



ST GEORGE'S HALL

St George's Hall has been described as 'the finest example of neo-classical architecture in the world'. This magnificent building was the result of a design competition to build a concert hall in Liverpool City to host musical festivals. The competition was won by a young architect, Harvey Lonsdale Elmes, based in London, who then went on to win a second competition to build new Assize Courts. When funding proved difficult for the concert hall the decision was made to combine the two functions into one impressive building.

Liverpool City Council decided to make St George's Hall 'the people of Liverpool's building' and to present the Hall as a Visitor Interpretation Centre. As such the building goes beyond being 'just another museum'. The Hall aims to appeal to all and particular attention has been given to visitors with access difficulties.

When the Hall re-opened on St George's Day 2007 by HRH Prince Charles The Prince of Wales, it marked the end of a ten year planning and restoration programme, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund at a cost of £ 23 Million. This extensive refurbishment has required the highest standards of design and craftsmanship and brings together a team of consultants, project managers and suppliers, lead by heritage architects, Purcell Miller Tritton.



Custom made oak cash desk
© Vonsternberg



Alcoves are illuminated by back-lit boxes with the Hall's logo in Stainless Steel
© Vonsternberg



Branded material and merchandise formed part of the retail identity.

At the request of the Liverpool Culture Company's Head of Heritage Development Graham Boxer, BroomeJenkins were invited to design, manage and implement the Hall's visitor shop located in the basement of this Grade I listed building and world heritage site. Following an initial briefing meeting on site it became clear that the space identified by the architects for the shop was not going to work from either an operational or customer point of view. The location earmarked was not visible to approaching customers and too narrow. Therefore it was our view it would fail commercially.

Following presentations to the various stakeholders, BroomeJenkins offered a solution which utilised a larger area identified for use as a cloakroom. Combining the functions of both shop (open during working hours only) and a cloakroom (required for evening events) provided the client with a dual function space which would work.

Due to the complexity of accessing the building and with storing large scale materials on site, the shop elements were designed to be built as individual pieces which then only required fitting on site. By designing the fixtures in this way, they could be built 'off site' and then shipped in. Our approach aided the design development process and enabled the design to be monitored at the supplier's works. Quality issues were dealt with before the units were fitted thereby overcoming potential snagging issues - post installation.

Each piece was also designed to address issues of contractor access and on-site parking. All elements were demountable or pre-assembled (dependent on their size) to overcome narrow entry points and doorways. Although the shop space provided many challenges such as deep alcove's which would be difficult to shop, exposed brickwork which would absorb the light, and a space that had to operate on two levels, the final solution is a huge success.

As part of the programme to create the retail element of the hall, our work included the creation of an identity which is derived from the rare Minton tiled floor in the main hall. Creating a marque and a manual for use, the identity is now being used as a destination brand. As for the shop, the space is commercially exceeding our client's expectations.

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