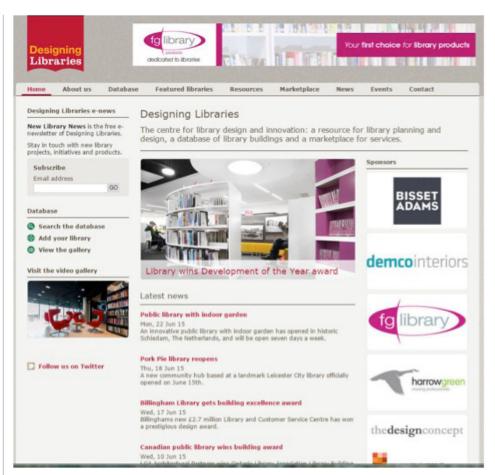# Designing Libraries

The gateway to library buildings past, present, future

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What is it?

Designing Libraries provides a freely accessible resource for everyone interested in design and innovation in libraries. It is a not-for-profit organisation funded through sponsorship from companies with an interest in building development and design.

SCONUL along with CILIP (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals), SCL (Society of Chief Librarians) and SLA (School Library Association) are partner organisations and all are members of the Advisory Board. Given the nature of the Designing Libraries enterprise, the SCONUL representative on the Advisory Board is drawn from the User Experience and Success Strategy Group and is currently Liz Waller from the University of York. The Advisory Board meets twice a year in May and November.

A bit of history

The Designing Libraries project in the UK came into being in 2003 as part of the Government's strategy for the future development of the public library service in England over the next ten years. The pilot website was initially granted funds from the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) to go live and this was carried out by the Information Services department of the University of Wales Aberystwyth under the direction of CILIP's Library Buildings Project Steering Group. At a later date the SCONUL database of library buildings was also added to the Designing Libraries database. Designing Libraries is now a self-financing not-for-profit organisation funded through sponsorship from such companies as Bisset Adams, Demco Interiors and Harrow Green.

Features

Designing Libraries has a lot to offer, whether you are thinking about a new library or refurbishment and want to get to grips with the latest developments,
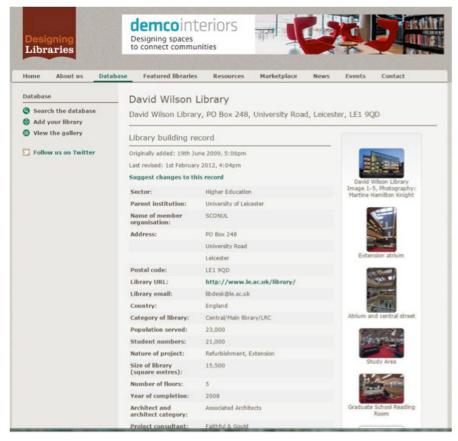
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are looking for suppliers or just want to keep up to speed with library buildings such as the new £11m steel clad building for the Middle East Centre at St Anthony's College, Oxford.

- Designing Libraries **Database** will give you key facts about a development, the David Wilson Library at the University of Leicester entry can be seen below. Key facts can include such gems as student numbers, m2, architect, interior designer and number of study spaces. Many entries also provide photos – inspiration if you are trying to identify libraries to visit.

- **Featured libraries and case studies** is Designing Libraries' own selection of library design projects from around the world, and individual library case studies from sponsors and advertisers.

- **Resources** is a directory of web links and sources of information on libraries, library organisations, library buildings, library design, technology and innovation.

- **Marketplace** is a guide to architects, designers, library furniture suppliers, technology companies and other providers of products and services to libraries.

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- **News** will keep you up to date with new libraries across the world
- **Events** lists selected events relevant to the sector

Contributing to Designing Libraries

Designing Libraries is always keen to add new library records to the database, particularly from the academic sector. You can add your project to the site from this link http://www.designinglibraries.org.uk/index.asp?PageID=15 – just look for the Help documents on the right to download the pdf which will tell you what information you will need to gather before you begin to create a new online record.

As you will see from the news feature above, Designing Libraries is also keen to report on new buildings or developments. If you think you can add to the news content you can contact Designing Libraries via the following page http://www.designinglibraries.org.uk/index.asp?PageID=74. Or if you are organising an event relevant to Designing Libraries why not get in touch to have it featured in the Events listing?

Future plans

Over the past few years the main site has been developed to increase the number of news stories and a wide selection of case studies – along with a more international perspective. Work still in progress is the development of the 'Architects Archive', inviting major architectural practices to submit designs and plans for some of the world's iconic new library buildings and interiors.

Currently the database of library buildings is held on a separate server with its own search mechanism. The plan is to transcribe the database records into 'natural language' records within the main site content, making the entire site searchable by keyword, using Google search. There will also be a new

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searchable image gallery with photos drawn from site content. These are both considerable development projects for a 2016 launch.

Contacts

You can keep up to date by registering for the free e-mail newletter from the Designing Libraries home page www.designinglibraries.org.uk. If you would like to comment on Designing Libraries or suggest developments for the future you can do this via the website or contact me: liz.waller@york.ac.uk.