

INDEPENDENT, EXPERT  
ADVICE THAT PUTS YOU  
IN CONTROL OF YOUR  
CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

CLIENT ADVISERS

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Do you have an **accurate and clear brief and clear vision** for your project?

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Do you have a **strategy or masterplan** in place for all your buildings?

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Have you **fully evaluated** the pros and cons of all the options – new-build, refurbishment, remodelling extension, re-purposing or demolition?

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Are you confident of getting **best value** and of managing design against the available budget at every step of the project?

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Do you know whether the design will **meet all your needs**?

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How **sustainable and future-proof** will the project be?

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Do you know the best **procurement route** to take?

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Do you know how to get the best from **available tools** such as BIM?

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Who will be your **guide and critical friend** to meet your challenge?

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Do you need support to **manage your stakeholders**?

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## Defining and delivering best value

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When considering a construction project, the most important decisions are the ones made at the beginning, before the planning and design stages and long before work starts on site. It is at this early stage that the success, or otherwise, of your project is decided.

Whether it is your first or your fiftieth construction project, you need sound, impartial and informed advice.

RIBA Client Advisers are highly trained, experienced architects, and construction professionals who can advise on how to get the best out of all phases of your project, including the procurement process. Having a RIBA Client Adviser on board from the earliest stage can help bring certainty, minimise risk and maximise the value of your investment.

A RIBA Client Adviser will work with you and your team, collaborating at every step to help define and deliver the best long-term solution: one that will fulfil all the aims and requirements of the project.

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© Peter Langdown Photography





# Examples

## RIBA Client Advisers Sharing Best Practice

Since the inception of the RIBA Client Adviser service in 2005, RIBA Client Advisers have supported clients to deliver many high functioning, award winning public and private buildings and projects.

They have enabled clients to innovate, to get the most from the design team and to learn from past experience.

Client Advisers work collaboratively to compile and share best practice advice about project delivery. Various case studies about how Client Advisers have added value to a range of project types are available on the RIBA website. A few examples are shown here.



Central Somers Town Plots 5 & 6 Housing & Public Park  
Morris & Co, DSDHA  
© London Borough of Camden

### Central Somers Town Client Adviser: Tina Frost, Fluent Architecture Ltd

The RIBA Client Adviser provided strategic design leadership and oversight of this complex regeneration project, co-ordinating the input of five separate design teams and delivering high quality design outcomes.

Central Somers Town is a flagship project within Camden Council's Community Investment Programme. It is a self-funded scheme with money generated from the sale of housing developments within the 2.2ha masterplan area, to be reinvested in educational and community facilities, affordable housing and public open space. The project has been delivered with extensive public consultation.



The Landing  
Studio Egret West  
© Studio Egret West

### The Landing Client Adviser: Sarah Williams, S Williams Architects

The RIBA Client Adviser was commissioned by the developer for a new mixed-use scheme at a key site in Maidenhead town centre, adjacent to the station.

The Landing comprises the demolition of existing buildings in a triangular site and the construction of a new high quality mixed-use scheme, which will revitalise the town centre. The scheme is a mix of retail, commercial, offices and residential buildings with associated underground parking and a new public town plaza at its heart. It seeks to improve accessibility and links with the local Shopping Centre, High Street and the Maidenhead railway station, which will become the Western terminus of Crossrail in 2019.



St John's School Classroom in the sky treehouse  
Opus  
© Peter Langdown Photography

### Outdoor Learning Project, St John's School Client Adviser: Ruth Butler, Ruth Butler Architects

The RIBA Client Adviser was central to the development of a transformational outdoor education facility for St John's School, delivered in a mix of hard and soft landscaping.

St John's School is a small primary school in Hampshire, built in the 1960s by Hampshire County Council as part of their SCOLA build programme. The school grounds include three tarmac playgrounds, a field and small woodland.

## What is a RIBA Client Adviser?

A RIBA Client Adviser is an experienced architect and professional practitioner (but not the one designing the building) working with the client's team, independent of the supply team, monitoring and helping the client to manage the design process from its earliest stages.

The UK Government recommends the early appointment of an independent client adviser to provide high level expert advice and to help protect the client's interests.

**Your RIBA Client Adviser will help you maintain control over issues affecting the quality, value, sustainability and lifecycle of your building or project. They can work closely with you to understand your business objectives and articulate your needs with absolute clarity and consistency and help you develop an accurate brief.**

RIBA Client Advisers are accredited by the Royal Institute of British Architects for their all-round procurement and design expertise, business knowledge and track-record of delivering results in construction projects. They are selected based on the knowledge, skills and abilities, understanding and experience they can demonstrate.

## How a RIBA Client Adviser will work with you

The high-level, independent expert advice and support of a RIBA Client Adviser can be crucial in establishing a strong, sound framework for your project.

Your need for management, guidance and administrative support will depend greatly on your existing in-house expertise and experience as a client. You should plan jointly with your RIBA Client Adviser precisely where and when, in the whole development process, you'll need their support.

**By appointing your RIBA Client Adviser as early in the process as possible they can be alongside you to advise on strategic decisions, help create the vision and set a strategic plan for delivery and assist in site selection or budget setting.**

Once in place they will quickly gain an understanding of the drivers, risks and the challenges of the project, help to develop the business case, brief and procurement strategy. They can develop the scope of work for consultants and define a clear set of deliverables and therefore manage cost. They can advise on the structure and appointment of the design team and also support the appointment of appropriate contractors.

Once a design and construction team are in place they can continue to advise you by reviewing designs for their quality and affordability, ensuring that proposals evidence best practice and maximise value.





# RIBA Client Adviser Skills Checklist

Working with other members of the project team,  
and depending on your needs, a RIBA Client Adviser will:



**Explore** high-level options for meeting your business or strategic need. Is a new building the best solution or can better use be made of your existing estate?  
.....



**Consult** key stakeholders to identify significant project issues.  
.....



**Prepare** feasibility studies and a strategic business case for the project.  
.....



**Make sure** that the project is compliant with the original brief and that you, the clients, are getting what was originally asked for. Where changes are unavoidable, divergences or modifications will be agreed and reported as necessary.  
.....



**Carry out** strategic risk assessments of the project.  
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**Prepare** the outline business case.  
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**Help** set a budget and propose a funding strategy, taking into account whole life project costs.  
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**Check** budgets, design proposals, construction details and project documentation.  
.....



**Identify** lessons learned from accumulated previous experience of similar projects.  
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**Prepare** a full project brief, output specification and sustainability goals.  
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**Identify** and develop the most appropriate procurement strategy for completing the project on time, to budget, and to the quality required.  
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**Prepare** and implement strategies for handover, soft landings and post occupancy evaluation.  
.....



**Define** an agreed set of project outcomes and benefits..  
.....



**Provide** guidance on the use and benefits of BIM.  
.....



**Manage** the invitation, and evaluation and selection of tenders from design and construction teams.  
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## How much might this service cost?

The cost of appointing a RIBA Client Adviser will vary depending on the services required, the type, size and duration of the project and what you need from them.

RIBA Client Advisers will agree terms on an individual basis.

A Professional Services Contract for Client Advice defines the services which the Client Adviser may offer.



© Karla Gowlett

## Appointing a RIBA Client Adviser

To find out more about how to appoint a RIBA Client Adviser, contact the RIBA Client Services team who provide a bespoke service which will advise you about why, how and when you should engage a RIBA Client Adviser. Clients can also refer to the Client Adviser register: [www.architecture.com/clientadviserregister](http://www.architecture.com/clientadviserregister)

After discussing your needs with you, they will be able to provide a shortlist of Advisers with the most appropriate skills and experience.

It is recommended that you meet and interview your shortlisted RIBA Client Advisers before making your final selection.



The Client Adviser showed thorough professionalism throughout the project and was able to cut through the excuses presented by the contractor by way of her expertise and training. At times when the Council could have been despondent, her cheerful and professional manner has maintained our confidence and **we have always trusted her judgement, her acumen and her expertise.** Without her, we would have floundered, with her, the project was finally completed, to the plaudits of our parishioners.



Councillor, Parish Council.

**Contact the RIBA Client Services team:**

**Telephone: +44 (0)20 7307 3700**

**Email: [clientservices@riba.org](mailto:clientservices@riba.org)**

**[architecture.com/clientadviser](http://architecture.com/clientadviser)**