

Refurbishment of DHI



Project start date: 16/06/2014

Project end date: 29/08/2014

Prior to refurbishment, the ground floor of Devonshire House was a cafeteria with uncomfortable seating and beige walls, which was considered not fit for purpose. Occupants reported poor air flow, with single-glazed windows allowing heat loss and solar gain, resulting in an energy wastage and uncomfortable surroundings for users. Consultation with students and Guild staff concluded that they wanted an open area to that could be used for both studying and socialising, and could be a space they could call their own.

In order to create the open area desired by users, a 110m² extension and a decking area were added onto the existing building. The resulting area is now light and airy and a hub of activity, used by a diverse group of students and members of the Students' Guild. The space boasts a laptop repair company as well as a hair salon in the new retail pods, and some Students' Guild core services have been moved into the area including Academic Representation, Change, Policy and Research and the Sabbatical Officers.



The materials and techniques used in the construction and refurbishment process were chosen to limit environmental impact, with particular focus on reducing the waste of materials and energy. All materials such as timber and plasterboard were recycled on site, helping to minimise waste. As well as this:

- The roof insulation on the new extension was designed so that it met building regulations + 10%, and the floor was also insulated to reduce heat loss and gain.
- The new 'wet' radiator heating systems was tapped into existing plumping to reduce waste and is now controlled centrally to maintain the temperature at an appropriate level.
- Brise soleil were installed on the southern elevation: these are a variety of sun shading structures that reduce heat gain in a building by deflecting sunlight. These help to reduce the need for air conditioning in the summer months.
- LED lighting was used throughout the building, which uses less energy and usually lasts longer than traditional lighting.
- Double-glazed windows were installed to replace the previous single-glazed ones, helping to reduce heat loss and gain.