

DJD News - Christmas 2011



Architects : Construction Consultants : Building Excellence

Welcome

2011 arrived with hope in some parts of the world, perhaps exemplified by the 'Arab Spring', and departs amid some gloom surrounding economies and the Euro.

This week a gift arrived in our office from the Royal Institute of British Architects in the form of a Bonsai tree for good fortune and I'm not quite sure whether this signals little fortune for 2012, or that our fortunes will grow (albeit, slowly). Only time will tell.

However, I am pleased to say that, not only am I looking out at a bright sunny day whilst writing these few words rather than across a snowy and frozen landscape as this time last year, but that, because of the variety of projects with which we have been involved over the past year, other contributors to this Newsletter have left me little space other than to wish all our friends a very Happy Christmas and, hopefully, a bright and prosperous New Year.

David Davis, Managing Director
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Working with Worcester

Recently reopened, the refurbishment of Worcester Community Housing's Warndon Neighbourhood Office, designed by DJD Architects, has seen a great improvement for customers and staff alike.

The bright and airy reception, lit by an energy efficient artificial 'LED skylight' has new counters at ideal heights for both standing and wheelchair using customers, a dedicated

computer booth for customer use, childrens play area and private interview room.

Meanwhile, staff are now working in a brighter, more contemporary office space with improved facilities and full accessibility.

Next on the cards is WCH's head office at Progress House on Midland Road, Worcester, where similar refurbishment will bring consistency between facilities and reinforce the Worcester Community Housing brand.



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Despite the recent statistics from the Homes and Communities Agency showing that new starts in social housing have ground to a virtual halt across the country, our housing association clients haven't been resting on their laurels!

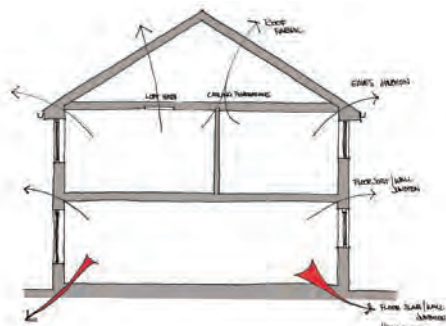
Improving Environments

Throughout this past year we have been working to implement a large programme of improvements to existing stock across Worcester Community Housing's estate throughout the city, from small scale environmental improvements to the overcladding of Worcester's tallest residential buildings, the tower blocks in St John's where investigation works are currently underway (opposite).

We are also working with Stafford and Rural Housing on a project to upgrade an existing void property (below) to make it more energy efficient. The aim is to achieve better than the standards set out in Retrofit for the Future and monitor performance in practice to guide decisions in improving other stock.



Key to the project is improving the efficiency of the building fabric and air tightness along with using low carbon technologies, PV and solar thermal panels and mechanical ventilation with heat recovery.



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DJD Architects have also assisted Heantun Housing in completing the first two phases of a major programme to replace the windows in over 100 sheltered and general needs flats with new high efficiency units.

New Build Success

Despite the small amount of new build affordable housing starts nationally, DJD Architects have seen projects starting on site. We assisted WM Housing Group and E G Carter & Company in the construction of 11 no. new homes on a rural exception site in Hanley Swan (below).



Worcester Community Housing have also successfully started on site with 34 no. DJD Architects designed flats, houses and bungalows in Warndon, Worcester.

We are continuing to work hard with our Clients on developing new sites and finding new ways to deliver much needed new affordable homes.

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Quality Care for the Elderly

We are pleased this month to have successfully achieved planning permission for The Chace Rest Home for a significant extension to their property in Malvern. As well as improving accommodation for a number of existing residents it will also

provide rooms for an additional 6 residents to benefit from the high standard of care offered.

In addition to this we have also aided the Chace in setting up a separate high quality respite day care facility, also in Malvern.

Local Development Frameworks (LDF's)

Many Local Planning Authorities are currently preparing new Development Plans that will guide planning decisions for over a decade.

DJD Architects have been busy working with planning consultants to make representations on behalf of private and public sector clients to influence policy and demonstrate site development suitability so they can be included in the plan.



Projects for Private Clients

Despite the lean times a variety of projects have continued to come through within the private sector this year, ranging from residential new build and conversion, change of use for a former church room to be used as offices, renovation works and thermal improvement works to a community hall and proposals for an equestrian centre, amongst others.

There are also positive signs from clients preparing plans ready to be implemented when the economy improves.



NewHope



New Hope is now supporting 40 families to receive regular respite care which is delivered during every school holiday and every Saturday throughout the year. The children enjoy trips to places like Snow Dome in Tamworth, Cadbury World and West Midlands Safari Park. In addition they have been mountain boarding, swimming and horse riding which has greatly improved the quality of the children's lives and gives their parents a well deserved break from their caring responsibilities.

New Hope Founder, Jean Wilson, tells us *"We are a very small project and rely upon donations, our own fund raising efforts and grant funding, so the donations you are giving us this Christmas are very welcome and enable us to keep offering these special families the support we think they deserve...so thank you to you all."*

This year, instead of the cost of sending Christmas cards, we are pleased to have made a donation to New Hope, an organisation doing wonderful work locally.

New Talent in Art

As in previous years, DJD Architects were proud to sponsor the prize for the best exploration of the 3D world by Worcester Sixth Form College's Art and Design Students.

This year's prized went to Patrick Jacobson (pictured right) for his work with textiles.



Work Experience

Every year we book up fast for placements for students wanting to gain an insight into architectural practice; as spaces are on a first come first served basis if you know of anyone who would be interested then please contact kevin.davis@djdgroup.co.uk in plenty of time!

Festive Paper Craft

Following on from previous years reindeer and santa, you can now complete the scene with a sleigh.



Printable patterns for all of these can be downloaded from:

www.djdgroup.co.uk/christmas

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CDM Co-ordination

DJD Construction Consultants have been particularly busy in this past year acting as CDM Co-ordinator on projects for both public and private clients.

Early appointment and a close working relationship has allowed the Practice to help Clients both fulfil their duties under the CDM Regulations and also make their projects run more smoothly and economically.