m², exceptional airtightness, and an operational energy use of only 38kWh/m²/year, it performs far beyond initial targets, delivering comfort, efficiency and joy.

[Sustainability Award](#)

HOUSE IN THE SOUTH-WEST, DORSET

WITHERFORD WATSON MANN FOR PRIVATE CLIENT

VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 603M²

The project entailed refurbishing two linear ranges of vernacular stone buildings, previously used as separate cottages across a long narrow yard, and consolidating these into a single dwelling for the clients and their family, with the landscaped courtyard at its heart. Over the years, various alterations had undermined the simplicity and directness of this former stable and outbuildings. The aim of the project was to restore their visual and physical connection to the yard and landscape, and upgrade the thermal performance to create calm, comfortable and generous rooms while retaining the essence of the vernacular. Direct new additions in traditional techniques combine with careful repair and focused stripping and opening up to create a calm, luminous living environment with generous rooms for time together and intimate, secluded corners for more private downtime.



RAMMED EARTH HOUSE, WILTSHIRE

TUCKEY DESIGN STUDIO FOR PRIVATE CLIENT

VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 520M²

On the site of a former brickworks in rural Wiltshire, Tuckey Design Studio has completed a boundary-pushing new residential project, crafted from one of the oldest and most sustainable building materials: rammed earth. The series of buildings has risen upon an area of clay-rich soil which, alongside recycled aggregate from demolished outbuildings, forms the composition for the rammed earth. The home is one of a few UK examples using the material unstabilised: a circular construction method involving no cement in the mix. Castle-like walls bind the building to its landscape, embracing gardens and visually offset by Douglas fir and oak timber frames that contrast with the monolithic earth structure. Distinguishing elements include decorative niches in the walls, a spiral staircase, rammed earth floors in the snug and a 'storm terrace' from which to observe dramatic cloud formations. Besides the honest, textural rammed earth, a grounded material palette features cedar shingle roofing, copper drainpipes, limestone sills, bag-rubbed brick and reclaimed greenheart timber colonnades.



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WEST MIDLANDS

5
WINNING
PROJECTS

£69.1M
TOTAL COST
OF PROJECTS

2,912M²
TOTAL
GIA

£9,331
AVERAGE PROJECT
COST PER M²

2
PROJECTS BY PRACTICES
WITH STUDIOS IN THE REGION

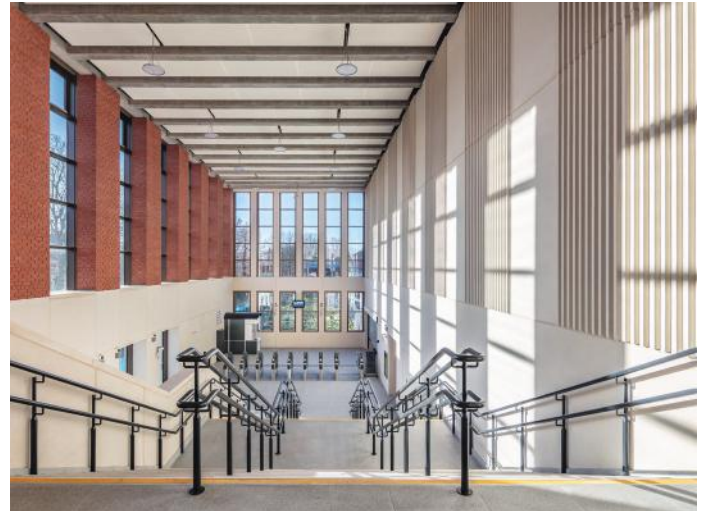
3
PROJECTS BY PRACTICES
WITHOUT STUDIOS IN THE REGION



CORNER FARM, WARWICKSHIRE
TAW FITZWILLIAM ARCHITECTS
FOR RICHARD & MADELYN BARTHOLOMEW
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 370M²

Corner Farm is a Grade II-listed, 17th-century farmstead near Stratford, retrofitted and remodelled to create a healthy, energy-efficient home. Years of alteration had eroded its character, leaving damp, cold interiors and compromised historic fabric. With a fabric-first approach, the building envelope has been thermally retrofitted, improving energy efficiency by 79%. The design reconnects the building's fragmented volumes, reinstating large barn openings to restore spatial legibility and natural light without imposing overly open-plan living. Salvaged beams, relaid cobbles, reused flagstones and a central oak kitchen celebrate its agricultural heritage. Handmade materials, lime and clay finishes, wide oak boards and exposed structure create a natural palette that breathes with the historic fabric. The project shows it is possible to make meaningful thermal upgrades to listed buildings. Collaboration with conservation and planning officers ensured sensitive, appropriately considered intervention, protecting the distinctive linear form while securing the long-term future of this important rural building.

[Sustainability Award](#)
[Conservation Award](#)



UNIVERSITY STATION, BIRMINGHAM
ASSOCIATED ARCHITECTS AND MOTT MACDONALD
FOR WEST MIDLANDS RAIL EXECUTIVE,
TRANSPORT FOR WEST MIDLANDS AND NETWORK RAIL
VALUE: £56M GIA: 734M² PER M²: £21,036

This project transforms one of the region's busiest transport hubs. Built in 1978 to serve 500,000 passengers a year, the station now handles millions, resulting in severe congestion. The new design addresses this by introducing two modern station buildings, wider platforms, and a spacious concourse to improve passenger flow and comfort. A key feature is its inclusive accessibility. The station now offers step-free access throughout, multiple lifts, clear wayfinding and a Changing Places facility, ensuring it meets and exceeds relevant standards. A new pedestrian footbridge connects the station to the University of Birmingham campus and the canal towpath. The redevelopment enhances multimodal connectivity with improved cycle routes, bus interchange facilities and upgraded landscaping. Delivered through collaboration between 13 organisations, the project balances technical complexity with architectural excellence. More than a transport upgrade, University Station is now a welcoming gateway to the university and hospital, supporting regional growth and sustainable mobility while creating a world-class passenger experience.



JAZZ HOUSE, HEREFORDSHIRE

ERRAND STUDIO FOR ANGY AND BRUCE BURN
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 158M²

A dilapidated Hereford garage site has been transformed into a well-crafted low-carbon home. Accessed via a lane between Victorian terraces and a pub, the site called for an approach able to reconcile privacy, daylight and outlook within a tight urban pocket. The house's modest timber volumes respond to neighbouring scale while introducing warmth and texture. Reclaimed brick from the garages cuts embodied carbon and anchors the building to its context. A high-performing timber envelope, exceptional airtightness and onsite renewable energy ensure very low operational energy demand, embedding sustainability quietly but decisively into the design. Internally, a sequence of calm, daylight spaces offers both retreat and connection. Client of the Year
Small Project of the Year



THE PARKS, HEREFORDSHIRE

STOLON STUDIO FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 1,110M²

This retrofit transforms a derelict dairy farm into eight low-carbon homes, adapting 15th- and 19th-century timber-framed barns and mid-20th-century buildings. The homes are full of delight and character: generous living spaces reflect the former agricultural use, and a courtyard-led masterplan fosters sociability while preserving privacy. Material reuse, breathable construction and local craft underpin the approach. Environmental performance includes A+ upfront and A++ whole-life embodied carbon, and a statutory biodiversity uplift of almost 48% in habitat units and 1,100% in hedgerow units. The scheme shows how heritage conservation, ecological enhancement and community governance can deliver rural regeneration. Project Architect of the Year sponsored by Lumion, Robert Barker

KEPAX FOOTBRIDGE, WORCESTERSHIRE

MOXON ARCHITECTS AND JACOBS
(ENGINEERING) FOR WORCESTERSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL

VALUE: £9.5M GIA: N/A
COST PER M²: £17,593

This new bridge reflects Worcester's ambition to improve connectivity between the city core, residential areas, river and green corridor. Kepax overcomes technical challenges via strong design and careful execution. It factors in climate resilience, spanning 60m over the flood-prone River Severn to create a fully accessible connection in all seasons. The 'hockey stick' design informed the structural typology. The slender deck is supported every 12m via stay cables over the park and river, and piers over a wooded bank. A finely crafted parapet with integrated lighting flows along the deck, while a sculpted pylon resolves the stay forces and acts as a landmark. The result is visual lightness and strong landscape integration. The bridge was crossed by 330,000 people in its first year, and Worcester Snoezelen – a charity that provides leisure opportunities for disabled people – sees it as a game changer in offering greater accessibility for people with physical differences. Building of the Year sponsored by dormakaba



YORKSHIRE



5
WINNING
PROJECTS

£77.1M
TOTAL COST
OF PROJECTS

29,089M²
TOTAL
GIA

£4,979
AVERAGE PROJECT
COST PER M²

2
PROJECTS BY PRACTICES
WITH STUDIOS IN THE REGION

3
PROJECTS BY PRACTICES
WITHOUT STUDIOS IN THE REGION



HERITAGE QUAD: YORK MINSTER CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE, YORK

TONKIN LIU ARCHITECTS FOR YORK MINSTER

VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 602M²

The Centre of Excellence is the first significant new building project in York Minster's precinct in a century. It consists of two buildings, the Heritage Quad and the Technology Hub. Combining the latest stone-cutting technology with traditional stonemasonry, the two buildings will together accelerate the restoration of the heritage buildings by four decades within the next century. The design proposal maximises the reuse of robust built fabric including existing U-shaped garage walls and foundations. The massing for different accommodations around a courtyard is unified under one roof, set at a height to optimise the volume for the workshop equipment, while minimised so as not to obstruct views of the Minster. The timber-roofed structure lifts towards the city wall to invite views, from visitors taking strolls on it, into the workshop. It also rises towards the cathedral to frame its views for the working masons. The roof additionally creates a covered area around a central circle of wildflowers.

Client of the Year

Building of the Year sponsored by dormakaba

Sustainability Award



TECHNOLOGY HUB: YORK MINSTER CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE, YORK

TONKIN LIU ARCHITECTS FOR YORK MINSTER

VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 811M²

The Technology Hub is the other building making up the York Minster Centre of Excellence and houses a suite of digital stone-cutting equipment. Stone is delivered directly from a quarry to the hub, where large blocks are cut and prepared for later hand-finishing of delicate work in the Heritage Quad. The two buildings work as complementary structures to fulfil the heritage craft role of the Centre of Excellence. The Technology Hub sits at the heart of the urban fabric of medieval York, in a courtyard site surrounded by an existing complex of 1920s workshops. The new building infills the courtyard and unites facilities for the York Glaziers Trust, stone masons, metalsmiths, joiners, electricians, scaffolders, plumbers, and gardeners.

Client of the Year



CALVERLEY OLD HALL, NEAR LEEDS
 COWPER GRIFFITH ARCHITECTS FOR THE LANDMARK TRUST
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 615M²

Calverley Old Hall is a Grade I-listed structure situated between Bradford and Leeds. It had been the home of the Calverley family since the late 13th to early 14th century, and reached the height of its status and form by the mid-17th century before falling into decline when the family moved away. The manor house and chapel were then subdivided into tenanted cottages. The Landmark Trust purchased the site in 1981 to prevent it from being sold as individual lots. In 2017, Cowper Griffith Architects won an international, two-stage design competition organised by the Landmark Trust to conserve and reimagine Calverley Old Hall. At the time of the competition, areas of the property were derelict and in need of urgent repairs – including the Solar Block, Great Hall and Parlour Block, which were on Historic England’s Heritage At Risk register. The following restoration is generous, sustainable and deeply rooted in its historical context – a model for how heritage can be renewed for the future.

Conservation Award
 Project Architect of the Year sponsored by Lumion, Karen Lim

11 & 12 WELLINGTON PLACE, LEEDS
 TP BENNETT FOR MEPC/FEDERATED HERMES
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 26,698M²

Completed in early 2023, 11 & 12 Wellington Place are the latest additions to the thriving Wellington Place estate in Leeds. They offer prime office space across two interconnected bronze-clad structures, strategically located a short walk from Leeds railway station. The buildings’ layout, height and overall shape are designed to feel balanced from every angle, with the development showing civic ambition in its choice of materials and thoughtful detailing. A strong commitment to long-term sustainability also sees it set new benchmarks for improved operational energy performance and transparency. Fully let and occupied for over 12 months, the buildings have redefined sustainable commercial office development in Yorkshire. 11 & 12 Wellington Place demonstrate how thoughtful design can bring social, environmental and economic benefits together. The pair of buildings contribute positively to Leeds, offering high-quality workplaces while enriching the public spaces and community around them.



**YORKSHIRE HOUSE FOR A COUPLE,
 NORTH YORKSHIRE**
 RURAL SOLUTIONS & SADLER BROWN
 ARCHITECTS GROUP FOR PRIVATE CLIENT
 VALUE: CONFIDENTIAL GIA: 363M²

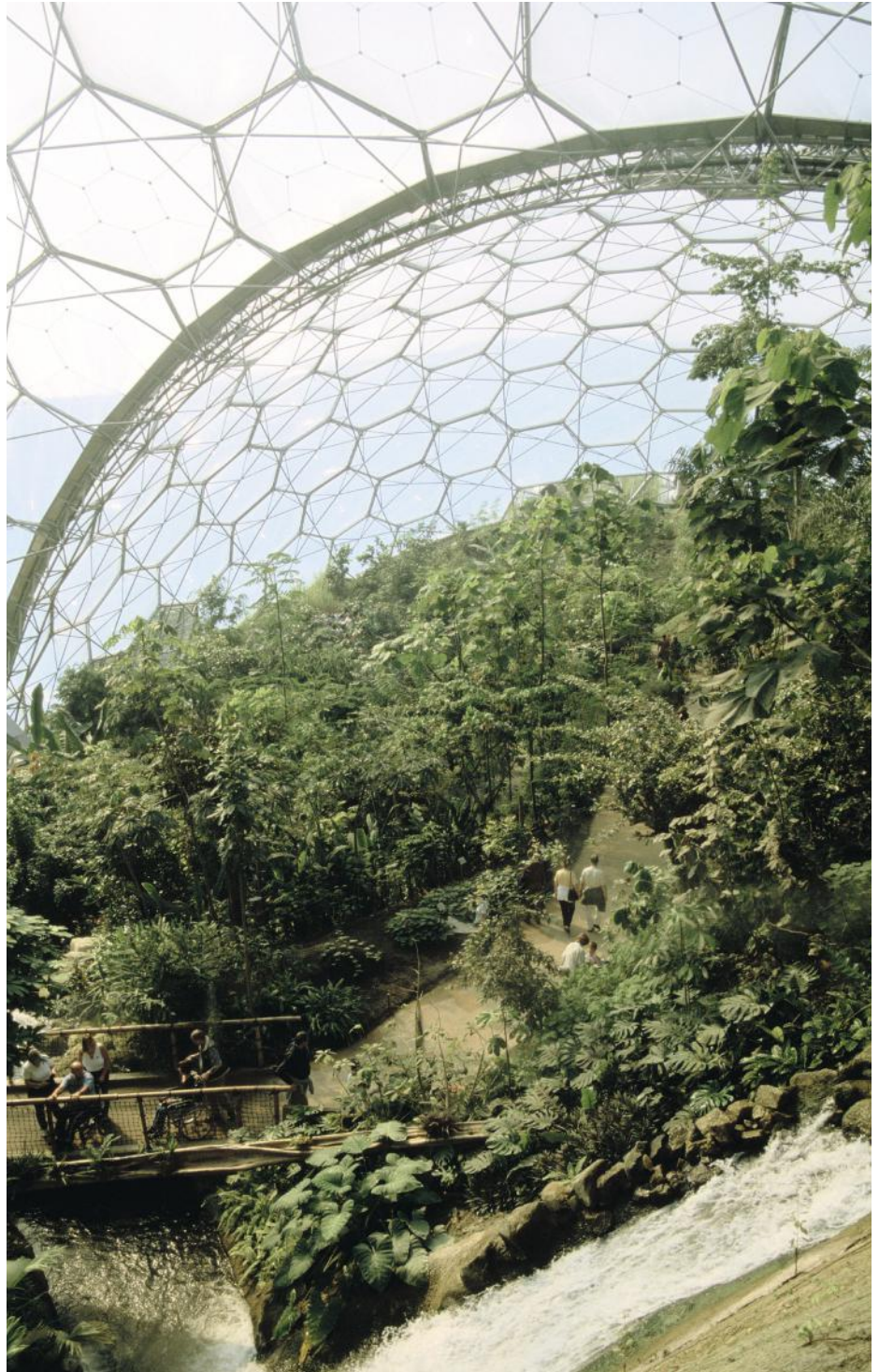
A finely judged piece of contemporary rural architecture, this house is shaped by a deep understanding of its landscape and local material heritage. It is both intimately scaled and quietly confident, balancing craft and environmental performance with a distinctive regional character. Situated within a designated National Landscape, the design mimics natural forms and is set into the sloping landscape to create a dramatic, dynamic relationship to the bodies of water nearby. Its construction is robust, with the material palette chosen for longevity and environmental responsibility. This home was designed for a couple to live in as their main residence, and delivered through the ‘exceptional country homes’ clause of the National Planning Policy Framework. The result is a dwelling with a unique design and high-quality finishes: a home rooted in its place, yet boldly of its time.



TAKING STOCK AT 60: WHY THE RIBA AWARDS MATTER

WORDS

Oliver Urquhart Irvine



Right: The Eden Project by Grimshaw, a RIBA Award winner in 2001. The new millennium saw a surge of recognition for cultural projects.

Below: A 1966 winner – the Elephant and Rhinoceros Pavilion at London Zoo, by Casson Conder.

Round-number anniversaries are not sentimental milestones; they are tests. They force institutions to prove what has genuinely endured and what must now change. This year marks a rare convergence for RIBA: 10 years of the International Awards, 30 of the Stirling Prize, 60 since the RIBA Architecture Awards were initiated, and 190 of the President's Medals. Longevity alone is meaningless. The real question is whether the RIBA Awards still exercise authority in a profession, and a society, that has changed profoundly over the past six decades.

Architecture is, by definition, exposed to time. Buildings are not static artefacts; they are tested daily by use, neglect, adaptation and public scrutiny. Their legacy is written not in photographs but in performance. Proper anniversaries impose discipline: they compel us to examine what the profession has rewarded, what it has overlooked, and whether the criteria of yesterday remain adequate for the pressures of today.

When the awards were reset in 1966, the ambition was explicitly to encourage better architecture and to deepen public understanding of it. Crucially, the RIBA Awards were conceived as instruments of professional judgement and public value in their own right, not – as is sometimes the case with awards programmes today – as content pipelines or revenue props for publishers (not just in the architecture sector, but across the piece). Instead, they arose from RIBA's core purpose: to set standards, surface excellence and hold the built environment to account. That clarity of intent matters even more in today's digital landscape, where analogue readership has fragmented and the temptation to instrumentalise cultural programmes for short-term commercial gain is ever-present.

What still sets the RIBA Awards apart, quietly but decisively, is process. Every project is visited in person. That commitment is demanding,

unfashionable in an era of remote judgement, and absolutely central to credibility. Architecture cannot be properly assessed from images or submissions alone. It must be walked, tested, and experienced in context. Without that discipline, awards risk becoming exercises in presentation rather than evaluation.

The cumulative effect of this approach is formidable. Thousands of architects have served as volunteer jurors, visiting buildings across the UK and internationally. This is not the view of a distant, insulated panel. It is a rolling act of professional peer review, refreshed annually but strengthened over decades. With hindsight comes pattern recognition; with continuity comes authority. Few awards systems anywhere can claim that depth of lived assessment.

Read longitudinally, the awards archive is not a vanity record but a working history of postwar Britain's built environment. The early years were deliberately broad: housing, universities, churches, factories and even the Elephant and Rhinoceros Pavilion at London Zoo appeared in the first cohort, signalling that architectural quality was expected everywhere, not just in prestige commissions.

Over time, the shifts are unmistakable. The late 1960s and early 1970s were dominated by education, tracking public investment in universities. The late 1970s and 1980s saw the rise of offices and high-tech industrial work as pre-eminent recipients. Around the millennium, cultural projects surged. The 2010s again elevated education, this time through national school programmes. Most





Above: The 1988 London pumping station designed by John Outram was a po-mo Award-winner.

recently, the private house has become the most frequently recognised typology.

That last trend should give us pause. It may reflect where design freedom now survives. It may expose structural constraints in public procurement. It may signal widening inequalities in who can commission ambitious architecture. The awards do not and should not pretend to resolve these questions. But because they are grounded in first-hand inspection, they provide unusually hard evidence from which to interrogate them.

Geography reinforces the point. London inevitably dominates in raw numbers, but remove the capital and a far more complex national ecology emerges, with strong performance across the East, Scotland, the South and the North West. At city scale, distinctive patterns sharpen further. Thanks to Cambridge University, higher education has been notably exceptional there, while housing schemes predominate in Manchester, and one-off houses are well represented in London. The strength of the awards has always been their ability to surface these granular realities rather than flatten them into a single national narrative.

The Stirling Prize has, for three decades, provided the public focal point

– sometimes brilliantly, sometimes imperfectly. Its visibility matters. But its legitimacy depends entirely on the depth of the system beneath it: the site visits, the layered juries and the profession-wide commitment that feeds the shortlist. Remove that foundation and the spotlight quickly loses its authority.

There is, however, no room for complacency. The context in which architecture operates has shifted dramatically since 1966: climate imperatives, procurement pressures, regulatory complexity, changing patterns of practice and a more sceptical public environment. The awards have evolved to incorporate sustainability, retrofit and social value, but the pace of change outside the profession is accelerating. Authority must be continually re-earned.

So what is the legacy and what does it mean for the future of the profession? First, rigour remains non-negotiable. Visiting every building is expensive in time and effort, but it is precisely what differentiates the programme in an increasingly image-driven culture. If anything, that discipline matters more now than when it was introduced.

Second, evolution must be purposeful, not cosmetic. Categories and criteria



Above: Francis Pym's classically inflected concrete extension to Ulster Museum was a 1972 winner.

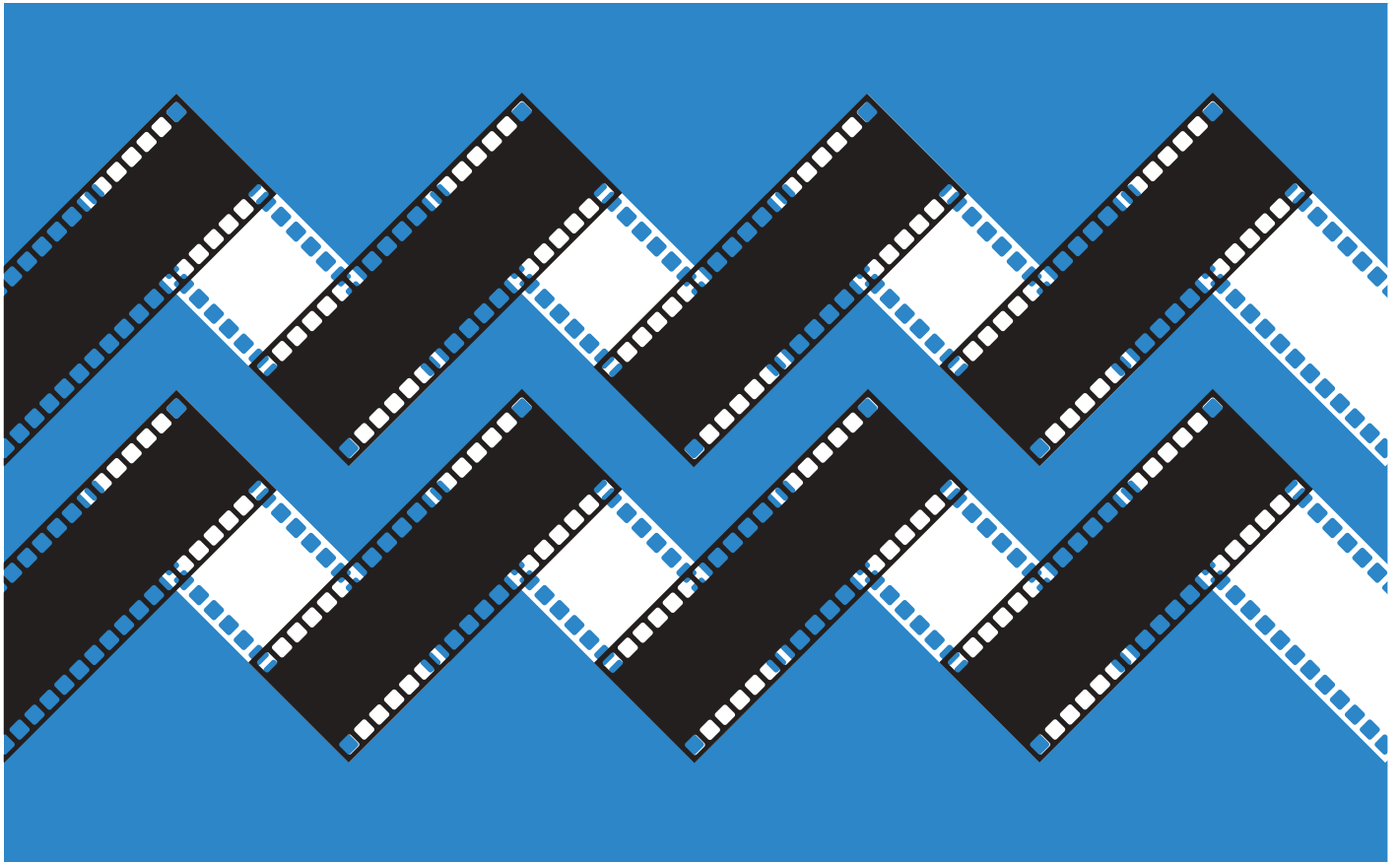
should continue to respond to the realities of contemporary practice, particularly retrofit, housing delivery, and the social performance of buildings, while resisting the drift toward fashion-led judgement or the gravitational pull of media cycles.

And finally, RIBA's archive of its awards is a national asset that has not yet been fully activated. Sixty years of systematically visited buildings constitute an extraordinary evidence base for understanding how the UK has built, invested and prioritised. Making that intelligence legible, through mapping, public trails, research partnerships and digital access, should be treated as core infrastructure, not optional outreach.

Anniversaries are useful only when they clarify intent. At 190, 60 and 30 years respectively, these milestones give RIBA a rare moment of institutional self-scrutiny. Properly handled, they are not ceremonial markers but instruments of accountability: tools for testing whether the profession is keeping pace with the society it serves, and if the signals it sends about quality still carry the authority the built environment urgently requires. ■

Oliver Urquhart Irvine is executive director, architecture programmes and collections at RIBA

RIBAJ SHORT FILM COMPETITION 2026



Are you an architecture student or early career architect with a flair for storytelling? Make your name as a visual communicator and win a prize

DEADLINE:

Thursday 25 June 2026, 2pm
For more details and to enter:
ribaj.com/film-competition

Architects have always communicated through drawings and words. However, increasingly, film is being used to capture, promote and tell stories about the built environment.

To showcase the profession's most creative up-and-comers, in collaboration with RIBA Future Architects, our short film competition asks students and early career architects to produce a video of less than two minutes, with subtitles, that is suitable for social media platforms. It is open internationally to those studying for, or in between, Part 1, Part 2, Part 3 or equivalent.

Submissions should respond to one of three themes: making buildings, after architects, or in practice. They could be lo-fi or crisp, witty or serious in tone

and feature long pans or fast-paced frames. Pick up your camera, phone or stylus and start creating.

Our judges this year are architectural photographer and filmmaker Jim Stephenson, creative communications consultant and campaigner Sabine Zetteler and architectural storyteller and visiting lecturer Mohammed Khizr. Panel members hope to see a wide range of approaches and will be looking for visual interest, an engaging choice of subject, strong storytelling and inventive use of the medium.

The shortlist will be showcased on RIBAJ.com with the winning film receiving a prize of £250 and two runners-up £125 each. ■

STORYBOARD: DESIGN A CENTRE FOR STORYTELLING

Storytelling is bound into the DNA of humanity. In 2026, the UK National Year of Reading, for our RIBA/J/West Fraser £2,500 annual challenge we're asking you to design a demountable storytelling centre to bring the joy of reading and listening to the nation's children

Opposite left: Aldo Rossi's design for Il Teatro del Mondo, Venice: elevation. Designed for the 1980 Venice Biennale, it was sailed to its mooring opposite the Customs House to evoke the city's 18th century floating theatres.

Opposite right: Fraser Livingstone's RIBA Award-winning 2006 Scottish Storytelling Centre has become a hub for the community.

As children, we love a good story. We've all been thrilled by The Hobbit, Harry Potter, The Hunger Games or His Dark Materials. Yet whatever our age, there's no escaping the visceral power of the written – or spoken – word to grip us in the same way as when the tale of Beowulf was recounted over an open fire.

But despite 2026 being designated as the UK's National Year of Reading, and also the hundredth anniversary of one of our most beloved fictional characters – AA Milne's Winnie the Pooh, written for his young son but living in all our hearts – children's reading is at a historic low point.

A recent annual survey by the National Literacy Trust highlighted that only one in three children aged eight to 18 said they enjoy reading in their free time, with even fewer saying that they read anything daily. For a culture with historic links to children's storytelling, these statistics – the worst for 20 years – are worrying.

Architecture has a strong relationship with books. The magnificence of Egypt's Library of Alexandria is lost in legend, but architects have always since delivered

when tasked with designing libraries, whether national, academic or local. Repositories of knowledge and learning, they remain symbols of pride.

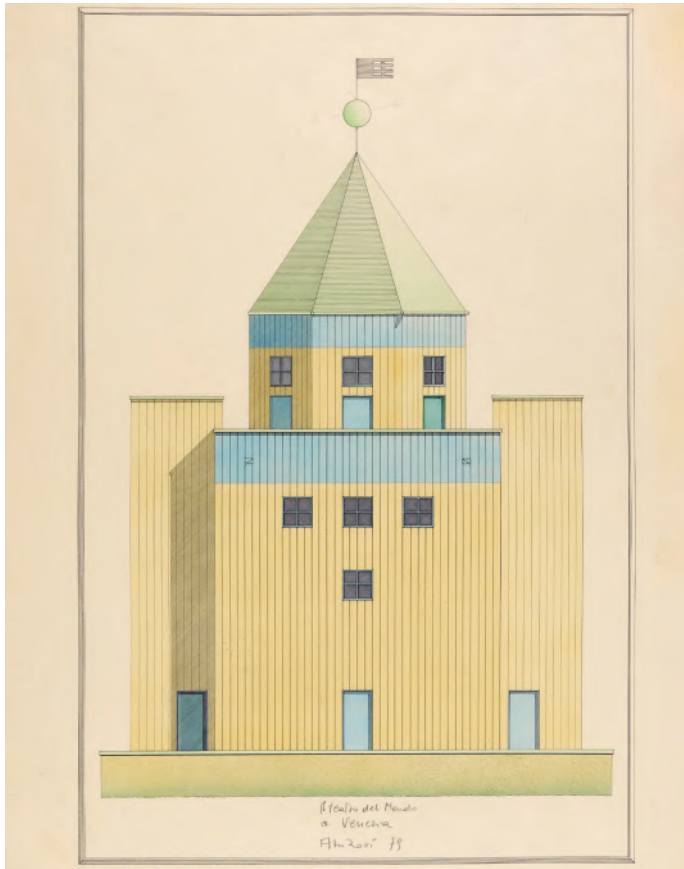
But what of the oral tradition? Where, outside of theatres, are there dedicated spaces to honour the spoken word? Such places are vanishingly few, though it should come as no surprise that Scotland, the country that gave us Burns Night, has set its love for the art in stone with its Scottish Storytelling Centre in Edinburgh, aiming to keep the craft alive for future generations.

So for this year's RIBA/J/West Fraser SterlingOSB Zero design challenge, we are asking you to design a mobile centre that will celebrate storytelling – and reading – nationally. With a main space that evokes the theatricality of gathering to listen, we'd also like a library/reading space, reception and even a café – but within a total of 400m² or less, all of which can be demounted to be set up in a new, temporary location. Structures can be more than one storey if desired, as long as you can ramp up to them, and these routes need not come out of the space allocation.

We are asking you to be inspired by historical spaces of engagement and exchange – the theatre, caravanserai, pavilions, fayres, even modern festivals – to come up with a space that inspires young readers of all ages to switch off their tablets and instead listen to stories old, new, and perhaps yet-to-be-uttered. ■

Supported content in partnership with





Who can enter

We welcome entries from experienced and emerging architects, those in Part 1 and 2 professional training, and diploma and undergraduate architectural students. Applying to all, the emphasis should be on imagination and fun – so enjoy yourselves!

Judging

Chaired by RIBA, judges will look for imaginative responses to the brief that make best use of SterlingOSB Zero. While we anticipate that other materials and surfaces will form an integral part of any proposition, it is expected that the main constituent of the design will be SterlingOSB Zero panels. Given that this is a conceptual brief, we do not require entrants to meet building codes or standards.

In this ideas competition, the winning proposal will be the one that, in the judges' view, proves to be the most joyful response to creating a space for gathering and listening. The proposal may be set in a context, but the expectation is that it be demountable and that this strategy should be evidenced. You should also set out why SterlingOSB Zero is particularly relevant for use in your chosen context.

Judges

David Connacher
Marketing manager, West Fraser Europe
Julian Kashdan-Brown
Director, Kashdan Brown Architects and 2025 competition winner
Keji Malik
Project director, Adjaye Associates
Stephen Proctor
Director, Proctor & Matthews
Jan-Carlos Kucharek
Deputy editor, RIBA

To enter

Visit ribaj.com/storyboard – entries should be laid out on no more than two A3 sheets, supplied electronically as PDFs and uploaded to the official entry website.

How you illustrate your proposal is at the entrant's discretion but may include:

- plans and sections explaining the proposal, its structure, material choices and demountable nature
- 3D or perspectival images that communicate a sense of the proposal in use
- supplementary images (such as model shots or fly-throughs) that help further convey the proposition

An explanation of no more than 400 words should also be uploaded to the online entry form describing the proposal and the manner in which it claims to meet the brief.

Deadline

Entries should be received no later than 14:00 BST on Monday 15 June 2026.

Notes

- The judges' decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into by organisers or judges regarding entries or winners.
- First prize is £2,500, plus three Commended prizes of £500 each.
- Shortlisted entries will be notified in writing, with entrants being invited to the winners' announcement and prizegiving event on Thursday 10 September 2026.
- By entering this RIBA competition, West Fraser has your agreement to using your name/company name and collateral produced by its marketing agency – videos, interviews, case studies, images – for the company's website, social media, digital and print media titles.
- Please email questions to: ribaj.storyboard@riba.org

NEW EDITION

In north London, Hayhurst and Co has gutted, retrofitted and refurbished a bracingly different 1970 home – a job that elicited a fresh reading of the architectural language in which it was written

Below left: The modernist home's language was so strong even the 19th-century villa next door was refaced to match.

Opposite left: Removing the raised ground floor has markedly improved the entrance sequence.

Opposite right: The narrow dining space, with its mirror vaults, has an ecclesiastical quality.

WORDS

Jan-Carlos Kucharek

PHOTOGRAPHS

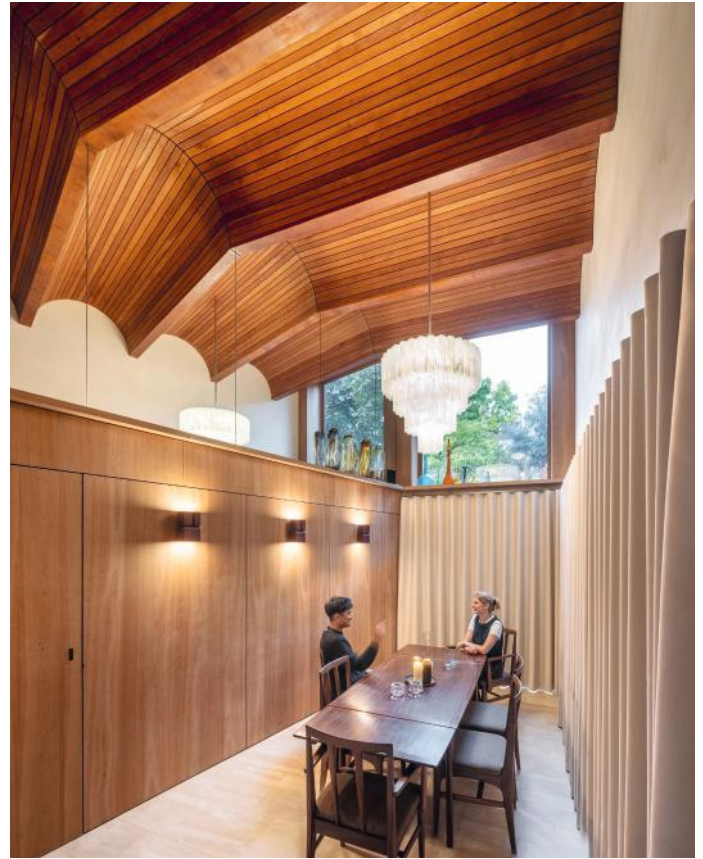
Kilian O'Sullivan



Nestling in the Hampstead foothills of north London is a home with a distinctive north-of-the-border flavour. Hayhurst and Co founder Nick Hayhurst calls it “new Scottish Baronial”, but the narrow 1970 brick house also resonates with Gillespie, Kidd and Coia’s Glasgow churches. Architect Igal Yawetz and Howard Radley must have enjoyed the Glaswegians’ form play, for its south wall, an assemblage of extrapolations, is all the more shocking encountered in a quiet, leafy street of Queen Anne Revival villas.

Originally appended to one such house on a vacant site, the new home’s idiom proved pervasive. That wasn’t just to the client, who lived in it unaltered for half a century, but for the original villa, which was later refaced in its modernist manner when being converted into flats. But it wasn’t the same story inside the four-storey, three-bed house. There, its dramatic exterior made way for something more prosaic: dark and dingy narrow floorplates with low ceiling heights and a separate lower-ground garage and raised ground utility/study area, which felt wholly disconnected from the living area running above it.

Hayhurst and Co’s retrofit and refurbishment, at first glance, doesn’t



appear remotely radical. While original timber windows and spandrels have been replaced by high-spec oak double-glazed tilt-and-turn units, some above new retro-style reeded glass panels, the only other change initially seems to be a third-floor oak timber extension, built out on an existing balcony. Despite being in a conservation area, the practice managed to eke out an extra metre at the top, making the argument to Camden planners that it would “clean up” the jarring convergence of the existing villa’s sloped gable wall with the horizontal geometry of Yawetz’s new addition. This now forms the perimeter wall of a stunning roof terrace and air-source heat pump plant area for a home that formerly had only a small rear yard.

Stepping inside through the original raised ground entrance now reveals a space of unadulterated drama. A timber separating floor between the original garage and utility room level has been removed to create, below, a double-height dining area topped by a cherry-clad barrel-vault ceiling. Hayhurst explains that the extreme retrofit of the building, forcing the architects to strip it back to its carcass, offered freedom to reimagine the interiors, within certain parameters. “We found that

in the act of modernist retrofit the urge is to be solely ‘restorative’, but we felt there was an argument to give the house a new reading while being faithful to its original language,” he explains. With the interiors, this manifests in everything from big spatial moves to material choices.

The dining space shows the approach most clearly. Originally narrowing from 3,975mm down to 2,240mm, this was reduced by the installation of an internal lining of PIR insulation behind cherry wall-lining boards, cutting these dimensions by a further 200mm. With an original 165m² area over five floors, sitting on a barely 30m² footprint, Hayhurst says the aim was to change the home’s siloed nature by opening the whole interior up – and that creating an entertaining space twice as high as it is wide was a key part of the strategy. “We wanted to give this new tall, narrow space character, and when thinking of similarly proportioned ones, we kept returning to ecclesiastical precedents,” he says. It helps to explain the triple-height nature of the entrance level itself.

Perhaps it accounts too for the choice of Travertine Classico that runs from the entrance lobby down to and along the dining room floor. Its hard stone is

SECTION AA

- 1 Kitchen
- 2 WC
- 3 Entrance level
- 4 Living
- 5 Walk-in wardrobe
- 6 New stair
- 7 Roof terrace



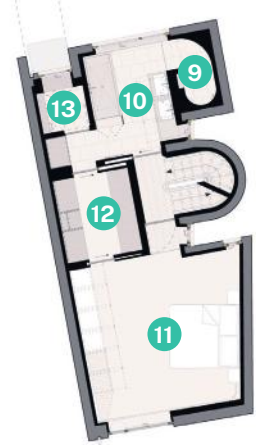


Left: Cherry slats now line the internally insulated stair tower. The circular rooflight is an original one.

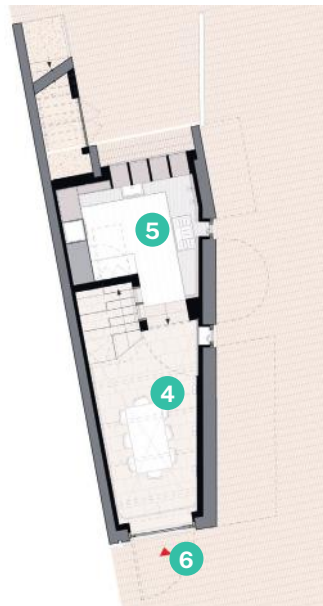
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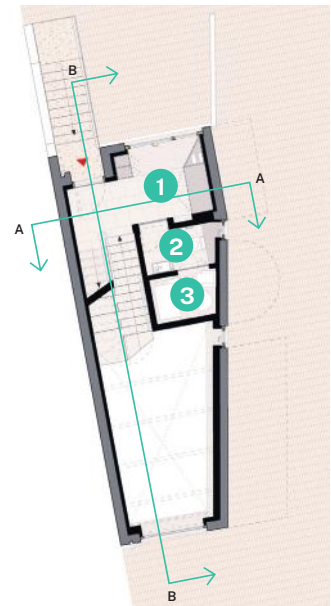
SECOND FLOOR



LOWER GROUND FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR



counterpointed by a buff-hued curtain that lines the north wall and full-height, west-facing window. This, along with the arched vault ceiling of cherry timber slats, brings a sense of material and acoustic intimacy to this refectory-like space. That's before the reveal of a high-level, full-width mirror on the dining area's wall, which creates a trompe l'oeil effect with the ceiling. The approach aims to be about contrast: "With an exterior characterised by a heavy, baronial quality contrasted by cantilevered elements, we wanted to play with similar notions of weight and lightness on the interior," Hayhurst explains.

It's seen in the morphing of the staircase as it moves through the building, with the former narrow, workaday timber stair to the first floor removed. Now, the solid run of travertine down to dining level is counterpointed by a semicircle of light, painted steel stringers up to the first floor, tracing a carved-out void of open teak treads that imitates the stair wall on the outside – but in negative. From first to third floors, the stair tower narrows by 100mm, to take account of the insulating of its brick semicircular wall, creating an even more compressed ascent than the original. Now lined in more dark cherry slats (similar to that found in the original kitchen), their timber treads augment a relative gloom to the next two levels before a new top flight, bound by white plastered walls, lead past a sliding rooflight to the roof terrace. Ascending from dining level, the shift from travertine to teak to oak, from light to dark to light again, is palpable.

Indeed, such plays are a theme throughout, not least in the kitchen. While

- 1 Entrance vestibule
- 2 WC
- 3 Plant room
- 4 Dining room
- 5 Kitchen
- 6 Rear yard
- 7 Study
- 8 Living
- 9 Shower area
- 10 En-suite bathroom
- 11 Main bedroom
- 12 Walk-in wardrobe
- 13 WC
- 14 Bedroom
- 15 Family bathroom
- 16 Roof terrace

SECTION BB



Core CPD Programme

Enhance your career with essential knowledge and skills

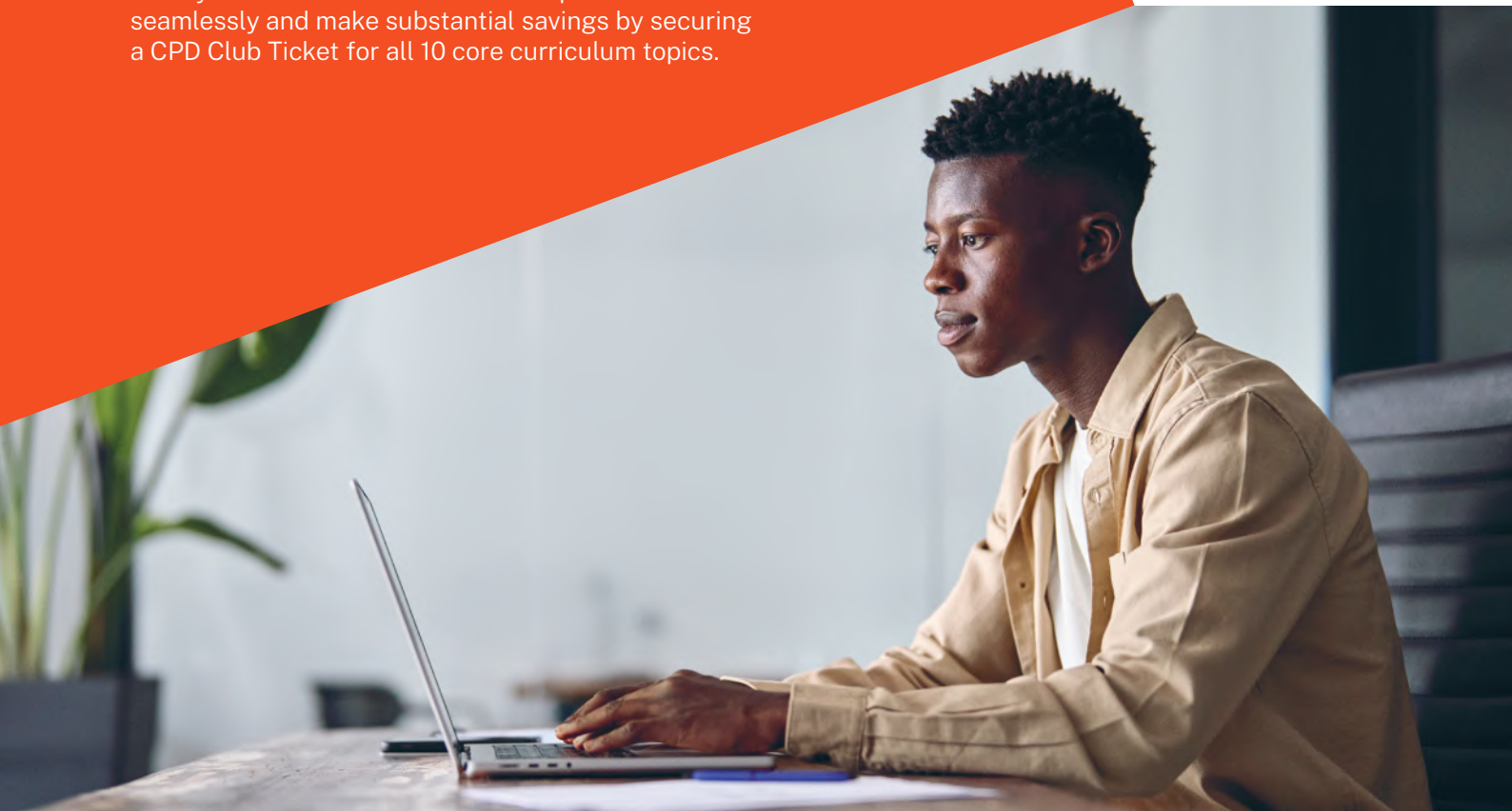
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the dining room it leads onto is flooded with light, here the rich dark hue of cherry timber units and wall linings creates the sense of being within a piece of bespoke cabinetry. Lit by a reed glass clerestory, deep set into the new insulated wall where the garage door used to be, the space feels far darker and more atmospheric, despite a light oak floor and the thick whiteness of its marble countertops.

It's evidenced again on the second floor, devoted to the main bedroom en-suite, where a daring glass wall in the light-flooded bathroom, barely mitigated by the use of reeded glass and a diaphanous curtain, showcases a bespoke bath of solid travertine. Behind a travertine and walnut vanity unit that looks like a mid-century sideboard, curving into a nook is a hidden shower area, whose darkness accords with a walnut-lined, walk-through dressing room in the centre of the plan between bath and bedroom, providing interludes of gloomth between brightly lit areas.

The strategy was not just about new interventions in the style of the original, however; there were also conscious endeavours to retain and reuse. Hayhurst says engineer Price & Myers' initial survey, which exposed problems with existing slabs, led to steels being added to shore them and provide bracing rather than replacement. During the strip-out, parquet floors were taken up, restored off site

and reinstated and, he adds, even 1970s pink ceramic tiles from the bathroom found a new lease of life. "We took them all, crushed them up and reconstituted it in resin to create the floor tiles and sink unit for the raised ground WC sat in front of the plant room," he says. The result is luxurious, resembling honed pink marble.

The refurbishment's effect is curious: a modest home with a relaxed, timber-lined period feel true to its modernist roots but which, in reality, is also an extreme spatial and material reinterpretation of the original. That's especially true in its energy performance, which, with its thermal lining, ASHP and double glazing, will far exceed the original D-rating. Opening the building out came at spatial and financial cost: even with the upper-level extension, the internal area increased by a mere 13m², and achieving the more than 11m high open volume meant a sprinkler system to meet Part B regs. But the vertical connectivity realised has been transformational, and Hayhurst stands by his approach. "It's part of the conversation about what modernist retrofit might constitute; externally, almost faithful adherence to its 1970s principles but with a radical internal reordering, to make it the space it should have been but never was," he says. And with a new commission to refurbish a 1960s Richard Gibson house in Camden's Murray Mews, it seems a chat he's happy to continue. ■

CREDITS

Architect
Hayhurst and Co
Structural engineer
Price & Myers
MEP engineer
MWL
Planning consultant
SM Planning
Party wall surveyor
AWM
Contractor
Rebuild London

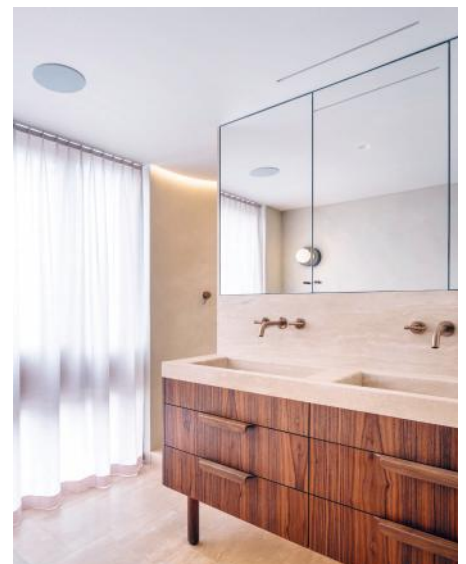
SUPPLIERS

Bespoke cabinetry/joinery
Vialle & Co
Roof lantern
Glazing Vision
Limewash paint
Bauwerk
Lime-based paints
Graphenstone
Sanitaryware
ABI Interiors
Curtains and blinds
Silent Gliss
Bespoke stone
GMI



Left: With window units copied and parquet floors reinstated, the new iteration feels close to the original.

Below: The en-suite bathroom is opulent with mid-century modern notes.



THE LIGHTER ROUTE TO BRICK FACADES

Martin Smithurst, product development and technical support manager at Forterra, explores how traditional and trusted brick finishes can be achieved on projects where conventional masonry may not seem practical



Presented by

OMNIA
FORTERRA

Brick remains one of the most powerful materials in British architecture. It carries planning weight, local continuity and a depth of texture that remains difficult to replicate. Yet many contemporary projects, particularly mid- and high-rise, mixed-use and retrofit schemes, ask more of the facade than traditional masonry can always comfortably provide.

The question for architects is no longer simply which brick to use but, rather, how to achieve a convincing brick architecture through lighter systems, reduced material use, faster installation and more flexible approaches to offsite manufacturing.

Forterra's new Omnia Mechanical Brick Slip system has been developed for exactly that. It's the first UK-manufactured extruded brick slip system where the full system – including rails, fixings and brick slips – can be sourced from a single supplier. It has been launched to help architects meet demand for innovative and sustainable ways of building while still achieving a traditional brick aesthetic.

The slips fix mechanically to a steel single-rail system to create a lightweight, A1 (non-combustible) rated rainscreen facade that is suitable for mixed-use mid- and high-rise developments and retrofit applications. It can also be integrated into prefabricated panels and modular systems, giving architects another route to combine modern methods of construction with a facade that remains familiar to planners, clients and communities.

Streamlined product specification

Long-winded product sourcing and having to order brick slips, associated rails and other elements from multiple suppliers are things of the past with our Omnia system.

A greater emphasis on safety and sustainability means project teams are seeking faster, safer and more environmentally conscious ways to deliver a building that largely looks the same on the outside but is constructed using alternative methods. We've drawn on Forterra's decades of brick-making experience to develop an all-in-one system that can be used to reflect regional brick styles, enabling new facades to sit seamlessly alongside traditional brickwork.

The genuine brick finish and range of colours available makes it easier to meet planning requirements without being constrained by traditional masonry construction methods that in some projects, like high-rises, are not the most efficient way to build.

Locally sourced manufacturing

The brick slips are manufactured at Forterra's plant in Accrington, which has been making bricks from locally sourced clay for more than 100 years. As a purpose-made, extruded brick slip system, the design of each slip has been precision-engineered to reduce material waste and energy consumption. The system is also compatible with Omnia's Soft Mud Brick Slip range, a selection of cut brick slips from the popular Measham brick range, giving specifiers a broader choice of finishes alongside Omnia's extruded slips.

The system has undergone fire testing by Warrington, building regulation structural testing by Lucideon, and CWCT Sequence B testing by UL Solutions. All test data has been independently verified by KIWA, giving architects and specifiers additional reassurance on system compliance and performance. ■



Above: Omnia combines purpose-made extruded brick slips, rails and fixings in a complete UK-manufactured system from a single supplier.



Above: The slips mechanically fix to a steel single-rail system to create a lightweight, A1-rated rainscreen facade that is suitable for mixed-use, mid- and high-rise developments and retrofit applications.

For project specification guidance, contact Forterra's sales team on +44 (0) 330 1231017, or at slips@forterra.co.uk or omniafacades.co.uk

STAYING THE COURSE

Bricks and blocks have long been a mainstay of the UK construction industry, but novel approaches are still possible at various scales – as three recent projects show. BAT Studio's David Di Duca discusses dramatic glazed brickwork on a rear extension, Giles Heather of Goldstein Heather explains using bricks to complement rather than copy the conservation context of a sizeable west London domestic add-on, and Squire & Partners' Tim Gledstone jumps into Rhino modelling to create a brick office facade that appears to have been liquefied

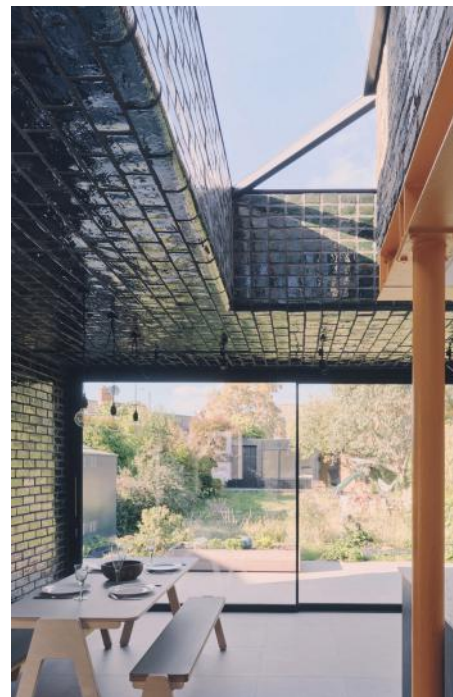


What was your design concept for the facade of Double Glazed House, your Victorian home extension in Walthamstow?



David Di Duca (DDD): The interiors in the back of the house were a bit tired and the existing rear extension wasn't great. Our new extension has two parts: a kitchen space in glazed brick, and a boot room to the side finished in ceramic tiles. The first consideration was how to work with the existing brick outrigger in the middle, which we decided to retain and celebrate, sticking it on utilitarian steel legs. The glazed brick forms a sculptural object that slots around this Victorian brick moment. We'd been talking to one of the clients about how to get the brick bullnose detailing right on the outside, and they suggested doing brick inside too, and that then spread to the ceiling.

We then started to see where we could go with the orientation of the bricks. Conceptually, all the bricks are orientated in the same direction. The whole thing reads like a giant stack-bonded pile of bricks that's been carved away. That gave us a detailing challenge to follow through.



How was this achieved through your use of bricks?

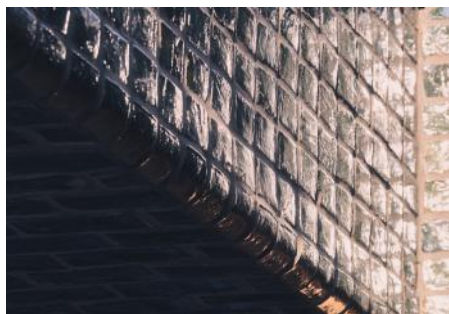
DDD: Some of them are full bullnose bricks, some are slips – there's a whole combination of different things going on in there to create the overall effect. We'd worked with brickmaker HG Matthews before on our Beulah Road studios project, where they supplied a similar tone of handmade green glazed brick, and we've done a series of projects with them since. They're great: they produce lots of samples of different glazes for us to look at and they're really amenable to doing interesting things with custom glazes. Their bricks look much more varied and rustic than other glazed bricks, and we wanted that depth of character in the extension – if it was too consistent it could have ended up looking like an abattoir.

The bricks are hand-thrown and fired for the first time in big kilns and then for a second time in an electric kiln with the glaze on them. This meant that we could get every detail we needed and do things like getting airbricks glazed. We couldn't get the right colour for dyeing the mortar, and in the end used a two-part tiling grout, which had a wider range of colours.

The darkness of the brick was a slight concern, but because the bricks are shiny, it's actually good in terms of brightness. It helps that the floor is a very light colour.

The bricks were standard brick sizes with slips on the ceiling. Where the bricks go up to meet the rooflight was really tricky; here we used a commercial system to hang full bricks along that reveal.

What was the biggest challenge?



DDD: The rooflight bricks, and the number of drawings we did to show where every type of slip and brick had to go. We also had to do all the quantities, so there were many meetings on site. Most of the interior is just like doing tiling, but you've got to make sure you don't end up with half a brick or a funny sliver somewhere, which would break the rationale.

The project as a whole was very time-consuming and the material choice and detailing was a big part of that, but we're very pleased with the outcome. There were 4,324 bricks in all – I think it's the biggest project we've done with handmade bricks.

Architect

Between Art and Technology (BAT) Studio

Structural engineer

Constant Structural

Contractor

Ascalon

Joinery contractor

MILK Furniture

Brick supplier

HG Matthews

What was your design concept for the West London House project facade?



Giles Heather (GH): It's incredibly unusual to have an extension on this scale. We had been looking at a ground- and first-floor rear extension, but when the adjacent site – a 1930s disused Territorial Army building – came on the market it made more sense for the client to buy it and extend laterally.

We're both contextual and contemporary architects, and invariably there's a balance between the two. It's about reconciling these two things, and that's principally through the materials selection, with a very carefully controlled palette of tonally related materials.

In the composition, there's a call and response between the host building and the new, introducing this rigorous set of geometrical forms that then find corresponding features within

the house. So while on the existing house there's a polygonal bay, on the extension there's a square bay. On the existing house there's painted render at the ground floor and around the architraves, while in the extension, there's in-situ concrete. The new bricks tonally correspond, and the proportions of the openings pretty much match their existing counterparts. Putting everything on one plane was obviously too much, and would start to overwhelm the host building. The pushbacks allow us to play around with the idea of what lies behind. The third-floor setback introduces the third material in the form of lime render, and is designed with a concertina form to catch the light. The extension takes its place in the townscape, but with quiet assertiveness.



GH: The bricks are really beautiful but aren't yellow stocks – we were looking for something tonally sympathetic without being imitative. We certainly didn't want a tumbled brick or reclaimed stock – we wanted something with a little bit more precision; with firmer edges. We were also looking for a slightly lighter palette within the same chromatic range. I think the Aurius bricks we found by Bespoke Brick Company have that. We specified it after a careful sifting through samples, and getting sample panels made up and seeing how they sat against other elements of the facade. There was a bit of back and forth about the degree of whiteness, and it ended up being quite white, which I think is successful as well. We're using it in a Flemish bond with a biscuity hue of lime mortar.

Apart from a few slips for the lintels at the rear of the house, they are all full bricks – it was comparatively straightforward. Behind the bricks are hempcrete blocks, which we used rather than concrete.



We used in-situ concrete because precast was too expensive, and also quite difficult to get for a project on that scale. Natural stone was out of the question after a round of value engineering.

How was this achieved through your use of bricks?

What was the biggest challenge?

GH: Technically, once we'd alighted on our detailed design approach, it was relatively easy to realise. It helped having a very competent and engaged contractor. The principal challenge was a logistical one – the windows were pretty late but the contractor, quite bravely, allowed the internal finishes to advance to a far greater stage than a more risk-averse firm would have done.

Architect
Goldstein Heather
Architecture
Structural engineer
Float Structures
Contractor
IC&T Projects
Brick supplier
Bespoke Brick
Company

What was your design concept for the TIDE Bankside commercial office redevelopment facade?

Tim Gledstone (TG): We wanted to create a contemporary warehouse that provided a state-of-the-art workplace. The location is along what used to be the Embankment, and we wanted to keep that link to the river with a design that responded to the context of the tides, seasons, and nearby parks. We liked the idea of an accelerated vernacular that appears eroded by time, and we wanted

to bring an organic twist to the design with levels of erosion and playfulness, and carry that up the outside of the building in sculptural piers.

I've often enjoyed going on the foreshore there and seeing how remnants of man-made materials get eroded over time, and how this relates to the soft, organic feel of some of the conservation area buildings around us.

How was this achieved through your use of bricks?

TG: Initially, we thought we could achieve the design in precast concrete, but then the design officer suggested brick. We got the planning consent on that basis and then had to work out how to do it. There was then a change of client. We convinced them the best way forward was to find the perfect partner and go into a pre-contract services agreement with them, so that by the time we got to the main contract everyone knew how we'd be dealing with it.

We met six or seven manufacturers and the clear team to work with was Thorp Precast because of Harvey Thorp's passion and drive. He effectively became part of the design team, working in Rhino alongside us. It was always going to be far too expensive to have special moulds for all of the different brick shapes required. Harvey had bought a water-jet cutting machine to deliver a high-profile office project in Battersea for Foster + Partners, and suggested using that with standard bricks to create the organic design.

It took six months of design development and lots of samples and prototyping, testing them on panels high up on a crane in different light and weather conditions. We wanted to source bricks

as locally as we could and looked at 30 kinds before choosing some by Smeed Dean. We were looking for something that had a warmth and richness that would suit the conservation area; something that had variety with little flecks and speckles and was as organic as it could be.

We couldn't use frogged bricks since they were going to be cut, so we ordered solid ones. The great thing was that after the bricks had been cut for the first time to our designs, the offcuts could be cut again, so there was zero waste. We also liked the little ridges you get in the brick when you run the water jet machine fast, which is the most cost-effective way to do it.

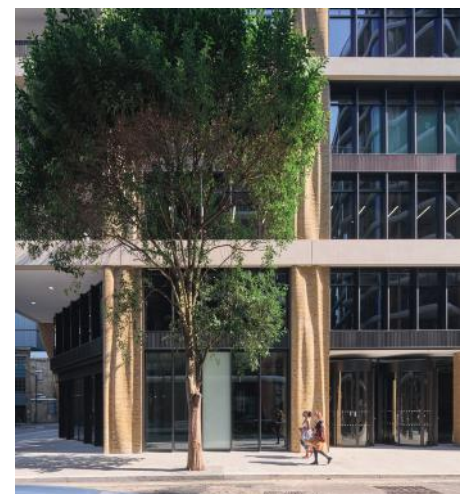
Every brick has its own passport to show where it goes, and was laid out on a system of trays and trolleys so the bricklayers could assemble them easily, in these beautiful timber moulds, with lime-based mortar.

The brick panels were nearly 8m long and were brought to site on flatbed lorries, before being assembled onto a GGBS reinforced concrete frame. The column on the corner, known as the stiletto, is structural and was made in five sections and assembled in place before concrete was poured down the middle.



What was the biggest challenge?

TG: Not having the answer to the question of how to do it in brick at the beginning. But our clients embraced bringing in an expert manufacturer, and together, we could collaborate to get the best solution from both our skill sets. The brick catches the eye of everyone passing by. The building is near the Tate Modern and the Globe, so there are always lots of schoolkids around, and it's quite fun when you notice them stroking the brick. It just puts a smile on people's faces. ■



Architect Squire & Partners
Structural engineer Heyne Tillet Steel
Sustainability engineer Hoare Lea
MEP consultant GDM Partnership
Landscape architect PAD Landscapes
Project manager Colliers International
Planning consultant Montagu Evans
MEP contractor Briggs & Forrester
Main contractor Kier Construction
Cladding manufacturer Thorp Precast
Brick suppliers Smeed Dean
(London Stock brick by Wienerberger)

GROWING PAINS

Expanding project demands can have a huge impact on architecture practices. Experts discussed being prepared, data oversight and why regular reviews matter at a RIBA J Spec webinar hosted with project management software specialist Milient

You can learn a bit about an architectural practice's workload from its coffee consumption. When the workload and staff increase, so do the cups of coffee needed to power people through the working week. Yet few businesses anticipate this increased cost – and many other impacts on people, systems and operations as they respond to rapidly changing client needs and project pipelines in today's increasingly volatile operating environment.

When clients step up in project scale – or accelerate or pause projects – the business impacts of change ripple out, affecting everything from staffing levels to office cleaning, desks and software licences. A single large project can even threaten the equilibrium of an established business culture as it sucks in resource and energy.

“To be a project leader is a bit like being a firefighter,” observed Jennifer Whyte, professor at the University of Sydney and Imperial College London, describing the preparedness and resilience needed to thrive in today's business environment. “If you're a

firefighter, you don't go into work hoping that there's a fire, but you're ready and prepared if there is.”

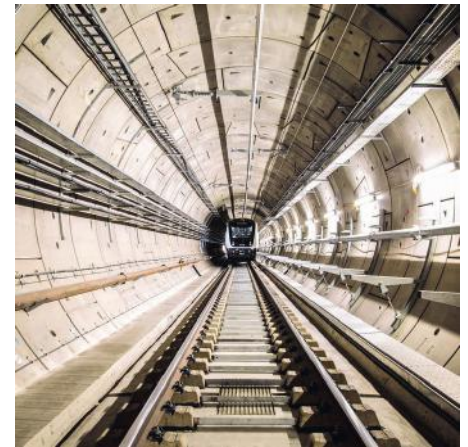
“We might think about it as climbing a mountain, rather than going for a walk on a Sunday afternoon,” she added in another analogy. They formed part of practical advice from speakers at a webinar – Stepping up in project scale: Mitigating project-related risks – organised by RIBA J in partnership with project management software specialist Milient.

Drawing on her research into complex mega-projects in London and Sydney, Whyte explained that the mindset of business-as-usual project leadership no longer applies. Today's world demands a more dynamic, “socialised” leadership approach, with that firefighter-like preparedness. That means “designing” businesses to be adaptive, so they can lead big, complex projects and maintain a clear view of their overall portfolio and its rewards and risks, while having the resilience to accommodate change.

Whyte's research has also explored interaction in the broader project ecology, notably in competing on resources,

drawing, learning and collaboration. The latter has the potential to help all businesses – from large to solo practices – manage scale-up. “I'd encourage you to think broadly about what kind of processes you need to adapt to different kinds of projects, and what kind of collaborations and partners you need to make use of the resources and capabilities you have in your organisation,” she urged the audience.

Access to data is essential to gaining that clear sight of projects and portfolios. “We don't see many practices that are under-planned, but we do see their event horizon is too short, meaning that they're underinformed when circumstances change,” said Jules Olivier, head of product at Milient. “We have fragmented visibility because project, resource and financial data typically can be siloed and sit in different locations, so it's really hard to have the agility and resilience to see the full picture quickly.” Financial impacts may as a result only become apparent weeks after change has happened – meaning teams could be redeployed late.



Early visibility of issues, and clarity on options and their consequences or trade-offs, enable rapid decision-making to help keep a project on track, Olivier explained. Systems help ensure visibility is clear and connected across pipeline, people and finances. “We can look at what revenue is now at risk, what fees might change, what are the underlying costs,” he said.

Systems must be underpinned by robust business processes and data. These will include commercial guardrails, such as controls for a contract perceived as high-risk, and regular reviews to ensure forecasts are up to date and emerging issues flagged, said Olivier. Timing of project reviews can also be key, with Rohan Kempadoo, practice manager at John McAslan + Partners, pointing to the benefits of having check-ins at the midway point through project stages to review decisions and processes. “Making sure you have enough time to turn the ship around is really important,” he said.

Such advice stems from the practice’s experience of working on large-scale and often evolving projects, including one where the client needed design work

for three sites to run concurrently in a condensed 10-to-12-month programme, rather than sequentially as first planned. A mobilisation fee helped the practice respond as it had to virtually double in size. Staff were hired on a mixture of permanent, fixed-term and temporary contracts, with new recruits dispersed to help them integrate and understand the company’s ethos and expectations. Some standardised approaches were adopted, including for the time off in lieu generated by the intense programme. While some processes were necessarily adapted, they remained robust. “You can collapse programmes, you can collapse schedules, but not your standards,” cautioned Kempadoo.

“Resilience comes through preparedness,” he continued. “If you understand where you are as a baseline, what your capacity is and how you can expand, you know where you can go in the future.” Just over half the webinar’s audience said in a poll they were stepping up in project size – or expecting to soon. Kempadoo’s words could help provide certainty as they navigate the unknown. ■

Above left: Sydney Metro’s Central Station is one of two in the city designed by John McAslan + Partners, which are part of the city’s infrastructure project ecology.

Top: John McAslan + Partners’ transformation of a Victorian former power station into the Global Leadership Centre for the Saïd Business School at the University of Oxford is both large-scale and high profile.

Above: Data is an important part of major projects such as the Elizabeth Line.

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MAKING LIGHT WORK OF IT



JAKE CURTIS

Modern offices must prioritise collaboration while being able to suit different modes of work. Julian de Metz, dMFK director, highlights four of the firm's projects where the details – including material choices – have made the difference

Anyone who talks about how the demands of the modern office tenant are 'changing' is already behind the times. The new normal must be an acceptance that working collaboratively helps us deliver more impactful, creative work – an ethos we believe in at dMFK.

But effective collaboration in the office is predicated on having generous, flexible workspaces which facilitate many types of working. These collated projects demonstrate the importance of the little details, from material choices in a new build to the restoration of historic elements in a heritage structure. These can shift the tenant's perception of a workspace, and can create a comfortable, homely atmosphere which can draw people into the office while inspiring collaboration and productivity.

Ultimately, we believe that designing around the human experience of space makes for healthy, productive workspaces.

Chancery House

Built as the Chancery Lane Safe Deposit in 1885, the original building was bombed during the Second World War and survived only by its silver vaults. Extensions from the 1980s and 2000s atop the subsequent 1953 replacement resulted in a series of dark, disconnected spaces.

dMFK worked with The Office Group (now Fora) to reinvent the structure of the building, punching through and lowering the two courtyards, with perimeter windows flooding sunlight into the basement level from every angle. Not only has this intervention improved the quality of the previously unloved and underutilised floorspace; it has also provided new sightlines through the floors, visually connecting various parts of the building together. Tenants can see from workspace areas to breakout zones to amenities such as the gym. The design recognises people need a variety of spaces, with this visual continuity encouraging them to explore the building throughout their workday.



“Effective collaboration rests on having flexible spaces which facilitate many types of working”



170 Piccadilly (top)

Our ambition was to rediscover 170 Piccadilly's architectural identity and reposition it as a fully managed workplace for GPE. The Grade II-listed building, dating from 1905, was suffering from successive modern interventions, with historic details and interior character eroded and lost.

Careful research and restoration enabled us to repair the building fabric and enrich the quality of space with a thoughtful, heritage-inspired fit-out. We restored elements such as cornicing, and ensured new architectural insertions would echo and enhance historic motifs throughout. Materials and furnishings were selected to create mixed zones throughout the workspace, differentiating between focused areas for quiet work, and breakout spaces for meeting and collaboration.

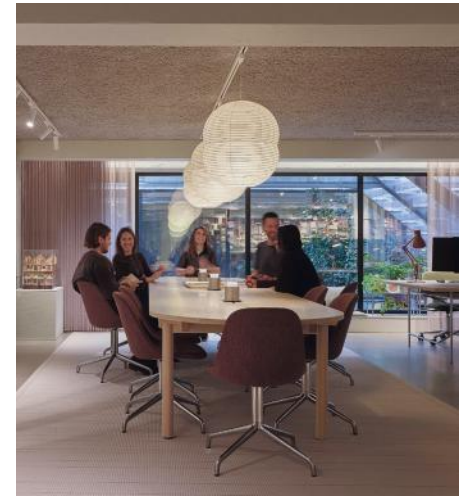
The design isn't just a contextual interpretation of the building's history, but an acknowledgment and understanding of modern ways of working, creating a place people enjoy spending time in.

Mayfair HQ (above)

On a design for a 50-person investment firm based in a six-storey heritage building, we concentrated on the layout and materiality of the space to create a mix of communal open-plan areas, focused working zones and private offices.

A significant amount of the early work was spent zoning the office, creating an interconnected series of spaces to acknowledge different working styles and needs through the day. With improved circulation and a mix of spaces for group work, shared meals and events, the new office was centred on the client's needs and fostering connection and community.

We layered warm, tactile and rich materials to add a sense of quality and depth, including solid ash, dark stained oak, natural stone and ceramic slabs. The soft, neutral colour palette is designed to complement the client's curated artwork selection, which is exhibited throughout the project's atmospheric, interconnected spaces.



76 Charlotte Street

dMFK jumped at the opportunity to expand our award-winning London head office in 2025, transforming a previously lightless basement into a multifunctional hub that blurs the lines between office, gallery and events space.

With a need to satisfy multiple uses, from hosting workshops and roundtables to dinners and parties, we knew that the design would have to challenge the traditional office fit-out setup. The end result focused on warm, homely materials and finishes, comfortable acoustics, a considered blend of natural and artificial lighting, and a rotating 'living room' of furniture creating a cosy environment. The jewel in the crown is the living sample library, which helps to inspire and inform our work every day.

We are passionate about the office because it allows us space to collaborate and develop our best work, so a fit-out that challenges the home by rivalling it in comfort and style was essential. ■

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COSTINGS

BRICK & BLOCKWORK

Brick and blockwork is used across all building types, both internally and externally. Internally, blocks are typically used for the formation of blockwork walls, while externally brickwork is commonly used to create feature or standard facades. External brickwork tends to be associated with residential development.

When considering pricing for brick and blockwork, both material costs, such as specification and quantity, and labour costs should be taken into account. The latter are often driven by the level of intricacy of the design. As regards supply costs, economies of scale also play an important role. The larger the quantity of material

ordered, the greater the efficiencies that can be achieved. Conversely, where only a small area of a bespoke brick or block is required, costs can end up disproportionately higher.

Economies of scale also affect labour costs. Small, intricate areas of brick or blockwork take significantly longer to construct and therefore incur higher costs than larger standard areas (on a cost per m² basis).

Prices reflect mid-range rates as of Q2 2026. All exclude subcontractor preliminaries, which can vary considerably based on project-specific variables such as size, logistics and programme.

BLOCKWORK

Blockwork is primarily used in the formation of internal, structural and external walls.

Considerations when pricing internal blockwork may include:

- blockwork density and thickness
- block specification
- method of installation, whether laid in stretcher course or flat
- access requirements
- wall height
- acoustic requirements
- head details

In addition to the pricing of blockwork, the following items are typically priced for as additional costs:

- sealants and mastics
- decoration, including paint
- lintels for openings
- support systems, for example wind posts or similar
- insulation requirements
- waterproofing in basement areas
- cavity formation

These items are excluded from the benchmarked rates set out below.

BLOCKWORK WALLS

140mm medium-density concrete block:
£90-130/m²

140mm high-density concrete block:
£110-160/m²

215mm medium-density concrete block:
£130-180/m²

215mm high-density concrete block:
£200-240/m²

Height of blockwork will impact the required support structure and wall thickness, as well as the type of access arrangements needed.

BRICKWORK

Brickwork is mainly used in the formation of external facades and as the finished surface to external walls.

There is a wide range of bricklaying styles, including stretcher bond, header bond and Flemish bond. More complex laying patterns will increase both labour time and overall cost.

Other considerations when pricing brickwork may include:

- brick lintels to openings
- cavity wall systems
- structural framing systems located behind the brickwork, such as SFS
- whether the brickwork is formed as part of a precast panel system
- articulation of the facade or wall, which will affect both the quantity of brickwork and labour costs
- access requirements

All of the above factors should be considered when pricing brickwork.

BRICKWORK WALLS

Clay brickwork:
£500-600/m²

Clay brick spandrel finish:
£700-800/m²

Glazed brick:
£700-900/m²

Glazed brick spandrel finish:
£900-1,100/m²

Brick slip facade:
£600-1,000/m²

Costs are based on the developed area of brickwork. More intricate brickwork that involves a higher level of detailing will fall towards the upper end of the stated cost ranges.

WORDS

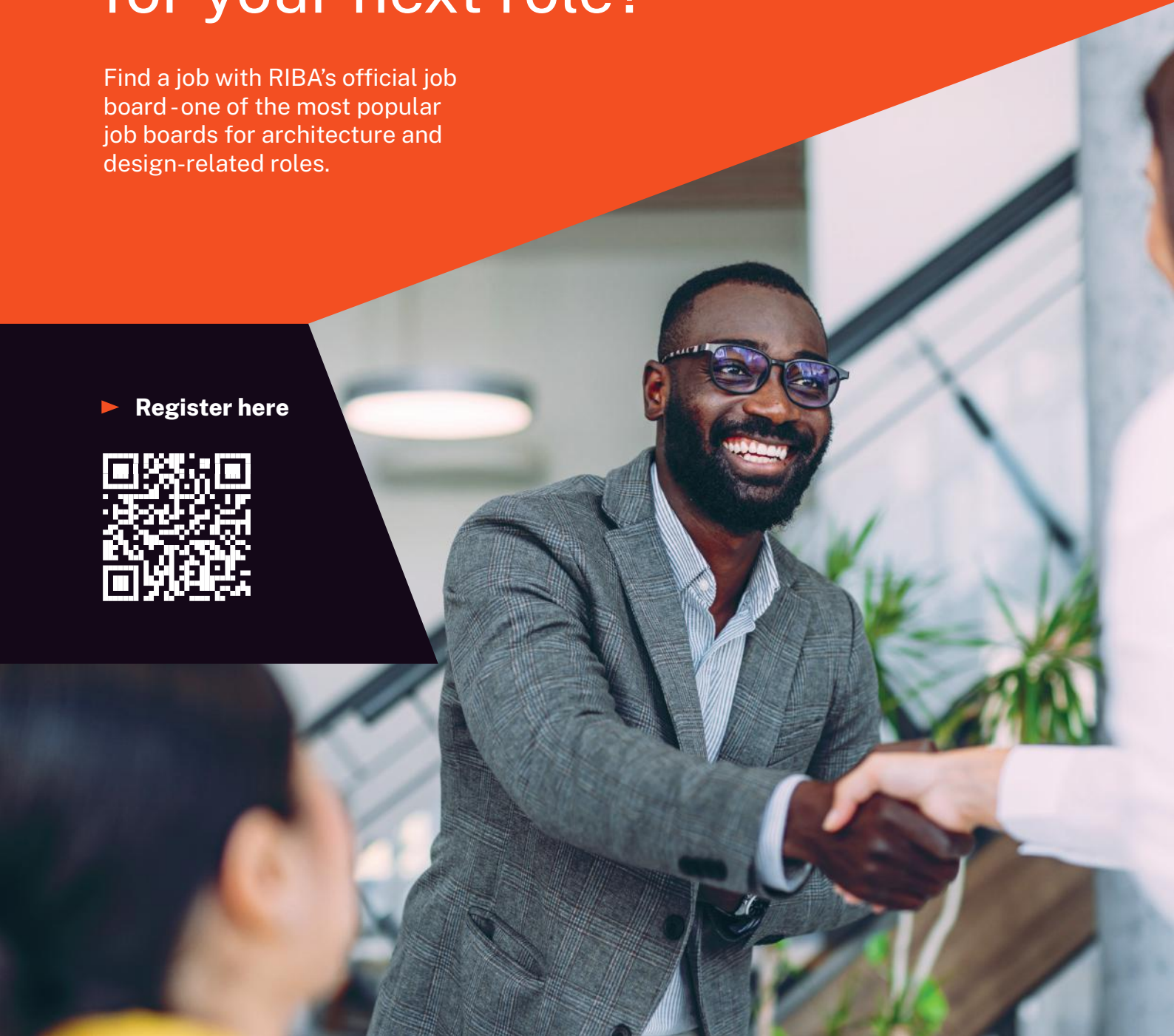
Tom Passmore, associate
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RIBA

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PRESIDENT: OUR CITIES NEED ARCHITECTS

In Sydney, city architect and design director Bridget Smyth has helped bring about better spaces, as in Sydney Central Business District (2019) for NSW Government by the City of Sydney design team.

RIBA has launched a campaign advocating for trialling city architects in England. There is ample evidence from abroad of the benefits they offer places and people, writes Chris Williamson



FLOBIAN GROEHN

In May, RIBA launched our campaign to promote city architects across England. Using case studies to illustrate the impact of investing in design expertise both here and abroad, alongside modelling of potential benefits and costs, we showed the benefits city architects can bring.

As the government looks to deliver homes and places on an ambitious scale, this is a crucial time to ensure that what we build is designed to meaningfully contribute to improving how, and where, we live. Investing in city architects is a clear way of committing to this goal.

Learning from international examples

Cities and towns in many countries across the world benefit from the insight of a city architect. They are in post in many European cities and regions: over half of the municipalities in Sweden have a city architect, as do nine Danish counterparts. A number of Dutch and Belgian cities and regions have installed city architects, while more than 120 municipal architects were in post in Czechia in 2020. Other European cities that have, or have had similar posts include Barcelona, Budapest and Riga.

We convened a roundtable with many of them as part of research into the role,

and I was also fortunate to discuss the campaign with Finn Williams, the city architect of Malmö and former Public Practice chief executive.

Each city architect has responsibility for their city's spatial design quality, though there is variation in their scope, decision-making powers and position within the local government structure.

In Europe, city architects generate significant value. Centralised oversight and accountability address delays and issues in planning systems which inhibit building, while architectural expertise ensures development is high-quality and sustainable. There is evidence of this benefit across the globe through successful city architect programmes in Malmö, Sydney, Seoul and Brussels.

City architects are responsible for advocating for the built environment and how it performs for people. This means making sure it is high quality, sustainable and accessible, and actively improves quality of life while helping the UK fulfil its commitment to meet the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. The role includes providing recommendations on how relevant financial resources are allocated and providing scrutiny at a masterplan

level. It should proactively improve the quality of development and the built environment, including by ensuring design quality is embedded throughout planning, regeneration and other related departments, working with colleagues across the local authority to promote good standards of design. It should also involve working with wider stakeholders, such as developers and communities, to ensure standards are maintained at all stages of the development process.

The government is looking to increase devolution and introduce strategic planning, and the establishment of city architects is vital to making sure that strategic plans meet the highest standards of design quality. They would be well placed to combine design expertise with knowledge of the local context and its challenges and opportunities. RIBA recommends a three-year pilot programme within the Greater Manchester Combined Authority.

City architects, together with integrated community and design review panels, could not only speed up the planning process but significantly improve the quality of architecture and the built environment, while contributing to the government's growth agenda. ■

ERNEST GEORGE AND PETO, HOME TO A HI-TECH FRONT DOOR

Group portrait of the office of Ernest George and Peto, 1887

By India Whiteley

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English architects Ernest George (1839-1922) and Harold Peto (1854-1933) began their partnership in 1869, after the sudden death of George's previous partner. By the 1880s their office at 18 Maddox Street was one of London's leading architectural practices, with a reputation that drew a bright crop of young assistants eager for a hands-on architectural education. George and Peto attributed the success of their partnership to their readiness to neatly divide their responsibilities: George was seen as the creative force, with Peto deftly handling the practice's business affairs.

The pair's office featured a manager's room, a waiting room, a draughtsmen's

room, and a private office each for George and Peto. They were known for cultivating an atmospheric interior in the office, filling the rooms with "fine old furniture" and hanging the walls with architectural drawings. One former assistant recalled the front door being operated by a wire, saving the "office boy" (perhaps pictured centre) having to run up and down the stairs whenever the doorbell rang. The presence of the young boy, the absence of women, and the various hand drawing instruments clutched by the assembled group, hint at the changes in store for the architectural profession in the approaching century. ■





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The Cowshed | Design Storey

RIBA South West Conservation Award 2025



Image: Lawrence Grigg

The Cowshed is the transformation of a Grade II listed C17th barn into a residential dwelling, celebrating the agricultural character of the building. The Conservation Rooflight with its traditional design, slim frame and flush finish to the roofline complement the aesthetics and provide natural light and ventilation to the living spaces.

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