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WRK/LDN: Office Revolution?

This research paper provides a snapshot of London's current response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the capital's workspaces and their urban context, and evaluates how offices will need to adapt in the long-term.

WRK/LDN: Office Revolution? brings together thought leadership from industry experts and views from a comprehensive NLA Members Survey of 180 respondents about their experiences of a year of lockdown, working from home and the potential impact this will have in the longer term. The report also includes over 100 projects, ideas and products to illustrate the changing workplace, as well as recommendations to ensure London can support the way we want to work in the future.

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The Building Society

The Building Society, 55 Whitfield St, Bloomsbury, London W1T 4AH | Status: Built | Completion: 2019

Client: Derwent London | Tenant: Elliott Wood | Architect: Make | Engineer: Arup | Interior Designer: Squire and Partners | Furniture Design: Rawside | Fit-out Specialist: Oktra

The Building Society is a collaborative co-working space for the built environment industry, where creative disruptors and innovators make, develop and share ideas. Founded by engineering firm Elliott Wood, in September 2019, the space is also home to the practice's 60-strong central London team.

The two-floor flexible office space, located at 55 Whitfield Street, is part of the wider mixed-use refurbishment of 80 Charlotte Street in Fitzrovia, developed by Derwent London and designed by Make Architects as a net zero operational carbon building from day one.

The Building Society is a purpose-driven community whose members are united around a common cause: to drive social and environmental change and create better ways of working. For the co-working space to embody this ethos, it was vital that its interior design reflected this commitment to sustainability.

To achieve this, Elliott Wood worked in collaboration with Squire & Partners' interiors team. Designs reference the building's Fitzrovia setting, celebrate structural elements and raw materials, and include greenery within workspaces. Layouts were developed with collaboration, networking, wellbeing and agile working in mind, creating flexible spaces for informal learning and events.

Two floors at ground and lower ground level are connected by a bespoke perforated metal staircase with a feature planting display. Textiles and leather give a soft contrast to the perforated metal mesh, brushed stainless steel finishes and concrete floor. The team prioritised re-used, recycled and locally-sourced materials, including a reception desk made of surplus timber.

Plywood-topped, steel tables and desks were designed for the space by low-waste local supplier, Rawside, to complement the modern, industrial aesthetic of the space. With a variety of workspaces ranging from large communal tables to smaller hot-desking and fixed desks for members to work and meet around, every detail emphasizes the collaborative, participatory culture at The Building Society.

"Elliott Wood's vision to create a place where people from across the built environment industry can collaborate, debate and lead change has been realised in The Building Society. We joined the community just 6 months ago and we're loving it! There are so many events and activities to get involved in — from debates, talks and networking, to crafting and lunchtime yoga. Most importantly, the space facilitates collaboration between disciplines and breaks down the usual silos. The Building Society is starting a new movement and we're excited to be part of it."

*Matthew Chamberlain, Director,
Ayre Chamberlain Gaunt*





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The Department Store Studios

19 Bellefields Road, Ferndale, London SW9 9UH | Status: Under Construction | Completion: 2021

The Department Store Studios is a four-storey contemporary workspace building adjacent to the award-winning refurbishment of The Department Store, as the next phase of Squire & Partners' investment in Brixton. Taking inspiration from the robust Edwardian aesthetic of its older sibling, the new crafted red brick building replaces a series of derelict 1970s annex structures with workspace designed for small to medium creative businesses, and a restaurant animating the ground floor. Internally, raw natural finishes are celebrated with exposed brick and a cross laminated timber frame.

Client, Architect and Interior Designer:
Squire and Partners
Structural Engineer: Elliott Wood



The Old Bakery

16 Forest Hill Rd, Dulwich, London SE22 0RR | Status: Built | Completion: 2019

A derelict out of use shop was restored sustainably to a flexible work space which now accommodates an Architect's office. RDA's office was designed as a multi-purpose flexible work space with varying degrees of private spaces. From the enclosed old baker's oven for private meetings, hidden services in the basement to the semi-private office space and the public store-front ground level. The front desk is on wheels and the ceiling lights on magnetic tracks can be arranged to accommodate local artists or dimmed for a yoga lesson.

Client and Architect: RDA
Contractor: Pawel General Building