

Designed for success

West London is an architectural hotbed, with iconic design, and designers loving to work there, says Ross Sturley, editor of *lookwestlondon.com*.

Think of West London, and architecture, and you think immediately of the BBC TV Centre – famously designed by Graham Dawbarn on a napkin in the shape of a question mark. There are modern classics, like Terminals 2 and 5 at Heathrow, by Lord Foster and Lord Rogers, and there's also a selection of fine art deco buildings – like the Gillette Building by Sir Banister Fletcher, and the Hoover building by Wallis, Gilbert & Partners.

But West London's architecture is not all heritage and history. There's a thriving community, and some fine examples of contemporary architecture around the region. One of West London's best known architects is Richard (Lord) Rogers, based for many years on the Hammersmith riverside (although now reportedly looking to move to central London). The practice won the Stirling Prize – the Royal Institute of British Architects' (RIBA) top award – in 2009 for the Maggie's Centre at Charing Cross Hospital in Hammersmith.

Other West London buildings recently honoured by RIBA include St Benedict's School Cloisters (by Buschow Henley), Wembley Stadium (Fosters), and Chiswick House Café (Caruso St John). There's much quality design to be proud of.

One architect who enjoys working in West London is Roy Collado, of Collado Collins. He

recently designed the major rework at Olympia Exhibition Centre, creating the first new exhibition hall in a hundred years, and the redevelopment of the Access Self Storage building on Brook Green, soon to be the new HQ for dunnhumby, bringing 1500 jobs to Hammersmith.

Those plans will see the Grade II listed former Ford Motors warehouse redeveloped as a 115,000 sq ft office building across six floors, with the facade retained, and an additional three floors of office space added, housed in an innovative glass dome covering the entire roof space of the existing building.

ColladoCollins, which began in 2004, now has a headcount of around 30 people. They are not based in West London, but love to work there. Roy says: "I've lived in Ravenscourt Park and Chiswick, so I know that the 1970's and 80's architectural trends largely passed West London by – that's a good thing!

"This means there's lots of good stuff to work with, as on Brook Green, where we designed a building that attracted an employer who would otherwise have just gone in to the West End.

"I love the village feel of a number of West London's towns, and of course the high quality parks and the river. It's characterful – which attracts the media and creative companies who provide great jobs of course, and so West London rather fuels itself."



Above: Roy Collado

Collado Collins plans for the former Access Self Store Building on Brook Green



Below: John Assael



More rooted in the region are Assael Architecture – at 60 staff, one of the 100 largest practices in the UK – based on Carnwath Road in Fulham. They are on site with schemes totalling over 2500 homes, and have been responsible for designing the new Riverside Studios, and for Great West Quarter in Brentford, which includes the landmark GWQ tower.

They're not confined to West London - Renaissance in Lewisham, and North Wharf Gardens in Paddington Basin are just two of the many projects they have designed elsewhere.

This year they made The Sunday Times "Best 100 Small Companies to Work For" list at no.47, perhaps partly because their in house band "Tender Package" are regular performers at charity events like Construction Rocks.

John Assael is expected to stand for election as RIBA President – as we go to press nominations are still open. We wish him luck!

Paul Vick is another West London-based architect who works in West London and elsewhere, his practice boasts a 100% planning permission



Theatre and ICT Centre, Brentford by Paul Vick Architects



Assael Architects Riverside Studios

Wandsworth as well as further afield.

The practice designed a new Theatre and ICT centre in Brentford and have worked in Leicester Square, Brook Street, Oxford and Smithfield Market.

Paul believes in the power of knowledge, art and technology to achieve a better forward looking world. He says "We use these to resolve problems clients have which are often historically accepted. The practice considers that the green agenda is resolvable and that there are always beautiful and ethical dimensions to make better buildings."

Paul uses his skills for charity too. He memorably contributed to Article 25 by participating in the 10x10 Drawings project, helping raise £90,000 in 2013.

Paul loves West London. "West London is often underestimated for its diversity, entrepreneurialism and creativity."

"West London is a hub with great connections globally, and a local population that is international and urbane. And, of course, we are all about helping make our clients' businesses thrive – and bring beauty into the equation!"

Architecture, a key part of the creative industries, is strong in West London, and likely to stay that way. With now our most globally famous icon – TV Centre – being reimaged by yet another award-winner – Paul Monaghan of Alford Hall Monaghan Morris – the love affair is set to continue for some time.



Above: Paul Vick



TV Centre proposed forecourt regeneration