

RETHINK



Image Credit - Boss Design

BOF BIRMINGHAM

Read all about our new show space

NEW CASE STUDY

Discover our latest case study

BOF X MORGAN

Making environments COVID compliant

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BOF BIRMINGHAM

SO WHY BIRMINGHAM?

101 Albion St,
Birmingham, B1

Not only does it work with the BOF acronym (coincidence or planned we won't confirm), it provides us with a base in the heart of the UK. Located in the Jewellery Quarter just outside the busy city centre of Birmingham, we benefit from ample parking and close by tram and train links making easy connections to our extensive Midlands & Northern client base. This business district has a real community feel and is steeped in history making it a unique destination; standing out from the crowd in such a large city. Starting with pretty much an empty shell, our design intent took influence from the surrounding areas. With dozens of luxury new build apartments shooting up, we have created

a space with a 'residential' feel that will potentially bring BOF new opportunities. The ceilings have been sandblasted and left exposed which pairs perfectly with the brick wall finish. LED track lighting combined with galvanized conduit and cable trays were installed in keeping with the industrial look, and we worked with Shaw Contract to create a statement flooring that softens the whole space. We also feature the original safe used by Charles Lucas and Sons back when the building was used to manufacture jewellery – an important link to the rich history and significant re-invention of the Jewellery Quarter into an important regional business hub.

At the heart of the UK with great transport links from all corners, Birmingham was the obvious choice and opening a show space here instantly sparked a lot of interest. Our supply chain are keen to have an element of their product on show and we look forward to working closely with them to make this possible. We will be showcasing design led products that attract the A&D sector but also our existing and new educational clients.

Max Fowler our NEUPC Account Manager resides locally and will

manage BOF Birmingham alongside Dan Ball – Strategic Accounts Manager and Tim Fagan – NWUPC Account Manager. Working as a team they intend to use this regional office and show space to showcase BOF product and service capabilities, and further drive the business forward. Inviting architects, designers, framework clients and suppliers to visit, whether it be for a meeting or to use the facility as a workplace. BOF as a business is moving progressively further North and this new space will enable us to develop existing relationships with our University framework customers and further increase the awareness of the BOF brand. We will be able to better engage with our Midlands and Northern based supply chain, which will in turn bring new opportunities with the A&D sector.

We may have embarked on this journey during a difficult time, but we are looking beyond Covid and the long-term development of our brand and business. BOF Birmingham has opened its door and we can't wait to meet with our manufacturers and clients to utilise this fantastic facility.

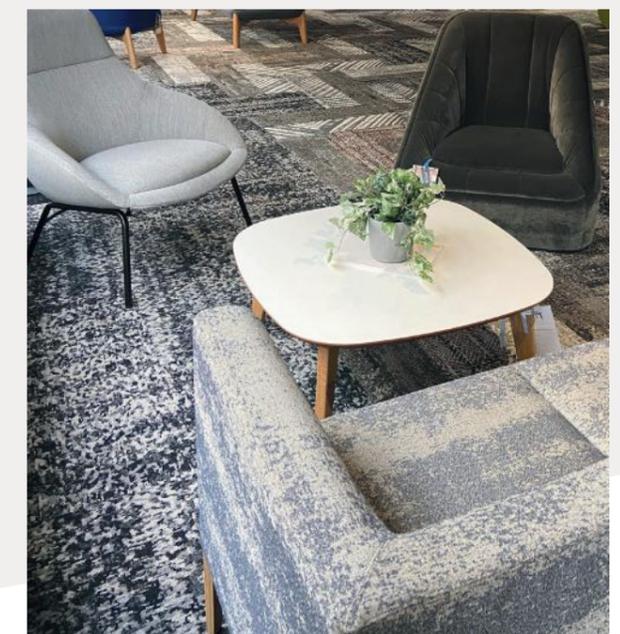


Left, Tim Fagan - NWUPC & NEUPC Account Manager
Right, Max Fowler - NEUPC Account Manager



OUR SPACE WILL EVOLVE AND PRODUCT WILL CONTINUOUSLY BE REFRESHED, KEEPING UP WITH WHAT'S CURRENT AND GIVING CLIENTS A REASON TO COME BACK

Max Fowler
NEUPC Account Manager





**ORIGINAL JEWELLERY
WORKSHOPS**





BOF WERE ACCOMMODATING TO OUR EVER-CHANGING TIMESCALES WHICH BECAME PARTICULARLY PROBLEMATIC DURING THE GLOBAL PANDEMIC AND THE INSTALLATION WAS SEAMLESS. THE PRODUCTS PROVIDED ARE OF A HIGH STANDARD AND THE COMMUNICATION THROUGHOUT THE PROJECT WAS ALWAYS CONSISTENT AND BOTH FRIENDLY AND HELPFUL. BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY, THE RESPONSE FROM THE END USER HAS BEEN EXTREMELY POSITIVE. WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO JAMES, ERIKA, ASHLEY AND TIM.



Katherine Orme
Project Support Officer at Liverpool John Moores University

The Avril Robarts and Aldham Robarts libraries were designed to meet the needs of a rapidly expanding university. The LJMU vision is for both Avril Robarts and Aldham Robarts libraries to be innovative in the services and spaces that are on offer, to ensure that the expectations of LJMU students continue to be met. Central to that vision is LJMU's aspiration to create libraries that provide a home space for students. LJMU want to create spaces that encourage students to remain in the libraries throughout the day and into the night, by providing places to work, to eat and to relax.

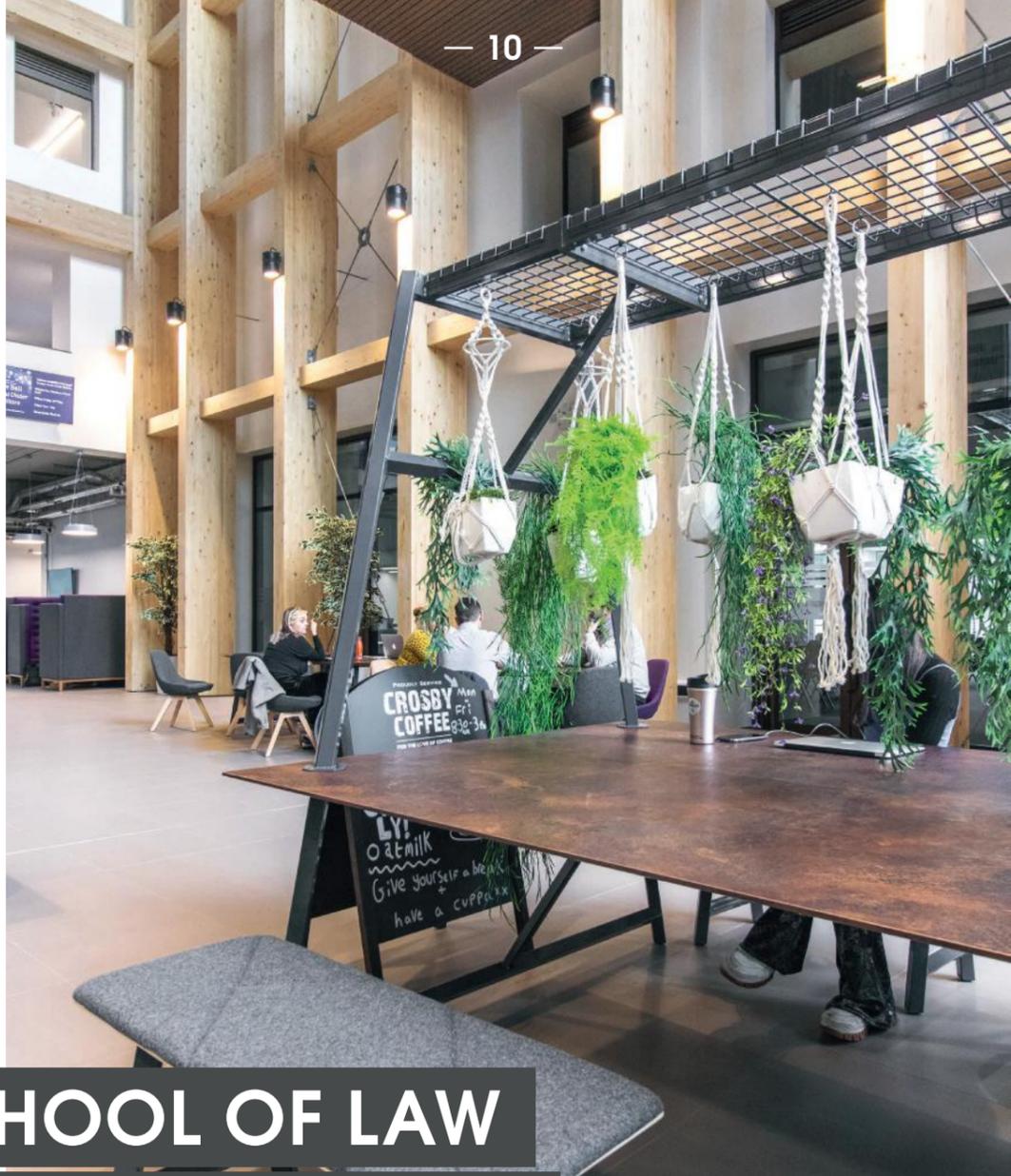
Wilmott Dixon were appointed to complete the refurbishment of the Avril Robarts library in 2019 as part of the major Tithebarn Building redevelopment project. The works created a modern environment for online and digital resources as well as book stock, new study and social spaces and more visible spaces for key student support teams. The refurbishment is being carried out in three phases with overall completion planned for late 2020.

We were awarded this project following a competitive tender process via the NWUPC framework agreement for the supply and installation of library furniture. We collaborated with the client's project teams and Shepard Robson architects who were involved in the space planning and selection of furniture.



AVRIL ROBARTS LIBRARY

Liverpool John Moores University



SCHOOL OF LAW & SOCIAL JUSTICE

University of Liverpool

The University of Liverpool is an inspirational centre of learning. Their aim is to support their students as they become highly employable, creative, and culturally rich graduates, with the capacity to find employment that will enable them to be agents for change in a connected world.

The new School of Law and Social Justice building provides state of the art facilities, comprising of a central open atrium area with front and rear access which will include a reception area, café and large social space/circulation area.

Academic offices for 120+ staff, collaboration spaces, PC suites, law clinic and postgraduate research suites. A ground floor events/meeting space which can accommodate 100+ persons and a fifth-floor accessible external terrace area. The new £25m School of Law and Social Justice (SLSJ) building – formerly the Cypress Building – has recently received an extensive renovation to provide the first home for all SLSJ staff and students, many of whom were previously split across three buildings. The building is accessible to all and includes a 100-seat events space, where the School will hold research

and teaching related events on a weekly basis. It will also house the award winning Liverpool Law Clinic, as well as Interchange, the charity through which Sociology students undertake a whole raft of research projects for third sector organisations every year.

We invited the project team to visit our showroom where they could meet the BOF team, assess sample products and view pilot schemes. Our Design team facilitated the finishes selection working with our Capital Projects team who collaborated with the client to develop the product specification. Following the initial stages of the project we engaged with Ryder Architects to design the Atrium space which features the Relic Cloud, Ilk, Yak and Downtown products from Frovi. We also liaised with Superplants as the client was keen to introduce planting particularly featured within the Relic Cloud.



BOF WORKING FROM HOME

During A Pandemic



Lockdown forced us to participate in the world's biggest 'Work From Home' experiment. Although we all shared this same experience, it has been different for each individual. We've been chatting to our team about how they have found the last few months and their predictions for the future.

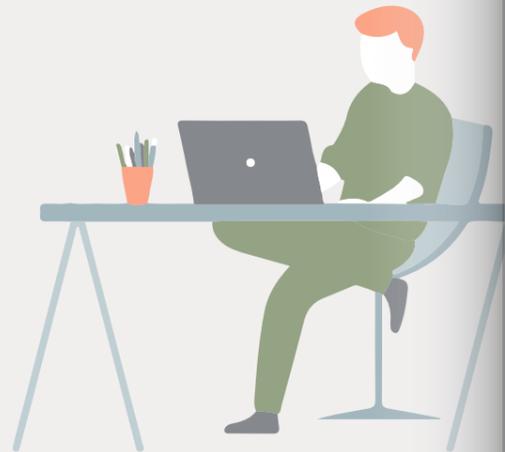
Here's what BOF colleagues had to say...



Clair Carlson - Account Manager

What did/do you miss most about the office environment?

The most obvious thing regarding not being in the office is the social aspect and the general banter as it were. BOF is so much more than just a workplace, we laugh we cry and we generally look out for each other. Of course I miss leaving 1 dirty spoon out to annoy Joyce.



What have been the positives of working from home?

Saving on fuel! I might get more for my car when I trade it in as the mileage is lower!



Tim Fagen - NWUPC & NEUPC Account Manager

Which platforms have you found most beneficial to WFH?

Microsoft Teams! Teams Meetings and the efficiency they offer – A benefit for me for Teams is seeing people in a less corporate or business like manner. For example in casual clothing, unshaven etc! This promotes a more relaxed atmosphere, seeing people in their home environments and shows **we are all just human!**



Simon Narbeth - Design & Projects Manager

What has been your favourite lockdown memory?

Being suitably dressed from the waist up.

Is there something you have learnt/accomplished since WFH?

Performance is a much better indicator of productivity and remote working has allowed me to focus with fewer distractions...some may not actually believe I had the audacity to write that!



Trudi Lloyd-Jones - Project Designer

What have you learnt since WFH?

Not to ask for my boyfriends opinion when creating a mood board

The Highs. The Lows. The Experience.



George Parrish - Accounts

Is there something you have accomplished since WFH?

Although it may not be quote on quote professional, during working from home I have discovered a lot more music. While being at home I have found many more albums, which has ultimately helped me accomplish more tasks throughout the day.



Shannen Jones - Internal Account Manager

Is there something you have learnt/accomplished since WFH?

Working from home with children!





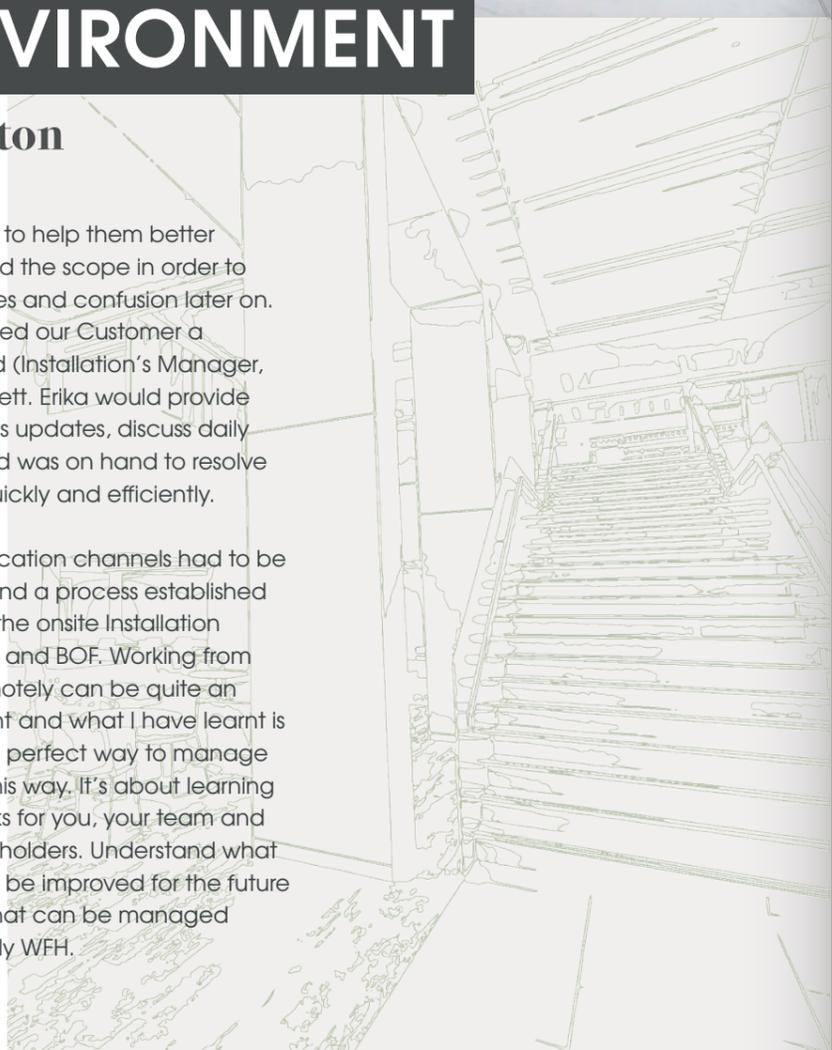
SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE & THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

University of Wolverhampton

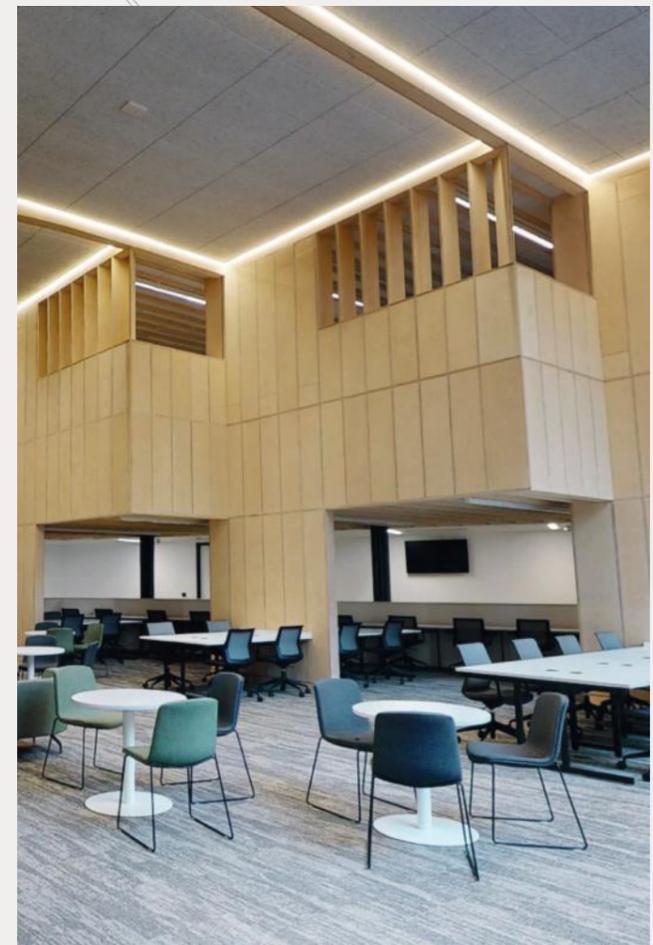
The Coronavirus pandemic has forced many of us to start working from home. Since the first lockdown in March 2020, many of BOF's planned projects were deferred. Over the following months it became more apparent that we needed to adjust and embrace the changes imposed on us. If we were to minimise unnecessary travel we had to evolve as a business and start creating a new structure that would allow us to manage our on-site installation projects remotely, without detriment to our Customers. One of the very first projects BOF managed remotely WFH was the University of Wolverhampton's School of Architecture Building. Firstly, we held a project "kick off meeting" which allowed internal stakeholders directly involved in the delivery of the project to ask

questions, to help them better understand the scope in order to avoid issues and confusion later on. We provided our Customer a dedicated (Installation's Manager, Erika Thickett. Erika would provide daily status updates, discuss daily events and was on hand to resolve queries quickly and efficiently.

Communication channels had to be created and a process established between the onsite Installation Supervisor and BOF. Working from home remotely can be quite an adjustment and what I have learnt is there is no perfect way to manage projects this way. It's about learning what works for you, your team and your stakeholders. Understand what areas can be improved for the future projects that can be managed successfully WFH.



“ FOR OUR CUSTOMER TO BE IN POSSESSION OF THE CURRENT STATUS OF THEIR PROJECT IN REAL TIME SERVED TO INCREASE THEIR CONFIDENCE IN OUR ABILITY TO DELIVER IN THIS NEW WAY ”
Erika Thickett
Contract Management Support





BOF X MORGANS

THE COLLABORATION BETWEEN BOF & MORGANS CONSULT

COVID Compliant - Screens & Signage

During the UK lockdown for COVID-19 BOF entered a partnership agreement with Morgans Consult to supply specific solutions to combat the threat of the virus. These solutions were designed to provide protection to the public, and they consist of health and safety signage, warning graphics, floor decals and acrylic protection screens.

Morgans Consult have a long history of working with acrylic for a variety of different purposes, including projects within the office fit out, healthcare, and education sectors. They have expert in-house manufacturing capabilities in their production workshop, using state-of-the-art CNC routers and laser cutting

equipment. Years of experience have helped Morgans to develop strong supply chains of quality acrylic from both within Europe and from the rest of the world, allowing them to continue manufacturing throughout uncertain periods.

Our team worked alongside Morgans Consult to survey different buildings and provide bespoke safety solutions tailored around their individual requirements. Morgans provided a client-facing consultancy service at the point of enquiry for manufacture, allowing both project management teams to closely review the works required and offer advice and guidance. Following the manufacture of the screens, on-site

installation was provided across the UK.

We've worked closely with Morgans on a number of projects for public sector buildings in Wales, as well as in universities to facilitate the safe return of students. These universities include Cardiff, Bristol, Bath, Swansea, Coventry, Warwick, Wolverhampton, Southampton, Winchester and the University of South Wales, to name just a few. These projects involved the manufacture and installation of acrylic safety screens in reception



areas, lecture theatres, computer suites, shops & cafes.

The COVID-19 outbreak has undoubtedly led to increased requirements for health and safety signage, with social distancing signs and safety partitions becoming a necessary addition to all workspaces and public areas. Due to this demand both companies (BOF and Morgans Consult) had to change our way of working and adapt our services to meet the demand during this difficult time.



300 Projects Later...

WE HAVE INSTALLED APPROXIMATELY

2000

PROTECTIVE SCREENS IN TOTAL

WE HAVE PROVIDED OVER **20 miles** OF COVID COMPLIANT FLOOR VINYL

HOW WAYS OF WORKING WILL HAVE CHANGED AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

This extraordinary period will surely demonstrate, in no uncertain terms, that the traditional approach to how many of us go to work in offices is no longer fit for purpose. Pre-conceived ideas about the viability of remote working have suddenly been challenged, and how organisations adapt to this new way of working could well determine their future. The move away from traditional, office-based work culture towards more agile ways of work has been predicted by many for years but we now find ourselves in a situation where it has almost instantly been widely imposed with minimal preparation. A change of this magnitude would, in an ideal world, come about through gradual change and evolution. But this is not an ideal world, and while this disruption to our working lives has been caused by tragic circumstance there is the opportunity to embrace positive changes to how we work in the future and not default to how things were before the COVID-19 lockdown.

Many of the questions about whether it is possible to operate effectively as an organisation

through use of remote technology have been answered. There may be teething problems associated with trying out unfamiliar technology, and remote technology will never fully replace face to face interaction, but the doubts surrounding whether it is possible to work with our teams from a distance will have, in many cases, been proven unfounded. The UK prime minister was able to lead the country whilst personally self-isolating using Zoom video calls and UK parliament resumed post Easter with members using technology systems to operate from their own homes.

This crisis has forced small, medium and large-scale enterprises across multiple sectors to innovate, adopting new working patterns and practices and accelerating investment in the business systems enabling staff to work effectively whilst remote from the office. What will need to be addressed in the fallout from this virus will be whether those efforts were justified only for the short term and they will automatically fall back into 'business-as-usual', or whether they will seize the opportunity to adapt to a new way of working, building on

the lessons learned during the crisis. Forward thinking organisations are examining how they responded to the demands of this imposed social distancing period and using that experience to inform them how to maintain the momentum of change and embed technology enabled new ways of working.

Technology aside, these enforced conditions are facilitating individuals to have a rethink too. Sudden, unexpected changes to well established working practices can of course be traumatic for some, but for many this period of disruption has created the opportunity for a temporarily pause, a time for reflection and consideration of what it means to 'go to work'. There could be acceptance if not a positive demand for changes to their way of working and a rebalance of the work and life. For those who faced a particularly gruelling commute or forced to pay hefty amounts for parking or public transport, the current demonstration that remote working is possible and viable will raise questions over whether daily travel to the office was ever really necessary or just the consequence of lack of development of new



DO WE HAVE TO GO BACK TO HOW WE WERE BEFORE – IS THERE NOT A BETTER WAY?

Blog by Alison White and Fintan Burke - PLACEmaking

“workplace designers and change advisors” PLACEmaking.co.uk

management solutions in this digital world to achieve productive outcomes based on engagement and trust in place of face to face instruction and ever present presenteeism. Now that it has been established that remote working can actually work, organisations will have to recognise that agile ways of working are not only possible but increasing a recruitment demand of the talent organisations need to attract and retain.

Even in this new remote working world, 'places' to come together will still be relevant but the offer will have to change. No longer desk dominated offices, the focus will be on event style knowledge sharing, cultural refreshment, mentoring and networking. Not only will organisations have to improve the physical environment, they will also have to improve the quality of the time spent in such places with greater levels of investment in smaller volumes of space and changes in tenure. This will represent a dramatic shift in not only what our chosen workplaces look like but also how commercial property is valued, operated and serviced.

As a result of this global pandemic, many of us mourn the loss of some aspects of our day to day lives but this could be a catalyst for positive work related change. Will PLACEmaking's pre-pandemic prediction that HQ offices will shrink in scale and will grow in distributed, community based co-working and hub spaces rather than traditional centralised office spaces be realised? 'Normal' life has been upended, and change is inevitable. When the time comes to examine what has happened and how it has affected us there comes a real opportunity to adapt to this change. Old, outdated ways of working that were still being clung to by some have been shown to be obsolete and with that a need for change will become of paramount importance. It is vital that we seize this as an opportunity and not squander the chance to make meaningful, positive changes to the way we work. Organisations have an opportunity to shift their accommodation strategies in preparation for this unique period to end, leading to radically different ways of working becoming the new standard.

Image Credit - Allermuir



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