

Scala

Winter/Spring 2015

news

Construction & architecture news for the public sector

Collaboration edition

in this issue: Brent Civic Centre, Wembley, Corfe Castle Primary School, Dorset, Liverpool Central Library, West Offices, York, Stromness Primary School, Orkney Islands; **Collaboration:** Holistic public engagement to create and improve the built environment, Collaboration – reaching for the skies; **SCALA SCHEME Study Day** on June 19 in Birmingham.



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Editorial comments



Collaboration leads to improvement and change with a better end product for all concerned. Not just in the award winning schemes featured but within organisations and the processes by which we seek to improve the built environment.

There are, of course, consequences, one of which is that this is the last edition of **Scalanews** as SCALA and SCHEME merge to form SPACES. Times are hard with further budget cuts and despite the wishes of many that the journal should continue it is not feasible in its current format.

Our new president, Sarah Morris, points out in her article that now is the time for the new society to pause and evaluate how best to utilise the energy built up, and the opportunities provided by the merger, to further improve services to members. Collaboration will be a key part of this with communication the means of achieving it.

I hope that **Scalanews** has set a standard by which professional organisations can communicate with their members, despite the competition from other formats. I believe there is still demand for an attractive well presented easily referenced publication, as the continued popularity of books and magazines shows.

This last edition features all the top winning schemes from the 2014 Civic Building of the Year Award, sponsored by the NPS Group, which are a tribute to the high standards of design and professionalism of all those involved in public sector construction and architecture. The history of the Yearbook and CBoY Award can be found in the article by David Kimmins, who was also stand in editor for 8 months when I was on a sabbatical.

A fascinating history of collaboration in the sector is found in the Legal Beagle article, while the NPS homepage concentrates on

the recent Farrell Review and the objective of "Making the ordinary better".

Our long standing collaborator and new partner, SCHEME, reflect in their homepage on the history of the society and their own hopes for a new dawn as SPACES is inaugurated as the first multi-disciplinary society of kind in the UK.

It remains for me to thank those who helped make **Scalanews** happen and develop over the years. Although published as a newsletter from 1997 it became an all colour professional journal in 2003 under Nigel Badcock's Presidency, with critical financial support from the LGTF and Hays Montrose. Our current sponsor is the NPS Group under Mike Britch whom I thank, together with all those who contributed through sponsorship and advertising over the years. Also the invaluable expertise of Lansdowne Publishing, particularly Adrian Wright, Managing Director, and Kevin Schofield, Graphic Designer, as well as Kevin Brennan who in recent years had the challenging task of gaining advertising.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as Editor. If early on in my professional career such a diverse activity had been suggested I would have questioned the judgement of all involved. Time and the support and patience of colleagues made it feasible, while collaboration brought it to life.

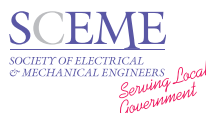
I thank you all,

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Contents

Brent Civic Centre	4
SCALA... the future is SPACES	7
Corfe Castle Primary School	9
NPS homepage: Holistic public engagement to create and improve the built environment	12
Liverpool Central Library	13
SCHEME: SCHEME merger to create SPACES	16
SCALAdiary	17
West offices, York	18
The SCALA Yearbook and Civic Building of the Year Awards	20
Stromness Primary School	23
The Legal Beagle	25

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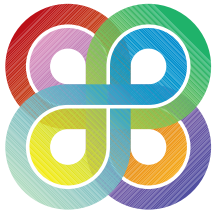
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Cover picture: Brent Civic Centre, Wembley.



Brent Civic Centre



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Completed in June 2013, this multi-purpose £85 million development allows the Council to realise its vision for a consolidated facility to house their civic, public and administrative functions under one roof.

Providing office space for some 2,000 staff, it allows Brent to adopt a consistent 'One Council' approach where departmental and professional boundaries are diminished and where internal and external partnership working is seen as the natural and expected way of doing business.

Located on perhaps the most prominent site in the Borough next to two well-known civic icons (Wembley Stadium and Wembley Arena), the Civic Centre streamlines all aspects of the Council's activities and has been designed to become the new hub and heart for the community where residents can meet, learn, eat and shop. The building is orientated to address the large, open Arena Square to the south and capitalises on this existing public realm. The main entrance is off of Engineer's Way, which crosses Arena Square;

a formal drop-off has been developed which helps indicate and accentuate this portion of the building. Key routes both up to and around the site, such as the link between Arena Square and future developments to the north, have been enhanced and reinforced to improve permeability and flow in the area.

The design of the building has developed from a conceptual sequence of large volumes that contrast with a coordinated series of more intimate activity areas. The resulting building is of an architectural significance that can stand on its own opposite the iconic buildings nearby. A simple diagram has arisen, with two wings forming an L-shape that encloses a central atrium on two sides. This soaring, naturally-lit space serves as a reception foyer and houses a large public staircase which also functions as an 



Winner of the Civic Building of the Year Award sponsored by the NPS Group.



Front elevation from Arena Square



Main atrium looking towards the drum

“The design of the building has developed from a conceptual sequence of large volumes that contrast with a coordinated series of more intimate activity areas.”

amphitheatre, hosting a programme of high-quality arts and cultural experiences that enhance the building’s social atmosphere. Additional seating and a café at this location invite people to dwell once they have completed their tasks and activities within the building. Colourful signage and considered vistas throughout the building, combined with significant use of interior glazing, help to clearly and efficiently direct people to the places they need to go.

A large, circular drum clad in laminated timber fins features prominently within the atrium and houses a number of functions sandwiched vertically on top of one another. The civic chamber is at the top and is a large, timber-lined room featuring a soaring ceiling and glazed oculus to allow natural light to filter in. It is used for council meetings, citizenship ceremonies and various other functions and can be set up in both formal and informal layouts. Around it are a series of private committee rooms that enhance its usability and function as a full Council meeting centre.

Below this, the Community Hall is a concrete and steel space with a glazed southern wall leading out onto a large winter garden facing Arena Square and Wembley

Stadium. It is capable of accommodating up to 1,000 guests for banquets, dances and other events and is the chosen location for the Borough’s much-loved Tea Dances bringing together residents of all ages and abilities. Outside this (and connecting the drum with the main atrium) a large and public podium at the first floor joins all these spaces and features flexible seating areas for users waiting or relaxing in its environs. On the ground floor, the Wembley Library features an expanding collection of books and periodicals together with a café and computers for internet access. A mezzanine level in between features a one-stop-shop for the community’s inhabitants. ▶



Winter garden next to the drum’s function space

6 Brent Civic Centre

“Retail space on the south and east sides of the building has been sensitively incorporated into the building.”



The civic chamber

The two glazed office wings to the side and rear of the building are located opposite the drum and help to form the enclosure around the atrium. Spaces inside are open-plan and flexible to provide a future-proofed solution to the diverse community’s administrative needs. Desks are included at a ratio of 7 desks per 10 users to economise on cost and space and anticipate future hot-desking working methods. Offices on the upper floors of the new Civic Centre are for staff access only and they are entered from controlled access points in the cores of the Foyer. Scenic lifts and stairs located on the outer edges of the cores express the vertical circulation and animate the facades of the building. Toilets and shower facilities are located in the cores themselves, while enclosed meeting rooms are next to the cores where they can be mechanically ventilated. Informal meeting and breakout areas are also provided together with tea points and business centres for multi-functional printers and storage throughout the offices.

The basement includes parking for 158 cars including electric-vehicle specific spaces, 35 motorcycle spaces, 210 bicycle spaces (to supplement 40 surface-level spots) and showers and changing facilities in addition to loading and unloading, waste collection space and mechanical and electrical plant areas.

The design’s iconic nature features efficient, stacked floorplates that have allowed nearly 1/3 of the 2.5 acre

site to be developed into a landscaped, formal greenspace used as a wedding garden where ceremonies and receptions can be held. Wedding drop-off, including coach set-down, has been provided next to this garden and a Wedding Suite, which has already proved extremely popular within the community, is located on the ground floor to its side. Retail space on the south and east sides of the building has been sensitively incorporated into the building and tenants will be chosen based on their usefulness to the community. Once let, these will help the building to connect further with the surrounding Wembley Regeneration Area, which is rapidly changing thanks to a number of new projects currently under construction and recently finished.

Credits

Client:

Brent Council

Architect:

Hopkins Architects

Structural Engineer:

URS Infrastructure & Environment UK Ltd.

Project Management:

Turner & Townsend Project Management Ltd.

Interior Design:

Hopkins Architects

Landscape Design:

Gillespies

Main Contractor:

Skanska

Cost

Demolition/External Works:

£2 million

Shell and Core:

£57 million

Fitout:

£26 million

A wide range of community buildings can be found under Other Building Types on the Knowledge Base.

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SCALA... the future⁷ is SPACES

This article for what will be the very last Scalaneews

is clearly a significant occasion. One that is undeniably sad when we consider the magazine's huge success over many years and the extensive audience it has reached over that time.

However, I would like to think there is also abundant optimism, as we have an opportunity to look ahead and ask ourselves what we want from our new society SPACES and how best we can provide our members with information and other benefits, such as networking and CPD events, to support them in their work environment.

I am writing this article on 2nd January as the passing of 2014 gives way to the New Year, and one we all hope will bring us success, happiness and health. Again, a sadness as we look back and realise another year has passed us by, but a strong feeling of opportunity and expectation for the future.

We have all learnt to accept that in our lives and more and more in our work, the only constant is change, and yet we know how hard it is often to have the courage to let go of the comfort and security of the old, and face the uncertainty of the new.

The merger of SCALA and SCHEME into SPACES, which members have overwhelmingly supported, commences officially on 1st April 2015. Like any change process, it was never going to be easy. There have been many and will be further hurdles to jump and we will without doubt get things wrong, miss and overlook details and make decisions that we may later wish we had not. I believe that because we know and accept these risks as part of the environment we are in, we are in a much better place to deal with them. Further, and more importantly, I know that those involved in the transformation from both SCALA and SCHEME are a strong and incredibly dedicated group. By working so well as a team we really are a sum of our individual talents, and so can resolve and overcome the difficulties we are likely to face. On a personal level I also believe, that when it comes to making many decisions, there are few that cannot be unpicked or reworked if we really want to and are brave enough to say 'we got it wrong'.

Maybe it's because I am a woman, (or is it because I am an architect? Or is it because I am both!) but being able to stand up and say 'I've changed my mind' is just sometimes the right thing to do!

Making this the last publication is one example of this. Unfortunately, due to the changing nature of local government and the economic climate, and despite the hard work of all those involved in delivering it, **Scalaneews** has been making a gradual loss over the recent editions as advertising revenue has not been adequate to cover the full cost of publication and distribution. Because of this, we have decided to wait and see how our new society comes together, and what level of demand there is likely to be from both our members and potential advertisers for a magazine in the future.

Thankfully, our finances are in a healthy position but the future months will require initial investment to be made to set up SPACES; we know there will be legal and accounting costs to be funded and we would like to invest in social media, including a new website and Linked-in/Twitter groups so our members can connect better with each other. We also need to have a clearer picture of who our society will comprise. SPACES has set out to be a society that is truly multi-disciplinary, representing architects, construction, engineers and surveyors working in the public sector. Currently the merger to create SPACES is between architects and mechanical and electrical engineers, but we are meeting with the Society of Chief Building Surveyors in the middle of January in Birmingham to progress talks about building surveyors merging with SPACES also.

So, despite the change and passing of some long standing practices, the future for all of us involved in creating a vibrant, growing and successful society is exciting and extremely refreshing at a time in local government when everyone seems to be talking downsizing, rationalising and budget cuts. ■



Sarah Morris

SCALA President

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SCALA celebrated its 40th. anniversary and the 10th. anniversary of Scalaneews in 2013 and background articles can be found in the Autumn edition of Scalaneews of that year – Ed.

Click on the SCALA link to learn more about the objectives and structure of SPACES.

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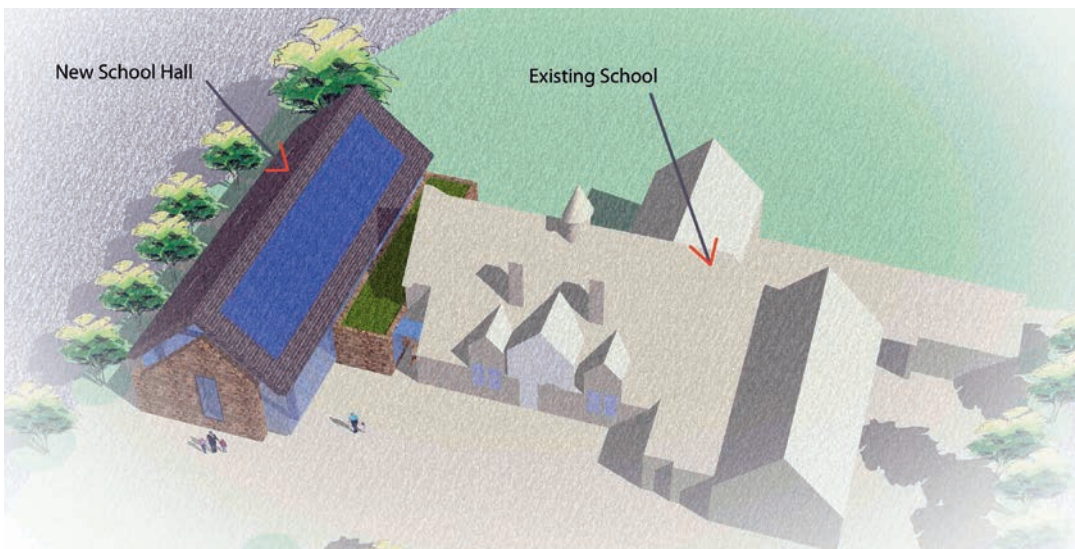


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Corfe Castle⁹ Primary School

The new hall and refurbishment project was part of the reorganisation of Purbeck schools, which involved changing the educational structure from a three tier to a two tier system.



Digital view of the development


The reorganisation involved 16 schools and Dorset County Council's in-house team 'Dorset Property' delivered the programme. Corfe Castle CE First School became a 0.5 form entry primary school including the creation of a new hall, while the existing school was refurbished and remodelled to create a new classroom and resource area off the existing hall.

Corfe Castle is a historic village in Dorset which lies south of the famous Norman castle ruins and the steeply sloping Purbeck ridge. The school itself is within the settlement boundary of the village and a

more extensive conservation area including the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Numerous listed buildings, monuments and places of historical and archaeological importance are located in the vicinity.

Given the historic importance of the area, the new school hall had to be sensitively designed and was placed to the north of the existing school to provide a balanced composition to the main school frontage. The existing trees along the northern boundary provided good levels of screening. The lightweight glazed link between the old and new buildings acts as a buffer zone and provides a segregated means of access into the hall for community use out of school hours. An L-shaped block of single storey accommodation wraps around the hall and contains the kitchenette, toilets, storage and plant.

Purbeck stone was sourced from local stone quarries and used with a modified lime mortar to create the main gable end. This reflects the local craftsmanship found in the area and also satisfied the requirements of the conservation architect. 



New school hall with corner glazing and glazed link and Purbeck stone finish



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Architect

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Winner of the Small Project category in the Civic Building of the Year Award sponsored by the NPS Group.



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High level glazing providing good lighting and ventilation in the hall

The introduction of corner glazing created an interesting asymmetric gable end. This provided views out across playgrounds on two sides. The glazing is an aluminium composite type providing a modern vernacular.

The concept of a floating pitched roof for the new hall demonstrated a strong and clear architectural intent. The high level glazing provides uniform daylighting levels as well as natural cross ventilation. Due to the even distribution of the high level glazing, near perfect daylighting levels have been achieved internally. As a result, artificial lighting is not required for over 80% of the working day, reducing energy consumption and emissions. Passivent units have also been installed to the northeast gable to provide ventilation without the need to open windows.

iSBEM calculations were carried out to determine the best method of complying with Part L of the Building Regulations. As a result, photovoltaic panels were installed on the south facing pitched roof to achieve optimum levels of efficiency. This provided an A+ Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating and resulted in a net zero CO₂ emission for the school hall.

High levels of insulation were used to comply with Building Regulations and eliminate thermal bridging. Robust construction details were adopted and air testing certification was obtained to ensure the building remains highly sustainable with optimum efficiency.

In addition to the new hall, the existing school was refurbished including the sub-division of the existing school hall space to create an additional classroom as well as a new learning resource hub. The original Victorian entrances were brought back into use to recreate the main entrance into the school. To ensure a sustainable approach was maintained, high efficiency light fittings with automatic control and heat recovery ventilation units were used.

As part of a pupil engagement exercise, the school pupils were asked to create a series of clay models to reflect important characteristics found in the surrounding area. The models included examples of the castle ruins, knights and dragons. Following this pupil engagement, a local stonemason was commissioned to prepare a date stone carving reflecting the pupil's clay models. This date stone was completed and installed in time for the opening ceremony.

Credits

Client:

Dorset County Council, Children's Services

Architect, Project Manager, QS, M&E Engineer and Landscape Architect:

Dorset County Council's, Dorset Property Team

Structural Engineer:

Dorset County Council's, Parsons Brinckerhoff

Main Contractor:

Interserve Construction Ltd

CDM Co-ordinator:

Stride Treglown Management

Value:

£1.1 million

Construction Period:

32 weeks

Completion:

September 2013

“The concept of a floating pitched roof for the new hall demonstrated a strong and clear architectural intent.”

The Education section on the Knowledge Base has a wealth of projects to view.

12 Holistic public engagement

to create and improve the built environment



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The Farrell Review (2014), commissioned by Ed Vaizey, Minister for Culture, Communications and the Creative Industries, recommended Design Review Panels should become PLACE Review Panels.

This recognises increasing public participation and contributions by the Third Sector supplementing the traditional involvement of the public and private sectors in the built environment. The already established design review system, accessible by all the planning authorities at central and local levels, will be enhanced by “Place-based” leadership, to help strengthen and understand what makes the local DNA and improve the poor environment of our neighbourhoods and towns today.

Design Review Panels should become PLACE Review Panels (Planning, Landscape, Architecture, Conservation and Engineering) and include professionals from each of these fields. The “Design Review: Principles and Practice” guidance produced by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), Cabe at the Design Council, the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) and the Landscape Institute (LI) makes the case for panels to be cross-professional and underlines the importance of best practice. This guidance should be adopted by all PLACE Review Panels used by local planning authorities. At the same time, they should become less like a crit at architecture school with peers passing judgement, and more enabling and collaborative. (Recommendation 22)

With the erosion of local government’s in-house design capacity and the compounding effect of budget reductions since 2008, local authorities are less able to take a long term view on improving their housing, schools, community buildings, streets and public spaces. Despite this authorities such as the London Boroughs of Croydon and Brent, and the cities of Bristol, Birmingham and Manchester have all championed design quality and provided leadership that is visionary, committed and able to deliver. Some of their successes would be valuable case studies for us all.


On “Design Quality”, the Farrell Review emphasised the importance of “Making the ordinary better”. This requires a change in values and mind set as it is all too easy to focus on “one-off” new buildings which attract publicity and miss the all-important setting and context of our existing environment of ordinary and everyday buildings.

Well-planned streets and high quality public realm contribute significantly to the liveability of our cities and towns. For each alteration and new addition, the developers and planning authorities often only consider the immediate surroundings (in the red lines) and the needs of the primary users. Further consideration should be given on how people move to and from places in comfort and safety. Landscape provides the primary infrastructure and integrates the spaces between buildings contributing to the public realm.

The UK has produced many prominent architects and a vast range of creative designers in the arts and creative industries, and yet, other than in London, our built environments are generally mundane and predictable. Why?

The Review made two key suggestions on how to develop and cultivate our skills through wider engagement on design quality:

1. By empowering the Third sector (voluntary groups) to get involved at local level;
2. Providing basic training on place making and design literacy to all who make decisions on built environment; such as councillors and senior staff within the public sector.

In making such a long term commitment by extending their collaboration and engagement through PLACE Review Panels built environment professionals will be helping to enhance and preserve our built assets ensuring a new and bright future for communities in the UK. 

For further information on the Farrell Review go to www.farrellreview.co.uk.

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Liverpool¹³ Central Library

This project has transformed a series of Grade II* listed buildings on a World Heritage Site into a stunning 21st Century Library that combines the best contemporary design with exemplary adaptation and conservation of a previously under-used civic asset.

Demolition of a 1950/70s library behind a retained façade, and its replacement with a new Library and Archive, was the key to opening up access to some fantastic historic spaces that had been little used or were not publicly accessible.


The project consists of the dismantling of the William Brown Library and construction of a new Library and Repository behind the retained facade, together with the internal and external refurbishment of the Grade II* listed fabric of the Picton Reading Room and Picton Hall, Hornby Library and Oak Room.

Delivered successfully on time and budget through a competitively bid PFI process, the new Liverpool Central Library's design has been driven by The City Council's commitment to a radically improved Library Service for the people of Liverpool.

Already in receipt of ten awards and shortlisted for further awards, development of the Library's design

involved day by day coordination with the Library's development team and their many stakeholders.

High quality 3D drawings and visual images were used to explain the design to the stakeholders. This was a particular requirement of the brief as specific views and vistas were considered very sensitive within the historic Liverpool City Centre streetscape.

Delivery through the PFI process demanded an extremely disciplined approach to quality control and design compliance issues and a handover 



North-south visual section through the building



Aerial view showing the new library behind the original facade



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Winner of the
Regeneration category
in the Civic Building
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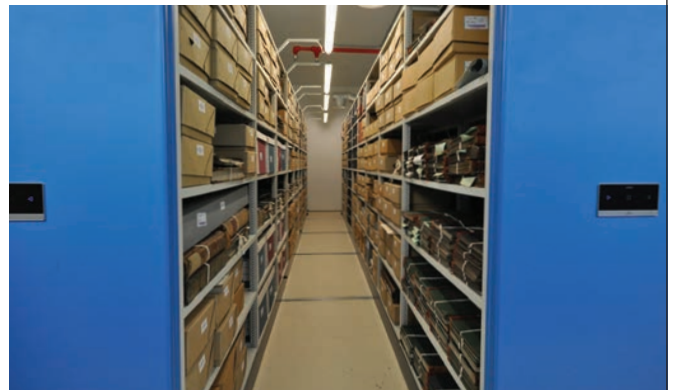
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The foyer showing the dramatic views upwards towards the dome

process that involved some 30 tests for completion prior the building being accepted by the Council. Regular 'Principals Meetings' reviewed the performance of the design and construction team, and this helped to complete this process successfully.

Fundamental to the success of the PFI bid in commercial terms was the attention paid to life-cycle costs and a robust approach to cost control throughout the project. The design team worked consistently with the PFI consortium's FM provider in developing all aspects of the design (including detailed 3D modelling studies of high level access for the building's stunning central atrium).

A holistic design approach ensured that architecture and engineering worked together efficiently and effectively including the exploitation of high levels of daylight and thermal massive construction to reduce energy demand.

Effectively a 'Design and Build' construction contract, the design team also worked in close cooperation with the contractor's supply chain to develop innovative technical solutions to the projects considerable challenges. These included specialised 'soft-demolition' methods to protect the building's neighbours, the Liverpool World Museum and the Walker Art Gallery and their sensitive contents.

Local labour and suppliers were a high priority for the Council, and its partnering contractor who also used the project to provide research and education opportunities at a local University. The project was administered locally from our Liverpool office.



View of the upper floors and dome

Credits

Architects:

Austin-Smith:Lord LLP

Mechanical and Electrical Engineers:

Buro Happold

Civil and Structural Engineers:

RoC Consulting

Quantity Surveyor:

Shepherd Construction

Main Contractor:

Shepherd Construction

Photos:

Shepherd Construction

Overall Cost:

£50 million (approx. £30 million construction cost)

Timescale:

Construction late 2010 – early 2013

Size:

8,600m² new, 5,000m² refurb = total 13,600m²/Landscape is 2,960m²

Author Frank Cottrell Boyce described setting foot inside the new library as going to visit your grandma to find she'd "turned into Beyonce".

"It has taken some time, but re-presenting this wonderful collection of historic buildings to the community was tremendously fulfilling for all the team; but much as we love the buildings, to see the atrium (quietly) buzzing with activity and a client excited with opportunities for the future is really rewarding. I think this is what the regeneration award is all about and we are proud to have been involved."
Neil Chapman, Practice Principal and Partner.

16 SCEME merger to create SPACES

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Since March 2014 there have been detailed discussions with a view to merging SCEME and SCALA. A substantial majority of members of both Societies voted to merge SCEME and SCALA into the new Society, SPACES, with effect from the 1st April 2015.

As this will be the last article from SCEME to be published in the last edition of **Scalanews**, I thought that it would be nice for some of the longer time-served members of SCEME to reflect on the intervening years. My NEC colleagues Geoff Robison and Charles Tanswell have kindly documented their early recollections of SCEME, for which I extend my thanks.

SCEME 1951

The inaugural meeting of the 'The Local Government Society of Chief Mechanical and Electrical Engineers' was held at the offices of the Institution of Heating and Ventilating Engineers, 75, Eaton Place, London SW1 on 16th November 1951.

It is worth noting that the word "Mechanical" came before "Electrical" because the mechanical engineers clearly considered themselves to be the "senior" profession, and so their title obviously had to come first! (Charles Tanswell's words, not the author's...)

Geoff Robinson says:

"I was four years old at the time and can't remember that much about what was discussed; however I can remember some of the major changes that have occurred over the 28 years that I have been associated with SCEME.

The world was a totally different place in those days. There were no computers, very few telephones and the speed of the first and second daily postal deliveries dictated the speed of industry. The cost of energy was rarely considered in the design of engineering services. Steam was the principal heating medium for industry and the major fuel source was coal. Hospitals generally relied on massive 'Lancashire' solid fuel boilers and the heat loss from the distribution pipes could easily

account for 35 to 40% of the total load. Schools were heated in the main by hand-operated boilers burning coal or coke. Controls were extremely basic and power cuts were a regular occurrence.

Back in the early days, membership of the Society was restricted to those individuals who had aspired to the dizzy height of 'Chief Engineer'. Anyone who had not obtained such eminence was not recognised by the Society, and even when you had achieved such greatness, you had to be vetted for a period of six months by other members of SCEME before you could be nominated for membership. Having reached this pinnacle in life, a good Chief Engineer could expect to earn as much as £35 per week!

Of all the changes that I have witnessed over the years, I think that the most important decisions taken by the NEC have been to open up the membership of SCEME to other engineers employed in local authorities, followed in 2000 by a change that allowed engineers who were employed in the private sector (but worked on local government projects) to become members. In the last sixty-three years, there have been many forceful individuals who have shaped the way that SCEME developed and evolved into what it is today. Some have provided a dynamic approach, whilst others have had a steadying influence on the Society (I put myself and Charles in this category) but no one ever thought themselves bigger than the Society, and together we have achieved the great Society that we have today."

Charles Tanswell commented:

"When the Society was formed, membership was only open to chief engineers of county councils – no districts, boroughs or cities then! Whilst the



society was already using the acronym SCEME in 1985, it was still officially using the old title as well.

As I recall, the first change of the society's full name came in 1987 when it became the **Society of Chief Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in Local Government** – and the final change, dropping the word Chief (reflecting the demise of that title throughout local government) and admitting external engineers, took place in 1998 when it then became the **Society of Electrical and Mechanical Engineers serving Local Government.**"

On April 1st 2015, SPACES will herald the new dawn as the first totally multi-disciplinary society of its kind in the UK, and whilst we are all saddened by the farewell we must bid to SCEME, we as members will have the

professional courage to embrace the challenge of building a new society incorporating the strengths of SCEME and offer the continued support that underpinned SCEME's ethos to the new society. ■



SCEME members and guests celebrating the 60th anniversary at the Houses of Parliament in 2011

“On April 1st 2015, SPACES will herald the new dawn as the first totally multi-disciplinary society of its kind in the UK.”



Scaladiary

February

17 NW region meeting on acoustics (contact Fiona Fanning T: 01344 206299)

March

10 Joint London & South region meeting with SCEME on acoustics (contact Mukund Patel T: 07557 117575)

June

19 **SPACES Study Day** in Birmingham on Collaboration and working together (See Latest News for more information)

With the amalgamation of SCALA and SCEME to form SPACES the dates of the next Forum and Council meetings are tbc.

ACA Council dates and information go to www.acarchitects.co.uk or contact Shona Broughton T: 020 8325 1402 E: office@acarchitects.co.uk. ■

18 West offices, York



Ian Asher

Head of Commissioning
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Praised by English Heritage as a model for sustainable redevelopment and delivering savings of £25 million over 17 years, the multi-award-winning £32 million redevelopment of West Offices has revitalised part of the city.

Since becoming a unitary authority in 1996 York's administration, serving its 200,000 residents and seven million annual visitors, had found itself expanding into a sprawling mis-match of 17 different offices which, over the years, had increasingly presented logistical and administrative challenges, exponential maintenance cost rises and service efficiency nightmares.



The approach to the building reflecting the railway heritage



Aerial view of the station redevelopment

The solution was to consolidate services in a deteriorating Grade II* listed structure, built as a station and hotel in the early Victorian era before a later station was built outside the city walls. It was a complex in decline for over a century – one which had a very uncertain future other than the inevitability of its rapid descent towards English Heritage's "at risk" register.

The council required open-plan, modern, efficient, accessible workspace with a single focal point for customer interface. Also a building which reflected the rich heritage of the historic city yet showed its ambition as a progressive authority, switched on and open for business creating a headquarters and customer centre reflecting York's historic past and its 'open for business' ethos.

In line with its green commitment, the council specified a BREEAM excellent rated headquarters delivering carbon reductions of 30% above building regulations with more than 20% of its energy requirements from renewable sources.

Relocating the remains of an important historic wrought-iron canopy allowed for the removal of unsightly mid-20th century bridge extensions across the rail tracks. This created a large open space within the u-shape of the original platforms and hotel giving the architect scope to deliver the design required for a flexible modern office.

Technically, the challenge was to create a new four storey structure within the historic frame of the 1840s building and support a massive overarching new steel roof which, in the best traditions of railway architecture, features a north-light structure to maximise natural daylight whilst minimising solar gain. Enclosing the open end of the u with a large glazed façade adjacent to the refurbished canopy structure – previously hidden from the public eye but now in full view from the striking vantage point of the city walls – completed the framework.

A series of atriumed platforms provide the space and natural daylight required and support the roof, putting no pressure on the existing historic structure to which each storey is linked via a series of



Winner of the
Regeneration category in
the Civic Building of the
Year Award sponsored
by the NPS Group.





The new four storey office structure

bridge walkways. The light wells between new and old, to the full height of the building, expose the internal brickwork of the original facades giving timbre and a striking historic backdrop to what is actually a 62% newbuild complex. The resulting gross internal floor area is around 149,000 ft² (13,842m²). It houses not only the council's own 1,400 office based staff, but also the customer centre and a number of city functions all under the same roof.



A light well between the old façade and the new offices

Key to the comfort of the building is the integrated heating and cooling strategy using largely natural ventilation with some mechanical extract, and the thermal mass of the old building, to help control the temperature. Subterranean ducts and corridors, which are a feature of three sides of the original building, are used to provide natural air flow delivering around three degrees of "free" cooling. Combined heat and power units and biomass boilers are housed, together with the IT system, in the building's Victorian basement.

The team arranged regular in-progress visits for English Heritage, York Civic Trust and other special interest groups during the construction and won praise from all parties.

Chris Hale, S Harrison's design manager:

"We had to find ways in which the open-plan brief could be met in what was essentially a cellular Victorian building. The first task was to ascertain what we needed to keep and what could go... to make the building work with us rather than against us."

English Heritage Chief Executive Simon Thurley congratulated the developers for their "remarkable vision" and heralded the scheme as "a national model for the sustainable regeneration of older buildings".

Credits

Developer:
S Harrison Developments Ltd and
Buccleuch Property

Architect:
Crease Strickland Parkins

Employer's Agent:
Rex Procter & Partners RICS

Consulting Engineers:
Ward Cole

Client:
City of York Council

Main Contractor:
Miller Construction

Building Services:
Martin Design

Articles on
Other Building Types
on the Knowledge
Base cover all
building types
including heritage.

20 The SCALA Yearbook and Civic Building of the Year Awards



David Kimmins

Editor SCALA Yearbook

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When I was a keen young trainee architect at West Sussex County Council in 1969 a little village school I had designed was published in the SCALA Yearbook in glorious black and white.

I proudly showed it around the office, and gave my dotting parents a copy to show off to their friends. Since this was the heyday of the schools systems my little scheme was virtually indistinguishable from all the other flat roof system buildings in that edition and perhaps the reason it got in was the fact that I'd cunningly taken the photo through leafy tree branches and there wasn't a lot of the building actually visible.

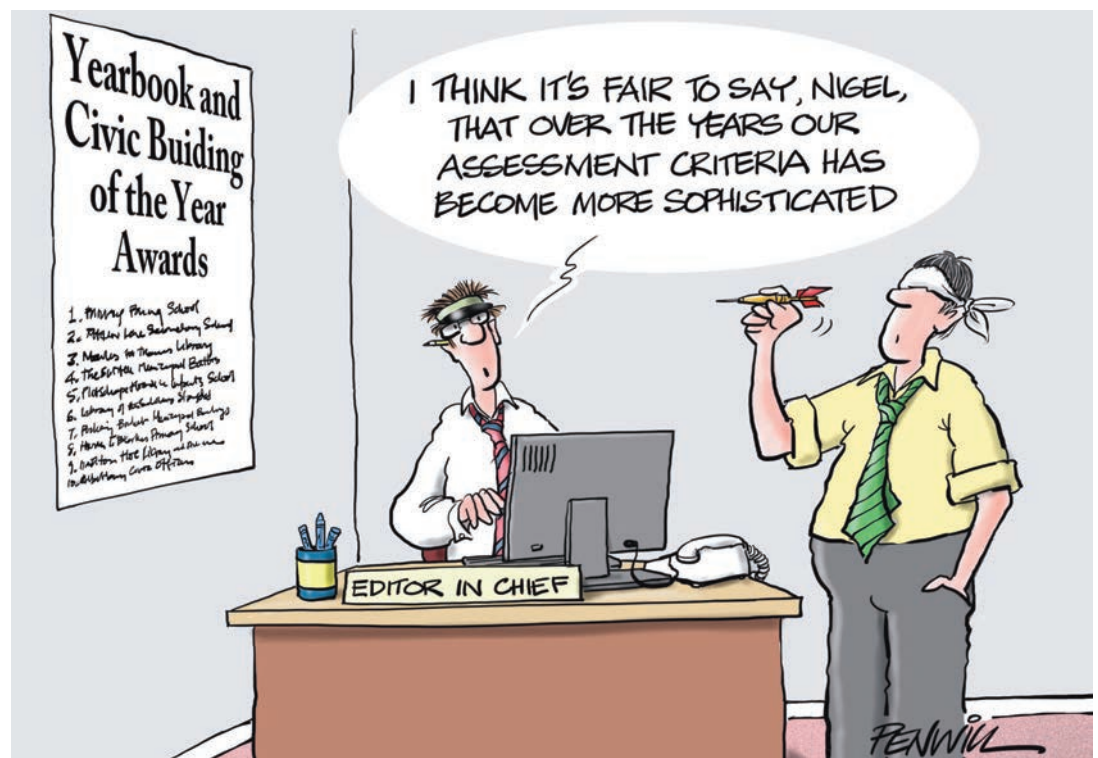
How things have changed! We now have a Yearbook with an extraordinary variety of high quality schemes which is the only publication showing off the range of good work being done by our members, both in-house and by their consultants. It is sent to every UK local authority chief executive and plays an important part in raising and maintaining SCALA's (and hopefully in future SPACES's) public profile.

The Yearbook was first published 1959 and over the years it had number of publishers of varying graphic design quality and commitment. However, it has always relied on advertising income to make it viable, and in the 1994 the advertising began to dry up due to one of our seemingly regular recessions, and the then publisher withdrew.

In 1995 we've lucky enough to find Lansdowne Publishing, who were prepared to take the risk and put in the significant resources necessary for a re-design and re-launch. Since then we have had a very productive partnership with Lansdowne and consistently high graphic design quality.

I was persuaded to become editor at that time on the promise that it would enhance my standing in 

When accepting further involvement in the work of SCALA David famously said "But for this uncharitable act (of recruitment) I could have had a peaceful life carving out a brilliant career". The photo above shows how seriously he undertook his PR role – Ed



the community. Sadly, it hasn't actually done that but has been both rewarding and frustrating. The early years were frustrating because of the recession. After weeks of phone chasing we were lucky if we got 60 submissions – at least half of which we wouldn't have published had we not been desperate!

As time went on it gradually became more rewarding. We have seen an extraordinary improvement in quality and quantity of submissions. We are now getting up to 130 and the challenge now is what we have to leave out rather than what we have to put in.

However, some frustration still remains in that while design standards have improved we still have some problems with the ability to write concise well structured text. We ask for 200 words but what we often get is a rambling discourse of anything up to 500 words, and a large part of the editor's role is turning this into something concise and reasonably understandable.

It was early in 2003 when, as part of a small group gathered together to select suitable projects for publication in the Yearbook, Nigel Badcock declared "this is so frustrating, some of these projects are excellent and should be rewarded, publication is not enough... why doesn't SCALA run a competition with awards?" The rest is now history and Mike Britch of NPS kindly agreed to sponsor the event with the editorial panel taking on the new assessment role.

The addition of entry to the CBoY Award, via selection for publication in the Yearbook, further improved design standards. Initially after the launch nearly all the entries continued to be from in-house teams of local authorities, but just as SCALA's membership has now expanded to be truly multi-disciplinary, so the Award now attracts entries from the wider public sector with projects designed by leading private architects who happily work in the public domain. So our first winner in 2003, St Thomas of Aquins High School in Edinburgh, designed by the City of Edinburgh Council's in-house team, sits alongside the 2014 winner Brent Council's Civic Centre in Wembley, designed by Hopkins Architects. ▶



“We have seen an extraordinary improvement in quality and quantity of submissions.”

All of the Civic Building of the Year Award Winners since 2003

22 The SCALA Yearbook and Civic Building of the Year Awards

“The standard increases year by year, as the current crop of award winners in this edition shows.”

Both are excellent buildings worthy of high praise, both equally help establish the validity of the Competition.

Each year the CBoY short list is constructed initially from photos and descriptions and members of the panel visit the shortlisted schemes, usually in pairs. The assessment system is based on a modified CIC Design Quality Indicator methodology as an objective marking system. At the final meeting of the panel these scores are moderated, and there may be second visits to some schemes to arrive at the list of Award winners.

Before it was launched there were worries that the quantity and quality of submissions wouldn't justify having an award, but these proved unfounded from the very beginning. The standard increases year by year, as the current crop of award winners in this edition shows, and Civic Building of the Year has become a nationally recognised (and the only) award celebrating the best in public sector architecture and the 2014 winners are listed below.

SCALA Civic Building of the Year Awards 2014

The Civic Building of the Year

Brent Civic Centre, Wembley

Client: London Borough of Brent.

The Civic Building of the Year – Small Project

New School Hall, Corfe Castle CE VC

Primary School

Client: Dorset County Council.

The Civic Building of the Year – Regeneration Category

Liverpool Central Library

Client: Liverpool City Council

West Offices, York

Client: City of York Council

The Civic Building of the Year – Education Category

Stromness Primary School

Client: Orkney Islands Council

Highly Commended

The Library of Birmingham

Client: Birmingham City Council

Ashbourne Library

Client: Derbyshire County Council

Michael Woods Sports & Leisure Centre, Glenrothes

Client: Fife Council

Commended

Vision West, Nottinghamshire College, Mansfield

Client: Nottinghamshire College

Kirkcaldy Leisure Centre

Client: Fife Council

Eastside City Park, Birmingham

Client: Birmingham City Council

Four Oaks Primary School, Anfield

Client: Liverpool City Council

For further information on all the Award winners go to the Awards Base.

www.publicarchitecture.co.uk


information and technology for construction & architecture in the public sector

The journey started in 2002 when the then Scottish Executive, now the Scottish Government, asked local authorities to submit ‘School Estate Strategies’.

Fast forward to 2014 and the county has two new schools – one of which is Stromness Primary, winner of the SCALA Civic Building of the Year Awards 2014, Education category and a big achievement for Scotland’s smallest local authority.

In 2007 parents, pupils and staff from Stromness Primary were consulted on the location with the majority of responses favouring a rebuild of Stromness

Primary – a stunning location at the head of the ‘Hamnavoe’, the town’s natural harbour, was chosen.

Stromness itself is a fantastically picturesque town with a historic core and outstanding conservation area. Gliding into the sheltered harbour on the ferry, visitors are greeted by a view that would have met all seafarers since the Hudson Bay Company sparked the boom we still see today. Outside the core 



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orkney.gov.uk



The historic setting of the school overlooked by the town



The limited palette of materials providing a contemporary solution



Winner of the Education category in the Civic Building of the Year Award sponsored by the NPS Group.

24 Stromness Primary School

“Stromness itself is a fantastically picturesque town with a historic core and outstanding conservation area.”



Glazing and rooflights provide a well lit interior

“suburbs” now climb the hillside to the west and north around the bay.

High on the Council’s wishlist was that the new building would both mediate between the old and the new of Stromness – and take full advantage of the outstanding vistas offered down the Hamnavoe and of the old town. Sitting on the shore and at the point where two major approaches into the town meet, the location meant the building would be overlooked and highly visible from multiple sides.

In keeping with the local vernacular the form reflects the distinct gabled rectangular blocks with linking accommodation reminiscent of the townscape. The limited palette of time proven materials provide a contemporary solution and include natural slate, stone, render and glass. The building has four ‘front’ elevations maximising the views and incorporating rooflights to enhance daylight performance.

The facilities include teaching and breakout spaces, kitchen and a separate multi-purpose central social space conjoined to the dining area. The large breakout space acts as a central street and blurs the boundaries between work and play, home and school,

learner and teacher and reinforces creativity, fun and provides interactive learning. Outside there is a multi use games area, amphitheatre and playground used as a resource area.

Sustainability and low carbon design contribute to an ‘Excellent’ BREEAM rating. Re-cycled stone came from the excavations from another construction site on the Schools Investment Programme.

Credits

Architect:

Keppie Design

M&E Engineer:

Rybaka

Structural Engineer:

AF Cruden

Acoustic Consultant:

RMP

Main Contractor:

Morrison Construction

Area:

2,460m²



All building types can be viewed in the articles section of the Knowledge Base.

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information and technology for construction & architecture in the public sector

Collaboration – Reaching for the skies

During a period whilst working in the USA, an architect became involved with the design of skyscrapers on fast track programmes.

Through that experience, it became apparent to him that if all the parties worked together collaboratively, the construction process could be planned in advance and then carried out to an agreed schedule. When he returned from the USA, he could see the weaknesses in the UK construction industry. He saw an adversarial and wasteful industry in which construction took too long, was too expensive and was not satisfactory for its clients; and, because of that, he became an advocate for change.

The architect in question was Alfred Bossom and he wrote his views in his book 'Reaching for the Skies' which was published in 1934 (80 years ago). This was one of the first major criticisms of the standard of performance of the UK construction industry.

Ten years after that in 1944 (70 years ago) the Simon Report was published which, amongst other things, recommended a more collaborative approach to design and construction with earlier contractor involvement. If we move forward a further twenty years to 1964 (50 years ago) the Banwell Report was published; a report that focused on team relationships, construction contracts and other construction documentation. It looked, in detail at the traditional separation between design and construction and criticised the industry for having entrenched positions.

Thirty years after that, in 1994 (20 years ago), the Latham Report was published, and that report identified industry inefficiencies, and condemned industry practices existing at that time as 'adversarial', 'ineffective', and 'fragmented'; and it urged reform and advocated partnering and collaboration by construction companies (a view that was reinforced in the Egan Report which was published three years later).

Now we are in 2014, and although there has definitely been a culture change since 1934, it is clear that the ideals of collaboration promoted from 80 years ago have still not yet been fully achieved.

Collaboration in terms of construction projects may be considered as being organisations working together to proactively and jointly manage project risks in order to achieve the common goal of effective project execution. However, whilst that aim may seem to be most laudable, the problem that is faced is that what may be an 'effective project execution' for one party may not be the same as it is for another party.

In the real world, true collaboration will only really be achieved if each parties definition of an 'effective project execution' are aligned into one common goal which each party sees as being beneficial to it and to each other. This ideally would be to provide a project to the required standard, on time, and at or under budget. Without such a clear common goal, 'real' collaboration and integration between parties from different specialist areas will be extremely difficult to achieve.

Some argue (as was argued in the Egan Report) that if a common goal is found, and the parties recognise their mutual interdependence, then formal contract documents should gradually become obsolete. However, many other people are of the view that parties work collaboratively more effectively when a formal contract is in place because the contract provides a more formal framework for the parties to work within.

In the past 20 years, the choice of collaborative contracts has improved and now includes the JCT Constructing Excellence Contract (the 'JCT CE'); ▶



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Peter Barnes is a Director of Blue Sky ADR Ltd, a consultancy practice specialising in Arbitrations, Adjudications, Mediations and Expert Witness work. He is a Chartered Arbitrator and a Panel Adjudicator and is a member of several Adjudication panels. He is the author of three published books on contract issues relating to the construction industry, and is the co-author of a book titled 'BIM In Principle and In Practice'.

“Many other people are of the view that parties work collaboratively more effectively when a formal contract is in place.”

JCT Partnering Charters; the NEC 3 suite of contracts; the ACE PPC 2000; and the CIOB Complex Construction Contract 2013.

Often, collaborative contracts are assumed to be synonymous with a vague concept of ‘Good Faith’. Whilst it is true that ‘Good Faith’ provisions are a common feature in collaborative contracts, the effect of such provisions is debatable, and a review of recent case law (particularly the 2013 Court of Appeal case of *Mid-Essex Hospital Services v Compass Group*) suggests that, in respect of English Law in particular, the courts are leaning towards a rather restricted interpretation and application of such provisions.

Of course, there may be new legal precedence flowing from more tightly drafted ‘Good Faith’ clauses in some of the modern collaborative contracts (the JCT CE for example), which is intended to provide that any failure to observe the ‘overriding principle’ (i.e. working together in ‘Good Faith’ and in spirit of mutual trust and respect) should be taken into account in the determination of any dispute arising from the contract. However, that is something that has not been decided upon at the present time.

At the moment, and despite the ideals of collaboration stated above, the legal position is unclear, and it may well be that collaboration will only be applied universally when parties are, in effect, compelled to collaborate (which seems to be an incongruous use of disparate words), and through this compulsion the parties see the benefits to each of them arising from the collaboration

On this basis, the most obvious process that may compel parties to collaborate, and which is gaining ground in the UK construction industry, is BIM (Building Information Modelling) which, because of its very nature, obliges parties to jointly and openly contribute and add to a universal project computer model and therefore requires and, in effect, ‘forces’ the parties to collaborate with one another.

Therefore, in a strange way, and notwithstanding the other proclaimed aims of BIM, one of its greatest accomplishments may actually be seen to be the vehicle that finally brings a truly collaborative approach to the construction process in the UK.

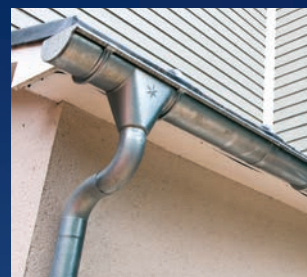
Alternatively, of course, that may simply be a ‘Utopian’ pipe dream, and we may all continue ‘reaching for the skies’ as Alfred Bossom was doing eighty years ago? ■

See other consultation articles in the Design & Procurement section on the Knowledge Base.

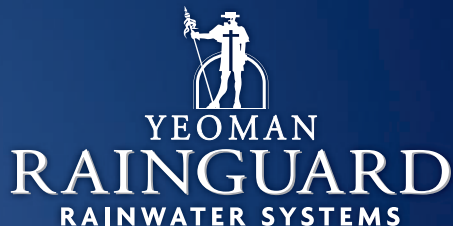
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