

People-focused *workplace design* award

Winner
British Heart Foundation

Winner
Financial Conduct Authority



The two winners of this new category couldn't be more different – hence why our judges just couldn't choose between them. First up: the British Heart Foundation (BHF). In 2016 the charity had a growing headcount in its London head office and

was rapidly running out of space. The changing world of work also demanded that the organisation enabled people to work more flexibly and collaboratively. And so the Smarter Working project was born.

Everyone was asked their opinion about current working practices, environment and culture. People said they wanted a better mix of formal and informal meeting spaces, areas to focus, and to work in a more agile way. They also said they wanted more access to leaders.

And so the exec team led by example, giving up their offices right at the beginning of the project and embracing the new ethos by sitting at different desks. Chief executive Simon Gillespie was the first to leave his office and starred in a video to promote Smarter Working to staff. Over a third of managers attended Leading the Way to Smarter Working workshops.

A weekly 'Smart cookies' email kept people up to date and a Yammer group enabled staff to ask questions and catch up with the latest project news. Move schedules were shared as early as possible and initial visuals were shared through an exhibition in BHF's café. 'Cut the clutter' parties were held, with other comms activity including posters to help people get used to the idea of shared desks and a tongue-in-cheek, humorous health and safety video.

Since the project began, the organisation has achieved a 60% headcount increase and only an 11% desk increase, saving £748,055 per annum, or £3,740,275 over five years. Overall, teams were 70% positive about the changes, with some great feedback from individual employees flooding in.

"This is never going to be one of the 10 coolest offices in the UK, but it doesn't need to be," one of our judges commented, with the whole panel agreeing that this was solid, organisation-enhancing stuff.

"Really positive output that really met the aims they set out to achieve," said another judge, adding that they were impressed with the charity's thinking about what the next couple of years would bring in terms of smart working and reducing the numbers working in the office. Whatever the future brings, we bet the BHF will be ready.

The Financial Conduct Authority's (FCA) relocation from Canary Wharf to the Olympic Park in Stratford was the biggest headquarters move in Europe in 2018. No wonder, then, that our judges described it as the "gold standard" of people-focused workplace design and as "exceptional work". A massive investment was made by anyone's standards. But this doesn't detract from it, our judging panel felt.

The key to success was this not being 'lift and shift'. Rather HR worked with the FCA's ExCo and board to push the boundaries of what the workplace could do. In designing the new building the FCA had three guiding principles: to take inspiration from the 2012 Olympics and its legacy (our judges loved this, particularly the description of divisional change agents as 'move makers'); to accelerate the organisation's wellbeing agenda and create a more collaborative and inclusive workplace; and to drive sustainability.

Yet the decision to move was not a popular one with many staff, not least because 70% had an increased travel time and because Canary Wharf was a safe, known environment near many of the institutions the FCA regulates. Move makers were critical to easing these concerns, as was HR leading an all-staff consultation process. Colleagues were encouraged to take time during working hours to see the site, and there was a 'model office' in Canary Wharf so colleagues could try out their new workspaces.

Detailing all of the features of the new, state-of-the-art offices would take many more words than available here. Colleagues were upgraded to hybrid laptops, with the new technology much lighter so staff could work from home or around the variety of office settings created.

Emphasis was placed on movement, with the layout designed to encourage people to be more active. The office incorporates living walls and natural foliage, and on the third floor (the Wellbeing floor) there is a gym and rooms for health initiatives such as flu vaccinations, pregnancy clinics and health assessments. There is a multi-faith/contemplation room, while the parenting room offers mothers an

opportunity to express for breastfeeding or visiting parents a place to change their baby.

Results include 87% of staff agreeing they were satisfied with the access to outdoor spaces, an impressive reduction in printing, and turnover remaining static over the whole period of the move. A worthy joint-winner indeed.



Shortlisted

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Everton Football Club

Microgaming