

Leeds Building Society

A pillar of 'Society'

£10m

/ Project value

June 2019

/ The project commenced

November 2020

/ The project was completed

Marking the “start of a new era” for Leeds Building Society (LBS), we completed the £10m strip out and refurbishment of its new headquarters in Leeds city centre. The “significant investment” has facilitated the Society’s expansion and has brought together more than 800 Society employees who were previously spread across three different locations. A key feature of our 11,000 sq m modernisation programme over five floors was the replacement of the building’s façade to improve thermal and lighting performance while ensuring LBS’s power needs are met solely from renewables. Demonstrating our commitment to the local supply chain, over 60% of the project workforce came from a 30-mile radius of the site.

The brief

In June 2019, we were appointed to refurbish the former Sovereign House, a riverside office block located in Sovereign Street in Leeds, and turn it into a modern headquarters for Leeds Building Society.



“Our new home is a significant investment in the future of the Society and a major commitment to Leeds in the long term. We’re pleased to be working with GRAHAM on this important project.”

Karen Wint
Leeds Building Society’s Chief Operating Officer

“The building offers more space than we currently occupy across three different premises and bringing together all our Leeds office-based teams in the one location will further improve efficiency and cut our operating costs.”

Karen Wint
Leeds Building Society's Chief Operating Officer

The challenges

As holders of the Carbon Trust Standard for carbon accreditation, LBS placed considerable emphasis on reducing its carbon footprint across all of its branches. This was a priority throughout our refurbishment programme. Notably, our team identified a creative way of repurposing glass when undertaking the replacement of the external curtain walling. In partnership with a local Leeds based company - a specialist in the manufacture and fabrication of sustainable worksurfaces produced from recycled glass aggregates - we reused large sections of the old windows as solid surface counters throughout the building.

The solution

A signature project for our Leeds based delivery team, the new LBS headquarters has placed the Society “right at the heart” of the city where it was founded in 1875. Conceived to “further improve efficiency” and help cut the “operating costs” of the business, the refurbishment is a “significant investment in the future”. Our CAT A and CAT B fit-out programme included internal soft demolitions, hard demolitions and structural works, as well as external façade works. Reflecting LBS's energy efficient design strategy, we replaced the existing façade with glass, which has significantly increased the amount of natural daylight flowing into the building. This approach has also minimised the volume of artificial lighting required when operational. Equally, the installation of energy saving cladding ensures heat is retained in winter and reduces the amount of cooling required in the hotter summer months. Furthermore, all of the fossil fuel heating has been removed from the building, ensuring that it is completely powered by renewable electricity systems.

Outputs & Benefits

- / **Programme:** We finished this project on time and within budget
- / **Upcycling:** Where possible, we upcycled and recycled materials, and created new products that were incorporated into the building
- / **Sustainability:** We replaced the existing façade with glass and installed new cladding
- / **Flexibility:** We worked closely with LBS to ensure its expectations were met, and we demonstrated a flexible approach to the works programme throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, ramping up and down as required
- / **Local workforce:** Over 60% of the project workforce was from a 30-mile radius of the site
- / **Awards:** We have been awarded - Green Apple Award – Gold Construction Excellence Awards – Sustainability Award



For more information on how we're delivering lasting impact:

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