

Penseiri

RSAW conference: 27 November 2009 Making the most of space: one size doesn't fit all

As the ratchet tightens on public and private finances alike, the pressure is on all of us to make do with less, and make the resources we have go further. Designers of the built environment are certainly not immune from this. Recessions force us to fight harder for every square inch of the space we provide, and to resist even more the temptations of cookie-cutter solutions.

Against the backdrop of the current market, the RSAW aims to share and compare best practice, expertise and experience of those working in the field at its Annual Conference.

How can good architecture capture our imagination, and change the way we relate to our neighbours? How can architects revitalize neglected areas and improve our health and well-being? Good spatial design can provide a more attractive environment, stronger communities with a sense of pride and ownership as well as attracting financial investment. To sustain a vibrant community, well-designed buildings and public space are vital. In many ways the qualities needed for well-designed buildings and landscapes can mirror those needed to maintain a cohesive society: innovation, forward-thinking and creativity.



RIBA-Award-winning scheme, Accordia
Photo credit: Peter Cook

The RSAW annual conference brings together speakers from across the UK:

- Alison Brooks (Alison Brooks Architects), designer of the RIBA Stirling Prize award-winning Accordia scheme in Cambridgeshire, will talk about how high density can deliver high quality
- Simon Henley (Buschow Henley Architects) will talk about Grover Close, Hemel Hempstead, which seeks to balance high density with a sound building footprint, parking and amenities
- Jane Davidson AM, Welsh Assembly Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing will deliver the keynote speech about how design ingenuity must meet Wales's exacting new environmental standards.



Angelina Street, Cardiff before and after
Photo credit: BRE Wales

One size certainly doesn't fit all, and George Clarke, presenter of Channel 4's *The Home Show*, is certainly no 'off the shelf' architect. He will give the Inspiration Hour talk at the end of the conference to send delegates away inspired and positive.

Join us at the RSAW annual conference at St David's Hotel, Cardiff Bay on 27 November to hear more about good spatial design, vibrant communities and creative thinking.

Book your place with Sophie Gibbs, RSAW,
t: 02920 228987 e: sophie.gibbs@inst.riba.org

New RIBA President takes office

On 1 September 2009, Ruth Reed became the first female President of the RIBA. Ruth is the 73rd RIBA President, a position previously held by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott and Sir Basil Spence among others.

Ruth has extensive experience in the practice and education of architecture. Currently Course Director and design tutor at the Birmingham School of Architecture, Ruth is also a partner of planning consultancy, Green Planning Solutions. Ruth's career has been expansive with terms spent designing for a national house builder, for a large commercial practice and for a housing association; the latter busy role combined with motherhood. In 1992, Ruth went on to set up her own predominantly self-build architecture practice in Wales and in 1997 she designed and constructed her own house.



Ruth Reed © Morley von Sternberg

Ruth has been involved in the teaching of architecture since 1993, and has served the profession most notably as President of the RSAW (2003-2005) and as RIBA Vice President of Membership (2005-2007).

RIBA President Ruth Reed commented:

"There is no doubt that the state of the architectural profession today is very different to that of two years ago; the economic recession has affected each and every practice and practitioner regardless of their size or geographic location. One of my key priorities as RIBA President is to ensure that the Institute continues to fully support and promote the profession, and work through this difficult time. I will be working with members across the country on sharing best practice, in order that we retain our world class profession and emerge stronger to meet the challenges of the new economic climate."

"In becoming the first female president of the RIBA, I am proud to be part of a change within the profession to recognise and encourage the skills and careers of women in the sector; I hope that by example I will encourage more women to remain in architecture. The profession as a whole needs to widen its membership to include architects from all social, racial and economic backgrounds to represent the diverse nature of our society."

Ruth's election manifesto indicated the importance of greater member engagement. In response to this promise, Ruth will be visiting Wales in February 2010. Watch this space for details.

Environmental Lab Research facility at the Welsh School of Architecture

At the Welsh School of Architecture, Cardiff University, the Environmental Lab Research facility enables the physical scale simulation of wind and lighting conditions for the testing of buildings in their environment.

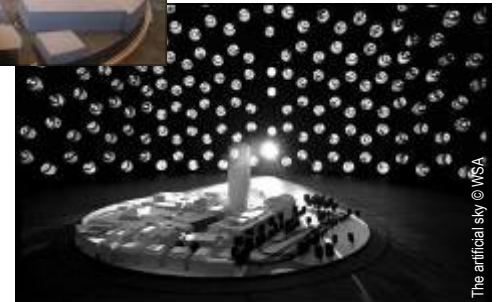
The Wind Tunnel

Wind induced environments are investigated using a Boundary Layer Wind Tunnel. This facility enables researchers to use scale models (typically 1:100 to 1:500) to investigate air pressure generated by wind effect and wind acceleration caused by buildings.

Natural ventilation is driven by a variation in air pressure over the building envelope, which is often dictated by the form of the building itself as well as its surroundings. The wind tunnel simulates these conditions and allows measurements to be made of the relative pressures upon different façade components. These measurements could be used to check ventilation rates, air movement and ventilation strategy through numerical simulation. The modification of ground level wind by buildings can also be simulated. Areas of potential wind discomfort can be identified and corrective measures can be tested.



Inside the Wind Tunnel © WSA



The artificial sky © WSA

Daylighting

The school's Artificial Sky and Heliodon simulates external natural lighting conditions; those arising from the sun, sky, and clouds, and the reflections from the ground and nearby structures. It can do so for all weather conditions, seasons and locations. At eight metres in diameter this facility is one of the largest available. The hemispherical dome, containing over 600 controllable luminaries, enables luminous distributions of different types of skies: overcast, clear or mixed.

The Heliodon sets the relative angles between the model and an artificial sun, as appropriate for the time, date and location being studied. This allows evaluation of solar penetration, glare and shadows.

If you're interested in the facilities and want to know more you can contact Huw Jenkins (jenkinsH@cardiff.ac.uk) or Don Alexander (Alexander@cardiff.ac.uk) at the School.

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01 DECEMBER 2009

SEND TO SOPHIE GIBBS, RSAW sophie.gibbs@inst.riba.org

Meet the new President

The RSAW Council consists of 12 members from across Wales who meet regularly to respond to RSAW policy and local matters.

The newly elected RSAW President is Pierre Wassenaar.



Pierre says:

“One of our initiatives is to look seriously at setting up a Centre for the Designed Environment that would give Cardiff, and Wales, a physical forum for bringing at least some of these bodies under one roof. These are exciting times for the RSAW. We very much look forward to the road ahead, and hope to be working with a good number of you on the way.”

Although born a Dutchman, Pierre has become partly Welsh through his family: His wife Rebecca is from Bridgend, and she's the reason he made the move from London to Wales in 2004. Pierre's children keep him on his toes as far as speaking Welsh is concerned.

Pierre studied at Cambridge and Kingston universities before working for the last 15 years in a wide range of design work: houses in Holland and Japan, factories in Spain, commercial fit-out and strategic briefing in London and Germany. On coming to Wales, Pierre joined Stride Treglown Davies in Cardiff and has been involved in everything from university and commercial projects to Cardiff's new central library. Pierre's approach to design has been about trying to pin down the elusive essence of what makes a "good project".

As the new President of the RSAW, Pierre is looking forward to times of great opportunity for Wales. Emerging from its industrial roots, Wales is a testbed for exciting sustainable regeneration. Wales has also taken a lead in raising the bar of environmental compliance by introducing potentially groundbreaking mandatory minimum standards in government funded projects. Then there's the enormous decaying building stock that needs gutsy and enlightened refurbishment.

Pierre sees architects in a crucial, unifying role in answering these challenges and is very ambitious for the RSAW. For example, the RSAW wants to connect into Government, at every level of legislation that affects the built environment, and has lobbied hard to ensure that good design is enshrined in planning requirements.

Practice profile: Gaunt Francis Architects, Cardiff

Gaunt Francis Architects are positive about seeing an improving mood in the private sector in the coming months, with increased enquiries from private developers in the second half of the year combined with expanding successes in public sector markets.

The practice, established in 1997, has expanded from its historic base of commercial design to successfully deliver a wide spectrum including masterplanning, retail, further educational, housing (including the much publicised Code 6 "Green House") and residential assisted living, creating schemes for an increasing number of public and private clients. This combines with consultancy roles for the Welsh Assembly, Design Commission and BRE assisting to drive forward a pragmatic line on sustainability.

Gaunt Francis, based in Cardiff with a sister office in London, have weathered the last year's economy comparatively well, although like most medium/large practices have been forced to reduce numbers. The architects studio-style design approach and flat management structure has helped through these changes and the partnership is optimistic about being able to grow the team during 2010.

To find out more about Gaunt Francis Architects, contact:

Nicola Spiteri

E nicola.spiteri@GauntFrancis.co.uk

W www.GauntFrancis.co.uk

T 029 2023 3993



Proposal for a development framework across the St Katherine's Dock estate, London



Completed scheme for Raven Audley Court, Ilkley, West Yorkshire (100,000 sq ft scheme of 98 apartments)

OCTOBER

FRI 9 – WED 4 Nov, REFLECTING WALES 09 : 09 exhibition at Howard Gardens Gallery, School of Art & Design, Howard Gardens Campus, Howard Gardens, Cardiff CF24 0SP. The exhibition highlights nine young/emerging architectural Welsh or Welsh resident designers who exhibit the potential to make a significant impact on design standards in our homes, working environments and the quality of places - cities, towns, villages and rural areas - in the decades to come.

Work by: David Chambers / Steve Coombs / Aled Wyn Davies / Sarah Featherstone / Richard Golledge / Matthew Jones / Niall Maxwell / Chris Owen / Rhian Thomas. Reflecting Wales 09:09 is organised by the Welsh School of Architecture in partnership with the Design Commission for Wales, and in collaboration with Design Circle RSAW South and Cardiff School of Art and Design. The exhibition and symposium is a key event within the Cardiff Design Festival 2009 and is supported by RSAW.

CPD WED 14, PARTY WALL AND THE ARCHITECT at The National Botanical Gardens in Wales, Llanarthne, Carmarthenshire, SA32 8HG, 2pm– 5pm. The Party Wall etc. Act 1996 includes work which involves: work on an existing wall shared with another property, building on the boundary with a neighbouring property and work involving excavating near a boundary. It is essential that architects understand client's obligations to notify adjoining owners and are aware of the circumstances under which a dispute can arise. This seminar covers mainly the Party Wall Act 1996, in particular:

- What is a party wall
- Where the statute applies to building works
- How to serve valid notices
- What jurisdiction party wall surveyors have
- Why appoint a third surveyor
- Implications for designers with regard to the Act

How to reduce risk in relation to the Act

David Reynolds BSc (Hons) MRICS from Drivers Jonas LLP leads the session.

CPD record: 3 hours of formal CPD. Fees (including VAT at 15%): £63.25 (RSAW Member) £75.25 (non-member). For more information contact Sophie Gibbs, t: 029 2022 8987, sophie.gibbs@inst.riba.org

THU 22 - FRI 23, WALES REGENERATION SUMMIT at Venue Cymru, The Promenade, Llandudno LL30 1BB. The second Wales Regeneration Summit will cover the themes of: Our Natural Assets, Low carbon region, sustainability, our industrial heritage; Social enterprise and community regeneration, Welsh Language; Housing and the Welsh Housing Quality Standard and Coastal regeneration. The Summit will provide delegates with a key opportunity to debate current approaches to regeneration in Wales, to examine innovative projects and initiatives that are effecting real change and learn about responses to the economic downturn and the unique opportunities that Wales offers. To find out further information and to register for this Summit log on to www.walesregen.co.uk

NOVEMBER

FRI 6, THE CONCRETE SOCIETY (WALES REGION) ANNUAL DINNER at Marriott Hotel, Cardiff, 7.15pm for 8.00pm. Black tie dinner with guest speaker Paul Tonkinson. Tickets: £49.50 + VAT per person. Contact Mike Doolan, Concrete Society Treasurer (Amodeo Precast Ltd) for details, t: 029 2048 1778, e: nicolaballett@yahoo.com

CPD WED 14, ARCHITECTURE AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT at UWIC, Cyncoed Road, Cardiff, CF23 6XD, 2pm– 5pm. Explore the challenges and opportunities of Project Management, its impact on the construction team and how it can be used to deliver successful projects. Project Management is becoming universal across all sectors and industries and many aspects of society. For architects and designers there are dilemmas of how much Project Management they should be offering and doing, and how much will or should be done by others. This seminar will explore:

- Why Project Management is important to architects and the construction industry
- What has to be managed and who by
- The role and characteristics of an effective Project Manager
- How and when to manage client/customer contributions and involvement

Sources and types of (Project) Managers.

Speaker: Tom Taylor of dashdot.

CPD record: 3 hours of formal CPD. Fees (including VAT at 15%): £63.25 (RSAW Member) £75.25 (non-member). For more information contact Sophie Gibbs, t: 029 2022 8987, sophie.gibbs@inst.riba.org

CPD FRI 27, RSAW CONFERENCE “Making the most of space: one size doesn't fit all” at St David's Hotel, Cardiff Bay. How can good architecture in the housing field capture our imagination, and change the way we relate to our neighbours? How can architects revitalize neglected areas and improve our health and well-being? The impact of good spatial design can provide a more attractive environment, stronger communities with a sense of pride and ownership as well as introducing an element of financial investment. To sustain a vibrant community, well-designed buildings and public space are vital. There is no doubt that the qualities needed for well-designed architectural and landscape spaces can mirror those needed to maintain a cohesive society: innovative, forward-thinking and creative.

With a keynote speech from Jane Davidson AM, Welsh Assembly Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing, other speakers include Simon Henley (Buschow Henley), Alison Brooks (Alison Brooks Architects), Jonathan Hines (Architype) and RIBA President Ruth Reed.



St David's Hotel, Cardiff Bay
Photo credit: St David's Hotel

To book, contact Sophie Gibbs
RSAW, t: 02920 228987
e: sophie.gibbs@inst.riba.org