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STARTER FOR

WOODFORD ARCHITECTURE AND INTERIORS LAUNCHED AS WE WELCOMED IN 2010, SO WE SPEAK TO CO-FOUNDER GAVIN WOODFORD ABOUT HOW THE DECADE WAS FOR THEM



HOW WAS YOUR COMPANY LOOKING BACK AT THE START OF 2010?

Woodford Architecture and Interiors was conceived in 2010. After having worked in Devon for a number of years, Sarah [Watson, co-founder] and I wanted to develop our own practice to specialise in creating sensitive and refined architecture and interiors.

WAS THE PERIOD 2010-2019 A GOOD ONE FOR YOU GENERALLY?

It has been a great period of design for us; one of our major achievements in the last decade has been the development of our design portfolio and with that the ability to showcase our skills, from the design of some exceptional new homes to the transformations of some notable listed buildings.

WHAT KIND OF TRENDS DID WE SEE COME AND GO?

We love using earthy tones which have a beautiful warmth to them that can be both sophisticated and homely, so we are delighted to see cold, high gloss finishes going out of trend – and we are delighted our clients agree. We love to create layered architecture and interiors. This can be done with curated collections of art, objects, niches, wall hangings, and even rugs; so minimal, austere interiors are not for us as spaces to live in.

WHICH TRENDS FOR YOU WILL STAND THE TEST OF TIME?

In the development of our work with both new houses and historic and listed buildings we look to retain the patina of age whilst facilitating practical new uses. Examples of this are the reuse of a granite trough, left unused and converting that into a feature in a boot room; another example is the repurposing of an unused workbench to create a unique bathroom vanity feature. Investing in a classic or timeless item that is well made by a reputable company is always a smart choice, the item will hold its value and may even become collectible in the future! Skilful layering of old and new is something that will endure the test of time.

HAS WOODFORD ARCHITECTURE AND INTERIORS EVOLVED IN ANY WAY OVER THE LAST DECADE?

We have evolved with each new project and each new project challenge. We love the little details, materials and lighting and we love responding to our clients' brief by developing a design that does everything that they originally asked for and more with the aim of surpassing their expectations.

Another of our major achievements has been the evolution of our happy and highly talented team, and this makes coming into work every day a pleasure.

WHAT KIND OF PROJECTS WERE YOU TAKING ON?

We set up the practice to focus on residential architecture and interiors; so the type of projects has largely remained the same, but over the years the scope and scale of the projects has developed enormously as clients have confidence in our ability to work on our specialist area of one off houses and holiday homes. With this type of work there is a wealth of opportunity to consider designs and materials that bring a richness to everyday life and that is very rewarding.

IF YOU HAD TO PICK 3, WHICH PROJECTS STAND OUT FOR YOU?

Tricky! If I had to... as we speak, we are just completing an outstanding family home on the Cornish coast in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Key to the development of this new home was a requirement to protect the intrinsic and enhance the character and beauty of its stunning countryside setting and create an energy efficient home. A sensitive landscaping design was developed in conjunction with the house to restore land that had been left dilapidated prior to our clients purchasing the site. The use of a palette of traditional materials and sensitively designed landscape proposals ensure that the design responds to its setting. We plan to submit this project for the RIBA house of the year awards. Last year we completed the renovation and refurbishment of one of Exeter's finest Grade II* listed houses. As part of our full architectural and interior design service we were commissioned to provide new joinery designs, bathroom designs, ironmongery and lighting specification and project management.

Our plans for the restoration and refurbishment of a distinctive and significant Strawberry Hill style former Vicarage where we were able to secure the approval of a new swimming pool should also be on a shortlist. This project included the restoration and refurbishment of the many important listed features and new joinery and furniture throughout the house that have invigorated this family home with a new lease of life.

WHAT KIND OF TRENDS SHOULD WE LOOK OUT FOR IN 2020?

New technologies in interior furnishings, such as performance fabrics that are water and stain resistant, mean they are super durable around children and pets. New architectural materials that recycle waste will become increasingly more readily available in exciting colours, patterns and textures. Not a trend, but a movement: sustainability awareness is now at the forefront of new architecture and design.

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