



# A fit-out that's Europe's first to the WELL Building Standard

Fit-out specialist and FIS member QOB Interiors has delivered a 'gold' level performance in the fit-out for multi-disciplinary engineer Cundall at One Carter Lane, Europe's first building to gain the WELL Building Standard (WELL).

Opposite St Paul's Cathedral in the heart of the City of London, the 15,400 sq. ft office at One Carter Lane takes up the entire ground floor of the mid-nineties building and provides new workspaces for more than 180 employees. Cundall chose to create an exemplar project, not only to ensure its staff would be as happy, healthy and productive as possible, but also as a showcase for its clients and collaborators.

As part of this aim, the company pursued the WELL Building Standard (WELL), a performance-based system administered by the International WELL Building Institute (IWBI) which measures human health and wellness, based on seven categories of building performance: air, water, light, nourishment, fitness, comfort and mind.

From a design by architects Studio Ben Allen, the project saw QOB Interiors deliver the challenging Cat B commercial office fit-out to stringent tolerances with

a focus on the most sustainable and environmentally-friendly materials. Every aspect of the fit-out – from materials used to lighting, heating and open space – had to be thoroughly considered as to the impact on post-occupancy use before the design was finalised.

The specification of materials under WELL meant only those that had a very low concentration of formaldehydes and volatile organic compounds (VOC) could be used. The VOC rating of all materials had to be between negligible and zero, ensuring that office fixtures, fittings and fabric do not expel harmful chemical or organic emissions. Medical research has shown that indoor air quality has a major influence on the health, wellbeing and productivity of building occupants.

At the Cundall offices, all furnishings, insulation, interior paint, adhesives, oils, waxes, varnishes and finishes were specified for low or

zero VOC, formaldehyde and toxic content. To maintain the air quality in high density areas, variable volume air distribution is controlled by CO2 sensors.

Natural materials including solid oak cupboard doors and edging, birch ply desks and timber shelving were installed by QOB throughout the office while a recycled, woven nylon floor tile from Swedish manufacturer Bolon was specified for the flooring and fitted with a low VOC adhesive.

With the constant monitoring and testing of indoor air quality under WELL so critical throughout the fit-out, QOB had to ensure that there were precautions in place to isolate works areas to ensure any dust was contained, preventing contamination entering into other areas of the site. In addition, dust covers were used on light fittings and airtight plastic covers on all grilles, filters, ducts and fan coil units.

Commenting on the fit-out, David Phillips, project manager at QOB Interiors, said: "This has been one of the most rewarding fit-outs we have done. The WELL Building Standard was uncharted territory

for all of us, but we had the support of an excellent design team and a collaborative client which resulted in us being able to deliver the fit-out to an exceptionally high standard and within a tight timescale."

Other wellbeing measures in this environmentally-aware fit-out carried out by QOB included the installation of a water filtration system which goes beyond the normal level of potable water and is tested against dissolved minerals, chemicals and microbes. Two ventilated living green walls of reindeer moss were another feature, improving air quality and increasing occupant comfort, while efficient lighting had infra-red occupancy detection and daylight dimming controls.

Such are the impressive sustainability credentials of the Cundall offices at One Carter Lane that the project has also achieved BREEAM Excellent and SKA Gold ratings.

At the One Carter Lane office, the QOB Group has helped Cundall create an office environment which will set a high benchmark for the workplace, putting people's health and wellbeing at the very heart of the building.

