

Kathleen Lonsdale Building (University College London)

# Blending the old and the new at UCL

**£14m**

/ Project value

**January 2016**

/ The build commenced

**December 2017**

/ The duration

Officially opened by Sir David Attenborough in April 2018, the Kathleen Lonsdale Building (KLB) has been repositioned as a cutting-edge laboratory, learning and research facility. Consolidating University College London's (UCL) Department of Earth Sciences into one building for the first time in over 50 years, our £14m refurbishment and upgrade project represents one of the first major completed schemes of UCL's £1.2bn 'Transforming UCL' capital programme.

## The Brief

A 'Single Stage Design and Build' contract, the brief was to deliver the refurbishment of the Grade II listed Kathleen Lonsdale Building, with an emphasis on improving the building's utilisation and accessibility.



"We worked closely with UCL throughout the programme to ensure that the space was maximised in terms of efficiency, while taking care to restore the building's period features that evoke so much of its history,"

Rob Joyce  
GRAHAM Development Director

“New layouts have opened up spaces to create high quality workspaces with modern facilities, sensitively blending the old and the new. The project has also delivered a substantial improvement in the environmental performance of the building with much reduced energy consumption and natural ventilation in many areas. I am delighted with the finish and quality of what’s been delivered by the project team,”

Kevin Argent  
UCL’s Director of Estates Development

### The challenges

Located at Gower Place on the northern boundary of UCL’s Bloomsbury Campus, the constrained central London site remained live and operational throughout our 23-month programme. Home to the Department of Chemistry, Main Bloomsbury Data and Communication Hubs, and laboratories, it was critical that there was limited disruption to these high-profile areas. Furthermore, as a Grade II listed building consideration to the original features was of paramount importance.

### GRAHAM’s solution

Representing GRAHAM’s second contract award at UCL (the Courtauld Building was the first), the newly refurbished KLB now accommodates the entire Department of Earth Sciences, open planned offices, shared ‘Hubs’, and a variety of breakout areas. Radically rethinking space, we reimagined 6,100m<sup>2</sup> across four floors. Significant improvements were made to teaching, research and social learning spaces for the existing Chemistry Group, an Astro Physics Department and a new ‘Radio Chemistry’ laboratory. Detailed phasing was adopted throughout the project, with the programme broken down into five main phases and 16 sub-phases, which ensured that the building remained in operation throughout the duration of the works. Indeed, by April 2016 the GMP lab, used to research ground-breaking medicines, was complete and in use. The original form and features of the Grade II listed building were carefully restored and, in alignment with UCL’s sustainability commitments, we achieved a 23% reduction in overall carbon emissions.

### Outputs & Benefits

#### / BREEAM: BREEAM Very Good

/ **Phased Delivery:** We implemented a phased approach to delivery and by March 2017, we had completed the office space, meeting rooms and teaching facilities within the Earth Sciences Block

/ **Carbon Emissions:** We achieved a 23% reduction in overall carbon emissions by incorporating natural ventilation to all non-technical spaces and using sustainable materials

/ **Construction Waste:** At completion, 96% of construction waste was recycled

/ **Accessibility:** The building is now fully accessible and DDA compliant



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