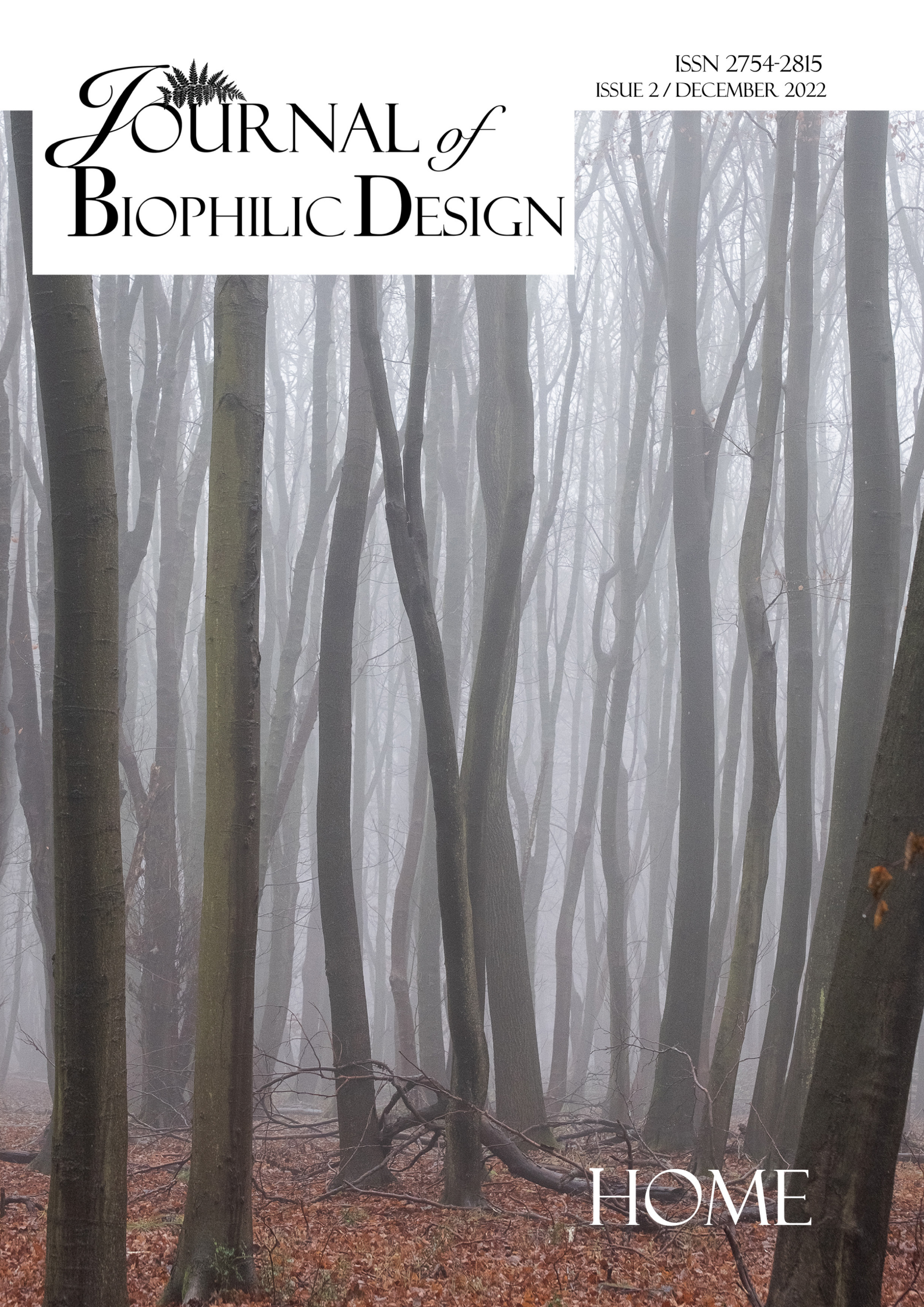




JOURNAL *of* BIOPHILIC DESIGN

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HOME

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Coming up ...

ISSUE 3, February / March 2023 – HEALTHCARE
ISSUE 4, April / May 2023 – CITIES
ISSUE 5, June / July 2023 – CREATIVITY
ISSUE 6, August / September 2023 – BLUE MIND
ISSUE 7, October / November 2023 – EDUCATION
ISSUE 8, December 2023 / January 2024 – WELLBEING
ISSUE 9, February / March 2024 – SEN / DIFFERENCES[...]

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Final word

If you are designing with biophilia at the heart of what you do, thank you for making the environments you create, the lives you improve and the planet happier and healthier. If you have just started on your Biophilic Design journey, then welcome to the movement, together we can make the world a better place to live, work and flourish in.

WELCOME

Welcome to the second edition of The Journal of Biophilic Design.

Thank you for supporting what I feel is one of the most beautiful, inspiring, positive design practices, Biophilic Design. I love it because it not only helps us as humans flourish in our lives, maintain happy and healthy jobs, enjoy family life, and supports our creativity and focus too but it is also kind to our planet too. There is no planet B, as they say, but, you know what, there is no second you either.

As designers, MPs, townplanners, mothers, fathers, friends, doctors, we all have choices how we live our lives and importantly, how and where we chose to live and work. The more I learn about the benefits of Biophilic Design, the more I understand that bringing in more natural materials, colours, views, textures, improved

acoustics, lighting, plants, zones.

We all love our homes, it is where we should feel safe and cosy, it should afford us space to do all the things we want to do alone or with our families and friends. With more and more people working from home, let's start creating inspiring havens to live, work and flourish in, I hope this issue, with Case Studies, interviews and science will serve to act as an inspirational springboard.

Thank you to our contributors as well, you are amazing people.

Vanessa Champion PhD, AMRSPH
Editor and Founder

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HIGHLIGHTS

Each edition of The Journal of Biophilic Design has regular sections. We highlight them here so you can navigate your way around the Journal. If you would like to contribute to a future edition, please do contact our editor we would love to feature your research and case studies.

4	Home	124	Environment, People, Planet
6	Connections	125	The World's Lungs
14	Design for Life	128	The Rise of Wooden Buildings
20	Biophilia in the Home	136	5 Tips to do at Home
36	Habitarmonia	138	Workspace Design Show
42	Pioneer Nature Method in Architecture	140	Biophilia of Materiality
54	Pfeiffer Design	144	Wellbeing
62	Good Quality Homes	145	Sanctuary in Uncertain Times
64	Novella – the Story Begins	148	A Healthy Home Environment
72	Biophilic Lighting in the Home	150	Humans in Trees (2)
76	Home-Working the Biophilic Way	154	BD as a Natural Step in Human Evolution
80	Taking Your Office Outside	156	Third Age Home
84	The Journey to a Sustainable Balanced Life	158	Search for Belonging
88	Orienting the Home for Hybrid Working	160	Managing Ourselves
		162	Biophilic Interior Design
92	Science Behind Biophilic Design	166	Biophilic Cities
94	BD – Sustainable Behaviour	168	Valuing Our Green Spaces
96	BD for Homes and Hearts	170	Primal City: Urban Design for the Human Animal
98	Sounds Smart	174	Land Fall
102	Making Home a Supportive Space for People Living With Dementia	178	Book Reviews
106	The New Age of Hybrid Working		
110	Plants	180	Magic Brush of Biophilia Quotes
112	Home as Shelter		
116	Plant Focus – Fashionable Fig	182	Final Word
118	Vertical Gardens		

Details of our contributors can be found on our website.

Each edition of The Journal of Biophilic Design is published every other month.

Next issue's focus is **Healthcare**.

Sign up for [our newsletter](#) on [our website](#) to be reminded when the edition is out. Don't forget you can read this on [your Kindle](#) as well as buy a beautiful full colour printed edition to keep and refer back to, contact us for direct links.

If you would like to sponsor the Journal please contact us.

Future editions will focus on Cities, Creativity, Blue Mind, Education, Wellbeing, SEN, Environment, Leisure, Retail.

HOME

What do you love most about your Home? Is it the entrance area as you come in? Could it be the windows that frame your views to the world outside? Is your bathroom a haven? Do your plants make you happy? Does your kitchen table hold happy family memories? What about your home “office”, does it help you do your best work?

You are lucky if you can answer yes to all those questions; if you do, it is likely that you are a designer working with Biophilic Design! But if, like the majority of us, at least with one or two of these (probably more!) you’re thinking, you know, I could do something better with these spaces, I’m just not sure what.

First of all, I suggest, that you take a page turn through this opening specialised section on the Home. Oliver Heath’s opening essay perfectly sums up why designing happy, healthy homes using Biophilic Design is incredibly important, especially right now. Then scan the beautiful images from the case studies and delve deeper into the rationales behind the designs. One thing that stands out is how nature informs each space. When you’re reading, consider how bringing in views, materials, natural light, scents, textures, colours, space, zones, and harmony which echo nature and nature’s design to create beautiful spaces you WANT to be in.

If you then turn to our pages on the Science Behind Biophilic Design, you’ll learn a bit more about why nature and the patterns of nature make such a positive impact on our physical and mental health.

Let us know about the changes you make.

Connections

“No other space has to deliver on more essential functions than our home – the place where we both practice individual wellbeing, alongside nurturing our connections with others and the world outside its walls.”

Oliver Heath

Biophilic Design has rapidly ascended within commercial spaces, largely because its evidence-based approach is appealing to those that recognise its tangible numbers and return on investment, which makes it so compelling. While we are now seeing the practice embraced by early adopters in the design of our domestic environments, it is still relatively underdeveloped. This is something that we, at Oliver Heath Design, are particularly passionate about; investigating the ways in which architects, designers, and homeowners alike can apply the framework of Biophilic Design to residential environments – turning housing into healthy and nurturing homes.

But why Biophilic Design? And, maybe more importantly, why now?

Our homes are constantly morphing and adapting to facilitate our changing social, cultural, technological, and environmental needs – with every nook and cranny feeling

like it needs to add value. Recently homes have been stretched to the max, acting in lieu of spaces which were temporarily off-limits due to the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the office – as discussed in our article in the first edition of this Journal which focussed on the workplace. This stretch has made it clear that our homes can both cope under immense pressure and offer us more than just a place to eat, sleep, socialise, and rest.

We often think about the ways that our homes can serve us physically, forgetting that they also support us mentally and emotionally; the way they make us feel. For instance, having space for a home office is great, but only if it is successful in delivering a working environment where you can focus, feel energised, and equally facilitate respite where needed. With the cost of domestic space arguably at an all-time high, making our spaces work better, while supporting our wider holistic needs may be a more cost-effective solution than moving home to find more space.





Biophilic Design offers up a scalable and non-prescriptive way of approaching a multi-functioning home without the addition of more space, by instead enhancing existing spaces to work harder for occupants. This can be considered in a twofold approach:

- A neuro-psychological lens: how nature impacts our wellbeing at an individual level.
- A socio-psychological lens: how collectively nature can improve placemaking and connections with our surrounding environment, alongside the people within it.

Indeed, paired with the stresses felt by the physical home, is the issue of the waning connections we have within it. Biophilic Design recognises the importance of connections in the home and the way this impacts connections outside it; those with each other and with the natural world. For instance, facilitating positive interactions with nature in the home – nurturing a garden or tending to a natural system such as a compost heap, can impact the relationship we have with the wider natural environment and our treatment of it.

Social connections and family bonds within the home also play an important role in creating a healthy household environment. We know, from a 75-year-long research study undertaken by Harvard University, that the key to happiness is not wealth or status – but the bonds we share with family and friends.

The number of UK households sitting down to eat together has declined to just 28%;ⁱ what used to be a time for sharing anecdotes and catching up has now been reduced to either eating separately or sitting facing a screen rather than another human being.

“... the key to happiness is not wealth or status ~ but the bonds we share with family and friends”

It is true, ironically, that our increased connectivity (facilitated by forever progressing technology) has decreased connections with those directly in front of us. By focusing on areas within the home that have traditionally nurtured bonds with loved ones: the dining table, living areas, and outdoor space, we can begin to design touch points for connection. Because if our homes are a key space for forming bonds, and our relationships with friends and family the key to happiness, then surely the pathway to great design is to ensure the home is delivering on this.



A Biophilic Design framework is globally applicable, going beyond aesthetics and reframing the approach to creating household environments; designing spaces that are both visually stunning and supportive of occupants individual and collective needs. And, while plants play a part in the design process, it is so much more than this – employing numerous easy to adopt theories drawn out from our innate attraction to natural environments and processes.

At Oliver Heath Design, we have been crafting educational online courses on how we can specifically apply Biophilic Design to domestic settings. Using over two decade's worth of collective knowledge and expertise in designing for occupant health and wellbeing, our online courses offer both an introduction to Biophilic Design and a course dedicated to applying Biophilic Design within the home.

For homeowners fed-up with domestic design fads that temporarily deliver on aesthetics, you can expect to find longevity with Biophilic Design. For interior architects and designers, we now need to seriously consider how we meet the changing needs and demands of our domestic clients. The demand for sustainable, nature-inspired design is there, but our skillset and knowledge within industry desperately needs to catch-up.

Find out more about our Biophilic Design in the Home online course here:

<https://oliverheathdesignschool.thinkific.com/>

¹<https://www.about.sainsburys.co.uk/news/latest-news/2021/12-01-21-new-research-reveals-family-dinnertime#:~:text=12%20January%202021%3A%20Despite%20people,even%20lower%2012%25%20sharing%20breakfast.>



Learn how to enhance nature connections in the home using Biophilic Design principles. Sign up to our online courses for a 10% discount today.

- 1 **VISIT:**
oliverheathdesignschool.com
- 2 **ENTER CODE:**
JOB10 at checkout



Design for Life

“Much of our urbanised and artificial environments are devoid of nature. Not only does this have a profound effect on human health and wellbeing it also cuts us off from a humbler understanding of what it is, how it works and where our place lies within it.”

Kirkland Fraser Moor – Design Process

Marcus Vitruvius Pollio, a 1st century BC architect, and engineer of the Roman Republic originated the idea that all buildings should have three attributes: *firmitas*, *utilitas*, and *venustas* (‘strength’, ‘utility’, and ‘beauty’). These attributes went on to influence western architecture for more than 1500 years with a notable highlight of Leonardo da Vinci’s drawing of the ‘Vitruvian Man’. As an engineer and visionary, Vitruvius was involved in many ‘cutting edge’ Roman innovations designed to improve living conditions for building inhabitants. Central heating systems using hypocaust ducting of hot air were foremost and it is understood that he gave explicit instructions as to how to achieve this in the most efficient manner. Architecture for him was an imitation of nature, observing that as birds and bees built their nests, so humans constructed their shelter from natural materials. He would not have been familiar with words

such as biophilia and biomimicry, but these were deep intuitions that Erich Fromm¹ has observed as being our innate physiological orientation.

The western canon of architecture has always been an expression of power and function – the dominion of man over nature. ‘*Form Follows Function*’ is a late notable maxim coined by the Chicago architect Louis Sullivan. The phrase he actually used was ‘*Form ever follows function*’ which he later attributed to Vitruvius’ triad. Essentially for 2000 years western architects have been guided by the principles that a building must be solid, useful and beautiful. Each new style expressing the culture of its age and more often than not pushing the boundaries of technology and engineering to achieve these aims. Beauty is as always in the cultural eye of the beholder – think baroque v’s brutalism.

Over the course of the last 100 years science has helped reveal our position within a systemic network of inter-relationships with all other facets of nature – living and non-living. We have begun to better understand the ecology of human development. Sustainability as defined by the 1987 *Brundtland Commission* sought to find a balance within this network, but this has tended to keep us focused on functional maintenance. Life however (with a capital L), and all its glory is an expansive phenomenon – one of a dynamic equilibrium of abundance and flourishing. Limiting buildings and all human endeavour to function, utility and even (cultural) beauty are essential but not enough. A healthy ecology relies on the health of all ‘partners’ within the relationship. Since human beings are

now a considerable geological force, it is essential we wake up to our ‘niche’ role.

To navigate the tremendous impact of environmental degradation of planetary systems we cast one eye forward for tools and technologies and now one eye backward for narratives of ecological stewardship. Indigenous cultures millennia old have vital wisdom to share for our future travels on Spaceship Earth.

The 20th century saw a shift from a static, pragmatic paradigm, transferring our general cultural balance from modernism though postmodernism to what is now being termed meta-modernism. Meta-modernism is keen to draw in a wider narrative as considered by Lene Rachel Anderson in her book *Metamodernity: Meaning and Hope in a Complex World*²:



Much of our urbanised and artificial environments are devoid of nature. Not only does this have a profound effect on human health and well being it also cuts us off from a humbler understanding of what it is, how it works and where our place lies within it. Our work always endeavours to capitalise on a regenerative, biomimetic and biophilic approach, but we are mindful that this must be broader than the addition of a green roof or general carbon mitigation strategies. It must be expansive.

“Metamodernity provides us with a framework for understanding ourselves and our societies in a much more complex way. It contains both indigenous, premodern, modern, and postmodern cultural elements and thus provides social norms and a moral fabric for intimacy, spirituality, religion, science, and self-exploration, all at the same time.”

After almost 35 years of practicing ‘regenerative’ architecture my colleagues and I at my practice have arrived at an understanding that our buildings should not be considered as inert and static objects but rather as catalysts for living systems. Whilst clearly, we serve the interests of those that commission us, we endeavour to dig deeper into a better understanding of the ecologies – natural and manmade, that we find ourselves working within. In tandem to the client brief we continually ask how best we can harness what we are doing in the *firmitas*, *utilitas*, and *venustas* aspects to bring about multiple benefits to the natural, societal, and economic ecologies to create healthy and flourishing individuals, communities, and ecologies.



Many of our projects lie in sensitive rural areas within the UK countryside where cultural norms dictate that any human intervention should be taboo which at one level is entirely correct. However much of this landscape is in fact manmade having been managed artificially for hundreds of years. Agribusiness can also leave areas culturally 'beautiful' but actually devoid of the wide diversities of flora and fauna that should be present. Many of our country house projects gain planning through a particular legislative clause – Paragraph 80. This requires that the projects are of exceptionally high architectural quality and as such allow us to pursue innovative ideas that may not yet be palatable to larger developments. We take advantage of this and use these opportunities to demonstrate transferable innovation in low carbon local materials, on site renewable energy generation, internal spaces conducive to human health, building forms that blend with the surrounding topographies and landscape and biophilic strategies that enhance ecology health and biodiversity uplift.



As Edward O Wilson so elegantly states³ biophilia is “*the urge to affiliate with other forms of life*”. Humans have an innate affinity for Life and living systems but at a far deeper level than basic *firmitas*, *utilitas*, and *venustas*. We are subconsciously aware that we are part of a wider highly complex web of Life and that our assumed positions of stewardship require that we fulfil our role effectively. This cannot be achieved without us first being restored to health and balance as individuals and communities. A building that facilitates this can then be considered truly beautiful – a timeless, natural, and holistic beauty on a par with that of a single simple field lily.



¹ Fromm, Eric – *The Heart of Man*

² Andersen, Lene Rachel – *Metamodernity: Meaning and Hope in a Complex World*

³ Wilson, Edward O – *Biophilia*

Biophilia in the Home

“Biophilic design can create a peaceful environment, engendering the many benefits a constant, yet evolving connection to nature can bring; softening spaces that have suddenly become both our residences and workplaces, coupled with improving our physical and mental health.”

Amos Goldreich

Biophilic design, the concept of directly or indirectly increasing occupant connectivity to the natural environment, is known to help us feel calmer, more uplifted and less stressed. Since establishing Amos Goldreich Architecture in 2010, we have aspired to create buildings and places which have a positive impact on people's lives and are a joy to experience. For us, architecture is about people and communities, and our work is imbued with an acute sense of empathy, ease, pragmatism, and playfulness. Central to our aspirations of helping create a happier, healthier built environment is a connection to nature. Every project – regardless of scale, typology or sector – holds this at the forefront of its brief.

The experience we all had during the lockdowns triggered by the pandemic has shown us the importance of the home in our daily life. Biophilic design can create a peaceful environment, engendering the many benefits a constant, yet evolving connection to nature can bring; softening spaces that have suddenly become both our residences and workplaces, coupled with improving our physical and mental health.

The importance of biophilic design transcends the home, encompassing our relationship to the environment around us and even being a means by which to reach for a model of sustainability that looks towards working in harmony with the natural world, rather than exclusively looking towards technological advances and offsetting.













We believe that as much as possible, people should be connected to nature, for society's wellbeing and health. As architects, who author place and space, we seek to bring Biophilic Design principles into our often city-based work, where re-establishing a connection to nature is most needed. There are three key principles of Biophilic Design which I feel are most important and pertinent in our designs:

The first principle is Create Constant Visual Connection

At its most simple, this is about making sure from the outset of the design process that the garden can be seen throughout the interior, seamlessly adding to the internal experience, rather than feeling like a separate add-on. For Framework House, we designed for extensive levels of planting across many surfaces, such as the deep sedum roof, so that nature became ever-present and accessible. Other devices, such as the generous window seat, frame views into the luscious garden, helping incorporate biophilia into the everyday life of the home, even in winter.

The second principle is to Bring Nature In

A key component of this approach – which again needs to be considered from the outset if to be wholly incorporate throughout – is providing ample natural light, in every space, and many orientations, to create a connection to the passing of time, movement of the sun and the changing of the seasons. When working with both existing or new buildings, we

open up spaces as much as we can, often using “up and over” windows and skylights to create generous connections.

The third principle is to Incorporate Scents and Sounds

Activating as many senses as possible is a key feature of our approach to biophilia. A constant visual connection is a must, but to forge deeper connections we must create environments that allow for varied ways to experience and appreciate nature. For our House for a Gardener, a winter garden below an entirely glazed roof draws light and greenery into the heart of the home, allowing our clients to be surrounded by their plants even in inclement weather.

Layering biophilic features throughout compounds their effect. How these principles all work together will influence how you use the space, and then how that space gives back positively. An existing garden, a new internal winter garden, fishpond and the ability for many forms of interaction between these spaces and senses makes a House for a Gardener an unexpected urban oasis within a tight site.

It is our priority and duty to be respectful and caring of the environment and our community. These values imbue our work and we are minded to be involved in projects that contribute to individuals' and society's good. Incorporating nature in our proposals is one of the most fruitful methods in which we instil our values into our work.

<https://agarchitecture.net>





HABITARMONIA

*Renovation of passive house project using the Biophilic Design philosophy (Antwerpen, Belgium).
Finalist of the Golden Trezzini Awards 2022 for Best Implemented Private House Interior Design Project, Award Winner of Wintrade Global and Best Service Award in Houzz 2022.*

— CASE STUDY —

Nuria Muñoz



In the middle of a small forest in the village of Grasheide, Antwerp, Belgium, the family bought this passive house with a wooden structure manufactured by the company Debacker.

Although technically the house met all the requirements for sustainability and insulation, it lacked charm and space for this family with 3 children. The previous owners had not paid attention to its decoration and flow, and the new owners love well decorated houses that make them feel at home, so it was then that Habitarmonia was approached to create a home where this couple with stressful jobs could find peace and quiet, where the children would feel safe and where the family could reconnect with the beauty of the forest outside.

At Habitarmonia we work with a Holistic approach by implementing Biophilic and Wellbeing Design; and the first main step when starting a project is to analyse the future inhabitants, not only their tastes, hobbies and habits but also their personality types, the types of emotions and feelings they want to get from the spaces and indirectly we analyse if any of the inhabitants suffer from any kind of health or cognitive problems.

Once we defined the key points for the decoration of the house, we co-created a colour palette, created a mood board and held some sessions in which we advised our clients on different aspects related to health and wellbeing in their home. This was their A-HA moment; once they began to understand the impact their space could have on them and their family, the collaboration was much more effective in terms of choice of materials and furniture.

The couple's biggest challenges were high levels of stress due to their work situation, and through our various discussions, our clients shared with us that one of the children suffered from Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and dyslexia.

At Habitarmonia we place great importance on educating our clients in the co-creation process; by involving them in it, we make them feel more responsible for the choices they make, and we also create an awareness of the importance that nature has on our wellbeing.

So, to begin with, we started looking at how we could work with natural materials (under pattern “non-visual connection with nature”

from Biophilic Design Theory of 15 patterns of Terrapin Bright Green), which have a direct impact on reducing stress hormones, have a positive impact on cognitive performance and transmit tranquillity.

One of the first things that was done was to place oak flooring on both floors on top of the existing tiled floor, together with a layer of insulation for better acoustic and temperature isolation. The wood was treated with natural resins, so it was also possible to use it in the bathrooms and kitchen; an eye-catching element that created visual peace. Not least, the smell of the wood as well as the feel of the wood enhanced the sense of calm in all rooms.

The next step was to choose a colour palette that would unify the spaces (and would be aligned with the people living in the spaces) and paint them with ecological paint.

One of the general recommendations for our clients was to remind them of the importance of being able to operate the windows, as it is a passive house, the builder's recommendation was to have the windows permanently closed, for the best functioning of this system, but, speaking of well-being and health, it was our duty to guide and advise them towards better use of them. We raised their awareness of the benefits of ventilating the rooms and getting fresh air from the outside (which in this case was a small pine forest).



Living Space

The living space consisted of a large living-dining room slightly divided with the kitchen. So, to make the spaces more welcoming, we included a wooden bar in the kitchen to convey warmth; with this simple detail, this space gained in comfort and socialising, as the new owners are very fond of cooking and having their guests around.

In the dining room, we used some of the furniture that the couple brought from their previous home; an old cupboard, a large table, and some designer chairs from the 70s. The materials we proposed for the windows were linen curtains and wooden shades, these were coming from artisans in the neighbourhood. And as an eye-catcher, we included an oak bookcase as the owners are very passionate about reading.

Master Bedroom

By adding an extra operable window to this room, we created a better visual connection with nature: the couple could contemplate the beauty of the forest from their bed and see the processes of the changing seasons and temporal changes. We also added linen curtains and suggested buying linen bedsheets, which together with organic cotton were the main textiles used in this room.

We adapted the existing lighting plan and added more subtle and diffuse lighting in the general light-scapes, and we incorporated natural made lamps made from shells and animal skin to create fractal lighting.

Most of the lamps used in the project were made of natural materials and organic shapes, and it was important that some of them could reflect different forms of light on the ceilings and walls.





The entrance

The entrance to the house, a room that was given a lot of attention as the couple regularly invited their friends and their children's friends, and it was very important to them to make them feel welcome and comfortable. To transmit that idea of a happy home, we created a wall with photographs and souvenirs of the family members: this gave a very homely feeling to the space.

The focus of the layout was to make the most of natural light. Each of the windows in each of the spaces has a beautiful natural view that allows the owners interact with nature in all conditions. And by carefully considering the arrangement of the furnishings in each room, we created a sense of light and spaciousness that allows the occupants to see beyond the rooms, (this is called prospect and refuge in Biophilic Design terminology)

Some of the less-expected but much-appreciated advice we give our clients is about what kind of plants to include in the spaces and what kind of essential oils to use to encourage creativity and calmness or simply recreate pleasant smells for the

family. In biophilic design, we pay a lot of attention to all the senses, as it makes the experience of the spaces much more interesting; and therefore, any smell, taste or sound that connects us with nature, will promote the benefits we want to transmit to our clients.

Our aim when designing a project is not only to create an aesthetically beautiful space but also, and above all, to achieve the maximum healing effect, applied to the intended spatial purpose and the corresponding functions of the assignment. Implementing the appropriate design elements can support not only the highest quality of life but also supporting people in their healing and recovery from emotional and physical illness.

The design of this home is clearly curated, but it never becomes intimidating or overly made-up. Everything feels comfortable and welcoming, immediately putting people at ease. In its apparent simplicity, this project shows the importance of interior design in defining how people feel in a space. This home is clearly a space to live, not just one to admire!

www.habitarmonia.com



PIONEER NATURE METHOD IN ARCHITECTURE

LANDSCAPE AND DESIGN

Stephen Melvin

— CASE STUDY —
PRIVATE HOUSING ‘LA MADONNINA’



I used to love playing in woods as a child. This translated in my teens and adult life to adventures in wider landscapes.



The starting point for our designs is landscape and the forces that shape it. We describe this process as ‘landscape facilitation’. Without a connection to the land a building runs the risk of being irrelevant or worse, a cancer in the landscape. We believe architecture and nature should co-exist.

In our modern house 'La Madonnina' we wanted to capture the essence of a beautiful remote place. To understand the unique blend of gravity, geology, weather, and ecology. How sunlight, water, soil, topography, trees, wind, flora, fauna, the sounds, and the view shape the site.

Journal of Biophilic Design

HOME

The design is generated by the view and by the tree presence. The building embraces the open landscape while nestling against the woodland. The architecture is adventurous. The master bedroom projects like a great overhang over the patio.



The entrance from the street is on the opposite side and hidden from the view. It leads to a sheltered courtyard with an olive tree.





Here there are fleeting glimpses of the landscape on the opposite side, but, understated, the surprise is withheld.

There is interest, however, in the variable mono-pitch roofs sloping to the courtyard that recall steps in a river and a cascading waterfall. In nature, it is hard to find a more delightful and welcoming encounter than a waterfall.



The arrival is complete, it is time to penetrate the home and discover its biggest surprise. Only when you enter the hallway, and glance through the glass stair screen to the expansive kitchen, that you experience the luxury of space, and turning to face the floor-to-ceiling glazing opposite, you get the stunning view across the uninterrupted landscape.



Drama unfolded, it is time to relax and enjoy
the sanctuary of the open living space...

<https://atelier-architects.co.uk/about/>



— CASE STUDY — SOCIAL HOUSING - OSSULTON CT

Designing with nature, landscape and people also brings significant benefit to Social Housing.

In this project we were dealing with a much harder urban environment. Fortunately, we were able to find ways to re-engage with the landscape, to embed the presence of the building into the urban grain while introducing a sense of connection to the wider surroundings.

The proximity of the river at circa 30m, although not visible from the building provided an important presence. And while located in a precinct with buildings encircling, its conservation area status provided the opportunity to explore pattern and mimicry with a distinctive materials palette.



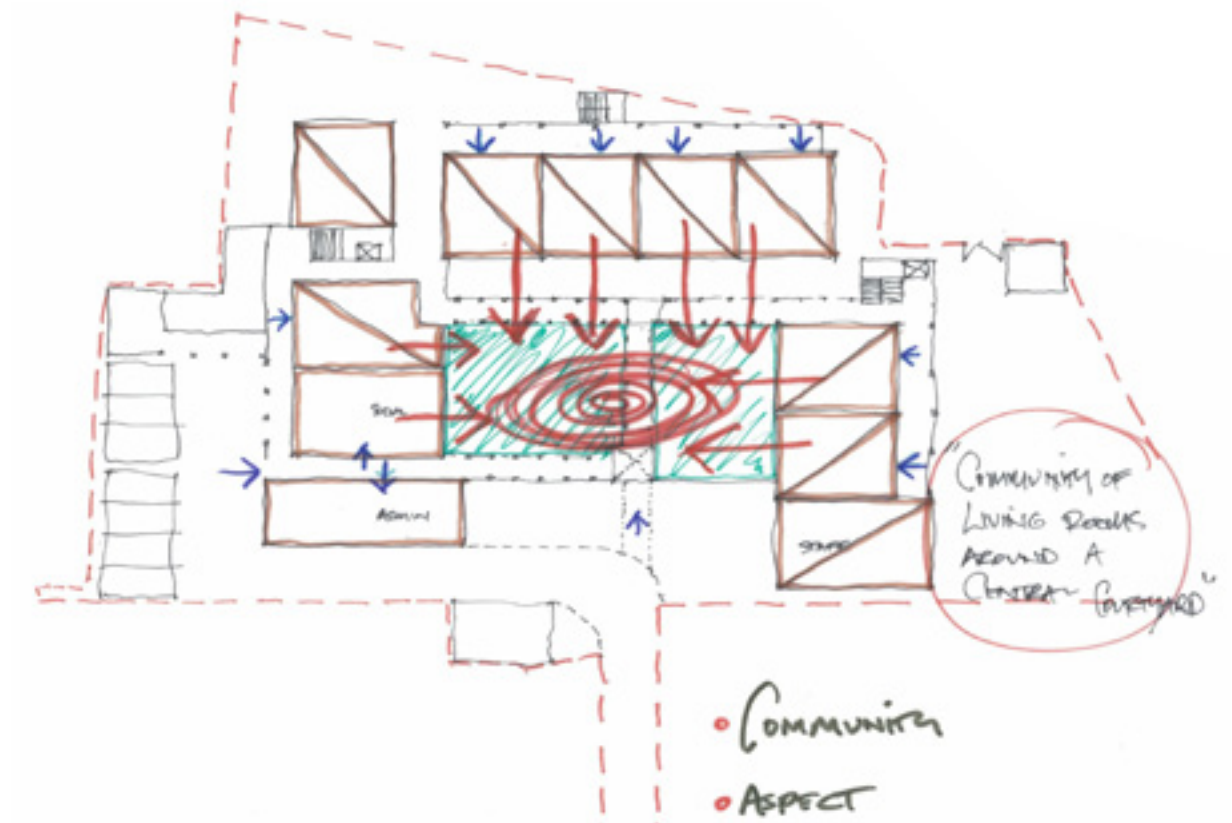
There is a degree of mystery as you enter the alleyway, your view unfolds, and you arrive in the sanctum of the entrance courtyard beneath an external covered cloister.



The entrance sequence continues past a communal garden cloister and then to a spacious and naturally lit walkway with stairs and lifts to all levels. The prospect of an individual flat is clearly revealed in the journey.

The flats are designed to be 'dual aspect', with views, thermal & airflow variability, dynamic and diffused light. This is very important to enable residents to feel connected with the outdoors.

In addition, all the flats have an external space, either patio or balcony.

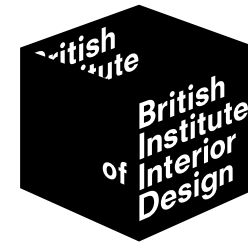


The concept for the layout was to create a 'community of living spaces around a central courtyard'. The southerly aspect meant that occupation of this external space would be attractive, even desirable.



Where time and budget permitted, we were able to explore biomimicry in the material detailing.

<https://atelier-architects.co.uk/about/>



PFEIFFER DESIGN

*Q&A with Susie Pfeiffer, founder of Pfeiffer Design
who won 2 BIID Awards, including the Anna Whitehead Prize,
the prize awarded for best achievement in sustainability*



Please tell us about Pfeiffer Design?

Pfeiffer Design is an interior design studio with a difference. Female-led, we are passionate about generating ideas and solutions, helping our clients create interior spaces that meet their exact requirements. Our designers manage interior architecture and FF&E projects from initial concept and architectural planning, through technical design and on-site project coordination to final installation and styling. We've built our reputation on reliability, transparency, and a friendly, professional approach.

Why is the environment / sustainable design important to designers?

As interior designers, we have a responsibility to tackle every project in a sustainable manner, informing and inspiring our clients along the way. The construction industry accounts for about 40% of the UK's carbon footprint and it is crucial we approach not only the sourcing of products with care and integrity, but that sustainable practices are undertaken throughout the design process.

Sustainability improves the quality of our lives, protects our ecosystem, and preserves natural resources for future generations. Sustainable development and design need to meet the needs of the present, without compromising on the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Sustainability is also important for economic reasons, as sustainable practices create jobs, ensure everyone earns a fair living wage and stimulates the economy.

In short, sustainability needs to permeate through every aspect of a design business to create long-term value to clients, and staff. Considering sustainable practices throughout the ecological, social, and economic spheres is crucial for the health and longevity of our planet.





Congratulations on your recent wins at the BIID Interior Design Awards for your ‘Design Studio, Chapel Barn’ project - please tell us about the project?

We designed and purpose built our design studio for our business and for our team of interior designers. The Studio is designed to be used in a flexible, out of the ordinary way, not only providing space for our team to work day-to-day, but also as a showroom space for our clients and somewhere to display and store all our samples, and extensive fabric library.

As the Studio is situated in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the exterior of the structure needed to be in-keeping with the adjacent agricultural buildings. In contrast, the interior is a contemporary open-plan design featuring an exposed steel-frame and ever-changing finishes to keep the studio feeling fresh and current.

The new design studio needed to provide ample space for our team of Interior Designers, having rapidly outgrown our previous studio. The principal spaces include a mezzanine floor for desks, kitchen/living area, bathroom, meeting room and ample space to host events and client presentations.

The project won the recent BIID Interior Design Awards, Anna Whitehead prize for best achievement in sustainable design. What elements of sustainable design did you incorporate into the project?

Reducing the environmental impact of the Studio was at the forefront of many design decisions. We specified and installed the latest sustainable technologies, including an air-source heat pump, enhanced insulation, rainwater harvesting system and a sedum roof which will soon be planted to reduce rainwater run-off and flood risk. The use of these sustainable technologies has not only improved the environmental impact of the studio but has instilled confidence in our clients and inspires them to use similar sustainable elements within their own homes.

In addition to this, we relied on local suppliers and subcontractors throughout the project, from construction and kitchen design to supply of bespoke upholstery and sourcing vintage furniture. This included re-purposing an old science table from a local college into a meeting table, reupholstering vintage Halabala chairs and using second-hand office chairs. We also ensured that, where possible, natural materials such as cottons, linens and jute were used throughout the design.

Throughout the studio we have championed British suppliers, from the building materials to the finishes. This includes the use of brands such as House of Hackney for the feature wallpaper, Fabco for the glazing and Bert Frank and Bella Figura for decorative lighting. It is especially important to showcase British suppliers, as it is indicative of how we specify products throughout our designs.



Please tell us about some of the materials used in the project?

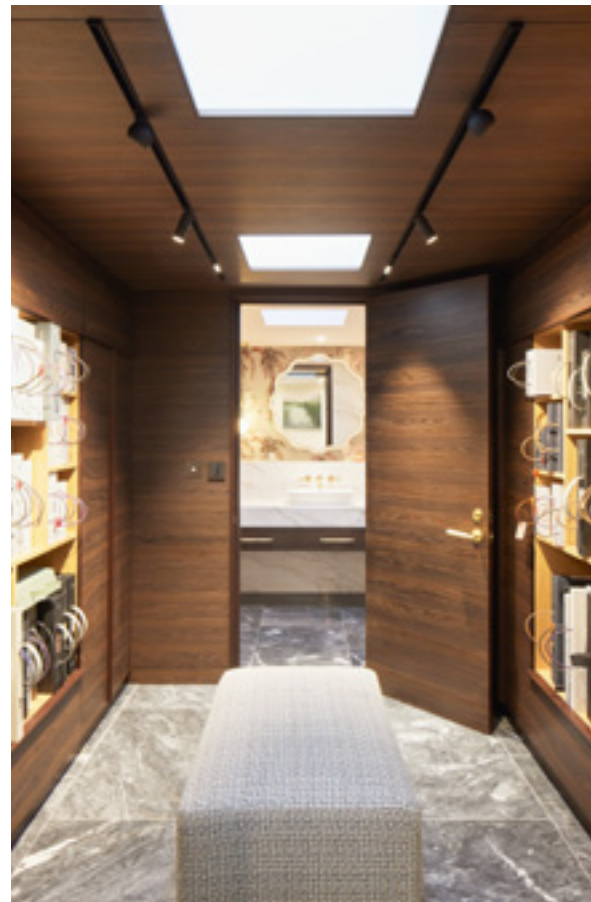
One of the key accomplishments of our studio is the overall design aesthetic, and the multi-layered way we have juxtaposed materials. The exterior cladding to the building features Japanese-inspired 'Shou Sugi Ban' charred timber, with steel-framed full height windows and doors by Fabco. The exterior of the building is in-keeping with its agricultural setting, whilst being forward-thinking and contemporary. This effectively contrasts with the interior which features an exposed steel-frame with an industrial feel, and combination of bespoke, vintage, and off-the-peg pieces, giving the Studio a truly unique design direction.

The floor specified needed to be practical and hard-wearing, suit the design aesthetic, be a good thermal insulator for the underfloor heating, and continue seamlessly from the exterior to interior. In the end resulting in 16,000 tumbled marble blocks, laid in a herringbone format.

The addition of an enclosed meeting room was imperative to create privacy for meetings and client presentations. Featuring a glass ceiling, contemporary brick slips and upholstered wall panels, this space feels cosy and visually inviting, whilst providing sound insulation and privacy.

The kitchen cabinets have been handmade in Sussex and feature a smoked oak chocolate veneer with a horizontal grain, laid at a 45° angle on the larder cupboard and other tall cabinets to create a chevron effect. The high-level flyover cabinets have glazed fronts that have been laminated with a herringbone copper mesh, which is perfectly in keeping with the statement solid copper under-sunk sink and copper inset handles. The interior of the larder cupboard has been finished in a statement California burl veneer. The worktop is a statement forest green slate with a distinctive mitred shark's nose edge. Solid brass handles in a black finish by Buster + Punch complete the industrial-inspired design.

The bathroom features solid brassware from the Landmark Industrial collection by Samuel Heath, a floating towel radiator by Bard & Brazier, marble mosaic leaf tile by Artisans of Devizes, a decorative pendant by Bert Frank and eau de nil Zeus wallpaper by House of Hackney.



Please tell us about some of your current and upcoming projects?

We are currently working on several projects across the UK, from Cobham and Esher to Tunbridge Wells, Brighton & Hove and the South Downs. These feature a contemporary new build apartment FF&E project for our clients who live abroad, full refurbishment of several period homes in Hove, ground floor remodel of two country homes in Surrey, a refurbishment of a high-rise apartment which is to be a second home for clients who live in Berkshire, and an ultra-contemporary new build family home being designed from the ground up. We are also just coming to the end of a spectacular refurbishment of a substantial country estate in West Sussex that our designers have been working on for three years.

Find out more about the project here:
<https://biid.org.uk/design-practice-pfeiffer-design>

Find out more about Pfeiffer Design here:
<https://www.pfeifferdesign.co.uk>

The BIID Interior Design Awards will be back in 2023,
entries open in January, find out more here:
<https://biid.org.uk/biid-interior-design-awards-2023>



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Good Quality Homes

“Biophilic homes bring many benefits to health. The monetary value of having a healthy nation is immense and the home is where it starts.”

Derek Clements-Croome

Governments talk about the number of homes that are needed but few mention that it is *good quality* homes we need which of course begs the question ... what do we mean by good quality? In essence, it is about providing homes in which people can flourish. Of course, we need utilities that are reliable too, but the home is not just a physical thing, because it is also a haven for spirituality and for this the building should have soul and be a joyful place sheltering one from the vicissitudes of life. Think of the home as a sanctuary for the mind with the basic functional services needed in everyday living. Homes should be adaptable for people of any age or in any state of health.

There are various assessment tools and guidance available such as the *Home Quality Mark* (HQM) from BRE in 2016, a year that also saw the publication of the UKGBC Report on *Health and Wellbeing*

in *Homes*. The HQM has 11 wellbeing, environmental, social, and financial categories. A later publication is *Building for a Healthy Life* (BHL) which is a design toolkit developed in 2020 for homes, streets, neighbourhoods, and public spaces.

A good quality home is not a luxury it is something that everyone should be able to have and yet many damp and unhealthy homes still exist even in prosperous countries. There are many barriers in the building industry. Decisions are too often made based on cheap cost and maximum profit; the supply chain is often very disconnected too making coordinated decisions difficult. Climate change demands we build sustainably and related to this context we need a vision for healthy living. There is a lack of awareness on how our homes, in which we live and sleep for many hours in a day, affect us mentally as well as physically.

Nature and our connection with it is vital. During Covid, we witnessed how a garden or even a balcony can uplift our spirits in uneasy times. Homes are not just a structure alone; they have surroundings which affect us inside or outside the home. Green space encourages activity and social interaction; research has shown it reduces loneliness and even crime rates. Green space with meadows and woodlands lets people enjoy the many benefits of forest bathing. Homes need gardens too. What joy flowers and plants bring into people's lives. Inside the home, greenery freshens the air besides giving visual pleasure throughout the seasons of the year during the day and night.

Biophilic homes bring many benefits to health. The monetary value of having a healthy nation is immense and the home is where it starts.

www.derekcroome.com

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NOVELLA – THE STORY BEGINS

*SpaceInvader designs stunning new residential
amenity space overlooking the River Irwell*

— CASE STUDY —



Designers SpaceInvader completed a 540 sq m ground floor amenity space for **Novella**, a new-build residential development on Stanley Street in Salford, facing directly onto the River Irwell and located within the vibrant new riverside district of **New Bailey**. The scheme has been created by client **The English Cities Fund (ECF)** – a strategic partnership between national developer **Muse, Legal & General** and **Homes England**, the government’s housing and regeneration agency – and forms part of ECF’s £1bn, 50-acre Salford Central regeneration. **Novella** is comprised of 211 luxury one- and two-bedroom apartments in a 23-storey landmark building by architects **Hawkins\Brown** and combines striking design with luxury amenities, including a 24-hour concierge and communal lounges, podium roof gardens and a residents’ gym and wellness suite.

The brief to **SpaceInvader**, who had previously worked with **ECF** on the multi-award-winning **Riverside** office project in Salford, was for the amenity design to target both young professionals and older empty nesters in a scheme that offered potential residents easy access to the city of Salford and its vibrant centre and amenities. The design needed to embody a high-end feel with

a strong personality, and be aimed at tenants with an appreciation for design and quality, who were looking for peace, quiet and comfort in an environment that would also enhance their living experience and offer the possibility of social interaction.

*“We are delighted to have worked with The English Cities Fund again on this scheme” **John Williams, Founder of SpaceInvader** commented. “It’s also great to be working on such a high-quality project in Salford, further building both our project portfolio in the region and extending the studio’s experience in the high-end residential domain.”*

Amenity Design Concept:

SpaceInvader’s inspiration for the project came from the scheme’s riverside location and also from the etymology of Salford itself, which derives from the Old English ‘Sealhford’, meaning ‘a ford by the willow trees’, referring to the willows that grew alongside the River Irwell.

*“Our design concept was influenced by the branches of the willow tree” **SpaceInvader Senior Interior Designer Beth Evans** commented, “and by the way the*

willow draws your eye down in a cascading movement, as well as by the scheme's glazed views over the River Irwell, which had to be allowed to be the star attraction, through the creation of a calm and contemplative interior that complimented rather than competed with that view."

A tonal colour palette was directly inspired by the willow tree and river, including silvered timber joinery inspired by its ageing bark, the use of earthy tones throughout and the introduction of Nature's greens through planting and the use of a teal green to reflect the river. The fixed elements feature brown-tones, whilst wall colours are richer, with the final layering of the space adding subtle extra colour. Brass is also used as a gold accent in both the scheme's feature lighting and as an edge to structural and freestanding furniture items. The scheme's stand-out feature, a 15m-long rear joinery wall, with two curving lines revealing a stepped-back, lit central section, was also inspired by the way the willow tree's cascading branches draw the eye down.

The scheme worked in an integrated way from the outset with the development's 'Novella' branding guidelines, primary palette of midnight green and gold and secondary palette of dark green, eagle green, dusty rose and ghost white. The Novella logo features a strong 'N' letterform, surrounded by a simplified shape representing a book or novel, creating the marque and usable either as a framing device or standalone element. The branding also incorporates a book-inspired strapline – 'Start your story'.

*"The interior introduces a very natural language of greens and timber right from the start when residents and guests enter" **Beth Evans** added. 'It was very important that the base palette remained simple, tonal and considered to achieve a sophisticated look and feel. We were not only conscious of the primacy of the views, but also of the way the light enters the space too, falling beautifully onto the new timber walkways and changing throughout the day."*



Design Walk-through

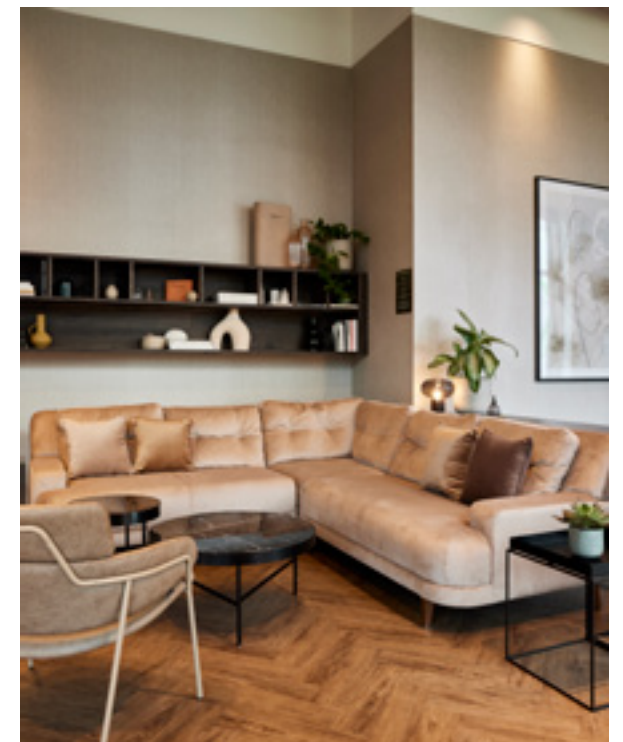
The amenity spaces offer places to meet and socialise, as well as to work, relax and exercise, embodying a variety of missions that help create a good work-life balance for residents. As well as a gym and separate wellness studio, there are lounge and co-working areas and spaces for quiet contemplation, plus a communal table, which can be booked for private dining. The 24-hour reception also offers residents concierge services, including dry-cleaning.

Through intelligent space planning, **SpaceInvader** created pockets of space with an overall openness to provide an approachable atmosphere, while maintaining some privacy when required. The use of dividing joinery walls and bookshelves built into columns create zones which are sophisticated as well as comfortable. The space is designed to help with the creation of a sense of community and to add social value for residents, with the placement of each setting carefully positioned to encourage chance encounters and allow residents to build connections with their neighbours, facilitated by the openness between the dwell and circulation spaces.



One of the scheme's standout features is its exceptional use of lighting. The **SpaceInvader** team responded to the building's architecture and landscaping, which have been designed to maximise sunlight to the lower levels of the building and specifically to make the most of the trees directly outside, which create a dappled lighting effect. Ambient lighting is therefore present but doesn't overpower the natural lighting to allow the latter to take precedence and is supported by decorative and task lighting throughout.

Lighting was also key in adapting the space for either work or leisure use. Avoiding bright and harsh lighting allows for a more hospitality-led feel for relaxation, whilst task lighting features throughout to facilitate working, without compromising on the atmosphere, allowing residents to use the space in whatever way suits their needs at any time of the day.





The reception offers residents a hospitality-style greeting and features a timber and matt green panelled rear wall. A hidden cloak cupboard provides an extra level of service, enabling guests attending a meeting to hang their coats. The reception desk, set at an angle that matches the building's façade, is a bespoke, curved-edge, lozenge shape with swirling-patterned Corian cladding and an offset *Lee Broom* circular pendant above. Recessed ceiling lights from *Delta* demarcate the whole of the rectangular reception zone. The reception desk is inspired by moving water and the way in which, over time, harsh angles are eroded, leaving behind a smoother form, whilst its cladding refers to the patterns made by lichen and fungus in Nature.

Opposite the desk, along the glazed wall, high perch seats overlook the river, suitable for laptop working. To one side, a high bench, 8-seater work zone is set beneath three *Lee Broom* polished gold and tube lights, as well as a first small lounge area with one-to-one seats and small tables, followed

by three clusters of four-seater tables for dining and lounging, with *Lee Broom* glass-and-brass globe pendant lights above.

A long walkway section follows, with full-height glazing allowing the external view to dominate and zoned areas sitting behind the walkway. Toplit structural columns in the space are clad in a *Formica* laminate with a grey marbled aesthetic with brass edging. A separated but unenclosed area follows offering seating for 12 people. Two sets of three-piece *Fulcrum Chandeliers* by *Lee Broom* hang over the 12-person table here, whilst a large, loose-lay rug from *Changespace* sits beneath to help demarcate the zone. This is a bookable space for private dining, to be served by incoming catering, with the inset tea point station to the side offering drink and refrigeration facilities. These first two zones are also home to the scheme's stand-out feature wall, designed by **SpaceInvader**, made up of undulating, painted timber with a concealed LED light set within the central 1.3m-wide gap.



HOME

The long, lounge section that comes next is an inviting, comfortable and homely area with three sofas, including one large, L-shaped sofa. Loose furniture here and throughout follows the base colour palette of rich browns, marbles and taupe, with occasional accent pops of colour in teal or dusty rose pink. A long, dark timber wall shelf is full of interesting visual items, along with lifestyle publications (such as *Kinfolk*) and books, tying in with the scheme's **Novella** branding, about both writing and art, but also focusing on the Manchester and Salford location. Two booth seating areas follow, with sumptuous velvet upholstery, set against a textured wall covering from *Tektura*. Acoustic metal panels by SAS, featuring a geometric line design, form the ceiling treatment over all these areas, which also feature wall art by *Desenio* and planting, set both into large floor planters and smaller table and shelf pots by *Urban Planters*.

A final small work-or-relax lounge area is located at the end of the timber-look walkway (a mid-tone parquet timber *Amtico* laminate), which then

dog-legs away towards the gym and wellness studio. The first wellness area focuses on physical and mental wellbeing, offering pilates, yoga and meditation, with a softly-lit joinery fabric screen and a thematic book selection on wellbeing. The second wellness space is the gym, where the focus is on physical fitness, with books here also for residents' use, this time focusing on exercise, repair and stretching, plus healthy eating recipe books. The gym equipment was installed by a specialist installer, although the ceiling treatment and panels ties in with the rest of the amenity scheme to ensure design unity.

All feature lighting throughout was supplied by *Light Forms*, along with a number of floor lamps, with architectural lighting specified as part of the building's shell and core treatment by **Hawkins/Brown**. The ground floor also includes a bike and bin store and a back-of-house space for staff. A remaining space is likely to feature retail offers in the future.

www.spaceinvaderdesign.co.uk



Photography by
Andrew Smith at
SG Photography

Credits

Client: ECF
(The English Cities Fund)

Amenity Designer:
SpaceInvader

Contractor:
Morgan Sindall

M&E:
Hannan Associates

Joinery:
J Careys

Lighting Supplier:
Light Forms

Furniture Supplier:
Ralph Capper

Planting:
Urban Planters

Wall Art:
Desenio

There's No Place Like Nature – Biophilic Lighting in the Home

“It's inherent in us as humans to feel a positive response to nature and want to replicate that sentiment in our own home?”

Guy Kornetzki, Associate Lighting Designer, Nulty

The idea of creating a peaceful space where visual links to nature promote a feeling of wellbeing is appealing and taps into our evolutionary need to increase connectivity to the natural environment. And yet, adopting a biophilic design philosophy in a residential setting isn't as straightforward as we might think. Whilst to some extent it happens organically – as we tend to have access to a garden and instinctively place a few pot plants around the place – a biophilic approach is only authentic if we think further beyond the greenery.

In the commercial and hospitality sectors, architects and designers are increasingly asked to incorporate biophilic principles on a large scale, in what is often an unnatural environment. Because of this, a conscious and coordinated effort is required to realise a biophilic concept in a meaningful yet natural way. In the residential world, the scale of biophilic design can be large or

small depending on the project. Lighting, similar to planting, is just one piece of the puzzle, because there are myriad ways to approach a residential project and create meaningful links to the natural environment. A landscape architect can make sure landscape elements are visible in as many spaces as possible. Here we are confronted with a cascading scale of options, ranging from a porch or a garden at one end to a rich, forest-like atrium at the other. The next step is to ensure residents have clear views of these outdoor spaces, so an architect will implement suitable openings to reveal such exterior landscape interventions. Using windows and skylights to frame how we view nature from within, an architect can seek ways to maximise daylight penetration into the home. An interior designer can then develop a design language for the home that offers subtle references to nature through the material palette and furnishings.

Once all these pieces of the puzzle have been considered, the lighting designer comes into play. On one level, it's about considering how daylight levels in one area of a building should be counter-balanced with artificial light to prevent the appearance of shady or gloomy areas when natural light penetrates this particular space. When greenery is brought into the mix, it's about balancing how we illuminate these areas to allow plants to thrive and human occupants to gain enjoyment from the space. We achieve

this by choosing the right light spectrum for healthy plant development, while managing architectural lighting around the green areas to prevent the space from becoming overly illuminated. The lighting needs of plants can't be allowed to overpower a residential scheme as it has to function as an atmospheric space in its own right, particularly at night when you want to evoke a certain mood. It's also important for plants themselves to have visual relief from light because they need a light-dark cycle to grow properly.



The challenge of balancing the large quantities of light that plants need to survive with the design aspirations for a project, has only been exasperated by the global sustainability crisis and rising energy costs. In our attempt to navigate this difficult dichotomy, we need to move away from reductive green walls that require a high level of exposure to light (and energy), towards beautifully executed schemes with a more balanced approach to biophilic lighting. It's reassuring that we're seeing the emergence of retail products with in-built illumination that support the healthy integration of planting. Arguably a clear sign that the benefits of biophilic

lighting are being felt on a more tangible level.

When it comes to the exterior of a building, electric lighting can be used to highlight links to nature and enhance how people experience that space. Planters, trees, hedges and water features can be illuminated to support a resident's connection to the outside world. Even lighting architectural elements like exterior retaining walls or paths can help draw a person's attention outside. This is most noticeable at night-time, of course, but can also be important in the daytime on particularly overcast days.

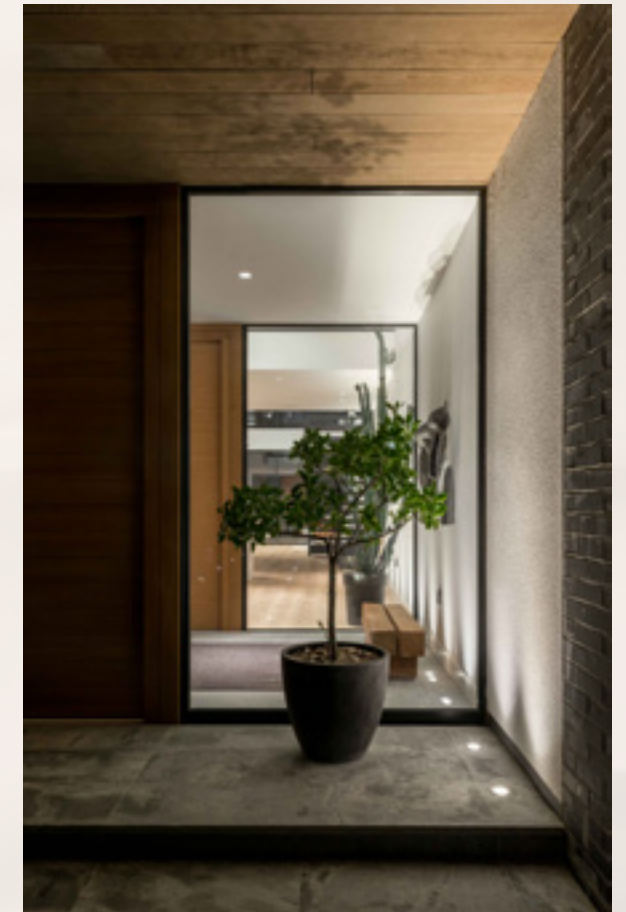


Additional factors to consider include colour temperature, light distribution, placement of light and even spectral distribution of the various light sources. These elements all play an important part in supporting a holistic biophilic approach. Consideration should also be given to time, as one of the key aspects of the natural world is its 24-hour cycle, where light levels shift constantly throughout the day until they fall away at night. All living things are connected to this cycle, and we now know that a person's circadian rhythm is influenced by exposure to light. This knowledge helps us improve our connection to nature by using appropriate light qualities such as illuminance, directionality, contrast and

colour temperature to emulate natural light in the best way that we can.

All of this considered, 'biophilic lighting' is challenging because the most effective way to experience connection to nature is undeniably to go outside and be in nature – to experience daylight itself. It's also slightly misleading as a definition because it implies a specific function or quality that delivers biophilia. Lighting cannot do that alone and must work in collaboration with other elements as outlined above. Only through a balanced approach to biophilic lighting design, can we align with principles that support our well-being and strengthen human connection to nature.

<https://www.nultylighting.co.uk>



Home-Working the Biophilic Way

“Post-pandemic a large proportion of us are working from home for at least part of the week, if not all of it. Both of us have worked from home for some years now and have found our own spaces to work from. In that time, perhaps unwittingly, we have surrounded ourselves with biophilic design elements.”

Maggie Procopi (Workplace Trends) and **Nigel Oseland** (Workplace Unlimited)

Nigel writes:

These days I work largely from a ‘shed’ in our garden. Alex Johnson, blogger and author of ‘Shedworking’ refers to it as ‘the art of working from home in a shed-like space separate from the house’. I do not intend to discuss the merits of shedworking in elaborate detail here. Alex has already done that and he has done it well using beautiful images of ‘shed-like’ spaces from all over the world that illustrate his thesis. I can only offer a personal account of why I prefer shedworking and joined the ranks of previous more famous advocates of garden cabins including George Bernard Shaw, Roald Dahl and Le Corbusier.

After browsing through Alex’s book, you will agree that ‘shed’ is probably an understatement for most of the ‘shed-like’ structures used as home offices.

My own has an insulated roof, large, double-glazed windows and doors, 40 mm thick timber walls and a high-pitched roof. It’s more of a mini log cabin than a B&Q garden shed. Inside we had the option of adding plasterboard and additional insulation. But it was an additional cost and frankly, I liked the wood finish as it was and so decided to see how it went and introduce further insulation if needed. Thankfully it wasn’t required, and I retained the log cabin-like wood interior.

That the shed is completely separate from the house is the biggest benefit to me personally. Firstly, I must get dressed for work and make a short commute through the garden. So psychologically I am changing my mindset to one associated with going to a place of work. My shed is at the bottom of the garden (behind a bush), a good 75 m from the house. Once

down there I am more inclined to settle in and ‘get on with it’. My focus is punctuated with occasional, rather than frequent, visits to the kitchen which allows me to stretch my legs, get some fresh air, and rest my eyes, whilst avoiding the biscuit tin for much of the day.

The distance from the house means I have fewer interruptions. The family never bother me down here. My main visitors these days are my cats and other distractions come from the occasional squirrel running across the roof, the pitter-patter of rain and a friendly robin prospecting for worms – all welcome. In winter I have bird feeders hanging just outside and have set up my camera in a permanent position waiting for that illusive rare bird to alight. I am also close to our wildlife pond, alive with frogs in the spring.

This is all viewed through one façade of full-height south-facing glazing. It’s not just the animals, more importantly I look onto the more natural part of the

garden and the nearby ferns, castor oil plants, bamboo, mahonia and ivy – lots of ivy. I can open or close the windows as I please, controlling the daylight and ventilation to suit my needs and mood. The natural ventilation is supplemented by a desk fan that allows me to cool down even in the hottest of summers.

There has been some debate around whether working from home is good for the environment. Although less commuting reduces the carbon produced there is some concern that homes will be heated for longer offsetting any environmental benefit. Shed-working means that only a small space needs to be heated; in my case, this is with a small thermostatically controlled 2 kW Dimplex convector heater that is rarely on. And in summer I use the windows to cool via cross-ventilation without fear of air or noise pollution. However, at that point, the birdsong carries into my space, but it is often commented on and enjoyed by colleagues during Team calls.

*A Biophilic Environment is proven
to Reduce Blood pressure
Improve Short term memory by 14 percent
Make us more Productive,
Give us better Concentration
Help us be more Creative
Enhance mood and cognitive performance*

Maggie writes:

The shed was originally built for me as at the time I was working from home and Nigel was in London. In contrast to Nigel however I am not at all a tidy worker, and so to get (what I like to call) my organically messy notes, books and papers out of the house it seemed a good idea to move to a self-contained space. In reality, though it was short-lived, as come mid-afternoon I needed to be back in the house with the family returning from school.

I also tend to work more sporadically than Nigel, for shorter but still productive periods of time, breaking off for household duties, dog walking and family. So, it made sense for me to gravitate to the dining table, a beautiful large reclaimed wood farmhouse-style table, with various scars from family life over the last 20 or so years. I often work late at night as well and so shed working at that time would be no doubt very peaceful but not so practical.

Digitalisation means that I now have fewer bits of paper floating around also and so there is less mess and more space for plants. At last count, there are 35 pots of varying sizes. Some are more difficult to keep but I enjoy tending to them. I would encourage anyone who doesn't have green fingers to still bring low-maintenance plants into their space. Our younger son has little interest in plants but alighted on some succulents I brought back from a conference one day and they have been in his room ever since.

The dog is never far away and the cats check in with me frequently also. I can't imagine living without plants and animals around but even if without them, my workspace has wood floors and table, natural light, windows that open (how many office windows are stuck shut?) and the walls are painted with Crown's Mellow Sage. This is a most restful and natural colour and given half a chance I would cover the whole of the inside of the house with it. Artwork on the walls tends to be nature-inspired prints from the likes of Amanda Clark and Ed Org. I am lucky enough to also have a view of the garden, in particular our apple tree which I watch changing through the seasons.

Looking around I see also that most of the lampshades are glass, Art Nouveau, mostly shaped like tulips, and there is a Tiffany lamp with the iconic dragonfly design. In the days when I commuted to work for large organisations, I remember the harsh lighting that one had no control of was one of the things I hated most in the work environment. It made me tired, I felt and looked washed out by lunchtime.

This all seems the natural way to work for me but Zoom calls have allowed us to see into each other's places of work and sometimes their houses. I am still amazed at the starkly bare magnolia walls behind so many folk I speak to on video. Neglected spare rooms have often become the home office but could easily be made more comfortable with the addition of biophilic elements.

Final thoughts on home working

Exercise: our bodies were meant for moving. Remember to take breaks, exercise, and maybe invest in a sit/stand desk if that is your thing.

Social: to varying degrees we are social animals. Even the most highly introverted people sometimes need human company. Nigel is an extrovert and so regularly arranges coffee and lunches out. Maggie is more introverted but still enjoys a walk through the town on market day.

Productivity: the beauty of home working is that with a little planning you can arrange your space, your work-day, and your complete environment to best suit you for your health, wellbeing, happiness and productivity. The standard 9-5 job is fast becoming a thing of the past. Partial or full home working, done right, can release much-deserved time for additional activities and pastimes.

<https://workplacetrends.co>
<https://workplaceunlimited.com>



TAKING YOUR OFFICE OUTSIDE

Brian Martin

“Did you know that the natural variation of daylight in the garden has a positive effect on the circadian system, as well as being easy on the eyes, plus variation of temperature and airflow improves comfort, wellbeing, productivity, and concentration?”

To achieve our best work, it is valuable to have a relaxed focus. When it is time to unwind, it helps to be somewhere that makes us feel tranquil and secure. Being outside is a great step toward this as we experience the natural processes of the day. The sounds, the play of the light from outside, as well as the smells and the feel of natural building materials all have a subtle beneficial effect on the body that can enhance engagement and attention and improve attitude and happiness in the mind.

The natural variation of daylight in the garden has a positive effect on the circadian system, as well as being easy on the eyes. Easy variation of the temperature and airflow improves comfort, wellbeing, productivity, and concentration.

A garden room is intended to be part of the garden, the planting and landscape design. For instance, the InSpira system can lend itself to any shape, either an organic form as part of a grand design or to fit into an odd space. There are few straight lines in nature, so organic forms are more pleasing.

When we sit with our back to a curved wall while facing a wonderful view is comforting and cosy and improves concentration and the feeling of safety, at the same time reducing stress, boredom, and fatigue.



Furniture can also be understood biophilically, by understanding the nature of ourselves and the evolution of our bodies it is clear we need to move more than we do in a traditional office, it is important to stand, kneel, lay, or lean as much as or more than sitting in one spot. Flexible or multipurpose seating and desks can help to achieve this.



Just as walking in the woods, sitting by a lake, or working in the garden improves our mood, being in a biophilic room is closer to a natural setting and we respond to nature in a healthy way. The natural environment has informed our evolution. We are linked to it in so many ways that are often obscured by modern living. Reconnecting through biophilic design is restorative and we can use it to our advantage, now we understand how it works. The science has shown that we perform better, are more relaxed, simply more at home when we integrate the natural world into our built surroundings.



The biophilic response is individual to each of us, this system can make a biomorphic room as individual as anyone or any garden, to create the best environment, a truly quality space.

<https://in-spira.co.uk>

The Journey To a Sustainable Balanced Life

“A sustainable, balanced lifestyle is a luxury that many of us in fast-paced demanding lives dream of living one day. But why ‘one day’ and not ‘now’?”

Anoushka Gangji

Our modern environment is a minefield of stimuli. Instead of mindful consumption, today’s society is driven by overconsumption and overstimulation, with technology being the largest contributor. Causing us to live at a faster pace.

As a result, we begin to disconnect from ourselves, our natural habitat, a sustainable rhythm of life and the world around us, leading to the biggest epidemic of our time: Burnout. The impact is huge and \$322 billion annually is lost as a result of burnout according to the World Economic Forum. Burnout, not only has a personal cost but has a significant cost to society and the world at large.

Although we owe it to technology for influencing the evolution of humanity, at the same time, it has led us to be in a perpetual state of digital and material consumption. Technology is here to stay; it is a contemporary reality that has brought immense benefits to our lives and society as a whole. So, what does the future of our wellbeing in a tech-saturated world look like? The answer is simple: *Balance*.

A sustainable, balanced lifestyle is a luxury that many of us in fast-paced demanding lives dream of living one day. But why ‘one day’ and not ‘now’? Balance shouldn’t be an end goal, but be a part of your journey. That journey starts with disconnecting from the noise around us and reconnecting with ourselves.

Transformative Power of Spaces and Healing energy in Nature

As human beings, we are connected to the earth, and we are not innately wired to live in concrete jungles. Our environment has a direct impact on our state of mind. If our surroundings are cluttered with too much noise and distractions, we feel anxious, and stressed with our brains automatically shifting gears and going into survival mode, thus making it difficult for us to connect to our minds. Our mind is our temple, and we must look after it. Creating the space for ourselves to think is what helps our mind to process and declutter our thoughts and build a connection to ourselves.

As living beings, we have always related to nature and its healing properties. It’s in nature where humans have always returned to seek clarity, become grounded and thrive again. Through its healing powers, nature offers the perfect backdrop to reflect and act with awareness towards a sustainable balanced life. Nature is the key ingredient to help us restore balance in our lives.

Imagine a better way of living. Where balance is everyone’s norm

Steps we can take to create a sustainable balanced life

It’s important to understand that a balanced life looks different for everyone. What works for you might not work for your partner, your friend, or your next-door neighbour. We are all unique beings, and you have to explore for yourself what works for you alone. Remind yourself “it’s the journey, not the destination”.

The first step to creating a balanced life starts with awareness, the realisation that your current state of mental and physical wellbeing is unbalanced. Look around your current space, your daily environment, and things that you are in contact with and explore what needs to be let go of and how it will make you feel.





The second step is to be kind to yourself and nurture the process of change by creating time and space with actions that nourish your mind, body and soul. Give yourself permission to break habits that no longer serve you and take time to see how that change starts to look like.

Finally, as you allow yourself to make new choices, new habits and behaviours are created that are purposeful in creating a balanced life. As you embrace the journey of living a balanced and sustainable life, you start to become more mindful of your impact and start to live in the present moment.

Your refuge from modern day chaos. Press Pause, Logoutt

We are all unique beings and sometimes on this path of exploration, we need a helping hand. This is where Logoutt comes in: A purpose-driven wellness and hospitality brand, on a mission to contribute to people's wellbeing by elevating awareness around sustainable living.

Logoutt's mindfully designed spaces and immersive experiences are created with the intention to evoke a mind-nature connection, giving you the freedom to press pause and slow down. It's the place where you can

come and escape the pressures of city life and burnout to restore your well-being. Or as Logoutt likes to call it 'zenoutt'.

The spaces have been built using biophilic design principles, aimed at creating a restorative experience in the heart of nature. The experiences are centred around awakening your senses and every aspect of Logoutt space has been designed with purpose. Functionality, comfort, and connectivity with nature are the key elements that define the Logoutt space.

As a purpose-driven brand, sustainability and impact is an ongoing mission with a deep-rooted meaning. From ground up sustainably sourced materials are used to build the spaces that have been designed to be off grid and tread lightly on the environment. By partnering with landowners who have acres of pristine land to share, Logoutt creates diversification opportunities allowing them to earn additional revenue in return for hosting the spaces. This in turn supports rural communities by creating a sustainable economic snowball.



Welcome to Nature's Space bar

Through months of exploration and user research, by looking at the most innovative concepts in architecture and wellness, Logoutt was conceptualised by the growing needs of humanity today.

Fundamentally intertwined with nature led to the use of biophilic design principles of the space along with local, sustainable and environmentally friendly materials forming the foundation of the zen sanctuary.

The space is purposefully designed to welcome you in and evoke a feeling of restored calm. The concept intertwines elements of Scandinavian contemporary with a natural finish. The interior leverages sunlight from every angle and the clean shapes instantly declutter the space.

The first thing that catches your eye as you step into space is the circle. Nature has no straight lines. The imperfections of nature are what makes it so beautiful and a key objective is to appreciate its raw form. Using a circle within the design is a reference to the cyclical nature of life. This iconic design feature at the centre of the space symbolises unity, serenity and reconnection. It's a private nook that separates the living area and by climbing through it, reconnects you with your inner child, bringing about a playful aspect.

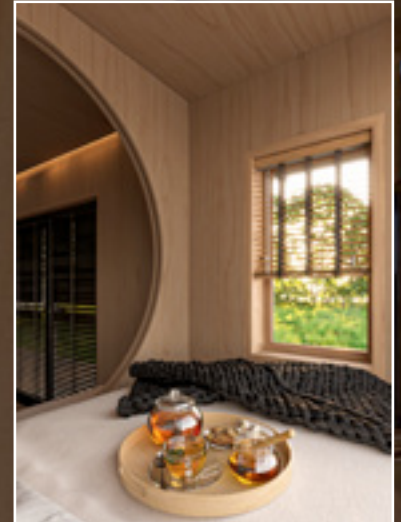
By mindfully placing windows and doors directly in front of you and at eye level in key positions, Logoutt seeks to blur the gap between the inside and outside no matter where you are sitting or standing.

There is no perfect time like the present moment, so make space in your day and start your journey to a balanced life by exploring a few of these moments.

- Immerse yourself in nature with a walk through the woods, in a park or any green space close to you. Awaken your sense of sight, look around, what do you see?
- Reconnect with nature and hug a nearby tree, walk barefoot in a park, garden or on a beach. Awaken your sense of touch, notice how the grass, the earth, the sand feels between your toes.
- Take a moment to reflect, sit, listen to the birds, the sound of the wind, the silence, quieten your mind. Awaken your sense of sound, what do you hear?
- Remind yourself of this moment and how it made you feel each time you start to feel unbalanced.

Logoutt spaces and experiences will be opening its doors in Spring 2023.

www.logoutt.co



ORIENTING THE HOME FOR HYBRID WORKING

“In our previous article, we started out by talking about the Workplace. The word Workplace’ used to be synonymous with the Office. THE Workplace.

When said like that, it still is. But YOUR workplace? MY Workplace? Well, nowadays, that could mean the Office, the Home or anywhere in between, and it can change by day or by deeds.”

The Hybrid Workplace, a distributed model of work from anywhere, is here to stay, in one form or another.

COVID has accelerated trends which were already present, but which were the preserve of a minority of strange outliers (myself included) who worked from home. Then in a flash, the workplace of every office worker in the world was flipped. Gone was the commute. Gone was the impersonal building you went to. Gone was the office of colleagues. Gone was the space over which you had zero autonomy. Goodbye to office banter. No more water-cooler gossip. No more distractions from noise & collegial interruptions. For better or worse, we were sent home.

With almost no warning and even less preparation, suddenly, our Homes gained an extra function. And boy, were we underprepared.

6 months in, employees of large corporate firms were still taking video calls on their beds in order to get away from the rest of the family. 2 years later people still work on their kitchen table, often in a veritable echo chamber of hard surfaces. We are slow to change even when it is forced upon us. And we are slow to prioritise ourselves when these changes happen.

These changes are here to stay in one form or other. That’s why we need to take lessons from biophilia and design for the mind to adapt our homes for the new reality.

In terms of adaptation, we have two categories: Move Home or Change In Place. I myself have moved home twice during the past 3 years. Once to gain a small garden, and the second time to get a bigger garden and gain a spare room which could be used as a dedicated office.

In these uncertain, changing and traumatising times, where even the air and surfaces can be seen as a threat, our Home needs to be a place of safety. Somewhere we can return to and feel reassured. A place of rest and recharge. Yes, as well as somewhere to work. And that duality means we need greater separation too. Alongside this sanctuary setting, we also need to be able to focus on work, to concentrate in ways which allow productivity and satisfaction. And we need to be able to do these things without disturbing or receiving influence from others who are sharing the space, be those family members or house-mates. We need either to have dedicated spaces for certain tasks, or we need to be able to adjust the space as needed.

All very well saying this, but how? Well, here are a few tips which can help both.

Clarity. Sit down with your fellow occupants and discuss your individual needs. Include rest and refresh in the conversation. A lot of frustrations in the home stem from assumptions about what other people know about our needs.

Allocated Space. Think about creating dedicated settings for how you prefer to work or recharge. A comfortable chair facing a window or wall or artwork. Headphones to help immerse yourself without disturbing others. A small space for crafting or working on a hobby. Somewhere which by going to, it sends a signal to others what your needs and intentions are.

Curtains. The power of curtains (to divide a space, to hide a work area, to surround an alcove) can be significant. They are

typically natural sound absorbers, they can vary the amount of light in a space, and they can create an element of zoning in a home, and they’re pretty cost effective.

Soft furnishings, blankets, acoustic kits.

All of these have a meaningful impact on how sound reverberates around a space. A small room with a foamy sofa in, will sound completely different to one without. Blankets just need to be present to help. A cost-effective acoustic kit stuck to a wall behind your screen can reduce sound bounce when talking ‘at’ your screen. More absorption generally leads to greater aural comfort which in turn can help reduce disruption and enhance rest or focus. You will also sound clearer on calls.

Nooks & Crannies. Make use of the natural hidey-holes, alcoves and cubby spaces around the home. If you don’t have an under-stairs, a breakfast nook or a loft, think about what you can make or buy to create one. Raised beds can create wonderful additional useful space underneath. A cupboard can be converted into a workstation, with the added benefit of being able to shut-up-shop at the end of the day.

Art & Nature. Sights, sounds and smells. Invest in an air purification device. Some claim to recreate the ecosystem found in a forest. Bunch plants together to create a wilderness feel. Use the sounds of the outdoors at certain times to put yourself in a particular mode. Turning it off then sends a further signal it’s time for the next mode. This journal is packed with expertise on the subject, so I am certain you won’t be short of ideas either for yourself, or for your colleagues/staff.



I'll leave you with this: It is time to take the multi-purpose role of our homes seriously and put plans in place to allow you to be your best self when relying on it. It's the most important location in your life and you have autonomy over it, so use it.

<https://nookpod.com>

THE SCIENCE BEHIND BIOPHILIC DESIGN

One of the most exciting aspects of Biophilic Design is that it is based on Science. There is so much research on how and why this wonderfully simple design process has such a phenomenal impact on us. In this regular section, our 'resident' Environmental Psychologist Dr Sally Augustin shares thoughts distilled from piles and piles of research, presenting results, suggestions and further reading for you to delve into each month. Plus, there will be an amazing search facility on our main website too we are hoping in 2023, where you can further drill down into academic research, news, case studies and more to learn from (and also, if you are a designer, help collate research to aid your explanation to the client why they need Biophilic Design solutions).

If you are an experienced expert on a certain aspect of Biophilic Design, or on how human physiology is impacted by their environment, please get in touch. We are also aiming to co-host a symposium with thought-leaders in the not too distant.



BIOPHILIC DESIGN – SUSTAINABLE BEHAVIOUR

“People who experience biophilic design are indeed more likely to behave in Earth-friendly ways – neuroscience research confirms this tie.”

Dr Sally Augustin

At a “gut level” it makes sense that people who have a biophilic experience are more likely to act in a green way. Biophilic design replicates – at least conceptually – the same sorts of experiences today that would have been present in nature when things were going well for us eons ago. For instance, creating spaces now that feel secure and have a view of what’s nearby (for instance a high backed restaurant booth where a diner can sit with a view across the restaurant and to its door) recreates in all the important ways the experience that our earliest ancestors would have had sitting secure

up in a tree or on the ground and leaning against that tree, watching the world go by (this sort of secure view situation is known to biophilic designers as having “prospect and refuge”). Biophilic design also encourages the use of natural materials, indoor plants, natural forms, nature views (via windows to the outdoors or art, for example), ventilation with fresh air, and design consistent with the ecological setting, for instance. Logically, people having good experiences want to continue to do so and we can’t have positive nature-based experiences if our planet’s condition degrades.

Science shows us that the relationship between biophilic design and sustainable action is not just theoretically logical but actually present.

Berto, Barbiero, Pasini, and Unema (2015) report that “The goal of biophilic design is to create settings imbued with positive emotional experiences, enjoyment, pleasure, interest, fascination, and wonder, which are the precursors of human attachment to and caring for place.”

Kellert shares in 2005, for example, that “an ultimately successful approach to sustainable design and development must also produce a beneficial experience rooted in people’s inner biophilic affinity for the natural environment,” before directly linking biophilic design to sustainable actions by individuals, groups, and societies.

Cole and colleagues (2021) report that place attachment (or the bond between a person and a place) can boost pro-environmental behaviour and identify biophilic design as contributing to place attachment. The Cole-lead team also neatly lays out the benefits of positive outcomes from spending time in green buildings “including reduced absenteeism and stress and increased comfort, productivity, work satisfaction, learning outcomes, organizational commitment, and sustainable attitudes and behaviours,” many of which are also discussed in the context of biophilic design.

The mechanisms underlying the links between biophilic design and sustainable behaviour by people have been explored. Biophilic design boosts peoples’ feelings of connection to nature (for example, Richardson and Butler, 2022). Martin and colleagues (2020), among others, report on ties between nature connectedness and greater pro-environmental behaviour.

So, biophilic design = sustainable behaviour. Hurray!

www.designwithscience.com
www.thespacedoctors.com

Rita Berto, Giuseppe Barbiero, and Margherita Pasini, and Pieter Unema. 2015. “Biophilic Design Triggers Fascination and Enhances Psychological Restoration in the Urban Environment.” *Journal of Biourbanism*, no. 1/2, pp. 27-34.

Laura Cole, Sylvia Coleman, and Leila Scannell. 2021. “Place Attachment in Green Buildings: Making the Connections.” *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, vol. 74, 101558.

Stephen Kellert. 2005. *Building for Life: Designing and Understanding the Human-Nature Connection*. Island Press.

Leanne Martin, Mathew White, Anne Hunt, Miles Richardson, Sabine Pahl, and Jim Burt. 2020. “Nature Contact, Nature Connectedness and Associations with Health, Wellbeing and Pro-Environmental Behaviours.” *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, vol. 68, 101389.

Miles Richardson and Carly Butler. 2022. “Nature Connectedness and Biophilic Design.” *Building Research and Information*, vol. 50, no. 1-2, pp. 36-42.

BIOPHILIC DESIGN FOR HOMES AND HEARTS

“Biophilic design makes humans comfortable and supports their efforts to live the lives they’ve planned in a fundamental, nearly primordial, way. It encourages positive life experiences by boosting wellbeing and cognitive performance. There’s no place where this sort of place-based help is more important than in our homes.”

Dr Sally Augustin

Occasionally, biophilic design is reduced, in practice, to adding a few plants in pots to a space, but it is actually much, much more than a plant here and there. Biophilically designed spaces, for example, feature:

- Natural light (daylight is like a magic elixir for our mood) and ventilation (whenever possible).
- Natural materials and naturalistic patterns/forms (particularly at least a few curving lines, in 2- and 3-dimensions, e.g., in upholstery fabrics and in the form of the sofa to be upholstered). Naturalistic patterns do not necessarily feature leaves and nature scenes, as a matter of fact, the best ones probably don’t because that might make them too complex (visual complexity is discussed below); they do, however have more curving lines in them than straight ones. They might be described as “organic”. Seeing wood grain is a great stress-buster, which explains why hardwood floors are so popular in homes (research also shows that wood with visible grain works best when less than half of the surfaces in a space are covered with it wood grain and that when given an option, it’s usually better to select warmer, lighter finishes). A natural material you might not consider: water. Seeing fish in a fish tank is an incredibly relaxing experiences, as is just viewing peacefully moving water – even a small-scale fountain in an otherwise barren courtyard can generate a relaxing view. The sounds that this sort of quietly flowing water makes are also a plus, as you’ll read about in sentences to come.
- Variations in conditions, such as shadows and light colour/intensity, during the course of a day/week/month/year and while also conveying the passage of time, in general (for example, copper develops a patina over time). BTW, warmer light is more relaxing when it is emitted by bulbs at tabletop or floor lamp height while cooler light has a more significant and positive effect on concentration and energy levels when it comes from overhead fixtures.
- Moderate visual complexity. Visual complexity is how much is going on around us that our eyes need to process and when we see more colours and shapes/patterns and things, in general, all placed in a space with less of an apparent plan/order/etc., visual complexity goes up. Residential environments designed by Frank Lloyd Wright have moderate levels of visual complexity. Be wary of creating spaces that are too stark – our sensory systems didn’t develop inside an empty white box and being in a similarly bleak environment now makes us tense.

- Views of nature through windows and/or views of nature scenes in photographs and art, in 2- and 3-dimensions.
- An element that moves, whether that’s window curtains or a hanging mobile that sways slightly in an HVAC current or something else. Our earliest environments were not completely static and our current ones shouldn’t be either.
- Opportunities to view the nearby area from a space that seems secure (for instance, from a high-backed booth over a sea of tables in a restaurant to the door of that restaurant). People are always slightly (or more) on edge if they are located in the middle of a space without nearby “cover” such as a tall plant or short wall behind them, it’s as if we still are wary of the approach from the rear of a sabre tooth tiger that might decide we look tasty. A related point: people feel most comfortable if their bed has a clear view of the doorway of the room they’re sleeping in, it’s best if the door opens so that the moving opening door temporarily blocks the view of the bed by anyone entering the room – and this bedroom configuration, is, consistent with biophilic design, conceptually much the same, and as pleasant to sleep in, as the treetop sleeping birth probably were for our earliest ancestors.
- Nature sounds, through open windows or artificially produced soundtracks. Best are quietly singing birds, gently rustling leaves and grasses, and peacefully moving water (waves, brooks, etc.). These sounds relax us as they refresh us mentally.
- A carefully considered range of sensory experiences. The natural world is a multi-sensory space and the full set of sensory experiences we’re likely to have in a home needs to be considered as it’s developed. For example: what does a flooring option look like, what does it feel like underfoot, what sounds are made by feet in shoes as they travel across it? Also, sensory experiences should reinforce each other, otherwise negative things happen

in our heads. So relaxing colours should be coupled with relaxing sounds and scents, etc.

- Experiences that are not entirely predictable. Too much unexpected “stuff” is stressful but a slight variation from what might be expected, such as a “non-standard” painting visible when a corner is turned, can set just the right tone. So can a chair that looks relatively plain when viewed from a standing position but reveals intricate inlay work when it’s sat on, for instance.
- Some sort of links to the physical and cultural environment in which they are located – a house in Phoenix should not be the same as a home in rural Shropshire, England.
- And do feature potted plants, indoors – at least a few, no more than a couple a few feet tall should be on view at any one time. When more are visible, visual complexity can inch up to stress-inducing levels.

www.designwithscience.com
www.thespacedoctors.com

For additional information on biophilic design, take a look at:

Yannick Joye. 2007. “Architectural Lessons From Environmental Psychology: The Case of Biophilic Architecture.” *Review of General Psychology*, vol. 11, no. 4, pp. 305-328.

Stephen Kellert. 2005. *Building for Life: Designing and Understanding the Human-Nature Connection*. Island Press; Washington, DC.

Stephen Kellert. 2012. *Birthright: People and Nature in the Modern World*. Yale University Press; New Haven, CT.

Stephen Kellert, Judith Heerwagen, and Martin Mador (eds.). 2008. *Biophilic Design*, John Wiley and Sons; Hoboken, NJ.

Useful Tech Tools to Help Improve Acoustic Comfort

The pandemic has helped to restore the value of quiet back into society. People have developed a greater appreciation of the importance of quiet in their lives and its vital role in their sense of wellbeing. And yet, because sound is invisible it is all too often overlooked in the design process of buildings. Consequently, the world suddenly appeared very loud, when lockdowns ended and we returned to a world of busy bars, restaurants, shopping malls, and the open-planned workspace.

A recent study by Leesman found that noise levels are important to 71% of the employees, yet only 33% find them satisfactory in their workplace. Additionally, recently released data reveals that London's restaurants are the loudest in Europe, and second only to San Francisco worldwide. A survey by SoundPrint found 80% of 1,350 London restaurants were too loud for conversation.

"The advent of smartphone technology is enabling people to educate themselves on sound levels and more. As a society we are wanting quieter spots and there wasn't any prior data allowing us to do that, which is why SoundPrint was born" explains Gregory Scott, Founder of SoundPrint.

SoundPrint is a global app that measures the noise levels of local bars, cafes, restaurants and other venues. Launching first in the US in 2018, it has since branched out to the UK and other European locations and has amassed over 170K downloads.

Explaining his invention, Gregory told us, "SoundPrint has been designed to be very simple and intuitive for the user. The app has two main functions. The first is 'SoundCheck' where you take a sound level measurement of your environment for a minimum of 15 seconds. The objective output will tell you whether the venue is good for conversation and whether it is safe for your hearing health. You simply submit the measurement by tagging the venue that you're in."

"The second key function is to Search. Users can find venues by noise levels, location and other criteria."



SoundPrint Founder, Gregory Scott – SoundPrint is an app that measures the noise levels of local bars, cafes, restaurants and other venues in multiple cities.

A study shows that a restaurant can lose up to 10% of revenue per year for being too loud, with diners, who may have enjoyed the food, nevertheless being less inclined to return to a space where it was difficult to have a conversation. This is where the SoundPrint app can empower restaurateurs, enabling them to see exactly how loud their space is. In fact, another helpful feature of the app is that it allows users to make a friendly, helpful, yet anonymous noise complaint to the venue.

Of course, restaurateurs and business owners aren't usually trained acousticians or interior designers. It can be challenging knowing where to start when it comes to finding products to reduce noise and improve acoustics in their venues and workspaces. This is where **Quiet Mark's Acoustic Academy platform** can help; providing a one-stop online directory of Third Party Certified acoustic solutions for every application area and building type.

"Optimising acoustic comfort within any space requires a two pronged approach", explains **Poppy Szkiler, CEO/ Founder at Quiet Mark**. "One needs to both choose appliances that have low noise levels and are proven to be the quietest of their category, like coffee machines, air purifiers, hand dryers and washing machines, and introduce more acoustic enhancing products and materials, such as glazing, flooring, ceilings, and sound absorbing lighting and furniture".

Since launching 10 years ago, Quiet Mark, the independent global certification programme associated with the **UK Noise Abatement Society** charitable foundation, has made it easier for consumers and trade buyers to find the quietest, best performing products. Their logo can be seen on products by brands including **Dyson, Samsung, Miele, BuzziSpace** and **Rockfon**, in leading retailers such as **John Lewis, Argos** and **Currys**, and on **NBS**, a leading construction data and specification platform.



Visitors to Acoustics Academy are first invited to select their building type, from a comprehensive selection including Office, Restaurant, Hospital and Hotel. They can then browse acoustic solutions ranging from lighting, partitions and furniture by **BuzziSpace**, meeting pods by **BlockO** (pictured left), glazing and sliding doors by **Internorm**, curtain tracks by **Silent Gliss**, or ceiling solutions by **Rockfon, Knauf, Armourcoat** or **BASWA acoustic**.

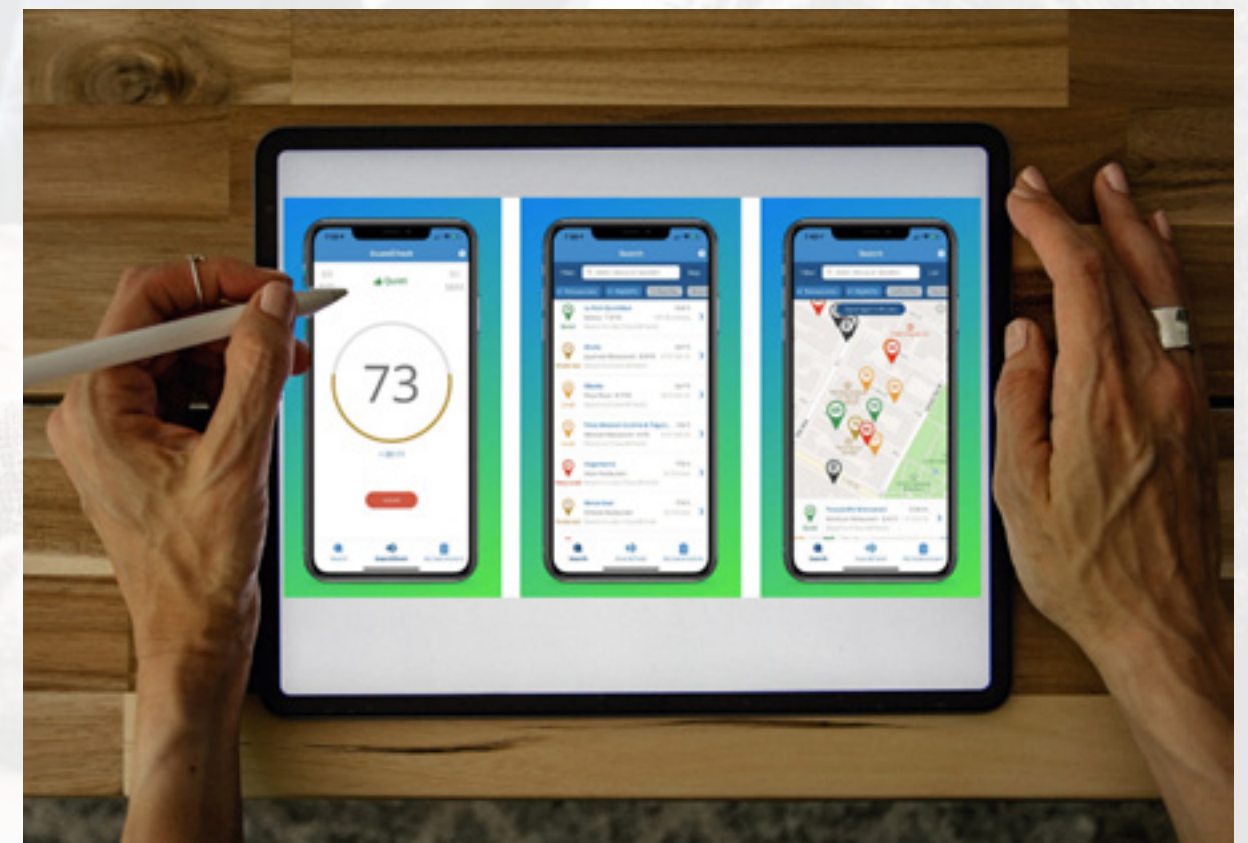
You'll also find innovative soundscaping solutions in the Acoustics Academy. Quiet Mark recently certified **Moodsonic**, which introduces responsive nature-inspired soundscapes that demonstrably improve human experiences and wellbeing indoors.

Sonically, the places where we spend most of our waking hours are unrecognisable from the natural environments we evolved in. Buildings like workplaces, hospitals and schools tend to be distracting and lacking the richness and therapeutic value of the natural world.

“The way people process sound is deeply personal. But, the evolutionary process did instil some common responses, which have been explored in hundreds of scientific papers”, explains Evan Benway, Managing Director at biophilic soundscape specialist Moodsonic.

“Birdsong, for example, tends to help us feel safe and secure, and its absence can indicate the presence of predators. And, just as the dawn chorus was once our natural alarm clock, the sound of birds can actually trigger our bodies’ circadian rhythms, improving our sleep cycles and quality”.

<https://www.moodsonic.com>
<https://www.quietmark.com>
<https://www.soundprint.co>



MAKING HOME A SUPPORTIVE SPACE FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA

“Many people with dementia will live at home for many years during this time they will experience both physical and cognitive change. This may cause them challenges when navigating their home, even if they have lived there for some time. This article considers hints and points to check on aids to physical access alongside ways of helping to reinforce messages and purpose to help people live better at home.”

Andrea Harman MSc, Volunteer Forest of Dean and Gloucestershire Dementia Action Alliance

The right home environment can help us feel comfortable, stay safe, keep active and maintain positive mental health. One of the things we love about home is the familiarity and legibility; particularly at times when learning new things maybe confusing and challenging. So when making any changes to the home environment of a person living with dementia it is best to do this slowly and with the person's involvement, consent and agreement.

Light and sight

Both ageing and dementia affect our vision so having good lighting and strong visual clues with contrast is very important. Access to daylight is additionally beneficial as it helps us stay aware of the time of day and the weather

and is beneficial to our mental health even when we are not outdoors. Whilst contrast of furniture to floor and floor to walls aids visibility floor coverings should be neutral and consistent in colour including the threshold strips so that colour changes and pattern are not perceived as a barrier or step for people with affected sight.

A few hints and things to check:

- Is there easy, uncluttered access to daylight?
- Is there a variety of controllable lighting available?
- Can light and lamp switches be easily seen and used?
- Shut doors are barriers – we often close toilet doors, but it is good for them to be seen when not in use.

- Consider leaving the bathroom light on at night and lighting the route from the bedroom.
- Keep bedrooms dark, but with easy access to lights.
- If possible, keep floor colour consistent and plain inside the house and in the garden.
- Offer contrast colour between flooring and walls.
- Does furniture contrast and show well against the walls and floor, contrasting cushions and table cloths may help furniture show.
- Provide a contrasting colour toilet seat, towels and toilet rolls, a coloured loo bloc helps people see the toilet bowl.
- A clear easy to read clock is helpful and comforting.

Physical access and movement

Many people who live with dementia become physically frail. It can also affect gait, movement and spatial awareness. Changes of height within a space, stairs and navigating obstacles becomes more challenging.

A few hints and things to check:

- Make clear direct routes through rooms.
- Have plenty of accessible storage available.
- Ensure wires and leads are tidied so that they don't become trip hazards.
- Can contrasting edging strips or tape be added to the edges of stairs?
- Are walking aids easily accessed, are they easy to use on different floor types?
- Watch out for corners – rounded edges are good or use corner guards.

- Seating with arms is often useful as mobility becomes affected.
- Consider if a seat, stairlift or grab rails would help?
- Voice activated services offer far more services than just music choices and can be linked to multiple different devices and used in many aspects of home management including cooking, heating, curtains, and lights.

Memory

People with dementia often experience memory loss both in creating and retrieving memories and undertaking tasks. More established routines and older memories are often easier to retrieve but may become muddled. This can cause challenges if a person living with dementia moves house.

A few hints and things to check:

- Clear fronted cabinets, help remind us of the contents, as do open shelves, labels, or photos of contents.
- Leave frequently used items such as coffee, tea (in clear jars) and cups out by the kettle – but don't let the place become cluttered.
- Put food in the fridge in clear containers so that the contents can be seen.
- Do a frequent date check on foods.
- A calendar or daily noticeboard acts as a useful reminder of events and meal planning.
- Do not move things around unnecessarily.
- Named photos can help as a reminder of family members or events.
- If replacing items try to get the same or similar.

- Consider room signs, or painting doors different colours if they all look the same.
- Clearly label hot and cold taps (red/blue may help).
- Use appliances with automatic switch off; gas valve limiters and electric cooker guards/timers maybe useful if there is a risk of cookers being left on.
- Use non toxic cleaning products.
- Set maximum temperatures on hot water.
- Ensure the toilet door can be unlocked from the outside.
- Familiar style taps and toilet flush are helpful.
- Flood prevention plugs are available.
- If the mirror is causing problems cover it or remove.

- Adapted phones, mobiles, and laptops are available and mean there are less steps to remember when contacting someone.
- Call systems and trackers give reassurance to relatives.

Noise

There are many links between hearing loss and dementia. This means many people living with dementia will also be living with hearing loss. Both hearing loss and dementia are isolating and may result in someone spending more time at home.

A few hints and things to check:

- Ask to turn TV and radio off when they are not being used, especially if you are having a conversation.
- Encourage people to talk and listen rather than talk over each other.
- Face a person with hearing loss when you talking to them, speak clearly but do not shout, and try not to cover your face when talking.
- Soft furnishings and carpet absorb sound helping to lower background noise.
- Check hearing aid batteries and that the aid is being worn correctly.
- Be aware that some sounds (often vacuum cleaner and other appliance noise) may become troubling especially when the source of the sound cannot be seen and people may become agitated.
- Fit smoke and carbon monoxide detectors with visual as well as audible alarms.
- Robot vacuum cleaners and lawn mowers are low noise and easy to use – but maybe a trip hazard or cause confusion.

It is important to remember we are all individuals and not all these tips will be necessary for or suit everyone, but some may prove helpful. All of us adapt to new things far better if we have tried them and been involved in the choice this is no different for a person living with dementia; however, the type of involvement may have to be adapted to suit them and too much choice can be confusing. Having a comfortable and enabling home environment goes further than the fixtures and furnishings it is also about support, activity and human interaction and these tips don't replace those things.

https://www.dementiaaction.org.uk/local_alliances/17195_forest_of_dean_district

THE NEW AGE OF HYBRID WORKING

“In this brave new world, our homes have become our places of work, and our offices are increasingly a space for connection, taking on a new life as relationship-building hubs for in-person connection and communication with colleagues and clients.”

Guy Osmond

For much of its history, ergonomics has been seen as a discipline for the workplace not the home – hardly surprising, given that its focus is on optimising the relationship between the individual their environment to allow them to work effectively, sustainably and in a healthy way.

That disassociation has been underpinned by the fact that ‘work’ and ‘home’ have, for many generations, been decoupled – conceptually and in reality, with the former bound within a nine-to-five stretch spent ‘at work’, and the latter slotted in around that.

In the case of biophilia, the reverse has been true in many ways. Connecting with the natural world and one another was something that happened away from the urban, grey environments of the office or factory. Nature, gardens, plants, even natural light were, for many people at

least, to be enjoyed only at weekends or during holidays.

Skip forward to 2022 and the picture is quite different.

Our developing understanding of biophilia and the powerful benefits it unlocks have seen an explosion of biophilic design in our workplaces. And, as the dichotomy of work and homelife has been undone, the demand for ergonomic design has extended into our homes.

Catalysed by the pandemic, which saw the vast majority of knowledge workers move to homeworking virtually overnight, we have entered a new age of home and hybrid working. Working remotely for at least part of the week is now the norm rather than the exception, replacing the old office-bound model for many businesses.

In this brave new world, our homes have become our places of work, and our offices are increasingly a space for connection, taking on a new life as relationship-building hubs for in-person connection and communication with colleagues and clients.

This paradigm shift means that ergonomics, more than ever, is a factor in how we design and inhabit our homes. Similarly, biophilic design has an even more central role in our offices, transforming them into the energising, vibrant, magnetic places they need to be to serve their altered purpose in the new world of work.

However, the effectiveness of managing this shift varies enormously between employers and for individual employees.

The hidden cost of homeworking

For most knowledge workers, provided it’s handled correctly, the combination of office and home performs well and has the potential to help optimise both wellbeing and productivity.

If being at home affords less disturbance and interruption than the office, it lends itself well to the core working behaviours of Concentration and Contemplation, while time in the office is better for the other two – Communication and Collaboration.

However, the way this new age of homeworking manifested at speed and under duress at the start of the pandemic has left a lasting, if unintended, legacy. In many cases the makeshift arrangements

adopted at the outset have been allowed to perpetuate – even after people have moved into permanent hybrid working situations.

And while some employers have provided money to help their employees buy what they need for their homes, that support has been insufficient or non-existent for many. Display Screen Equipment (DSE) workstation assessments, which employers are legally required to complete for any member of staff using a screen for an hour or more a day, have been allowed to fall by the wayside, with ‘out of sight’ often meaning ‘out of mind’.

Millions of homeworkers are undoubtedly still making do with inadequate equipment, lack of space, and poor or non-existent training about how to create a healthy and sustainable working environment at home. Even if their employer has supplied a chair or the funds to buy one, it is a waste of money unless the whole setup is reviewed.



Leaving people working on laptops at kitchen tables – or the equivalent – risks doing untold harm to their musculoskeletal health and mental wellbeing. Employers need to take their responsibilities to homeworkers seriously, reinstating the mandatory Display Screen Equipment assessments, and stepping up with the furniture and kit they need, wherever they're based.

Once they have their desk, chair and screen height correct, the next step is holistic training to include ergonomics and 'bigger picture' conversations, to understand what makes an individual feel most at ease and unstressed in order to create the most productive working environment. That's when you can begin to tap into the benefits of biophilia too.

Blended not balanced

In an era of hybrid working, we need to move beyond work/life balance as a core cultural concept.

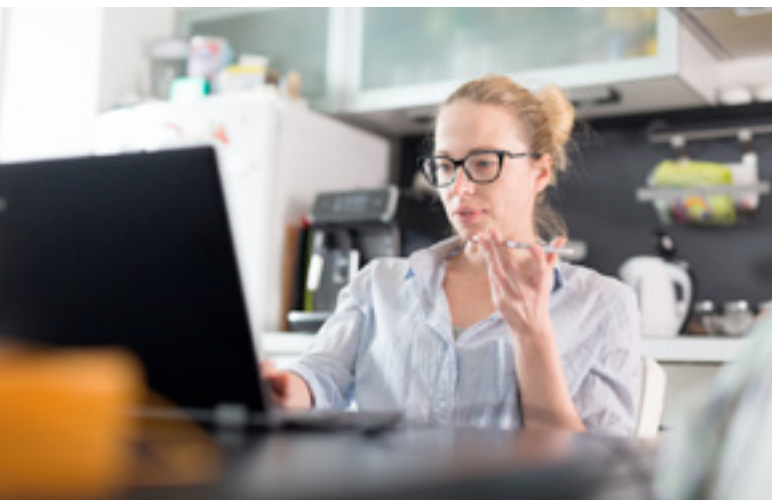
This model, which compartmentalises paid work from the rest of life, might have



made sense when we all gathered in offices between 9am - 5pm, but when people work remotely, they expect to have a greater degree of flexibility to manage their own time – with family life, exercise, and social engagements woven through rather than bookending their working hours.

Rather than work/life balance with its inbuilt on/off dichotomy, this is about a culture of flexibility and fluidity. It makes it much easier for workers to get outside, and to take advantage of the wellbeing boost wrought from connection with nature, family and friends. Taking a walk when you're on a call, or a run around the park on a break, even lifting your eyes from your screen to look out into a garden, or just at a window box, can improve mood and productivity.

However, while many people have relished working from home for the freedom to schedule work, family, and self-care activities into their day in a way which suits them, the unfortunate reality is that the health benefits they might reap will be undermined by a poor work set up and without due regard to the ergonomics.



Where do we go from here?

When we think about shaping workspaces to optimise wellbeing, that conversation no longer ends with office design. In a post-pandemic world, with homeworking and hybrid working far more commonplace, more desired, and here for the long term, the homeworking environment is at least equal in significance, and as such will make a material difference to the wellbeing and productivity of the individual, and ultimately the success of the business too.

While many businesses are investing in redesigning their offices to focus on their new role as a magnet and relationship hub, they do themselves and their teams a disservice if they fail to address homeworking environments too.

Likewise, even if remote employees are seeking out opportunities to interact with the natural world and tap into the benefits of biophilia, they could actually end up worse off than when they were in the office full-time if they are also spending long hours toiling in a poor homeworking set-up. To put it another way, you might be working in a glorious garden office, but if you're sitting on an uncomfortable garden chair, the biophilic benefits are effectively cancelled out.

This time of change in the world of work represents a

huge opportunity then. Just as we are embracing biophilic design in our workplaces, incorporating the colours, shapes, materials and textures of nature to help optimise health and productivity, we need to be incorporating ergonomics in our homeworking environments too. Only by getting both elements right can we create the kind of ideal workspaces which are both practical and pleasurable, supporting physical health and mental wellbeing, and optimising productivity too.

<https://ergonomics.co.uk>





PLANTS

If you read the first issue, there's a nice description of why plants are good for us, and to be honest if you're reading this Journal you're probably already more than half-way over the line in terms of plant-loving. In this regular section of the magazine, we explore how and why plants bring us joy and also give tips on how to design with plants, tips on cultivating them, nurturing them and yourselves along the way.

We hope you'll garner a deeper understanding as to why plants are good for us (from reducing VOCs to helping improve acoustics in the workplace, healthcare and on a larger scale, cities), to finding out more about how to care for them, where to group them for the best impact, how some plant leaf shapes are better than others for certain types of work, rooms and places. It's all fascinating stuff.

Our writers are plant experts, either as designers or botanists, and as mentioned at the beginning of our Science Behind Biophilic Design section this issue, I explained that we will be having a cutting edge, high powered search engine on the front of our website in 2023, where you'll be able to search for plant information even quicker than the bat of an eyelid. Phenomenal - a union of brains, technology, research, vision, passion, philanthropy and love of life. Which, in many ways, this is what 21st century Biophilic Design brings.

HOME AS SHELTER

This month, Ian Drummond, houseplant expert and multi RHS Chelsea Award winning interior landscaper tells us why he fills his home with plants.

Ian Drummond

What is a home? At its most basic, a home is a place of shelter and safety and to our cave-dwelling ancestors who created the first domestic space, its primary function would have been to provide refuge from nature and its extremes. So, it's a little ironic that here we are, thousands of years and quantum leaps of design and technology later, doing everything we can to find ways to reintroduce nature back within our homes.

For those building a home from the ground up, of course, this is easy – it comes down to considering nature within the design from the beginning, rather than as an afterthought. Something as simple as bigger windows and bi-fold

doors brings the landscape into the home and even for apartment dwellers in cities, something as simple as a skylight window offers an infinity of natural possibilities. In this way, we can enjoy spectacular sunsets, a murmuration of starlings diving and swirling their way south, or glimpses of the ever-changing leaves of the mighty plane trees that are the urban lungs of so many cities in this country, all these things become part of our visual domestic living experience.

But homes without a garden or balcony, with windows offering nothing more than a man-made cityscape, can still contain a connectedness with the natural world with the introduction of houseplants.



I'm talking about more than a single plant because unless it is a *Ficus lyrata*, that can also act as a living sculpture and focal point (see our article on *Plants in this issue of The Journal of Biophilic Design*) it is not going to be able to deliver the feel-good benefits that we need. Instead, we need to look at ways to create planting schemes by carefully considering where to position them and how they are arranged and displayed.

Light is one of the most important factors when thinking about where to place plants because they can thrive anywhere in the home as long as there is natural light. In terms of maximising their feel-good impact, using natural materials for pots and planters, like stone, wood or terracotta, also strengthens the psychological link to the outside world.

Bathrooms are often a first choice as a location for successful interior planting, because while a bathroom is essentially a practical space, it is also the place we go to indulge in restorative pampering and bathing. How we use our bathrooms will also help to decide where to position the plants, so think about having plants in your sightline when taking a bath – if space allows, go for something spectacular like a kentia palm which will thrive in the damp environment. Hanging plants are also a great option, particularly if floor and surface space is limited – *Tradescantia* and *Hedera Helix* both have a trailing habit and look amazing hung by a window or either side of a mirror. If space allows, think about putting plants on a surface or shelf, *Aloe vera* is a natural choice here, particularly with its medicinal associations – the sap is brilliant at treating a number of skin ailments, so who needs a chemist with one of these in the bathroom!





The bedroom is another fantastic room in which to have plants because we all know that a good night's sleep is vital for our health and wellbeing. Sansevieria trifasciata is a plant that can help to achieve this because not only does it absorb carbon dioxide and other environmental nasties, but it also gives out oxygen throughout the night. As a bonus, in terms of its care, it is also long-suffering and easy to please, even tolerant of low light levels. Another option is Spathiphyllum (the Peace Lily) which has NASA-endorsed air purifying qualities. It is also a beautiful plant with crisp white bracts above deep green foliage, and lets you know exactly when it needs watering by dramatically drooping its leaves but then perking up again an hour after it has been watered.



I love to see plants in the kitchen, but here space can so often be at a premium, that they really need to earn their keep. Consider keeping fresh herbs on a window sill, or even a hanging basket – tiny chillies are also delightful. Any plant with a culinary purpose delivers a multi-dose of positivity because they are both functional and decorative – they look beautiful, enhance the flavour of the food we eat, and make us feel great. I can't think of anything better.

<https://www.iandrummond.design.com>
<https://www.plantsatwork.org.uk>

*Photographs by:
 Nick Pope from At Home with Plants
 by Ian Drummond and Kara O'Reilly,
 published by Mitchell Beazley*

PLANT FOCUS

Fashionable Fig

Ian Drummond

Need to green up a space fast? Look no further than *Ficus lyrata*, commonly known as Fiddle Leaf Fig, one of the great visual extroverts of the houseplant kingdom. The very scale of this specimen delivers an immediate 'hit' of green, instantly providing the emotional and physiological benefits of being connected with nature, that a smaller and more discreet plant would struggle to achieve.

Visually, it's no unruly thug either, this one won't romp all over your carefully arranged home or commercial space – in fact it is a favourite with designers who appreciate its rather restrained sculptural nature. It has the most exquisite violin-shaped leaves, reaching up to 50cm in length, complete with pale veins running through their gloss of deepest green. There are arresting variegated cultivars too, with cream splashing through the green for a different kind of visual impact.

In its natural rainforest habitat this plant can reach up to 15 metres in height (usually via a 'host' tree, which it will ultimately kill) but nothing so sinister will happen in interior planting schemes. An impressive but more manageable 3-5 metres in height

can be achieved, though this can be curbed at any point by simply cutting back when necessary.

The scale and structure of this incredible plant provides an instant focal point, particularly for communal areas in offices, hotels and retail spaces, along with larger rooms in domestic settings. It can also be grown in several different ways, most commonly the crown is full and round, but it can also be trained as an espalier to provide large-scale green screening that is absolutely stunning.

With all these attributes mounting up, it could be expected that this plant is a prima donna of high maintenance, but it's delightfully easy to keep happy. Just make sure to position it in a light spot, ideally a place with a sunny outlook but away from direct sunlight and keep the soil evenly damp. To maintain its good looks, keep it gently pruned to maintain a pleasing shape and enhance those beautiful leaves by keeping them free of dust, then mist regularly with water for extra glossy health.

<https://www.iandrummonddesign.com>
<https://www.plantsatwork.org.uk>





VERTICAL



Gardens

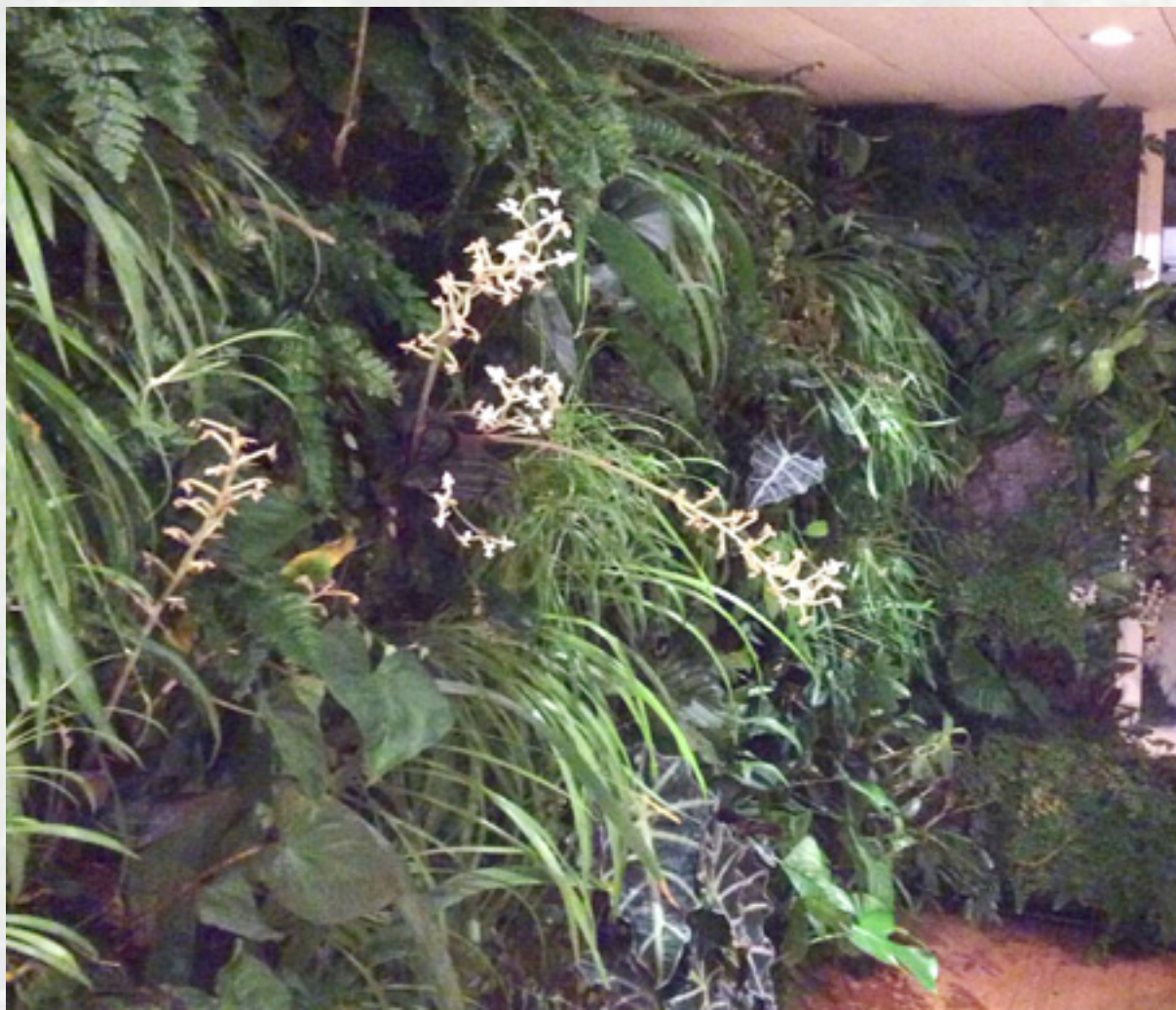
DANIEL BELL VERTICAL GARDENS

One of the first principles that I learnt in landscape design was, to whenever possible bring the garden up to the house, a principle I took on board at the beginning of my career.

I started out growing hardy outdoor plants in the UK from around the age of 10 on my father's nursery, and that stayed my focus for most of my teenage years, that said it was always exciting when we had new plants arriving inside our house, we had a lounge area with lots of sunlight and during the Summer months we had large Datura flowering away with their amazing trumpets.

Working on a garden centre in Windsor from 16 to 18 years old taught me a lot, invaluable, and a good part of that was buying, selling, and advising on indoor plants. When I was 18 I started my own company with a £1000 loan from my Nana and Poppa, forever grateful.

Fast forward 18 years from there, and I had accumulated over 800 completed landscape design and build projects, not easy, not quite a walk in the park but proud and still in love with anything design-led that was plant-based.



By now I had moved to Sweden with my girlfriend (now wife), deciding on a completely new beginning in Sweden, starting a family. Just at this time my old friend Billy Reilly who had some of the finest nightclubs in London had an idea, he saw an article on a Parisian – Patrick Blanc who had devised a way to cover buildings with plants using only felt and no compost, he suggested that I should meet him as he had a building in Kings Cross that needed something, I got in contact and myself and Billy spent two very fun, inspiring trips to Paris to meet him for to understand his technique.

He has a genius approach, lo-tech and I could embrace this which I did – firstly on Billy's pub on the Caledonian Road, Kings Cross, next I took on the Athenaeum Hotel on Piccadilly, both of these projects were outdoors, next came the Skyteam Lounge at Terminal 2, Heathrow Airport, completely indoors with no natural light. We made two airport lounges very green with recessed snaking walls of over 100 species of indoor plants running throughout the lounges, snaking wall design by the brilliant Desgrippes.

I was still (and still am) very much designing, building and renovating projects of all sizes during this period but vertical gardening certainly gripped me.

I had now learnt that I could build a diverse garden anywhere in the world which may sound very grand but it's not, just the principle works in any environment indoors or outdoors with the obvious water, nutrient and light requirements and of course Right Plant Right Place – perhaps put aside the polar regions for now – and then going back to the principle of my earliest memories of learning landscape design 'bring the garden to the house'

I was now gaining lots of interest in my vertical gardens and was given opportunities to not only create vertical gardens on the exteriors of buildings but also indoors, this fitted perfectly into that thought and principle of bringing the garden into the house.

Now I have created many vertical gardens within the home and it seems the dining/living place is perfect, a place where year-round we sit at least twice a day, perhaps the best place to enjoy a garden, certainly in climates such as much of Europe where we can't enjoy outdoor living as much as we may like too, I love it, the emotion it brings – always happiness, questions and good feeling.

The process is quite simple, lightweight and lo-tech, almost all plants work with a few who are fussy such as Orchids (aside from one species) and Succulents, this is because they have very certain requirements and have proved unreliable, aside from that we can go for it with Adiantum, Monstera, Soleirolia, Asplenium, Muehlenbeckia, Nephrolepis, Aspidistra and Ludisia discolor (please note the Ludisia or Jewel Orchid thrives on my vertical gardens), species such as Cymbidium and Phalaenopsis require a far more specific environment, I can understand that their roots like more exposure in the natural environment.

When I plant my gardens, vertical, horizontal, indoors or out – without doubt, no straight lines and as much diversity as possible.

If we embrace this idea and on vertical gardens use recycled materials which I do, do not use compost which I don't, and no major manufacturing – then surely we are on a good trip.

daniel-bell-vertical-garden.format.com

To view a demonstration on how Daniel's system works, have a look at the video on YouTube or on our website (search for Journal of Biophilic Design Daniel Bell Podcast)





ENVIRONMENT PEOPLE PLANET

Were you following COP27? I have to say, last year, I was glued to the social feeds, the news reports, I watched quite a few live streams and many of the “side shows” that were taking place. This year, for a number of personal reasons I missed quite a bit of the “blow-by-blow” news feeds, but I did catch the Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction. Overall, I was still left with an overwhelming feeling of frustration that things aren’t happening fast enough, I raised a semi-positive eyebrow to the fact that global investment in energy efficiency of buildings increased by around 16% from 2020, but then ended up frowning because energy used in buildings actually increased by around 4% in 2021. These are global figures, and you can read more about these and other stats on the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction website.

Keeping with the same presentation, there was a wonderful talk by Mae-Ling Lokko who celebrated the potential of using local materials for construction. For instance, using traditional construction practices like those which are already a corner-stone of African cultural heritage, can be a key to helping reach the country targets.

We need new systems of thinking if we are going to construct fresh, new sustainable homes, schools, hospitals and cities. Biophilic Design advocates using natural materials where we can, and also at its heart, new architecture and design of buildings and spaces should be informed by the landscape they are in. How great would it be, if we could design our houses and towns using materials that are made from the local clay, stone, soil and at the end of their life, they return to the bosom of the earth?

Now wouldn’t that be something?



The world’s lungs are breathing a sigh of relief

“Dutch environmentalist and former diplomat explores the recent elections in Brazil, the loss of glaciers and the impact on the climate crisis.”

Alexander Verbeek

Lula elected as the next President of Brazil

Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, better known as Lula, won one of the most critical elections in Brazil’s history by defeating incumbent far-right candidate Jair Bolsonaro. Lula, a former leftist president of the country, had obtained 50.8% of the vote with 99% of the votes counted. Bolsonaro, elected president in 2018, received 49.1% of the votes. US President Joe Biden congratulated him for winning “free, fair, and credible elections.” Adding these

words to the statement shows concern about the subsequent developments in one of the world’s biggest democracies.

“Tropical Trump” lost

Brazil’s democratic institutions have long been under siege by President Jair Bolsonaro. As a result, millions of citizens have now questioned the credibility of Brazil’s elections. You’re not alone if you see a pattern closer to home. Bolsonaro is referred to as the “Tropical Trump” for various reasons, this being just one of them.

Deforestation in the Amazon

One of the reasons the world has been missing Brazil is the destruction of the Amazon, the world's lungs. Lula and Bolsonaro envisioned opposite fates for the Amazon at a crucial moment. If deforestation continues at current rates, as favoured by Bolsonaro, the Amazon will pass an irreversible threshold in just a decade or two. Scientists warn that it would transform the rainforest into a savanna that would release billions of greenhouse gases. As president, Lula demonstrated great success in drastically reducing Amazon rainforest deforestation. Sadly, Bolsonaro has openly supported clear-cutting and burning in the Amazon for agriculture, reversing this trend. Additionally, he undermined current environmental safeguards and legalized unlawful activity. In protected regions and Indigenous territory, illegal mining and logging grew during his watch, leading to pollution, destruction, and violence.

A “zero-deforestation” target

Lula said that he would fight for a “zero-deforestation” target in the Amazon. Note that this is not a zero-illegal-deforestation target; he spoke about all deforestation. Brazil is the world's sixth-largest producer of greenhouse gases, primarily due to methane emissions from cattle pastures on cleared land and carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from deforestation. It is also the fourth-largest historical emitter.

Beef production is the primary cause of deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon. The country exports more beef than any

other country worldwide, particularly to the U.S. and Chinese markets.

Rio Branco, Brazil

According to recent research, Luna's victory might stop the destruction of 75,960 km² of the Amazon rainforest by 2030. The size of that territory is comparable to Panama. Brazil's emissions would be significantly reduced if this were done in conjunction with a renewed emphasis on forest restoration. Researchers from the University of Oxford, the International Institute for Applied System Analysis (IIASA), and the National Institute for Space Research (INPE) model the implementation of Brazil's Forest Code, the nation's most important piece of legislation for combating deforestation in the Amazon and other ecosystems. This is a good day for climate action and a good day for The Planet. And today, the world's lungs breathed a sigh of relief.

23 million Olympic-size swimming pools of iconic glaciers disappear every year because of climate change

I like warm weather days but am deeply worried about the warming climate. I was interviewed recently by TRT World News about the latest UNESCO report on the rapid melting of glaciers in World Heritage sites; it concludes that a third of these glaciers are expected to vanish by 2050. The report also states that the remaining two-thirds of these 18,600 glaciers could still be saved “if” global temperatures rise by no more than 1.5°C beyond pre-industrial levels.

But that is a very big “if” since curbing global warming to 1.5°C will be a tremendous challenge. According to a report released Wednesday by the environmental think tank World Resources Institute (WRI), countries' current emission reduction policies will result in a 7% decrease in emissions from 2019 levels by 2030. To achieve the Paris 1.5°C objective, WRI said that emissions would need to decrease by 43% over that time.

The glaciers in the 50 UNESCO World Heritage sites cover roughly 66,000 km², or almost 10% of the Earth's total glacierized area. They include the longest (in Alaska), the highest (next to Mt. Everest), and the last-standing glaciers in Africa. Since 2000, the glaciers have been retreating more quickly as a result of CO₂ emissions, which are rising temperatures. The melting of these glaciers is responsible for about 5% of the observed global sea-level rise. They are losing 58 billion tons of ice annually, equal to the capacity of 23 million Olympic-size swimming pools.

This is the video of the interview: <https://youtu.be/pTeTn3RNaPY>

A UN report says glaciers sites like Mount Kilimanjaro, the Alps and the Yosemite National Park in the US will disappear by 2050 due to global warming. Dutch environmentalist Alexander Verbeek weighs in on this report in this interview.

The Director General of IUCN, Dr. Bruno Oberle, commented on the report:

“When glaciers melt rapidly, millions

of people face water scarcity and the increased risk of natural disasters such as flooding, and millions more may be displaced by the resulting rise in sea levels. This study highlights the urgent need to cut greenhouse gas emissions and invest in Nature-based Solutions, which can help mitigate climate change and allow people to better adapt to its impacts.”

Examples of endangered glaciers by region

Africa:

- According to available data, glaciers in all World Heritage sites in Africa will very likely be gone by 2050, incl. Kilimanjaro National Park and Mount Kenya.

Europe:

- Glaciers in Pyrenees Mont Perdu (France, Spain) – very likely to disappear by 2050.
- Glaciers in The Dolomites (Italy) – very likely to disappear by 2050.

North America:

- Glaciers in Yellowstone National Park (United States of America) – very likely to disappear by 2050.
- Glaciers in Yosemite National Park (United States of America) – very likely to disappear by 2050.
- Glaciers in Waterton Glacier International Peace Park (Canada, United States of America) have lost 26.5% of their volume in 20 years.

<https://theplanet.substack.com>

THE RISE OF WOODEN BUILDINGS

“Timber is gaining traction as a replacement for classic concrete. It offers a number of design and construction advantages, including being a more environmentally friendly material. Odile Smith was in conversation with Albino Angeli, CEO of Xlam Dolomiti.”

Odile Smith

Advocates of mass-timber construction maintain that using timber can be more environmentally friendly than conventional construction and that the carbon footprint of a building constructed with sustainably harvested mass timber, can reduce significantly the carbon emission the with respect to the same building if it were constructed in the traditional manner of concrete and steel.

So, considering that the carbon emission produced by the built environment covers around 40% of the total carbon emission, taking a serious look at how this can be reduced at every stage of a building's life cycle is certainly something that is calling for attention.

In my conversation with Albino Angeli of Xlam Dolomiti. We took a little step back and looked at what constructing in timber looks like, its implications and challenges, and what to expect for the future.

Albino Angeli, CEO of Xlam Dolomiti, an Italian company leader in the production of CLT and glulam panels, explained how the products are made and the different uses for each.

These products are also sometimes called mass-timber products or engineered timber. CLT and glulam differ in the ways that they are used in a building.

CLT is used for surfaces such as walls, floors, and floor separation and is made with the use of smaller lamellas. The layers of kiln-dried dimension lamellas (usually three, five, seven, or nine) are oriented at right angles to one another and then glued to form structural panels. By gluing layers of wood at right angles, the panel delivers excellent structural rigidity in both directions. The main kind of timber used is spruce or pine.

Glulam is primarily used for the load-bearing frame in a building such as rafters, beams, or columns. Although the process is similar these are formed into beams and are made with smaller lamellas to allow for curvature in the beams.

In order to maximise sustainability and healthy materials Xlam dolomiti uses polyurethane glue with no emissions of VOC. The wood (spruce and pine) used is usually locally sourced and always certified PFEC.

The global market for mass timber was estimated at \$956 million in 2020 and is expected to grow at an annual rate of 13.6% from 2021 to 2028, according to a December 2021 report by Grand View Research.

This is clearly a very good indication for the future; countries in the North of Europe have already reached 23%-24% of wooden buildings whilst Germany has reached around 20/22% and Italy with around 8% shows a lot of growth potential.





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Mr. Angeli explains that whilst in the domestic market the demand for individual housing in wood is soaring, the actual capacity to fulfil this demand is lacking, not so much due to the lack of raw materials, as the lack of skilled human resources to develop the projects.



This is pushing more traditional construction companies to reskill their workforce to be prepared to face the demand for more sustainable housing. Private buyers are very clear on what they want which is healthy, energy-saving houses. The shift, driven by the demand of the consumers forcing the market to adapt is an encouraging indication. Furthermore, many bigger developers who use ESG reporting, are also looking at projects that will improve the sustainability ranking of the building and so they will prefer those projects that incorporate a significant amount of timber to reduce the overall carbon emission which is the priority now.

If we take a look at carbon emissions; according to Mr. Angeli, once the building is completed the emissions of CO2 will be equal to zero. However, as can be expected, during construction some CO2 is created due to transport and manufacturing, but this is later offset by the negative CO2 emissions of the structure itself. That said, what the sector still has to develop is the final stage of the life cycle of the building concerning the issues relative to

the disablement of the structure, this still needs to be improved.

If we take a step further the building sector 4.0 is off-premise construction (pods), this is definitely more efficient and effective. It is no longer a question of manufacturing single products, but it is now a question of designing and creating complete systems off-site to a tolerance of around 1mm even for beams and rafts; guaranteeing better health and safety standards for workers significantly reducing time on site (in the case of bigger projects by 50%-60% whilst smaller projects even up to 80% reduction), and consequently reducing operating costs.

When talking about insulation and wanting to use organic products for insulation such as wood fibre or hemp the problem will arise around fire safety standards.

At the moment the fire safety standards in the UK and Europe have been developed taking into account concrete and steel buildings and not mass timber construction and the complete system.

Furthermore, the general public associate wood as being extremely dangerous and highly flammable but as Mr. Angeli points out there is a significant difference between the flammability of mass timber structures, walls and flooring included, and the flammability of smaller timber frames made of timber kindle.

Results have shown that mass timber elements, with or without gypsum board protection, can achieve significant fire resistance, beyond 3 hours in some cases. Tests have also shown that fire stops approved for concrete construction are suitable for CLT elements, so long as adequate detailing is provided.

Most totally wooden buildings have a limitation of being cost-effective up to the height of a round 14 floors, beyond that Mr. Angeli explained that it is best a hybrid solution both for economical and structural purposes.

The hybrid solution sees the foundation in concrete and the structure in steel however a heavy use of wood in the other parts of the building would balance the CO2 emissions.

Northern Europe and the UK are driving this change and the US is also making giant steps forward in developing high-rise wooden buildings (Milwaukee – USA, Mjøstårnet – Norway).





It was great talking to Mr. Albino Angeli and listening to his opinion and contribution concerning the trends of an industry that has such an important impact on reducing overall worldwide CO2emissions. Xlam Dolomiti is a leader of Glulam and Xlam (CLT) in Italy covering complete design and build for medium to big-size projects

I find it even more interesting how this sector is driven not only by economic and climate crisis factors, although very important, but also by individual buyers' demand to have a healthier living space

and it is this awareness and demand that contributes to shifting the market.

From a Biophilic perspective, the use of wood in our buildings also has a direct impact on our well-being; when we walk into a wooden building it is as if we are walking into a forest. Our visual, haptic, and olfactory senses are stimulated; we see, feel, and smell the sensations of the forest. We associate wood with nature and nature with life.

www.thebiophilichub.com

5 TIPS TO DO AT HOME

Lucy Barfoot

Many of us have adapted to spend more time in our homes. It is a place where we sleep, relax, cook and often work, study and exercise. There are numerous ways we can reduce the impact we have on the planet through our daily routines and what we choose to fill our homes with. I've put together five tips for new habits and ideas to try out.

1. Kettle usage. Boiling the kettle is one of the most energy intensive activities we British love to do multiple times a day; yet we often boil more than we need. I tend to run the tap for about 3 seconds for one cup but you can always fill the cup and pour the contents in to ensure you're only boiling the amount you need. I think we're all guilty of forgetting a cup of tea, but if each time you consider the energy used to brew it you can make a conscious effort to enjoy it while it's still hot.
2. Evaluate your stationery choices. Shocked is the only word I can think of to describe how I felt when I started reading the labels in high street stationery shops. Even some of the most eco-friendly, recycled options are being made in China and most

likely flown over on jumbo jets to arrive as quickly as possible. The supply chain of what we buy should always be considered so try to find out the origin of the items you want to buy, and aim for as close to the UK as possible. Usually if an item doesn't state the source, it is probably from China. My advice on materials is to look for certified sustainable papers or recycled content. The FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) is a good standard to look out for with wooden or paper items. If you like to write things down I would definitely stick to standard paper. I have researched brands that promote "stone" paper but on closer investigation, discovered that this so-called stone is in fact plastic and not easy to recycle.

3. Save that scrap paper. Keep all those incorrectly printed documents, packing slips and paper spares in a box and get used to using them for those random notes and memos. I am fully understanding of aesthetically pleasing stationery, but scrap paper always comes in handy and doesn't expire! It also doesn't have to be pieces of A4; think about saving envelopes, the back of old posters and even paper packaging.

4. Preparing multiple lunches and snacks ahead of time. The benefit here is not only for your precious time but every meal we make we may be using a hob or oven and create lots of dirty equipment which can be resource intensive. Meals last surprisingly well in the fridge, so why not try meal prepping? This also means you can use your own containers, saving on unnecessary single use packaging.
5. Recycling end-of-life items. I'm talking beyond the usual household recycling and thinking about those pens, broken

electronics, printer toners and worn out mouse mats. Many specialist schemes exist for these so try finding a local drop off for terracycle or if you want an even easier solution a company called Refactory provide big boxes you can purchase to recycle mixed plastics. They take months to fill and include the return shipping when they are full. For old or redundant technology why not give it to DonateIT who support people in technology poverty.

coconutandcotton.co.uk



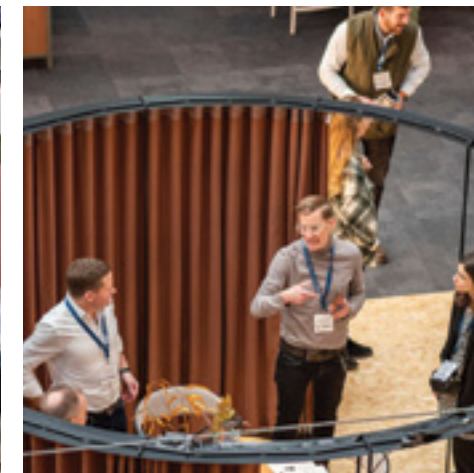
workspace design show

Rebirth and BioMaterials to be showcased at 2023 Workspace Design Show

Workspace Design Show will be taking place at the Business Design Centre, London, on 27-28 February 2023 with the theme being 'Destination Workplace'.

Gensler, the worldwide integrated architecture, design, planning, and consulting firm will be designing the Show entrance, with the theme 'Destination Workplace Rebirth'. Becky Spenceley, Design Director at Gensler, who is leading the project, says *'It feels like there has never been a more exciting and yet equally unknown time in the future of workplace design. We are inspired by this synergy between a new era of workplace and a new outlook on how we can care for our planet, and how we as designers can affect that through pioneering and sustainable design. It's about fresh perspectives to enable new ways of working and create unique and tailored destinations for people, hence the overarching theme of Rebirth.'*

New to this year is the Bio Materials exhibition, designed by BIOHM, with biological systems at the heart of its inspiration. This will combine ideologies of the circular economy and human-centred design with future-tech, representing an exciting opportunity for visitors to discover advanced materials, that will be crucial to the future of design.



workspace design show

Destination Workplace: Places Where People Want to Be

20+
Countries

3,000+
Attendees

120+
Products

100+
Speakers



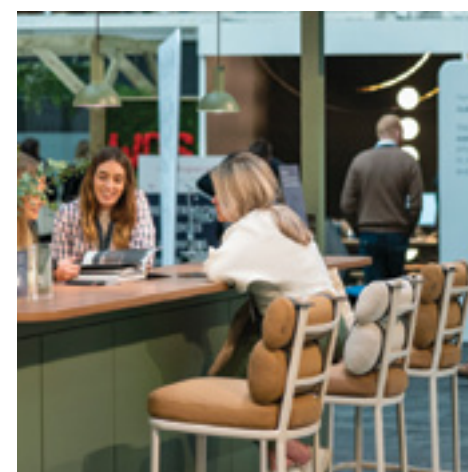
Major international architecture practice BDP is responsible for 'Change by Design' a lounge space concept for the 2023 Workspace Design Show. This will provide a discussion piece surrounding the current climate crisis, and will question the impact of workplace design on the natural environment. It represents a problem-solving approach that will demonstrate how the use of recycled, reused and bio materials in design projects can help to shape a low-carbon future.

The FIS, (Finishes & Interiors Sector) Innovation awards will also take place at the show, recognising outstanding innovation in the finishes and interiors sector across various categories.

The show will also provide visitors with the chance to explore the latest product launches that are transforming the employee experience in our workplaces, creating spaces for people to harbour creativity and enjoy working in.

<https://workspaceshow.co.uk/>

Also look out for the talks, our editor, Dr Vanessa Champion will be moderating a panel there too..



27th & 28th February 2023,
Business Design Centre, London

REGISTER FREE

As many readers will know, Biophilia has been defined as the love for or a connection with nature. Originally coined by the social psychologist, Eric Fromm, it was popularised by the biologist, Edward Wilson. However, it has been in human culture and religion in many different forms for thousands of years.

Humans seem naturally attracted to nature and feel at peace there. In Buddhism, there is a term called 'Esho Funi' or 'Oneness of Person and Environment'. However, Buddhism takes the connection deeper, further and wider- it states that the two are interdependent, interconnected and of dependent origination ('funi' means 'two but not two'). Without one, the other cannot exist – environmental existence is dependent upon and connected to an acknowledgement of life in it.

So how would such a philosophical concept apply to a robust discipline such as construction? Within construction and design, biophilia has been aligned with other terms such as sustainability, regenerative design, ecological architecture, biourbanism, and even circular economy. Biophilic spaces connect and support the human need to be near nature or natural spaces even though they could be man made (such as gardens and sculptures). These spaces can have positive health effects including stress reduction, improvement of memory and concentration, and healing

after illness. Gardening activities have been proven to have helped mental and physical health. I started a charity in 2010, Charushila, an environmental design charity that works on small kitchen garden projects in disused spaces. We have completed six projects internationally and in the UK; that combine the need for growing food, connecting with nature and the reduction of waste.

However, having plants is not the only option. In certain environments such as hospitals and healthcare settings, plants are even banned as biohazards. Biophilia can be incorporated within materials, textures and colours inside and outside a building. Natural materials come with a bio-memory of where they originate – their colours and forms remind us of nature, regardless of how they are used. In my work, I have used materials such as earth, lime, sand, stone, straw, metal and wood in different forms and these make architecture come alive. These materials are also biodegradable, reusable or recyclable. I find that taking such materials one step further by more processing

Image: The Lotus plant, favourite of many religions and cultures is also a smart plant. Its leaves are structurally robust and able to repel water. Such characteristics have been applied to self cleaning glass (credit: Author).

step further by more processing may make them more durable but also take away that 'aliveness'. So working with earth is great – it is tactile and pliable, breathable and relatable to nature. Firing earth blocks and making them into bricks then makes the product a very different material to work with and difficult to reuse again.

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support the human need to be near nature or natural spaces even though they could be man made (such as gardens and sculptures). These spaces can have positive health effects including stress reduction, improvement of memory and concentration, and healing after illness. Gardening activities have been proven to have helped mental and physical health. I started a charity in 2010, Charushila, an environmental design charity that works on small kitchen garden projects in disused spaces. We have completed six projects internationally and in the UK; that combine the need for growing food, connecting with nature and the reduction of waste.



Image: Biophilic images carved into seating in a kitchen garden project at Hoxton, East London by Charushila and Gareth Sheils (stone sculptor). All materials were reclaimed from the Chelsea Flower show (credit: Author).

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Where using natural materials such as earth, straw and others may not be possible, a lateral connection with nature becomes a biophilic necessity of design. At present, for instance, timber cladding on buildings is deemed unsafe

In conclusion, it is my view that biophilia in architecture or design is not restricted to the visual use of plants – it is much wider and sophisticated. We can also learn from the smartness of nature – its circularity, protective functions and structural advantages. It is also about our wider connection with the environment, using resources wisely and prevention of toxic waste from the work that we do as designers. Further, biophilia can be about teaching the next generation to live with nature, nurture nature and love nature!

www.ecologicarchitects.com



Image: Author working with earth blocks in France, creating a structure based on catenary arch – a form found in nature.

Have a listen to the wonderful and inspiring podcast we did together a while back, search for “Journal of Biophilic Design sumita singha” on audible, Spotify, iTunes, Amazon music and all RSS feeds (and on our website under Podcasts and watch the video on YouTube) due to the implication of the 2022 Building Safety and is being removed. In such cases, secondary materials can be used as fire-safe cladding, for surface texturing and treatment on the underlying material to enhance its biophilic connections. It matters where humans see, touch and experience materials. It is also important that such materials should be non toxic, easy to clean and tactile.



Image: A residential project by the Author using copper-clad extension on a roof garden, West London. Copper is a metal that can be recycled and reused – and also beneficial to plants. Further as the copper ages, its patina takes on different hues.

ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS? WHAT FOOTPRINTS SHOULD WE BE LEAVING IN OUR WORKPLACE?

“The team at FOOTPRINT+ question whether the term ‘crisis’ is helpful and offer an interesting, maybe sobering view of how we view our historical use of fossil fuels.”

Tim Pyne, Creative Director, FOOTPRINT+

At FOOTPRINT+ we try to encourage a more optimistic view; last year’s launch slogan was ‘Goodbye Oil, Hello Sun’, and we installed 1500 sunflowers throughout the event, grown for us by Hortus Loci. Visitors were invited to take them home and plant them.

Fossil Fuels have been instrumental in transporting the human race from a society ravaged by disease and hunger to one where the majority of people are adequately fed, there is leisure time, and early death is increasingly rare. When the industrial revolution started, the quality of life on earth was low; now it has improved incomparably.

Having said that, the by-product of this has been the emission of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere which have caused, and are causing, a rise in the

earth’s temperature. Now we have no option but to transfer from a reliance on fossil fuels to the use of solar, wind and tidal power, and the technology to do this is developing fast.

The use of renewable energy will improve people’s quality of life, but this is not widespread enough yet.

Designers have the responsibility to put scientific advances on carbon reduction into general use, and to do this efficiently they need the most advanced knowledge available. That is what we launched FOOTPRINT+ to facilitate and it has an obvious and urgent role to play. We shape the content along with those who attend the event to ensure each edition of the FOOTPRINT+ event is different, exciting and important.

www.footprintplus.com



WELLBEING

How have you been this year? I mean, how have you REALLY been? Every year brings changes, shifts, challenges, confusion also maybe, but there are also moments of laughter, love, friendship and surprise.

Our health takes a whack when we are surrounded by stresses, especially those we cannot control. Our cortisol levels rise, our blood pressure takes a hike upwards and we take it out on our nearest and dearest too (even if that's the dog, our boss or our kitchen appliance that always seems to pack up when there are too many things challenging us).

I think, for me, one of the most wonderful, life-giving, life-affirming miracles we can wrap ourselves in, is nature. We are part of nature, and as friends of mine are often heard saying, we ARE nature. As I mentioned in an earlier editorial introduction, we haven't changed that much since life-on-the-plains, we still keep an eye out for threats; we need water, food, sleep, rest, companionship.

I'm not constantly tree-hugging, honest, with my other media work I live a busy life working in the city, on client-sites, travelling, stressing out, worrying about family, friends, trying to be a gazillion things to all people (like you probably too!), but my constant is the heartbeat of the earth. The trees are my non-gossiping listening posts, solid and organic, they cover the sky above me when I need reassurance, and they fill me with wonder when I need to remind myself I'm not alone.

So, really, this section is for you. Read the personal stories, views and there's even a meditation in this one. Take some time out for yourself, read, relax and just be.

SANCTUARY IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

"Have we undervalued the inner life of home to put a premium on professional achievement? Maybe Jung has something to teach us?"

Valerie Andrews

"I always wondered why (historians and story-tellers) leave housekeeping and cooking out of their tales," Ursula LeGuin observes in her sci-fi novel *Voices*, "Isn't it what all the great wars and battles are fought for – so that at day's end a family may eat together in a peaceful house?" In recent times, we have undervalued the inner life of home and put a premium on professional achievement – and that has cost us dearly.

Ideally, our homes are a source of intimacy and resilience. But too often things go wrong. The landmark Adverse Childhood Experiences study found that an unstable home leads to serious health problems later in life – depression, diabetes, lung disease, heart attacks, alcoholism, and obesity. Our early experience of home makes thus shapes our health and well-being for decades. So why have we neglected the thing that matters most?



Three years ago, I launched a digital magazine, *Reinventing Home*, believing that a dwelling must function as a sanctuary in this era of unprecedented change. In *The Architecture of Happiness*, Alain de Botton describes home as a shell that protects us from the pressures of the outside world. “We need a home in the psychological sense as much as we need one in the physical: to compensate for a vulnerability. We need a refuge to shore up our states of mind because so much of the world is opposed to our allegiances. We need our rooms to align us to desirable versions of ourselves and to keep alive the important, evanescent sides of us.”

In the novel *Housekeeping*, set in the 1950s, Marilynne Robinson describes a grandmother who cares for her family with a fierce devotion. Her daily tasks are what we’ve come to think of, in the post-feminist world, as drudgery yet “the wind that billowed her sheets announced to her the resurrection of the ordinary.” *Housekeeping* used to be a liturgy, with each day dedicated to a special rite: *Wash on Monday*,

Iron on Tuesday, Mend on Wednesday, Churn on Thursday, Clean on Friday, Bake on Saturday, Rest on Sunday. For centuries, domestic chores set the rhythm of our days and kept us grounded in the flow of life.

In the 1930s, the Swiss psychiatrist C.G. Jung built a portion of his country house at Bollingen by hand, with tools used in the Middle Ages. When in residence, he spent long hours in the kitchen, fanning the fire with leather bellows, cooking, and tending to his pots and pans. When San Francisco analyst Elizabeth Osterman visited Jung there in 1958, she met a strong bodied, white-haired 83-year-old in a green workman’s apron, chopping wood. “I felt as though I had stepped out of time and entered into an inner world where everything was relevant, unhurried, natural,” she said. “I have found the way to live here (by the lake) as part of nature, to live in my own time,” Jung explained. “People are always living as if something better is to happen ... They are up in the head and don’t think to live their lives!”



Edward Hicks, *The Ark*

Today the pace is faster, and we’ve been catapulted into virtual reality, with little sensory orientation – and so we feel even more disconnected and displaced. To the degree that most people don’t know what to say when asked the simple question: “Where are you from?”

In his 1841 essay, *On Compensation*, Ralph Waldo Emerson compares us to the shellfish that periodically must fashion a new home: “The changes which break up at short intervals the prosperity of men are advertisements of a nature whose law is growth. Every soul is by this intrinsic necessity quitting its whole system of things, its friends, and home, and laws, and faith, as the shellfish crawls out of its beautiful but stony case, because it no longer admits of its growth and slowly forms a new house.”

Marilynne Robinson suggests that our notion of home must be flexible if we are to meet the challenges of this age. “Imagine that Noah knocked his house apart and used the planks to build an ark,” she says, “while his neighbours looked on, full of doubt. A house, he must have told them, should be daubed with pitch and built to float cloud high, if need be ... A house should have a compass and a keel.”

Our dwellings will be arks of a different sort as we grapple with climate change, housing shortages and scarce resources. Already we are building them and drawing up new plans. Consider the trend in Italy toward high-rise buildings that resemble urban forests – these host enough plants on rooftops and patios to feed their inhabitants; designs for underwater apartments off the coast of Brazil that have a soothing effect on the body and the mind;

and a proposal in Mexico City for museums and cafes carved deep into the earth (giving new meaning to “underground culture”).

How will we adapt, psychologically, as we move into these different corners of the biosphere? Our dreams during the pandemic may give us a clue. According to Harvard psychiatrist Deirdre Barrett, they point to a deep desire to leave behind our frenzied urban existence and start to live in harmony with nature. As Laurence Durrell says, “Each landscape is asking the same question. I see myself in you. Do you see yourself in me?” Yes, home is all about context.

How we fit into our surroundings, how we dialogue with them, and what price we choose to pay unchecked “growth and progress.”

For the past two years, I’ve been holding seminars on our search for sanctuary for people all over the world. One thing I’ve learned: When you want to get to know someone, listen to their story of home. Ask about the place where they grew up and the homes they’ve fashioned for themselves. The desire to go home, Rebecca Solnit observes in *Storming the Gates of Paradise*, “is a desire to be whole, to know where you are, to be the point of interaction of all the lines drawn through all the stars, to be the constellation-maker and the centre of the world, that centre called love.” When we are at truly at home, we are part of this grand cosmology.

Valerie is also author of *A Passion for this Earth: Toward a New Partnership of Man, Woman, and Nature*. She lives in a magic cottage in the California redwoods.

www.reinventinghome.org.

A HEALTHY HOME ENVIRONMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR BOTH PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

“We all know that our homes should be our refuge from the world. A safe place to rest and recuperate. But did you know that the environment of your home can actually have an impact on your long-term physical and mental health? Creating a safe, restorative environment in your home is important for both your physical and mental well-being. Let’s take a closer look at why.”

Dr Owen Wiseman ND

There are many ways that your home environment can impact your health. The air quality in your home, for example, can play a role in respiratory problems, allergies, and even cancer. A 2008 study found that children who live in homes with poor air quality are more likely to experience asthma and other respiratory problems.¹ Another study found that exposure to second-hand smoke increases the risk of lung cancer by 20-30%.²

Those living in regions with well-developed heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems may take for granted exposure to air pollutants. Air from the outside passes through a filter when your home is heated, cooled or the air is recirculated by the fan. These filters are assigned a rating known

as MERV or the minimum efficiency reporting value which reflects their ability to capture pollutants. MERV 6 is going to capture pollen, lint, and dust while MERV 13 at the high end of the scale can capture everything from mould spores to viral carriers. In homes without these systems, people’s health is more at risk.

The temperature and humidity levels in your home can also affect your health. If your home is too humid, it can create an ideal environment for mould and dust mites to thrive. These allergens can trigger asthma attacks, cause chronic respiratory problems, and worsen allergies. On the other hand, if your home is too dry, it can cause nosebleeds, static electricity, and cracked skin.

In addition to the physical benefits, creating a safe, restorative environment at home can also improve your mental health. For one thing, it can provide you with a sense of control when the outside world feels chaotic. It can also be a place where you can relax and feel comfortable being yourself. Additionally, a healthy home environment can give you a sense of stability and predictability, which are both important for good mental health. Finally, having a safe place to call your own can help reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness.

It’s not just the indoor air quality and temperature that matter – the outdoor environment around your home can also have an impact on your health. For example, living near a busy road or freeway can increase your risk of developing heart disease due to exposure to traffic-related air pollution. Similarly, if you live in an area with high levels of lead in the soil or water, you may be at risk for lead poisoning.

Tips for Creating a Healthy Home Environment

There are many things you can do to create a healthy home environment. Some simple tips include:

- Open windows regularly to let fresh air into your home.
- Vacuum and dust regularly to remove allergens.
- Control humidity levels with a dehumidifier.

- Keep indoor plants to purify the air.
- Avoid using harsh chemicals cleaning products.
- Test for radon gas and leaks.
- Make sure there’s plenty of ventilation in any areas where there’s potential for mold growth.

By following these tips, you can create a safe, healthy environment for yourself and your family.

As you can see, there are countless reasons to create a safe, restorative environment in your home. Not only will it improve your physical health, but it will also do wonders for your mental well-being. So if you’re looking for ways to improve your overall health, start with creating a healthy home environment. Your mind and body will thank you for it!

<https://owenwiseman.com>

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HUMANS IN TREES

2. THINGS THAT CAN LEAD US HOME

Anicee Bauer

Home.... a word with a fuzzy, cosy and comfortable feeling to it. It teams up well with words like safety and stability. And yet *home* remains hard to be defined. While some people think of it in the sense of *domestic*, *local* and *native*, others perceive it more in its figurative sense like *at ease*, *at rest* or *in one's element*. In this edition I would like to explore the meaning of home and, of course, have a look at the different roles that *trees* play in our understanding of home. After all, most trees are more or less literally *rooted* in one place their whole lives. What lesson can *we take home* from trees when it comes to *home*?

Let's first be clear about the undeniable fact, that trees are *indispensable* when it comes to our homes. They do not only look pretty in our gardens, *they make our homes*. We use wood to build the physical buildings we call home, the fences we feel safe behind and the pieces of furniture we sleep in (often dreaming about bigger and better homes somewhere in exotic countries). We use wood to make our tools. We use wood to shield us from the elements of nature, like sun, wind and rain. We use wood to keep us warm and we use wood to prepare and cook our food.

But trees offer us more than just practicalities. *They connect us to where we live*. A fire is so much more than just *burning wood*. It is the *centre of the home*, where families gather, celebrate, sing songs, tell stories and share their sorrows. And a tree along the road is so much more than just a tree along the road. It is a landmark to guide our way. And beautiful long majestic tree avenues announce to us that we have *arrived* at a certain place. They bid us welcome and inspire us with their old grand stoic presence. Trees carry our emotions, memories and stories. *They give us a sense of place*.

And in addition to this, being typical human, we have given trees symbolic meaning, healing and even magical powers, allocating them a defined place in our traditions and rituals. *We connect our lives with their lives*. We plant trees to mark special occasions, like a move to a new house, a wedding or the birth of a child. The destiny of the tree was seen as a reflection of the life of the child. Interestingly, we also plant trees when someone dies, often on the grave. Also, Ancient Celtic cultures believed that people were born out of trees and that their souls would return to the tree after death. So, they buried their dead in hollow trees to ease the process of transition. Other traditions summon lovers to meet under a tree and bind a knot into its branches, causing quite the spectacle for generations to come. Not to mention the many many hearts and initials carved into tree trunks all over the world. Oh, and how about the trees we decorate to look like *fairy homes*? Good old human humour! ... *What tree do you think of when you think of home?*

So, even though we often aren't aware of it, trees play a very big role in our understanding of home. But have you ever wondered how *they* perceive the concept of home? *Do trees feel at home or have a sense of home?* Well, in the forest trees grow where they grow. Period. They don't grow there by chance, but by the grace of the right circumstances at a certain spot on the forest ground. A spot where the seed didn't get eaten by a squirrel before it can sprout. A spot that is not too close to the mother tree to get entangled with its roots. A spot with enough sunlight and rainwater. However, when the spot is right and the tree finally starts to grow, does it *feel at home* there? Or would it maybe rather move to a different spot? And does it get frustrated, because it obviously can't? ... Intriguing, isn't it?



We humans can easily relocate ourselves, we can travel and settle where it suits us. A tree can't. And we humans can also adapt to different climates and sub-optimal living-conditions. A tree can't. Or at least not very fast. Trees are able to "travel" and expand their natural habitat, but, as I have learned from Peter Wohlleben, only with the speed of about 400 meters per year. The quicker way is to simply re-plant them elsewhere. And it just so happens, that humans indeed like to import exotic foreign trees – and expect

them to grow here just as beautifully as, for example, in Japan. These trees are then called immigrants, a very clever term, as they have a lot in common with human immigrants. Both arrive in their new home country without the ecosystem they grew up in. And if they fail to adapt, they both fall ill: tree immigrants mostly physically, human immigrants often also mentally. But they both settle – for better or for worse. And the human immigrant then becomes a "societal problem", the tree immigrant a "natural adversity"...



So, even while trees – in a sense – **can** change their place of home, it seems more likely to me that this never really was "part of the plan". Maybe trees are stuck in one place for a reason. Maybe they know something we humans don't. What if they want to show us that we don't have to **go** anywhere to **find home**? What if we **always** could **feel at home**, no matter where we are? Maybe trees want to show us, that it is worth it to invest a lot of time into **our growth**. And that growth can **only** happen from the inside out. That it's important to branch off, but vital to still stay centred – **in our element!** And that the deeper we get **rooted in ourselves**, the better we will be able to hold our ground in stormy weather. And be **at ease ... at peace ... home**.

**"We are all just walking
each other home."**

Ram Dass

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BIOPHILIC DESIGN AS A NATURAL STEP IN HUMAN EVOLUTION

“What can ancient wisdom do to help us create homes and spaces that integrate us closer to nature and help us flourish?”

Maureen Calamia

Those of us studying ancient wisdom traditions are amazed at the practical applications they provide for the challenges in today's world.

Feng shui is one such practice. It was developed 4-5,000 years ago, during the Neolithic period, for the purpose of planning communities. Its foundations are based on the observation of nature and its rhythms and was transmitted from one generation to another, to perpetuate the survival of the human species.

Over time, this information was hijacked by leaders seeking power and the information was hidden and suppressed from the masses. This was the case in China, where feng shui originated, but I do believe there were versions of this practice, also suppressed, throughout the world.

During this period, the practice of feng shui was masculinized. Its goal evolved to be more about domination and power than partnership with the land for survival.

And in the process of suppression, many feng shui masters created their own techniques which were also kept secret and used for the benefit of their leader. Hence, today, we have many different techniques, formulas, and rules for applying feng shui.

But, the more ancient aspects of feng shui are feminine, rooted in a co-creative partnership with the Earth. It relies on observation of the shapes of the land in relationship to weather patterns and proximity to water, healthy wildlife, soils, and vegetation, as well as protection from enemies.

The ancient people understood that the health of the land was vital to their survival. They looked for places that had a balance of yin and yang energy. I call it the “Goldilocks rule.” Not too wet, not too dry. Not too hot, or too cold. Not too much wind, but gentle breezes.

A Chinese proverb that has been my guiding principle for feng shui is, *“Living in harmony with the earth brings good fortune.”* Doesn't that bring up notions of sustainability?

And even though there are more feng shui practitioners and enthusiasts than ever before, feng shui is misunderstood and unaccepted by most people involved in creating the built environment.

So, biophilic design is the natural next step in the evolution for building.

Biophilic design is a practical approach, based on solid research, to shape and adapt our environments to support our desire to become more whole. Over these last few decades, many scholars realized that a stark separation from nature in our buildings and our modern lifestyles is correlated to human illness in body, mind, and spirit.

Biophilic design helps us to connect, again, to the natural world.

I believe the premise of biophilic design to be that if we live and work in spaces that make us feel more whole, we will be better employees, better partners, better parents, and ultimately, better citizens of the world.

What kind of leap requires us to go from where we are to caring for the earth?

If biophilic design, according to decades of research, contributes to our physical,

mental, and emotional wellbeing, what about our spiritual wellbeing?

Can spaces with biophilic design help raise our consciousness?

As better citizens of this planet we have the potential to understand our role as caretaker, not dominator, of this planet.

I believe that the use of biophilic design in our buildings and manmade spaces is a great step in that direction.

Once we recognize that nature makes us feel more whole as human beings, we will come to understand that we need nature to be whole, as well.

Using the ancient practice of feng shui we recognize that the environment we create is a mirror of how we are inside. If we are ill as a species, we create a degraded environment. If we are healthy, we create a healthy environment.

The practice of feng shui recognizes how we are completely dependent upon nature for our survival. How building our communities and homes in partnership with nature has allowed us to survive for thousands of years.

Biophilic design, as with feng shui, is in alignment with our current understanding of the Earth as Gaia, our co-creative partner, not for domination of Earth for power and money, but for sustaining life for all.

The use of practices such as biophilic design and feng shui, are a natural step in human evolutionary process.

<https://www.luminous-spaces.com/>

THIRD AGE HOME

A personal message from our WildEdge Walker

Amanda Bond MA MBACP,

In the last 6 years, I have observed my elderly mother's health diminish with some chronic health issues; for example, breathlessness associated particularly with atrial fibrillation. On being discharged from the hospital after her initial diagnosis, I took her to a local Botanical Garden where we wandered slowly appreciating the colours of the flowers, the wildlife around the ponds, and the sounds and scents all around us.

She lives on the 14th floor of a high-rise block of flats, very close to the seaside. Her apartment faces out to sea, with panoramic views over two bays, with a hillside in between. It's an urban environment on the edge of town. The apartment has a balcony which she didn't utilise that much back then.

In 2019, a group of researchers gathered to undertake a scoping review to understand the care and support needs of older people, focusing on those living at home

with chronic conditions in the UK.

(Abdi, S., Spann, A., Borilovic, J. et al. 2019)

The review highlighted that older people living with chronic conditions have unmet care needs related to their physical and psychological health, social life, as well as the environment in which they live and interact.

Many difficulties faced by participants in performing activities related to self-care, domestic life, mobility as well as problems they encountered in involvement in social and community life.

Some participants reported that physical impairments such as physical frailty, lack of independence, or ill-health reduced their ability to sustain relationships and hence contributed to their social isolation. Many participants reported having problems with mobility, preventing them from getting out and about much.

This review also showed that in spite of the physical challenges faced, many older adults demonstrated a desire to cope with their illness and maintain independence. The significant role family carers have in supporting older adults to meet their needs in this area is well-recognised in the literature.

As far as I can gather, none of the researchers investigated environmental factors in any detail.

Having seen the beneficial effects of that initial visit to the Botanical Garden, I encouraged my mother to introduce more plants into her home. She had a few houseplants that I had passed on to her, but none on her balcony.

Gradually, her interest grew in growing plants, choosing colourful, flowering plants at first. An array of varying sizes of pots soon took up space around the edge of the balcony. I took her out for walks, she often collected mementos, stones, shells and the like – bringing aspects of the seaside environment into her home.

I talked to her about the Forest Therapy practice I guided groups in, and over time I noticed that a growing awareness of seasonal changes, weather conditions, and the changing light during a day, was reflected in her conversations.

Nature's patterns were clear sources of joy in her daily life – observing the sunrise, cloud formations, a nesting pair of Black-Winged Gulls, just some of the topics of regular conversation became the norm.

Her health generally improved, appreciating each day more and more.

Two years ago, she was injured whilst traveling on a bus, impacting her vitality enormously – her mobility was severely restricted, and her self-confidence disappeared.

I supported her as much as possible, ensuring she had good food, etc. She enjoys cooking, and as she couldn't go out, (partly because of the effects of the restrictions imposed by the pandemic increasing her social isolation), she started to get more creative with recipes, as she recovered.

In the process, she started to plant seeds from fresh ingredients – like apples, lemons, avocados. Tending to these seedlings became an important occupation for her, and watching their growth brought her great delight. With this newfound interest, on walks in the countryside (when more mobile), as well as from town trees, she gathered and planted acorns and horse-chestnuts.

We now receive regular updates on the trees and plants – they are treated as kin.

Welcoming nature into her home, noticing and observing the smallest details, as well as the greater environmental changes she sees from her high viewpoint has transformed my mother's life. She still lives a rather solitary existence, however, no longer seems lonely, enjoying her own space and feeling more connected to the wider world.

<https://wildedgewalker.earth>

SEARCH FOR BELONGING: FINDING OUR PLACE IN A ROOTLESS WORLD

*“How do we learn to speak with reverence of the places we live, the communities we inhabit, and the other-than-human species who coexist with us?
How do we listen to all the voices that make a home.”*

Mary Reynolds Thompson

Years ago, I took a kayak trip down the lower Klamath River, a body of water that flows southwest from the foot of the Cascade Mountains to the Pacific Ocean in California.

One of our guides, and the official storyteller for the group, was a member of the Yurok tribe who have inhabited this area for millennia. As we floated along, he told us, “This is my land – the land of my people. This is the center of my world. Where is yours?”

It is a question that still has the power to shake me. I am more nomad than nester. I live in Marin County, California, miles from my birthplace of London, England. Like many transplanted people, I feel a sense

of bifurcation, of having roots in more than one country. I identify with both my birthplace and my chosen home.

But does that mean I don’t have a “center of my world”? Does it mean I don’t belong anywhere, not really, not in any significant way.

Modernity has made loess (loose soil of us all). We move for work, for adventure, for better housing prices or schools. Today, millions are being forced by war, feminine, and climate disruption to seek refuge in foreign lands. Many are literally out at sea, in search of home.

So, with all this movement, what does “home” even mean?

As a poetry facilitator and eco-coach, I encourage people to tell the stories of the lands they inhabit, whether they were born there or not, whether they chose the place or were forced to live there by circumstance. If we listen deeply, a place will speak to us. We can discover its history, explore its watersheds, learn the names of its flora and fauna. And yes, its local pubs, music halls, gathering spots, and libraries too. Wherever we are, we can become literate in the landscape.

The award-winning Chickasaw writer Linda Hogan wrote in *Dwellings*: “We are looking for a tongue that speaks with reverence for life, searching for an ecology of the mind. Without it, we have no home, have no place of our own within creation.”

How do we learn to speak with reverence of the places we live, the communities we inhabit, and the other-than-human species

who coexist with us? How do we listen to all the voices that make a home, not just our own clamoring assertions. Belonging must entail more than attaching to one aspect of a place – but to the place itself.

The origin of the word health comes from the Proto-Germanic *khailaz*, to make whole. A community, to be healthy, must concern itself with the whole, precisely because it is an expression of every part of the system. We need to listen not just to our voices, but the voices of the land and all its inhabitants.

In doing so, we will find our way back home.

www.maryreynoldsthompson.com/

Have a listen to the podcast we did together, search for Journal of Biophilic Design Mary Reynolds Thompson on Spotify, audible, iTunes or wherever you listen to your RSS feeds





A meditation for reading

Thriving workplaces, one breath at a time

Deborah Kempson-Wren

Close your eyes for a moment and imagine sitting on the ground outside in natural surroundings. As your body settles can you call to mind a sense of the blissful and nourishing calm that engulfs you as the natural rhythms of your body come to connect and resonate with the vibration of the Earth's life force pulsing beneath?

Perhaps you won't be surprised to hear that in this way the experience and benefits of meditation and mindfulness can be quite theatrically amplified when we take our meditation practice outside. Nature has a way of commanding and mesmerizing our attention so that all of our senses are enlivened and more intimately invoked when surrounded by nature. It's this feeling of our senses magnified that draws our attention more easily to the immediacy of the present moment and to the rich awareness of our own bright aliveness and presence.

Here's a short meditation that you can take inside or outside:

The intention for this meditation is to open up to feeling fully awake to your own presence and aliveness in this present moment – so that you might feel expansive and energised.

The invitation is to enter into this meditation with an attitude of openness and curiosity.

Begin by taking a couple of deep deep breaths – letting the exhale be long and slow through the mouth – like you're gently blowing a candle.

Then letting your breath settle into its natural rhythm. Tuning in and noticing the movement of the breath as you feel it in your body – on each inhale – and exhale – allowing your attention to rest here on the breath for a few moments.

Now gently bringing your attention to your posture – sitting strongly upright. Imagine your body rising up tall and strong like a mountain – so that you're feeling anchored – stable – and grounded – feeling really strong in your own presence and stillness – like the mountain.

Then on the next exhale, imagining your breath like a gentle and warm sea moving through you – like a healing balm – or a wave moving in and out along the edge of the seashore – letting your attention be

fully immersed in the sense of riding on the wave of each breath as it leads you to connect with your own interior aliveness from moment to moment.

Exhaling again and releasing your attention from the breath to lift up and come to rest a while on your mind – so that your full attention is located in this moment in the space of your bright mind that feels vast and expansive like the sky – pausing here a moment with a couple of breaths.

Finally guiding your attention to softly glide down into your heart space – and imaging this area in your chest to be vibrant – glowing – and radiant like the sun –

Feeling your heart filled with a loving warmth and unwavering kindness and appreciation for the wonder of your natural presence and aliveness in this moment – and a sense of awe for your breath and for the life it breathes into your being.

And perhaps feeling in this moment a really expanded sense and energised connection to all of nature that like you is lovingly nurtured and nourished by the sun.

Then as we come to close this meditation together, there's an invitation for you to tenderly hold an imprint of this expansive and bright energy within you as you go now to live through your day.

<https://www.managingourselves.co.uk>

BIOPHILIC INTERIOR DESIGN

Jecks Stone

Spring and summer, as a child, invited moments of exploration that made the most of longer days. It's here the significance of the environment was instilled into many aspects of my life. If the heat was not too intense, and the pollen count low, I had little reluctance to participate in the Sunday activity of going for a walk.

After church, as a family, we'd get in the car and head to the countryside. The journey really began once we arrived in our nature-filled surroundings with a carpark consisting of nothing more than compacted dirt. The walk, I later discovered was called a hike, took us uphill through woodlands and land carpeted in wildflowers. In no particular rush, there was plenty of time for my parents to point out many visual references of tree and plant species, glance at local wildlife and listen out for softened sounds that were familiar to the countryside.

It is only from recalling these childhood memories that I can now appreciate the sensory experience provided by the likes of Client Hills and Lickey Hills. I remember the subtle scents from pollen that often lead me into a bush of stinging nettles. The sound between the trees dulled the natter of other hikers, yet amplified the snap of twigs being pressed into the earth under my sandalled feet.

The prize lay at the top of the ascent where panoramic views of nature stretched far and wide. Glimpses of man-made structures in the distance got lost amongst the vibrantly blue and clouded sky sitting above layered plant life.

Whether true or not, as I stood on the top of the hill, it felt as though I could see the earth's curve. To me, at the closest point to the sky, I felt peace and tranquillity. I was acutely aware of every breath of air I drew and relished in watching swarms of birds take flight.

Nature as a Brain Stimulant

Do you find that the offerings of the natural world invite curiosity? For our brain to be actively curious, the muscle needs to be exercised. Nature is that stimulant, which is one reason to have it close at hand, in many forms, in environments where we spend 90% of our time. With some 12% of the UK population having little to no access to personal outdoor spaces, it is easy to see a disconnect between the outdoors and life under shelter. Both plants and animals are links to the outdoors that are often used within our homes.

Images courtesy of the author

On this page:
Mood board reflecting the natural textures used to design the bedroom space.

*On the next two pages –
Clockwise from top to bottom:*
Nature-inspired bedroom with ocean waved wallpaper reminiscent of the Cambodian tides; Views of Funchal, Madeira overlooking the ocean; Collection of nature artwork that can be used in place or to complement natural elements in the home.

Animals within our Home Envirnoments

With a strong movement towards being cruelty-free and vegan, not incorporating animals into the design of our homes can be seen as a separation from the natural world. However, animal-derived materials, like leather or wool, as well as the hidden components of furniture and surface finishes, tell stories of their mistreatment. Plus, keeping animal-derived materials malleable can invite harmful VOCs to pollute the fresh indoor air we need for our health.

An obvious way to respectfully celebrate the presence of animals in the world is through patterns. Our long history of using prints like tiger and leopard patterns is evident in their association with wealth and status. While real skins have been used in the past, the alternatives are often made from engineered synthetic materials. With the climate crises we face, material selection needs to be mindful of the repercussions of unsustainable choices. A better sensory approach could be recordings of nature sounds to aid in relaxation.

At the Lickey Hills chaffinches and blue tits mingled amongst rustling trees. As a place where calm and curiosity were heightened, their songs are sweet reminders of family excursions and my connection to the planet.

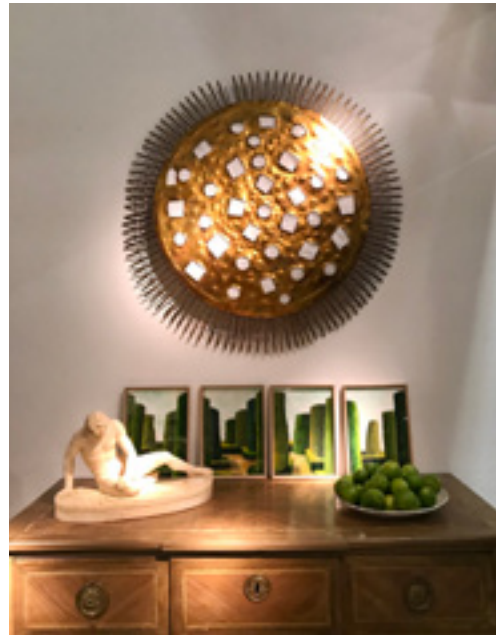
Well-being through a Sound Night's Sleep

Sleep being of paramount importance to a number of brain functions is the perfect time to welcome subtle sounds of natural environments. Unfortunately, cities and suburbs are plagued with sound interruptions. It has been found noise in built-up areas increases anxiety levels, affects sleep quality and is even linked to the development of Alzheimer's disease.

To counterbalance the impact, having nature close at hand does us the world of good. Our pets too. Research finds that sounds like rainforests, ocean waves or bird songs increase the amount and quality of sleep.

Adding to auditory stimulants and soothers, in this technological age, there is comfort found in the flourishing houseplant movement. Nurturing even a single plant calls for active participation in its growth. The ritual of watering, feeding and maintenance summons the benefits of gardening indoors and also shapes the home environment.

Houseplants need to be positioned for optimal light exposure or be housed safely away from the extremes in temperature fluctuations. As they can't pop into the cupboard to grab their own plant food or shimmy over to the perfect light conditions, this part of a home's decor invites us to an active participants. Indoor gardening is a way to witness the changing shape of nature. Plant's changing texture that is beyond our full control adds a refreshing element to our spaces without bringing out a tin of paint.



Closer to Nature

Despite the distance away from the outdoor places that offer respite, even in small doses, natural materials, sounds and aromatic reminders make them seem a little less far away through memory recall. Be it a photograph, aromas of wildflowers or replication of outdoor spaces, there is much good gained from bringing the outdoors in. What type of outdoor environment used can be influenced by our childhood experience, travels or the type of animals we are drawn to. When you think about how nature has influenced your home, what have you discovered?

www.personaabodeinteriors.com

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BIOPHILIC CITIES

Should a home be more than just four walls and a roof? Should a city be more than concrete blocks and freeways? In this section we look at just how we view our cities, posing more questions than answers maybe?

How would you answer this question? Should we be cutting ourselves off from the landscape, carving and drilling into the earth to staple concrete towers and greyness? How about our schools, hospitals and workplaces? Should they too be little boxes that sit next to the roadside, facing out onto the pollution, the noise, the traffic, the indifference?

How should we be designing our cities? We haven't moved that far away from our early homo sapiens self in terms of our physical being: our ears, eyes, sense of smell, touch, balance, fear, love, anxiety, taste. So why would we not think that our environment has an impact on these senses that haven't changed much in thousands of years? Why on earth would we design little dull grey sound-reflective boxes, with no natural light, no views to the outside, with straight lines and squares? When you read it like that, it does make you wonder. Why aren't our everyday spaces, those we spend 90% of our time (work, healing, education, and so on) designed to actually help us flourish rather than suppress our natural instincts and senses?

As many of our readers will already be aware, there are many many MANY studies which show that a more Biophilic environment is better for us, that bringing us closer to nature, patterns and textures of nature is key to actually helping us flourish., not just to exist, but yes, to flourish. Why not?

So yes, this section is asking questions, but there are answers. If you were going to question your city or your town, what would you ask the planners and urban designers (and hey, why not your MP) to change? What isn't healthy? How are the social housing silos built, are they designed with the families in mind, or are they built with the budget only front and centre. Is there run-off, carbon sinks, rainwater collection, flood prevention with planting, heat-reducing tree canopies? The list is endless. Have a really good look at your city. If you are a councillor what should be on your conscience? If you are a teacher what should your school look like? Do we have wildlife corridors so that bees and birds and other creatures have passage through the land, can we construct cycle ways and walkways so everyone can enjoy them too?

Also you may be asking, why is there a picture of trees in winter heading up the section on Biophilic Cities? Well, for a start this is our December/January issue, but also, and more importantly, one of the calls we make in Biophilic Design is to bring a wildness, freedom, "real" nature into our built environment. When I was a child, I was brought up in Highgate in London, we used to go walking in "Highgate Woods", which actually looked a lot like this photo here (although I shot this one in west Hertfordshire). You would have no idea that busy roads are nearby, schools as well as one of the main hospitals serving the area were where we just walked from.

So really this is to challenge, to start a debate: "what we should be including in our cities?"

VALUING OUR GREEN SPACES

“Covid exposed environmentally deprived areas in a way not previously seen.”

Dr Joanne Leach

It feels like an age since Covid lockdowns brought the world to, quite literally, a standstill. 2020 was the year when everybody became a homebody. Our homes suddenly had to contain the sum total of our lives. They were where we lived, worked and spent our leisure time.

During lockdown the deficiencies of our homes were made plain. Even the most indoorsy of us found ourselves missing grass, trees, flowers, even insects. Many decided a change was in order. For some this meant moving to new homes, perhaps with private gardens. For others it meant making changes to their existing homes by creating green spaces – outdoors and in.

Across UK cities and towns, Covid exposed environmentally deprived areas in a way not previously seen. The UK's first lockdown stipulated that people could exercise outdoors once each day but

could not leave their 'local area'. If there was no greenspace within your local area, it was tough luck. As a result, people's demand for quality neighbourhood green spaces increased.

The catch was that housing developers didn't perceive as much value in providing quality green space as they did in filling that space with saleable homes. This was despite high-profile examples like Central Park, New York, where nearby real estate is some of the most expensive in the USA *because* it adjoins the parkⁱ. Manchester's Piccadilly Gardens provide a sobering counterpoint. The celebrated sunken garden of the 1930s fell into disrepair and by the 1980s had become home to various forms of antisocial behaviour. Its decline was mirrored in the decline of the surrounding buildings and although the garden was redesigned (more than once), the area has struggled to recoverⁱⁱ.

Localised housing crises didn't help. In 2020 the Government said that 300,000 new homes had to be built every year to meet the shortage of supply found in cities like London, Brighton, Edinburgh, Bristol, York and Oxford. That's more than has ever been built before and so it's no surprise the target was missed by over 50,000 homesⁱⁱⁱ.

Under such pressure, and had Covid never happened, it may have been easy to ignore the importance of public green spaces. But with Covid came a renewed emphasis upon the importance of accessible green spaces for mental and physical wellbeing. In response, the city of Birmingham has created a 'City of Nature' plan that also makes plain the link between green and blue spaces and reducing inequalities. "Birmingham, once known as a city of 1000 trades will be known as a city of 1000 green spaces."^{iv}

In parallel, Birmingham is creating a car-free city centre. Whilst a car-free city feels a long way off the 15-minute city is gaining traction. The 15-minute city (or 20-minute neighbourhood) is easy to understand but tricky to implement. Paris has committed to transforming itself into a 15-minute city, where everyone's essential needs can be found within a 15-minute walk or bicycle ride. The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) points out that the dominant global planning paradigm of the last 30 years

– agglomeration – will make creating 15-minute cities difficult. Agglomeration means, essentially, urbanisation: urban job creation is encouraged leading to more people working and living in cities leading to cities becoming larger and commutes becoming longer^v.

As our memory of Covid lockdowns fades, we mustn't forget that access to green spaces isn't universal or equitable. Continuing urbanisation won't improve this. Instead, city planners and housing developers must be encouraged to use all their creativity to design-in quality green spaces and our access to them.

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PRIMAL CITY: URBAN DESIGN FOR THE HUMAN ANIMAL

“Across the world, architects, planners and engineers are designing human habitats. They’re called cities. Just 15 years ago, we became a predominantly urban species for the first time [1]; more people now live in urban settlements than in the countryside or wild. Yet, as we pursue city life, how many of us consider our own evolution? How many of us stop to remember that we are an animal – Homo sapiens – and what that may mean for urban design?”

Ross O’Ceallaigh

Humans like you and I have existed on Earth for at least 300,000 years. The whole history of urban life has occurred in the last 10,000 years, just 3% of the human story. The other 97% was spent living as bands of nomadic Hunter-Gatherers (also called Foragers) within pristine natural environments like the African savanna. There are still Hunter Gatherer bands existing in the world today, who may represent an unbroken way of life tracing back hundreds of thousands of years. This article focuses on what we (‘civilised’ people) can learn from them and our own Forager ancestors.

In response to the question, ‘what makes humans unique?’, evolutionary psychologist and bestselling author Dr Chris Ryan has a startling suggestion: We are the only animals that construct and live in our own zoo. A good zookeeper designs an animal’s enclosure to closely mimic its natural habitat. Some zoos get this badly

wrong, and the result is depressed and sick animals. The same is true for humans.

So the question for all those involved in the design of buildings, neighbourhoods and cities should be: what is our natural habitat and how can we best recreate that in urban places? This question could not only unlock design principles for healthy and happy places but also point towards a deep form of sustainability. Jared Diamond, the polymath and author, wrote, “Hunter-gatherers practised the most successful and longest-lasting lifestyle in human history”. The Hunter Gatherer way of life is the only way of life that has been proven to be environmentally and socially sustainable over hundreds of thousands of years.

Based on well-established anthropological records and research into human evolution, below are some ideas for how we could create the ‘Primal City’, an urban habitat in tune with our evolution.

Deep Biophilia

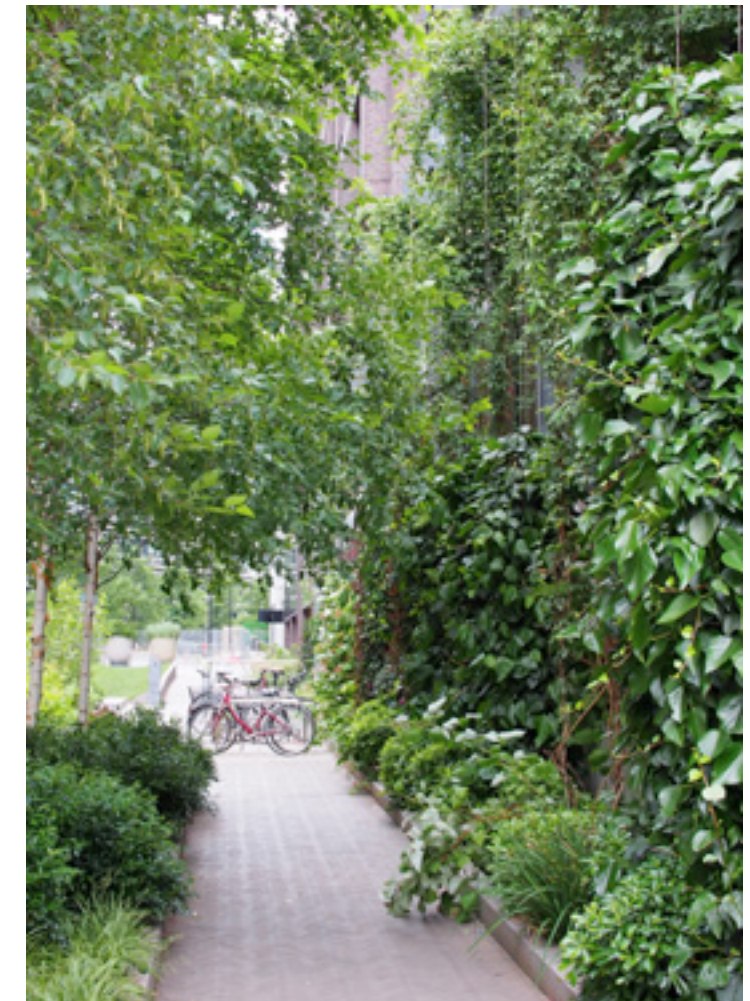
The evolutionary roots of biophilia will come as no surprise to those reading this magazine. Yes, we need ‘green’ rather than ‘grey’ cities. Urbanists are also now talking about ‘Nature-based Solutions’; deploying natural systems to tackle urban problems like flooding, heat waves and air pollution. But as important and worthwhile and these concepts are, there is a risk that we view nature as being simply something to deploy for the benefit of humans. This idea of human-nature separation is at the core of our environmental problems and unhealthy cities.

Through our long evolutionary history, human beings lived *as a part of nature* and interacted with other living things in mutually beneficial ways. All animals do this. This is why the presence of Hunter-Gatherers does not result in environmental degradation in the way associated with modern humans. So, when designing urban ‘green infrastructure’, can we also stop to consider what plants and animals need from us to thrive? That’s the deepest form of love for nature – Deep Biophilia.

Move like a Human

The fossil fuel age of cities has been dominated by one invention – the car. This miracle of transportation allows us to cover vast distances in comfort, which in turn led to cities getting much more spread out. Its existence makes possible far-flung suburbs and the strange, modern concept of ‘commuting’. But with all these benefits comes a price: sedentarism. Dr James Levine of the Mayo Clinic famously said, ‘Sitting is the new smoking’, because being sedentary is linked to a host of diseases and increased mortality.

Looking to Forager groups reveals a total lack of heart disease, diabetes, cancer and other ‘diseases of civilisation’. There are many reasons why this may be so, but a high level of physical activity is a clear contributor to health. The daily tasks of hunting and gathering food, building shelter and raising children mean not only a high quantity of movement (typically about 8 miles of walking per day) but also a huge *variety* of movement patterns like squatting, carrying, climbing and throwing, which are largely missing from modern life. Designing our cities around the oldest form of movement, walking, has huge benefits for public health and carbon emissions.



How do you encourage people to walk? Start by putting everything close together, making the city beautiful and interesting, and minimising the number of vehicles on the streets. Encouraging the full variety of primal human movements is more challenging but we could explore all-age playgrounds, urban forest schools or interactive art installations to encourage everyone, young and old, to move more playfully.

Housing for Homo Sapiens

The urban form of our cities owes a lot to the way we organise ourselves into family units. The expectation of typical Nuclear Families of two parents, two kids and a pet dog (or goldfish) means that the basic unit of urbanisation is the family home. Whether in a modest mid-terrace,

a suburban McMansion or a stylish new apartment, we are expected to form family groups and insulate ourselves from the wider community behind a locked door. This is a very recent phenomenon.

Anthropological accounts demonstrate that Hunter Gathers organise themselves in bands of 50-150 individuals, which included multiple extended families. Within bands, everything is shared including food and childcare. Furthermore, many cultures have protocols and traditions in place to prevent any individual from holding power over others. This led anthropologist Richard Lee to conclude that Hunter-Gatherers are ‘fiercely egalitarian’.

So, what if we want to live in a modern tribe in the city? Some groups have been experimenting with this for centuries,



‘though they don’t often draw the link to our evolutionary past. These include co-housing’ communities, ‘eco-villages’ and other forms of intentional communities where like-minded people come together to share resources and live in a way closer to our tribal nature. Not all these communities are successful or long-lived. But the ones that get it right point towards a model of urban living that is both happier, more resilient, and more sustainable than the suburban American Dream. What if we could move these models of co-living from the fringe into the mainstream?

all Indigenous people is their way of relating to the world. These groups have found ways of living good lives without fossil fuels in a way that helps other living beings to thrive. This is exactly what pioneering architects and urban designers are trying to do in their own way. Perhaps we should start listening to those who know best?

<https://greenurbanistpod.com/>

Images courtesy of the author

Indigenous Wisdom: Learning from those who know best

Perhaps the most important lesson we can learn from Hunter-Gatherers and

Notes

1. <https://ourworldindata.org/urbanization>
The UN estimates 2007 was the year when, for the first time, more people in the world lived in urban than in rural areas.

Land Fall

Two extensions and a house

“Yesterday I climbed the hill and became aware of my endurance through a battle between my will and the slope. I stopped and paused. Today I walked down the same hill and by instinct I paused at the same spot. When the place of natural repose is the same as man’s repose, the hill is marked by the dimension of man. Here is where the house will be erected.”

Sverre Fehn The Thought of Construction

Robert Bedner

How do we choose to touch the earth with our massive constructions of masonry, timber, stone and steel that we call homes?

As a building designer, I have addressed this question over the course of my professional career for more than 35 years. Termed as “biophilic design” this kind of approach speaks about architecture and design with a reverence for nature.

What is a hill? Nature and place and building sites are seldom flat and level in the part of the UK where I live. There are hills. Hills in wooded areas and hills by the seaside and hills in the cities. Hills have a base and sometimes they plateau or have a ridge or a peak. Hills have a relationship with the sky, the sun and the wind and the horizon and the trees and plants and animals that inhabit their different orientations and configurations. Hills generally have paths that lead from top to bottom.

What is land-fall? Land-fall is a way to

think about hills and architecture. Its about thinking about our place on the hill, our physical and mental (and for some spiritual) feelings about walking up a hill, pausing and resting on a hill or looking out towards the sky and horizon. Its also about considering how we choose to build our homes or other structures in this kind of setting.

Here are three projects that are close to my heart and demonstrate three different attitudes about the hill and about landfall.

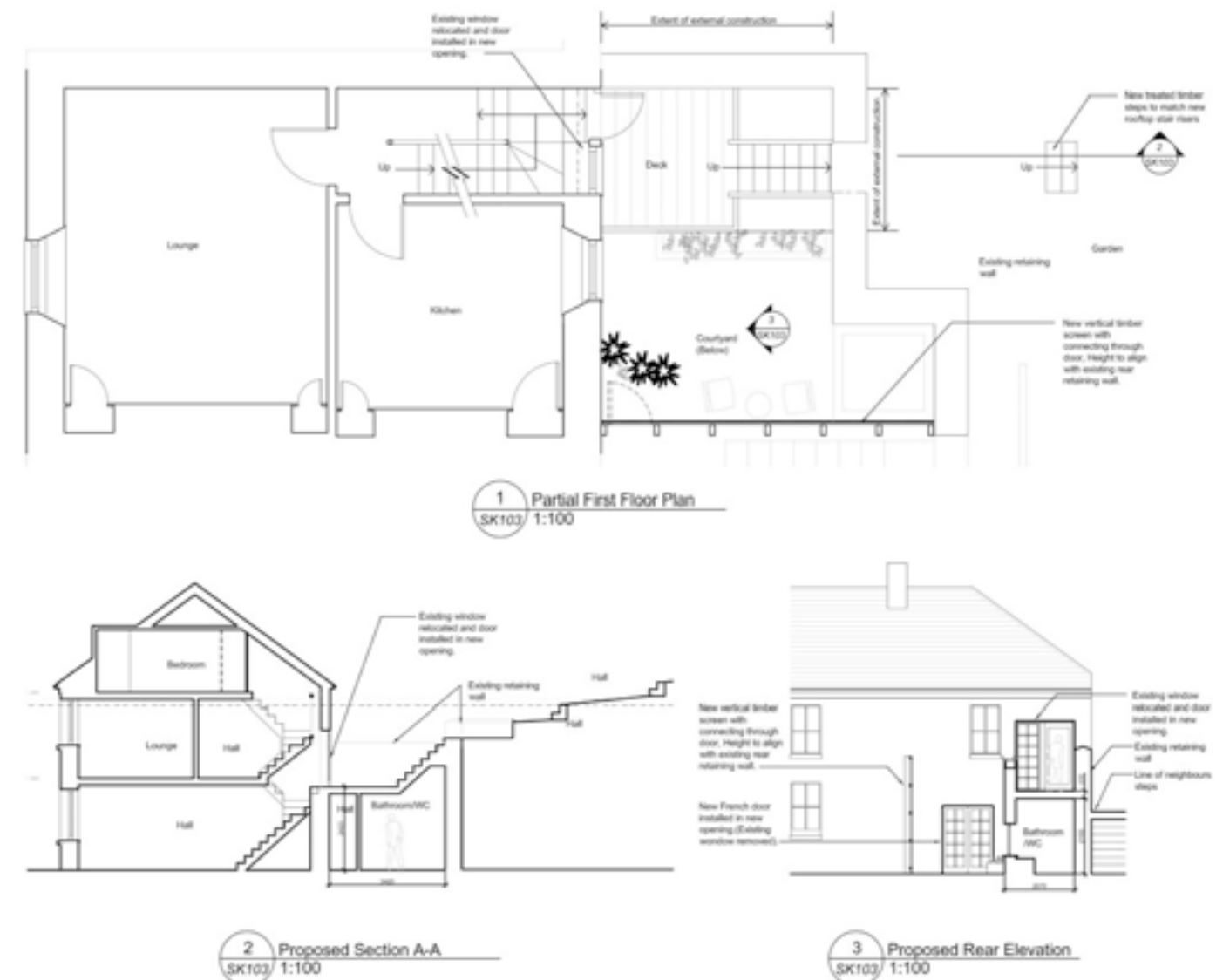
Extension to a small terrace house in Cornwall:

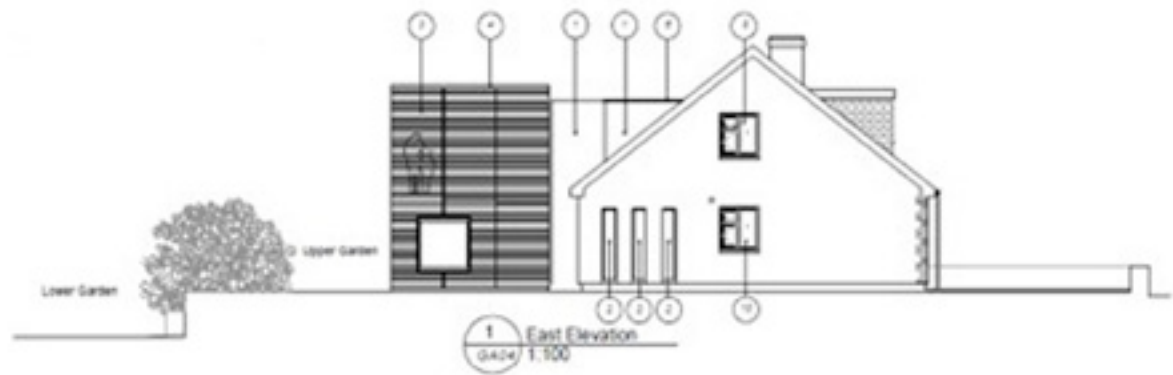
The project was an existing Victorian terrace house that backed up against a steep hill and very long and thin garden that the Clients loved though had a difficult access to. The Clients were looking for a way to better utilize their sunken garden and to reconnect with the hill and long garden behind their house.

From a visitor’s perspective the design works as follows:

1. Entering the house the visitor arrives at an existing staircase. From the bottom the staircase the visitor looks up to the landing. The landing has doors which lead out onto a deck and from there the stair continues merging with the landscape and up the hill. From the entrance there is a clear visual connection connecting the stairs of the house with the stairs on the hill.

2. Continuing past the stair through a hall leads the visitor to a garden bath (below the new deck above). A timber privacy screen has been built at the terrace boundary providing a private garden space for the owners. The bath is located next to a concertina window overlooking a planter. In the summertime it can be opened and become part of the garden and the act of bathing is back to nature with fresh air and sunlight.





Extension to a small detached house in the suburbs:

The project was an existing detached two-bedroom house in a suburban setting that backed up against a gently downward sloping, long and thin garden. The house had been constructed on a plinth at the rear with an elevated terrace that isolated the house from the garden. The Clients were looking for a better way to connect the house to the garden using natural materials, a better flow at ground floor level and additional bathrooms and master bedroom at first floor level.

From a visitor's perspective the design works as follows:

1. Entering the house the visitor arrives at the vestibule. From the vestibule there is a view through the kitchen and lounge connecting with the garden. Looking at

the section, the slope of the existing hill is brought inside the house with a set of stairs located at the junction of the existing house and the extension. Stepping the floor level down at the new lounge level increases the ceiling level and prominence of this space and its connection with the garden.

2. Looking at the plan and the section an expansive open plan space has been created by the removal of the walls between the kitchen and the lounge and the dining room. Sitting in the lounge the visitor can look up to the kitchen and dining room spaces or out to the garden terrace which steps down to the lawn. All three platforms focus on the garden.
3. The project is clad in larch timber with window openings that are placed for light and views.



New house on a river in Devon:

This last project was for a new detached home overlooking a river in Devon on a challenging and steeply sloping site. The brief included looking for ways to connect the house with the garden and as well to integrate a small swimming pool into the design.

From a visitor's perspective the design works as follows:

1. The house is located part way up the hill and not at the top of the site.

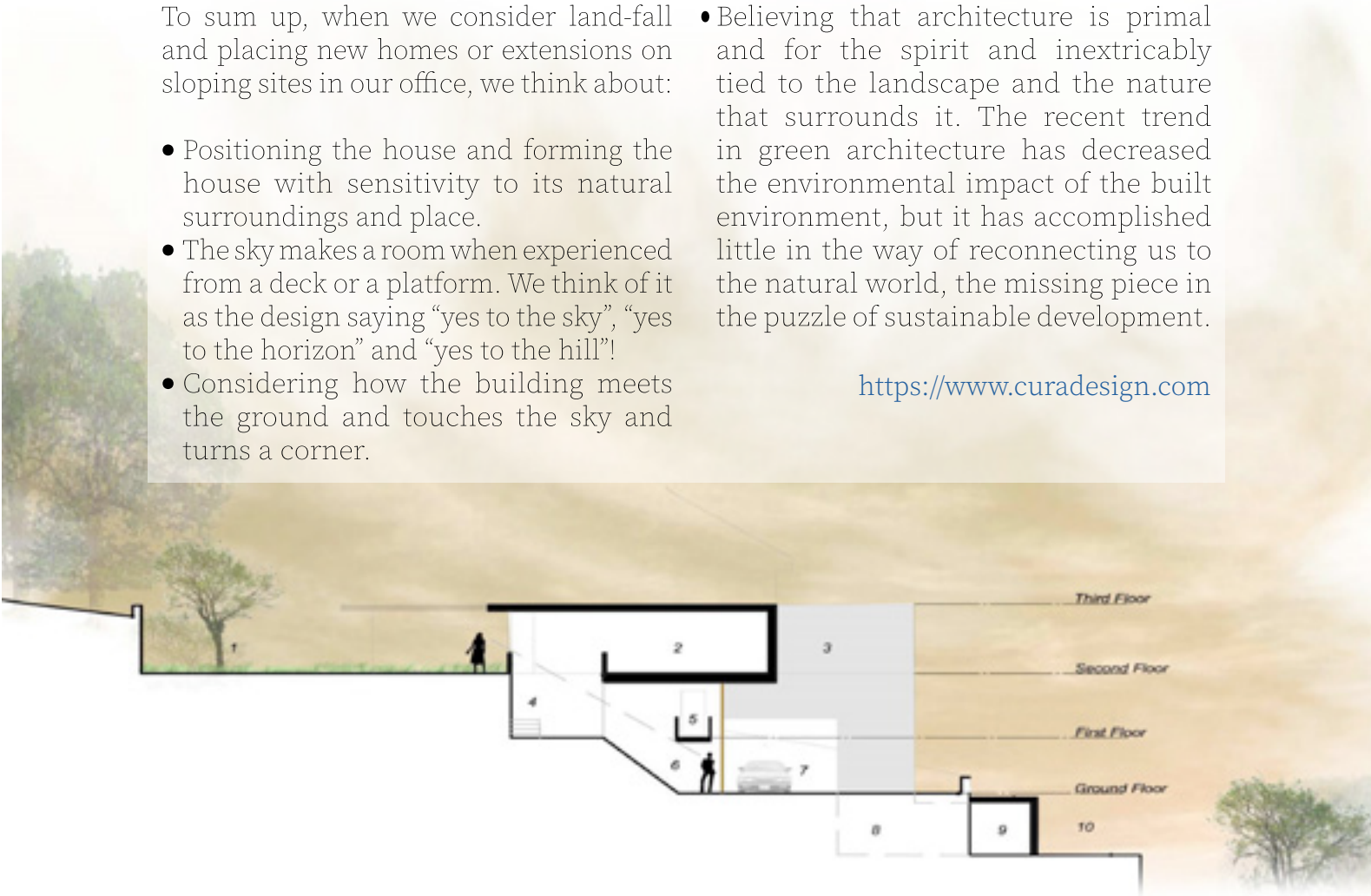
2. The house provides a straight line, a kind of datum which underneath, the hill and landscape flow below.
3. Looking at the section, upon arrival from the entrance vestibule, visitors have a clear sightline to the elevated garden above. The house forms a courtyard shape around this garden.
4. The swimming pool connects with the river below both by its positioning and as well the minimum detailing allowing the outside in.

To sum up, when we consider land-fall and placing new homes or extensions on sloping sites in our office, we think about:

- Positioning the house and forming the house with sensitivity to its natural surroundings and place.
- The sky makes a room when experienced from a deck or a platform. We think of it as the design saying "yes to the sky", "yes to the horizon" and "yes to the hill"!
- Considering how the building meets the ground and touches the sky and turns a corner.

- Believing that architecture is primal and for the spirit and inextricably tied to the landscape and the nature that surrounds it. The recent trend in green architecture has decreased the environmental impact of the built environment, but it has accomplished little in the way of reconnecting us to the natural world, the missing piece in the puzzle of sustainable development.

<https://www.curadesign.com>



BOOK REVIEWS

Each issue you will find some excellent book recommendations, suggested by the dazzling book and gift shop Folde in Dorset

Folde Dorset



The Art of Gifting Naturally, Angela Maynard

Angela's book starts out with a quote from St Francis of Assisi, "For it is in giving that we receive", and it's a theme than continues through this beautifully put together book. Printed in comforted muted tones, with stunning photography throughout, the reader is guided through a series of projects ranging through home and textiles, to scents, care and treats. While many of the items used can be found in the home of garden, the book clearly sets out where additional ingredients might be needed, making in easy to see which projects could be perfect for tackling on a damp Sunday afternoon. There are helpful guides too, for working with essential oils, or drying flowers, as well as gift wrapping ideas that focus on natural materials.

Whether you set about making gifts immediately (the gardener's hand cream, mulling spices for wine, and pressed flower shortbread caught my eye in particular) or simply want to plan for a lazy day of creativity in the future, this is a very practical and beautiful guide to how to make gifts that will be loved and welcomed.

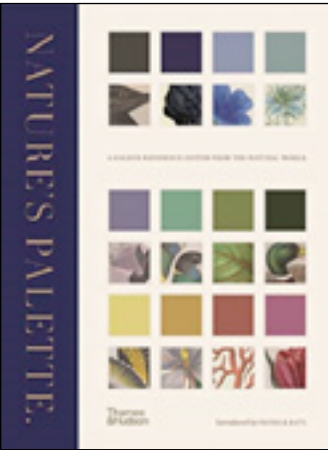
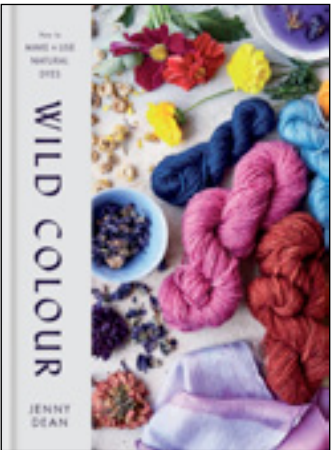
Published by Hardie Grant Books (UK), (£16.99)
<https://uk.bookshop.org/a/8995/9781784885298>

Wild Colour: how to make and use natural dyes, Jenny Dean

This practical and inspiring guide to creating and using natural dyes from plants, offers information on current environmentally friendly dyeing techniques and more than 65 species of plants and natural dyestuffs. Jenny Dean draws on her three decades of experience with natural dyes to create a comprehensive introduction to what you need to get started, as well as practical insights on tools and equipment. Reflecting on the need to move away from artificially produced colours, the book highlights the extraordinary range of colour and hues that can be achieved from nature. Visually stunning throughout, each of the plants featured in the book includes the colours that can be created; for example, pear ranges from pale to rose pinks when the

bark is used, while the leaves span a pale mustard to a sage green. There are also considerations for what types of items to choose to dye, the use of animal and vegetable fibres, and how to fix the dye. It certainly puts paid to the often held notion that natural colour must be boring – the colours achieved through careful dyeing and understanding your plant choices are simply stunning.

Published by Octopus Publishing Group, (£16.99)
<https://uk.bookshop.org/a/8995/9781784725532>



Nature's Palette, Patrick Baty

Nature's Palette has embossed on the front, in small gold letters, 'A colour reference system from the natural world'. And what a reference it is. At nearly 300 pages, it brings together illustrations from the natural world from flora, fauna, and geology into colour groupings, and shows the reader how nature has influenced and directed our perception and adoption.

The books draws on Syme's edition of Werner's Nomenclature of Colours (from the early 1800s), which was an attempt to establish a universal colour reference system to help identify, classify and represent species from the natural world. Werner's set of 54 colour standards was enhanced by Patrick Syme with the addition of colour swatches and further references from nature, taking the total number of hues classified to 110.

Nature's Palette has been enhanced elegant contemporary illustrations of every animal, plant or mineral that Syme cited. Readers can see for themselves Tile Red in the Cock Bullfinch's breast, Shrubby Pimpernel and Porcelain Jasper; or admire the Berlin Blue that Syme identified on the wing feathers of a Jay, in the Hepatica flower and in Blue Sapphire.

Whether used as inspiration or for the simple appreciation of the fabulous breadth and depth of colour in the natural world, Nature's Palette is a visual delight.

Published by Thames & Hudson Ltd, (£35)
<https://uk.bookshop.org/a/8995/9780500252468>

<https://www.foldedorset.com>

Top 5 Seller's



Landlines, Raynor Winn

Raynor Winn knows that her husband Moth's health is declining, getting worse by the day. She knows of only one cure. It worked once before. But will he – can he? – set out with her on another healing walk? The Cape Wrath Trail is over two hundred miles of gruelling terrain through Scotland's remotest mountains and lochs. But the lure of the wilderness and the beguiling beauty of the awaiting glens draw them northwards. Being one with nature saved them in their darkest hour and their hope is that it can work its magic again.

Published by Penguin Books Ltd (£20)
<https://uk.bookshop.org/a/8995/9780241484562>

Mushrooms, Collins Gem

This is the perfect pocket guide for nature and foraging enthusiasts keen to identify the most commonly found mushrooms and toadstools in Britain and northern Europe. It includes photographs and illustrations, details of size, habitat and when it can be found, whether it is edible or poisonous and most importantly, which similar species it can be confused with and why.

Published by HarperCollins Publishers (£5.99)
<https://uk.bookshop.org/a/8995/9780007183074>



Night Sky Almanac 2023: A Stargazer's Guide

Follow the progress of constellations throughout the seasons with this beautiful companion to the night sky. With the aid of easy-to-understand monthly calendars and maps, you will chart the rhythm of the lunar phases, discover events that light up the sky for brief periods, and explore the rich tapestry of characters that adorn the starry canvas overhead.

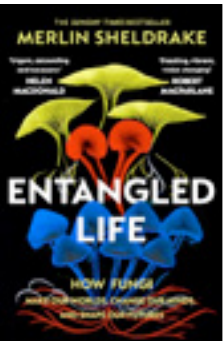
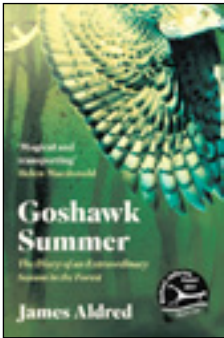
Published by HarperCollins Publishers (£9.99)
<https://uk.bookshop.org/a/8995/9780008532598>

Goshawk Summer: The Diary of an Extraordinary Season in the Forest, James Aldred

In early 2020, wildlife cameraman James Aldred was commissioned to film the lives of a family of Goshawks in the New Forest, his childhood home. Then lockdown. And as the world retreated, something remarkable happened. The noise of our everyday stilled. Amidst the fragility and the fear, there was silver moonlight, tumbling fox cubs, calling curlew and, of course, the soaring Goshawks – shining like fire through one of our darkest times. A Goshawk summer unlike any other.

Winner of the Wainwright Prize for Nature Writing, 2022

Published by Elliott & Thompson Limited (£9.99)
<https://uk.bookshop.org/a/8995/9781783966400>



Entangled Life, Merlin Sheldrake

The more we learn about fungi, the less makes sense without them. They can change our minds, heal our bodies and even help us avoid environmental disaster; they are metabolic masters, earth-makers and key players in most of nature's processes. In Entangled Life, Merlin Sheldrake takes us on a mind-altering journey into their spectacular world, and reveals how these extraordinary organisms transform our understanding of our planet and life itself.

Published by Vintage Publishing, (£10.99)
<https://uk.bookshop.org/a/8995/9781784708276>

MAGIC BRUSH OF BIOPHILIA

At the end of every podcast we ask the same question (if you haven't heard them yet, make sure you have a listen), and here we asked it last month, here are some replies?

If you could paint the world with a Magic Brush of Biophilia, what would it look like?

Gill, retired nurse

Trees. Figs, Scotch Pines and Oaks. Their roots entwined and their leaves sharing their knowledge of this world for us to admire and listen to.

Water needed by all.
The wildlife both they and us depend on.

Peace.

Quiet.

Reflectful times.

Calm.

Biophilia.

Becky Willoughby,
founder of Willow Therapy

My paintbrush would carry the ability to awaken all of my senses. To Colour the world in a way that awakens smells, sounds and sights with one fell brushstroke.

Amanda Bond, WildEdge
Walker Nature and
Forest therapy Guide,
Ecotherapist

At least half of this blue marble in space, teaming with life.

A circle of life remembering our wild kin, with sacred land returned to the guardianship of indigenous peoples teaching the other half how to be a restorer species.

Charles Smeed, founder of
TFocus group of companies

A lush green view from a Time Capsule home office that revolves globally through primary rain forests prairies and natural green meadows, observing from afar and focusing microscopically on all species of flora and fauna

Alex Tosetti, of Vu.City

Everyone has gone green it seems. From what I see in the industry, biophilia is now inherent in the design and fit out of offices and homes.

It's part of the furniture. It would seem to have been stimulated by the pandemic lockdown and the importance of mental health and well-being being at the forefront of everyday life. The post-covid 'new normal' includes biophilic inclusion for sure.

Nuria Munoz,
founder of Habitarmonia

Every space in which we live and work would function as a magic well-being formula: designers and architects would create spaces that reflect people's true sense of beauty, enhance their quality of life and promote wellbeing and happiness, thereby making people feel reconnected with nature.

George Harvey,
musician, producer

If I could paint the world with a magic brush of biophillia - every new house on a development would have to have a tree planted in front of it by the road surrounded by wild grass and flowers in the name of the owners of the property so they feel associated with a piece of nature.

What would the world look like, if YOU had a magic brush of Biophilia? Email us and let us know.

FINAL WORD

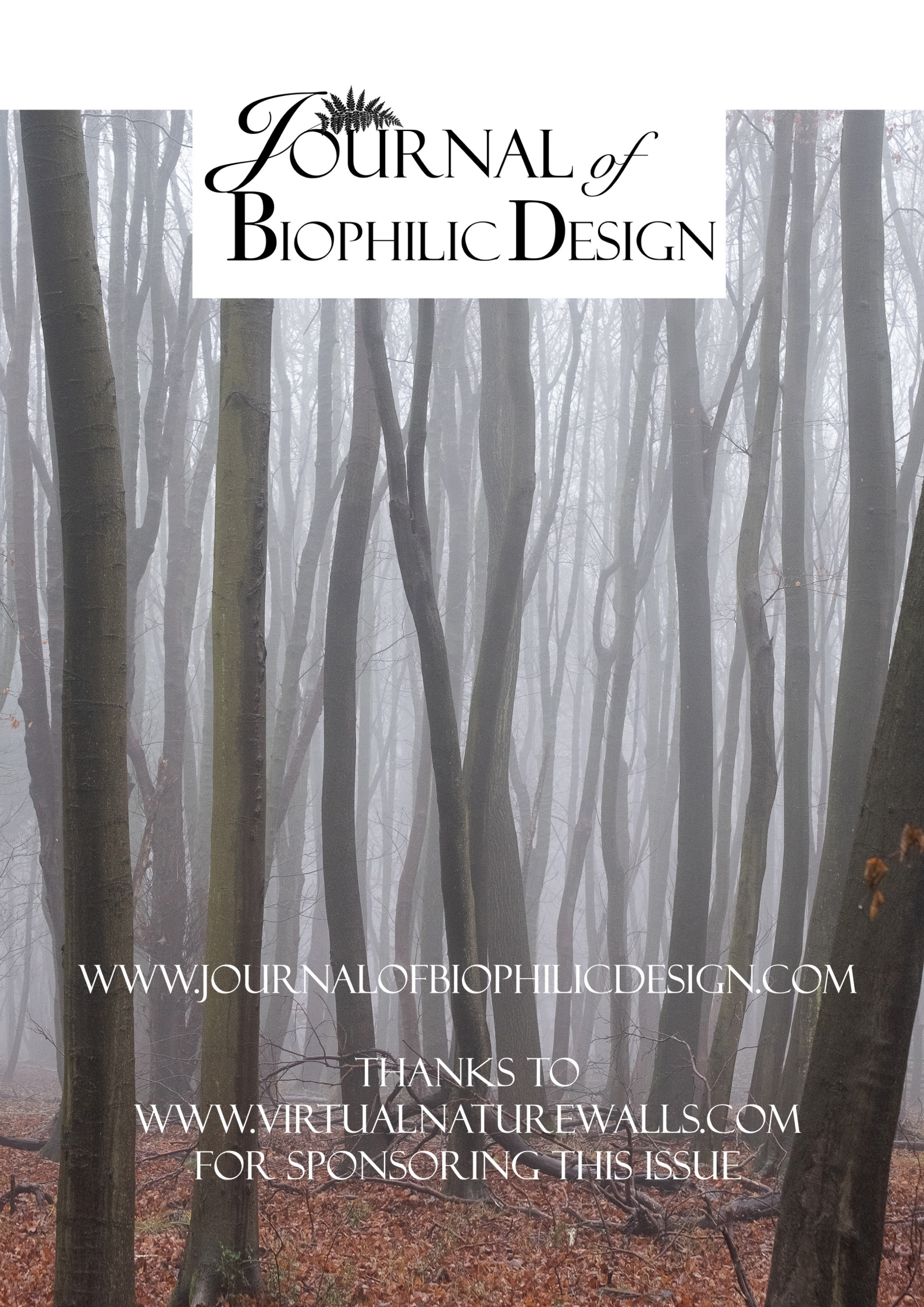
Dr Vanessa Champion
Editor

So, what did you think of that then?

Thank you for writing in to me after our first issue, I took heart that the first issue (themed, The Workplace, if you missed it), struck quite a few chords with people (including some of the great and good who operate in the Biophilic Design space), so really, a mahoosive thank you from me.

I would like to ask you, what else would you like to see in the magazine as regular features, or even just to cover ad hoc basis? As mentioned in earlier section editorials, in the not-too-distant, we will be launching an exciting new search facility on the front of our website journalofbiophilicdesign.com where you'll be able to enter specific search terms, say "Biophilic Design in healthcare" and you'll have a dynamic PDF you can save, forward, click through, print. It's called "dynamic publishing" and we are working with an amazing team of programmers in Cambridge UK.

Like nature has roots and connections under the earth where you can't see them, I'm always bowled over by this wonderful world we live in, the connections we make, the friendships and the future we forge together when we all put our hearts and energies into making a difference.



Journal of BIOPHILIC DESIGN

WWW.JOURNALOFBIOPHILICDESIGN.COM

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WWW.VIRTUALNATUREWALLS.COM
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