

BEST USE OF TIMBER 2017 SHORTLIST

AS PART OF THE ANNUAL RIAS AWARDS SCHEME, FORESTRY COMMISSION SCOTLAND AND WOOD FOR GOOD HAVE COMBINED TO SPONSOR AN AWARD AIMED AT ENCOURAGING INNOVATIVE AND CREATIVE USE OF TIMBER IN BUILDINGS IN SCOTLAND



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Forestry Commission Scotland
Coimisean na Coilltearachd Alba

Architecture & Design Scotland
Aithearachd is Dealbhadh na h-Alba

THISTLE FOUNDATION CENTRE OF WELLBEING

Location: Craigmillar, Edinburgh
Date Completed: May 2016
Building Type: Healthcare/Community
Architect: 3D Reid

Client: Thistle Foundation
Main Contractor: CCG (Scotland) Ltd
Timber Supplier: NorClad

THE PROJECT

The Thistle Foundation is a charitable organisation offering support to those with disabilities, enabling them to live independent lives, in their own homes. The new facility is situated at the heart of the original Thistle Foundation development, now a designated Conservation Area. A philanthropic gesture, put in place at the end of the Second World War - a B-listed model village-esque housing development, with the A-listed Arts & Crafts-style Robin Chapel, at its heart. Pioneering at the time, the scheme was one of the first to be designed to cater for those with disabilities - specifically, injured returning service men.

The Centre of Wellbeing replaces the former Tudsbury Centre, a central community hub that was no longer fit for purpose. Housing a series of complementary facilities, including a gym, consultation and training rooms and the Charity's office accommodation, around a double-height 'Hub' space, the project has been shaped to best cater for those who come to visit, taking consideration of ease of circulation within a highly legible plan. The design of the centre facilitates both wider community use and delivery of key support services, alike.

Flexibility and future adaptability was a key criteria in the design of the project. The office space and associated core have been configured in such a way to facilitate ease of sub-letting, etc. to other organisations, in the future, should needs and requirements change and hinged partitions, in the hub, allow the space to be modified to suit various uses.

USE OF TIMBER

The overall feel and appearance of the building was of significant importance. Most importantly, it required to offer a warm and inviting environment for those who the charity supports. Many who visit the centre suffer from anxiety-related conditions, either as a direct result of their physical condition, or due to separate mental health-related issues. The extensive use of timber cladding, to the central hub space, emerged as an ideal way in which to achieve the right ambience, imbuing the building with a homely, non-institutional feel, whilst contributing to the improvement of air quality.

Vertical sections extend out of the facade, to window locations on both the East and West elevations, minimising solar gain/glare to the office environment.

Ongoing maintenance of the exterior was a primary concern. Being a charitable organisation, it was important that costs were kept to a minimum. Timber material, impregnated with a treatment process, a blend of preservative and pigment, extends the lifespan of the timber and enables it to maintain the same colour tone. The latter point was of particular importance at the interfacing points of the interior and exterior areas of timber cladding. The design developed in such a way so as to utilise standard timber lengths, greatly minimising on-site wastage.

Images: Cadzow Pelosi



