

Summer 2025

JDDK.co.uk

Millmount.



Martin House
Children's Hospice

THE DISCOVERY

Healthier, Safer Homes

Reshaping the responsibilities of landlords in maintaining safe, healthy living conditions for tenants under Awaab's Law.

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THE DESIGN

Small Change, Big Difference

Making the most of the £100m government funding for hospice upgrades and refurbishments.

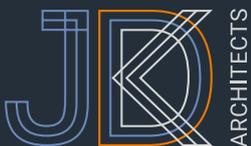
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THE DELIVERY

A People-and-Pet-Centred Approach

Creating a well-designed veterinary practice to support its emotional and operational demands.

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DISCOVER
DESIGN
DELIVER

A word from Millmount

At JDDK, we believe that design is never just about buildings. It's about the lives lived within them. Whether it's supporting a child in hospice care, a vet treating a beloved pet, or a resident looking for a safe, warm home, our work is rooted in real people, and the spaces they need to thrive.

This edition of Millmount reflects just that. From October, Awaab's Law will come into force, holding landlords accountable for ensuring safe living conditions. It's a landmark moment, and one we're proud to be preparing our housing clients for. Safe homes aren't optional – they're a basic right.

We also explore how thoughtful design transforms veterinary practices into calmer, more functional environments for the people and animals who rely on them every day. And with the government's latest hospice funding, we're reminded that even small budgets can make a big difference, something we've always championed at JDDK.

We're also proud to share some project updates from across the region. From the charming Bamburgh Walled Garden Café to the much-needed new homes in Thornaby and the start on site at Hebburn Extra Care, each project reflects our commitment to purposeful, community-focused design. Our restoration work at Keelmen's Hospital is a particular highlight – a site with deep heritage and huge potential.

We hope you find inspiration in the stories we've shared, which is a reflection of the people, places, and partnerships that continue to shape our work and remind us why we do what we do. We hope you enjoy learning about our recent projects as much as we enjoyed working on them.



Nicky Watson,
Director at JDDK Architects

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PROJECT UPDATES

Building the future of palliative care at **Martin House**

Building the future of palliative care at Martin House

Martin House Hospice has supported children with palliative care needs since the 1980s. As the needs of children with life-limiting conditions continue to evolve, so too must the facilities that support them. That's why Martin House embarked on an ambitious redevelopment project to ensure the best possible care for its young residents.

We are delighted to share that Phase 1, the construction of the new Children's Unit, has now been successfully completed. Delivered in partnership with Meldrum, this vital space is already providing a comforting environment for children and their families. It has been a tremendous effort from everyone involved to reach this milestone, and we are incredibly proud to be part of such an important project.

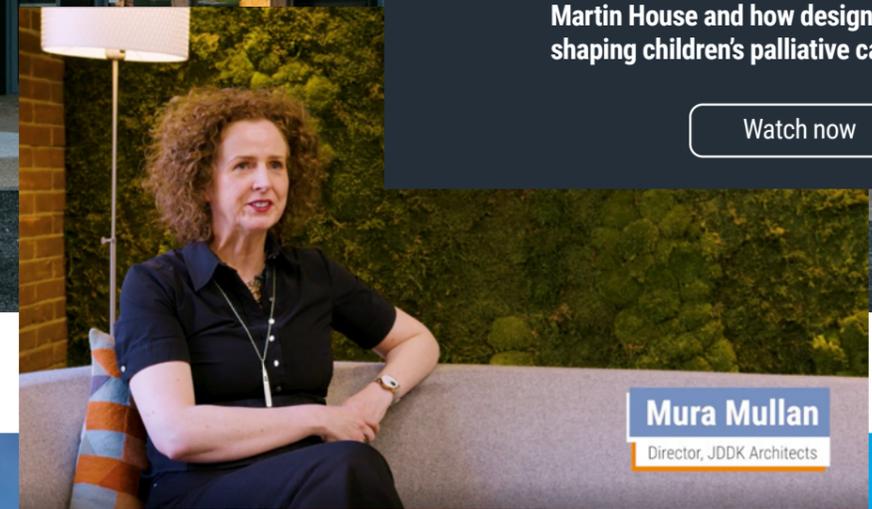
With this phase complete, our attention now turns to the second phase, which comprises of the newbuild Education Block, including a hydro-therapy pool, reconfiguration of the existing Children's Unit into the Wellbeing Wing and the refurbishment and extension of the existing Adolescent Wing. This next step ensures that Martin House can continue to offer exceptional care for young people as they transition into adulthood.

We look forward to seeing this next stage take shape and to continuing our work with Martin House to enhance this invaluable hospice for those who need it most.

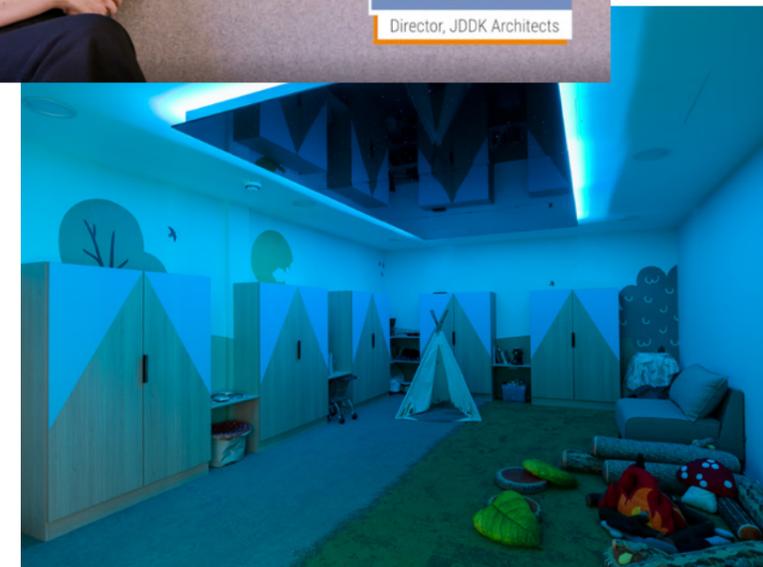


Watch Mura talk through our vision for the next chapter of Martin House and how design is shaping children's palliative care.

Watch now



Mura Mullan
Director, JDDK Architects



Hebburn Extra Care housing **breaks ground**



Hebburn Extra Care, a flagship development for Karbon Homes and South Tyneside Council, officially started on site in September 2024.

The £27 million project, delivered in partnership with Robertsons, will comprise of 95 apartment units, including 75 one-bed homes and 20 two-bed homes. Key features include secure internal garden courtyards to benefit residents with dementia and intuitive layouts with no dead-end corridors to enhance wayfinding.

Mura Mullan, Director at JDDK, says: "It's fantastic to see Hebburn Extra Care taking shape. This development will set the benchmark for two further developments to follow in the coming years using the same principles and approach as this project, creating much needed supported living accommodation for residents with a care need."

With construction now underway, we look forward to bringing this much-needed accommodation to life.



Historic charm meets sustainability in new Bamburgh hidden treasure

The Bamburgh Walled Garden Café has been successfully completed in collaboration with the Armstrong family of Bamburgh and Cragside Estates, bringing a vibrant new addition to the heart of Bamburgh village. Designed to complement the area's year-round tourist trade, the café offers a welcoming space for visitors and local residents alike to enjoy.

Developed from an approved planning application by David and Jane Darcy Architects, the café features a spacious outdoor terrace, a landscaped garden with a labyrinth and sensory garden and an adventure playground, all set within the historic walled garden. The development also includes a separate area for a Changing Places Toilet. This facility provides additional equipment and space for people who are not able to use a standard accessible toilet. The area includes parking for users of the Changing Places Toilet.

Nicky Hodgson, Associate Director at JDDK, said: "This is a hidden gem of a project that will boost tourist trade by sitting

hand in hand with Bamburgh Castle at the other end of the village. With over 10 million people visiting Northumberland every year, the café will be a valuable addition to the region's visitor experience."

Sustainability was a key focus in the café's design, incorporating photovoltaic panels on the roof, high-performance glazing, and air-source heat pumps. The structure also utilises bio-based materials such as oak trusses and larch cladding, ensuring both environmental efficiency and aesthetic harmony with its surroundings.

Bamburgh Walled Garden Café provides a unique and inviting destination for both locals and visitors, enriching Bamburgh's historic charm while supporting its tourism economy. The café was officially opened in April by celebrity chef and TV personality, North East native 'Hairy Biker' Si King.



PROJECT UPDATES

Affordable houses completed in Thornaby

The successful completion of the Westdale Road project in Thornaby has transformed the site of the former Anson House and Hudson House tower blocks into 37 high quality, affordable rental homes. Developed by Thirteen Housing Group in collaboration with T. Manners & Sons Ltd, this scheme was designed to address local housing needs while enhancing the urban fabric of the area.

Located near Mitchell Avenue and adjacent to Thornaby Primary School, the layout integrates into the existing street network. A mix of traditional brick built single- and two-storey homes now creates a strong streetscape and a welcoming sense of community. Modern design elements have been incorporated to replace the former high-rise landmark with a contemporary look featuring distinctive brick detailing and a cranked terrace design that responds to the busy junction at Thornaby town centre. A retained central tree and existing highway helped influence the design, creating a shared parking court and a communal garden for residents to enjoy.



Among the new residents is Dougie Leeming, who expressed his delight with his new bungalow. The 83-year-old said, "It's beautiful, I love everything about it" and complimented the development's location and the fresh start that comes with moving into a thoughtfully designed home.

The project commenced in 2019 with planning submissions in 2020 and, despite Covid-related delays, reached completion at the end of last year. Offering a range of two-bedroom bungalows and two, three, and four-bedroom houses, the scheme caters to a broad spectrum of local needs.

Support from Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, local councillors, and other stakeholders has been key in delivering this successful development. We look forward to welcoming all new residents as they settle into these modern, sustainable homes.

“It's beautiful, I love everything about it”

*Dougie,
Resident*



Keelmen's Hospital refurbishment moves forward with **key milestones ahead**

We are delighted to be working with the Tyne and Wear Building Preservation Trust and Newcastle City Council to rescue and restore the historic Keelmen's Hospital – one of Newcastle's most significant heritage buildings at risk. Built in 1701 and granted Grade II* listed status in 1954, the site is undergoing a comprehensive redevelopment to bring it back into residential use, with the support of Historic England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Overlooking Newcastle's Quayside since the early 18th century, Keelmen's Hospital originally served as an almshouse for retired and ill Keelmen, who operated the wooden boats that transported coal along the River Tyne. The current project aims to sensitively refurbish the historic structure into 20 affordable one- and two-bedroom apartments, including two designed for accessibility.

The planning permission and Listed building consent application was submitted to the local authority on 31st March 2025, marking a crucial step in securing the necessary permissions to move forward. Meanwhile, the project team is preparing for the next major phase – a second-stage National Lottery Heritage Fund application in early August, which, if successful, will secure £4.5 million to support the construction phase.

Samantha Dixon, Associate and Conservation Architect at JDDK and project lead, said: "Keelmen's Hospital is one of the few surviving buildings of Newcastle's 18th century industrial past – it tells an important part of the story of the city's mining heritage and longstanding commitment to social housing. Energy efficiency, accessibility and long-term sustainability are at the heart of the design. We're excited to be creating a welcoming new entrance from the north, improving access for all residents, and working towards a scheme that meets both heritage and housing needs."

The team has undertaken in-depth research to refine key design elements, including new windows and doors, and a new bridge and entrance. Through extensive historical analysis and precedent studies, JDDK and its collaborators, including building physics specialists and heritage conservators, are ensuring the project minimises long-term risks to the historic fabric while protecting the building's heritage significance and meeting contemporary standards.



Samantha Dixon

Associate and Conservation Architect at JDDK

Nicky Watson

Director, JDDK Architects



Watch Samantha and Nicky discuss how we're blending heritage and housing to deliver the Keelmen's Hospital restoration.

Watch now



Martin Hulse, Trust Manager at Tyne & Wear Building Preservation Trust, explained: "This is a major restoration project. JDDK has led the team with clarity, keeping everything on track and moving us through the design stages. Submitting the planning application was a big milestone – now it's about getting the approvals we need to move forward with the build. The residential aspect is especially important; creating warm, comfortable, efficient homes in a heritage setting takes real attention to detail. We're essentially pulling this building back to life, and that requires both care and precision."

A representative for Newcastle Conservation Advisory Panel (NCAP), added: "We commend all involved in bringing such carefully crafted, respectful and innovative proposals forward for what is a truly one of Newcastle's most critical built and currently undervalued heritage assets. We consider this an outstanding effort to achieve a positive outcome for an immensely important but challenging heritage asset."

With key milestones now reached, the future of Keelmen's Hospital is beginning to take shape – securing its legacy while providing much-needed homes for the city.

Awaab's Law – how landlords should prepare for the changes

Walker, Newcastle Retrofits



By Adam Vaughan, Director, Certified Passivhaus Designer, Trustmark Accredited Retrofit Coordinator

In October 2025, Awaab's Law will come into effect, reshaping the responsibilities of landlords in maintaining safe, healthy living conditions for tenants. This new legislation, named after Awaab Ishak, a two-year-old who tragically died due to prolonged exposure to mould in his home, places the onus onto landlords to proactively address damp and mould issues. At JDDK we can guide landlords, housing associations, and local authorities in preparing for these crucial changes.

Understanding Awaab's Law and its impact

Awaab's Law instructs that social landlords must investigate and remedy reported cases of damp and mould within strict timeframes. Unlike previous regulations, which provided broader requirements under the Decent Homes Standard and Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings, this law enforces clearer accountability for maintaining habitable homes. The emphasis is now on swift action and prevention, so that no tenant faces prolonged exposure to unsafe living conditions.

Many landlords may find it challenging to identify and fix these issues, often due to constraints like limited budgets or a lack of technical expertise. The causes of damp and mould can be complex, ranging from structural defects and inadequate ventilation to tenant behaviours influenced by fuel poverty. Our expertise in retrofit coordination and sustainable design can help landlords navigate these challenges.

Identifying and diagnosing damp and mould issues

Mould forms when moist air meets cold surfaces, causing condensation. Poor insulation, cold spots, and high humidity make it worse. We look at the bigger picture to identify the root causes of damp and mould. Our assessments, used successfully by Newcastle City Council and South Tyneside Council, involve a thorough investigation using advanced diagnostic tools.

These include:

- Ventilation Analysis – assessing whether airflow rates comply with building regulations and ensuring proper extraction in key areas like kitchens and bathrooms.
- Thermal Bridging Assessments – using thermal imaging to detect cold spots where condensation could form, potentially leading to mould growth.
- Humidity and Moisture Monitoring – installing data loggers to measure long-term humidity levels, helping to pinpoint recurring problem areas.
- Tenant interviews – engaging directly with residents to understand their home environment, heating habits, and potential issues related to overcrowding or overheating.

By combining these methodologies, we create a detailed diagnosis that helps landlords to find the best solutions for their properties.

Effective retrofit strategies for compliance with Awaab's Law

To meet the standards of Awaab's Law and create healthier living spaces, we prioritise strategic retrofits that effectively combat damp and mould. Our approach centres on three key areas:

1. Improving ventilation systems

Ventilation is one of the most misunderstood aspects of housing maintenance. In our experience, very few properties have ventilation that meets required standards, often due to incorrect installation, poor commissioning, or tenants inadvertently disabling fans. We often recommend decentralised continuous extract ventilation (dMEV), a low-energy system that continuously removes moist air, preventing condensation build-up. Centralised extract systems (MEV) are particularly effective in flats, reducing noise and increasing efficiency compared to individual room fans. Mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR) is an advanced system suited to new builds and deep retrofits, providing filtered fresh air while recovering heat from extracted air.

2. Enhancing insulation and reducing thermal bridging

Older buildings, especially concrete-framed flats, are prone to cold spots where condensation can form. Addressing these issues might involve installing continuous insulation to avoid cold areas. Replacing old single-glazed windows and doors with high-performance ones helps reduce condensation. If external insulation isn't an option, adding internal wall insulation can prevent cold surfaces that lead to mould.

3. Tenant education and engagement

While Awaab's Law places responsibility on landlords, educating tenants about proper home ventilation and heating practices is essential. Many issues arise when ventilation systems are turned off due to noise, energy use, or lack of understanding. We advocate for clear user guides and training to provide tenants with straightforward instructions on maintaining proper airflow and managing moisture levels. Smart monitoring systems, which alert landlords when fans are turned off, help ensure continuous ventilation without intrusive inspections. Community engagement programs, such as hosting workshops or information sessions, encourage tenant participation in maintaining healthy homes.

Challenges in managing new builds vs. older housing stock

The approach to damp and mould prevention varies significantly between new builds and older properties. New builds are typically better insulated and more airtight, reducing the likelihood of condensation. However, this airtightness also means that well-designed ventilation is crucial to prevent moisture entrapment. Passivhaus standards, which we are beginning to implement, ensure optimal indoor air quality with minimal energy use. Older homes still have poor insulation, outdated ventilation, and thermal bridging issues. Retrofitting these homes needs careful planning to improve insulation while ensuring good ventilation.

Funding and compliance considerations

The financial implications of Awaab's Law will be a major concern for landlords, particularly housing associations managing large portfolios. While there is currently no dedicated government funding for compliance, some retrofit grants and energy efficiency funding (such as the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund) may support necessary upgrades.

Additionally, proactive investment in these improvements will not only ensure compliance but also reduce long-term maintenance costs and potential legal liabilities. With tenants increasingly aware of their rights regarding damp and mould, landlords who fail to act may face compensation claims and reputational damage.



Looking ahead

At JDDK, we believe that Awaab's Law presents an opportunity to redefine housing standards for the better. The lessons learned from retrofit projects and Passivhaus developments show that a well-ventilated, properly insulated home is not just about compliance – it's about long-term tenant well-being, energy efficiency, and sustainability.

By combining diagnostic assessments, strategic retrofit solutions, and tenant education, landlords can not only comply with Awaab's Law but also protect their properties from future damp and mould issues – creating healthier, longer-lasting homes.

For those looking to prepare ahead of the October 2025 deadline, we offer expert guidance on damp and mould assessments, ventilation strategies, and comprehensive retrofit planning. Together, we can create healthier, safer homes for all.

Making the most of the government's £100m hospice funding boost



By Mura Mullan,
Director at JDDK Architects

The recent announcement of £100 million in government funding for hospice upgrades and refurbishments is welcome news for the sector. For charitable hospices across the UK, this investment presents an opportunity to improve the environments in which people receive care. However, the challenge lies in making these relatively modest pots of money stretch far enough to deliver meaningful impact.

At JDDK, our approach has always been grounded in the belief that small changes can make a big difference. It was the message we took to Hospice UK last year – “small change, big difference” – and it remains a guiding principle in how we work with hospices across the country. With this latest round of funding, this ethos has never felt more relevant.

Start with a strategy

Hospices that will benefit most from this funding are those with a long-term strategy already in place. When a pot of money becomes available, whether it's big or small, having a masterplan allows for quick, effective decision-making that aligns with wider goals rather than reacting to immediate needs without considering the bigger picture.

For example, we've worked with St. Oswald's for decades to establish a clear strategy for their facility developments. This allows the hospice to make informed choices about how to use the funding as it becomes available, rather than letting short-term pressures dictate priorities. That means when money comes in, it's not just about fixing old spaces – it's about contributing to a wider transformation of the hospice environment.



Marie Curie Hospice, Glasgow

The bigger impact of smaller changes

While £100 million sounds significant, when divided among the UK's many charitable hospices, the available grants can be relatively limited – sometimes as little as £60,000 per organisation. That doesn't mean the impact has to be limited.

We've seen first-hand how small-scale refurbishments can have a profound effect on both patient and staff experience. In 2006, we worked with Marie Curie in Glasgow as part of the Kings Fund Enhancing the Healing Environment pilot programme. The hospice had a £40,000 grant to refurbish a single visitors' room. Using off-the-shelf fittings and a simple reconfiguration of the space, the result was a transformed room that significantly improved the experience for families. It was a modest intervention in financial terms, but had lasting value to those who used it.

Another example is our work at Marie Curie Edinburgh, where we extended bedroom spaces to meet modern standards and provide covered outdoor access.

This wasn't a large-scale rebuild – it was a focused change that breathed new life into the building and extended its usable life.

These are the types of projects that can and should be prioritised under the current funding – projects that don't require major construction but that still elevate comfort, dignity, and usability for patients, families, and staff.

“
There's no one-size-fits-all solution in hospice design. Every organisation has its own challenges and character.”

Look beyond bricks and mortar

The best hospice environments are those that communicate care the moment someone walks through the door. That might be through something as simple as rethinking the reception area, to creating a more welcoming arrival experience, or relocating a nurses' station to improve visibility and efficiency.

These design tweaks don't need to be costly, but they speak volumes. A well-maintained, thoughtfully arranged space shows people, whether they're patients, visitors, or staff, that their experience matters. It creates a sense of being valued and cared for, and that emotional reassurance is just as important as clinical functionality.

At JDDK, we encourage all our hospice partners to think in these human terms. It's not always about new buildings or major refurbishments; sometimes the biggest improvement is simply about better using what you already have.



Marie Curie Hospice, Edinburgh

Refurbishment as a sustainable choice

While sustainability might not be the first thing that comes to mind with refurbishment funding, it's worth remembering that maintaining and improving existing buildings is a sustainable act. When we extend the life of a hospice by adapting it to modern needs, we're reducing waste, minimising carbon impact, and making the best use of public money.

There are, of course, tangible sustainability upgrades to consider too – replacing windows, improving insulation, upgrading heating systems. Many of these improvements are eligible for government funding and can help reduce running costs over time, freeing up more resources for direct care.

Design as a collaborative process

What makes a refurbishment project successful isn't just the design itself – it's the relationships behind it. Our long-standing partnerships with organisations like St Oswald's and Marie Curie mean we're able to respond quickly, understand the context, and suggest interventions that are both practical and aligned with long-term needs.

For any hospice approaching a project like this, engaging with architects early and collaboratively is key. We don't just draw up plans – we help clients think through their goals, constraints, and future ambitions. That means even with a limited budget, every pound is working as hard as it can.



St Oswald's Hospice Family Room

Lessons from the sector

One of the things we love about working with hospices is the strength of community across the sector. At events like Hospice UK, we see that in action – organisations sharing ideas, case studies, and lessons learned. That spirit of collaboration is essential, particularly when resources are tight.

There's no one-size-fits-all solution in hospice design. Every organisation has its own challenges and character. But by sharing what's worked, whether it's a reimagined visitor room or an improved staff break area, we all contribute to better, more compassionate spaces for everyone.

Looking ahead

Hospices across the UK continue to face huge pressures, not just in maintaining their buildings, but in funding staff and essential services. But what we do have now is an opportunity to make a visible, immediate difference in the places that mean so much to so many.

By taking a thoughtful, strategic approach, by prioritising design that enhances experience, working with trusted partners, and focusing on small interventions that deliver big value, we can make sure this round of funding isn't just a short-term fix, but part of a long-term legacy of care.

At JDDK, we're proud to play a part in that journey. Whether it's transforming a single room or rethinking an entire site, we believe design can and should reflect the compassion at the heart of hospice care. And with the right mindset, even the smallest investment can create spaces that support dignity and comfort when it matters most.

Boosting technical excellence and team retention

Design that delivers commercial success for veterinary practices



Nicky Watson,
RIBA, Director at JDDK Architects

A successful veterinary space isn't just about top-tier clinical care – it's about creating an environment that works for everyone who steps through the door. From anxious pet owners to hardworking veterinary teams, a well-designed facility needs to balance efficiency, comfort, and functionality.

At JDDK, we specialise in designing veterinary spaces that support both animal well-being and business success. By focusing on intuitive layouts, stress-reducing environments, and seamless workflow integration, we help veterinary practices operate smoothly while enhancing the client, patient and staff experience.

Here, we explore how our people-and-pet-centred approach creates veterinary spaces that are not only welcoming and effective but also commercially sustainable.



DWR, Cambridge



DWR, Cambridge

Essential design considerations for pets and their people

At JDDK, we design veterinary practices and referral hospitals with people and animals in mind equally. A well-designed veterinary space isn't just about clinical efficiency; it's about reducing stress for pets, creating a welcoming and calming experience for owners, and ensuring that staff can work effectively. Our approach considers everything from workflow and hygiene to natural light, soundproofing, and staff welfare, all of which contribute to a practice's long-term commercial success.

A key part of veterinary design is zoning – making sure that different functions within the practice are clearly separated. Public areas, like reception and waiting rooms, should feel welcoming and calm, while also being distinct from clinical areas. We will always advise our clients to design in separate waiting areas (and ideally separate consulting and treatment rooms) for dogs and cats because many animals are already anxious when they arrive, and keeping species apart helps reduce their, and their owners', stress.

The flow of movement through the building is just as important. The layout should allow owners, staff, and animals to move intuitively through the space without bottlenecks or stressful interactions. Consultation rooms should be private yet accessible, allowing vets to work efficiently while making pet owners feel comfortable discussing concerns. Treatment and surgery spaces, meanwhile, need to be meticulously planned to support smooth processes. One of the biggest challenges we solve is designing routes that let distressed animals be moved discreetly – particularly in end-of-life cases – so that their journey through the building is as calm as possible. Soundproofing is another vital factor; barking dogs, medical equipment, and general noise can create a stressful environment if not carefully managed, so we use acoustic solutions to keep the space as peaceful as possible.

Lighting plays a big role in shaping the atmosphere of a practice. We prioritise natural light wherever possible because it makes the environment more comfortable and welcoming for both staff and clients. However, in treatment rooms, we carefully balance daylight with specialist artificial lighting that provides the clarity needed for medical procedures. Striking this balance is essential to ensuring both clinical precision and psychological comfort for those using the space.

“
It's about reducing stress for pets, creating a welcoming and calming experience for owners, and ensuring that staff can work effectively.”

Enhancing staff wellbeing for boosted retention

We also place a huge emphasis on psychological comfort for staff welfare. Veterinary work is emotionally and physically demanding, and a well-designed practice or hospital should provide dedicated spaces where staff can work quietly or recharge. We incorporate break rooms, private offices, confidential meeting or telephone space, often using biophilic design principles proven to enhance wellbeing. Some of our most forward-thinking clients are now investing in wellness areas for their teams, recognising that burnout is a real challenge in the industry. Creating thoughtful, comfortable staff spaces make a tangible difference to the long-term success of a practice.

Another crucial element is capacity planning for specialist machinery. Veterinary practices and referral hospitals in particular, require highly specific equipment, which needs to be factored into the spatial layout and infrastructure. This ensures there is adequate space for fitting out, in use and for maintenance, power supply, and ventilation to support them. This is particularly important in referral hospitals, where advanced diagnostic, imaging and surgical capabilities must be seamlessly integrated without disrupting the overall flow of the practice.

When we took on a new facility project for DWR, we worked closely with their team, to refine how we approach these challenges. They shared their expertise in veterinary workflows to inform our approach to space planning, equipment placement, staff circulation, and patient movement, ensuring that our designs meet the highest standards for both efficiency and care.



Wear Referrals Veterinary Hospital in Bradbury, Co Durham

Design in practice: DWR Veterinary Specialists Referral Centre, Cambridge

JDDK Architects were appointed to design the fitout of a brand new 2500msq "shell" building, on the site of the well-established DWR veterinary referral hospital.

This project began by working closely with the hospital Director and individual staff members to develop a comprehensive design brief and schedule of accommodation.

Design proposals for how the required spaces would be laid out within the building were developed, incorporating feedback from the client at every design stage. Core design principles were followed e.g. separation of clients from patient and medical areas; separation of cats and dogs (DWR have been awarded Gold-level cat-friendly clinic (CFC) accreditation by the International Society of Feline Medicine (ISFM)); flow of patients between key medical and diagnostic spaces; variation of spaces for colleagues to work in and meet; design for colleague wellbeing.

JDDK also lead the design team in the technical delivery stages of the project, producing fully coordinated and highly detailed design information for the construction of these state-of-the-art facilities.

DWR Veterinary Specialists is now one of the largest specialist multi-disciplinary veterinary referral centres in Europe.



Vets for Pets, Washington



DWR, Cambridge

Delivering commercial success through design

Every veterinary practice we work on is different. Some are small, independent clinics, while others are large referral hospitals requiring complex medical spaces. That's why we take a bespoke approach to every project, collaborating closely with veterinary professionals to create spaces that work for their specific needs. Beyond meeting regulatory requirements, our goal is always to design buildings that make everyday life easier for vets, pet owners, and animals alike.

For existing veterinary practices looking to improve their spaces, we take a strategic approach to retrofitting. Many clinics operate out of older buildings and upgrading them while maintaining daily operations can be a challenge, but it is still possible to make upgrades that have a big impact. We focus on phased improvements, ensuring that critical areas like treatment rooms remain operational while other spaces are modernised. Retrofitting can involve reconfiguration of spaces, installation of new equipment, upgrading building fabric, improving accessibility, or creating a new identity for a practice, all while working within the constraints of an existing structure.

Energy efficiency is another major focus in our designs, supporting sustainability as well as budget management. We look at everything from low carbon energy generation and energy-efficient building services to sustainable building materials and drainage solutions. Durability is also key – choosing hard-wearing materials that withstand heavy use ensures the practice remains in good condition for years to come.

Ultimately, a well-designed veterinary practice is one that blends practicality with compassion. It needs to function smoothly, feel welcoming, and support both the emotional and operational demands of a busy veterinary setting. As the number of pet owners, and the lifespans on pets continue to rise, we believe that the importance of veterinary facility design is greater than ever, and it isn't just about treating animals – it's about creating a space where everyone, from pets to people, can have the best experience possible.



DWR, Cambridge

JDDK NEWS

Celebrating decades of dedication

Earlier this year, we had the pleasure of celebrating two significant long service milestones within our team. Our Personal Assistant Romanda Jobson, who has been with JDDK for 35 of our 38 years, is our longest serving member, while Mura Mullan, Director at JDDK Architects, marked 25 years of service. These achievements make us extremely proud of our team that are the foundation of our practice.

Many other members of our team are also part of the JDDK "25+ Club", including Alison Thornton-Sykes, Nicky Hodgson, Nicky Watson, and Stuart Franklin, whose dedication and long-standing contributions have played a huge role in our success.

Adam Vaughan, Director at JDDK, said, "We are incredibly proud and thankful for all of our team. Their dedication has been instrumental in the firm's success, and we're grateful to have been part of their career journeys, supporting their growth and development along the way.

"The collective experience within JDDK highlights the stability and expertise we have built over the years, benefiting both our projects and our clients. It's a reflection of our workplace that values growth and long-term commitment.

"We're also looking forward to celebrating more achievements this year, with Andy Rutherford set to join the "25+ Club" later in the year. As we continue to grow and develop our fantastic team, we remain committed to maintaining the high standards that define JDDK."



Mura celebrates 25 years with the team



The team celebrates Romanda's 35th anniversary at JDDK

Inspiring future architects with practical experience

Our work with students in the region continued for another fantastic year at JDDK Architects as we welcomed enthusiastic students from Northumbria University for the 2025 RIBA Student Mentoring sessions.

This year, we delivered a total of three sessions across three days, including a tour of our office at Millmount and a site visit to our St Oswald's Young Adults project. The programme kicked off with presentations offering an inside look at how our practice is run - from the software we use, and the skills required, to the importance of health and safety in architectural work.

Students also gained insight into the journey through our award-winning project, The Sill: National Landscape Discovery Centre. We shared how the project developed across all RIBA work stages, from initial concept

to final delivery on site, giving students a real sense of the complexity and creativity involved in bringing a building to life.

We're delighted that our team could offer these promising professionals a taste of architectural practice here in the North East. Gavin Wu, Otis Murdoch, Molly Falcus, and Stuart Franklin all shared stories about their route into architecture, what they learnt and some of the highlights of their careers so far.

This was followed by a site visit to St Oswald's Young Adults project where the students could see our work in action. Our hope is that the day sparked curiosity and emphasised the value of practical experience alongside academic study.

The RIBA mentoring programme is a key part of nurturing the next generation and showing them what architecture looks like beyond the classroom.



Northumbria University students visit Millmount

JDDK NEWS

A year of fundraising success for Children North East

JDDK Architects continued its support for Children North East, our Charity of the Year for 2024/2025, with a series of fundraising activities throughout the year. Since April 2024, in addition to our annual donation of £500 to Children North East Cowgate Hub, our team has come together to raise additional funds through a series of creative events.

Our fundraising efforts have included a variety of events over the past months. We kicked off with a Euro 24 sweepstake and followed that with a Family Fun Day at Shotton Grange, where team members enjoyed activities such as "Name the Teddy" and "Guess the Sweets in the Jar."

Later in the year, a Halloween Cake Sale and a combined Christmas Jumper and Festive Treats Sale, along with a Christmas Hamper Raffle, further boosted our support. In addition to these events, an extra donation of £400 was made in lieu of Christmas cards, boosting our overall support to an impressive total of £1,327.

To conclude a successful year fundraising for Children North East, by way of an in-kind donation, our team lent their design expertise pro-bono to create a welcoming garden at the front entrance of the Graingerville Building. In collaboration with Glenkemp Landscape Architects, the design features a winding path that invites visitors to explore the garden, a quiet seating area for relaxation and socialising, and a wildflower meadow displayed behind a Corten steel and timber retaining wall.



The team deliver donations for the Cowgate Family Hub



Christmas Jumper and Festive Treats Sale



Gavin and Molly sharing their paths into architecture at North Durham Academy

Inspiring careers in architecture at North Durham Academy

As part of our ongoing collaboration with our client, Karbon Homes, we were invited to take part in a Careers Event at North Durham Academy in Stanley. Organised by Building Self-Belief and sponsored by Karbon Homes, the event brought together a range of professionals from different industries to share their career journeys and offer insights into various professions.

Two of our team members, Gavin Wu, Architect and Molly Falcus, Trainee Architectural Technologist attended the event, taking part in three sessions with different groups of students. Each session provided an opportunity to discuss routes into architecture, the qualifications required, and the importance of work experience when considering career choices.

Gavin delivered an inspiring account of his own career journey. He recounted the challenging decision he faced after his higher secondary exams when he couldn't decide between pursuing medicine or architecture. His story described the importance of work experience

during his A-levels, a rewarding experience at a general hospital that clarified his career path, and the rigorous three-part qualification process in the UK. His journey resonated with the students – from earning his undergraduate degree in Malaysia, to obtaining a master's at Newcastle University, and finally completing his RIBA Part 3 exams –, encouraging the group to explore global opportunities beyond their immediate surroundings.

Sharing his experience of speaking to the students, Gavin said, "It was a great opportunity to share my journey into architecture with the students at North Durham Academy. Being able to explain the different routes into the profession and highlight the importance of work experience felt really valuable. The event also gave me a chance to hear inspiring stories from other professionals, which was a reminder that there are many different paths to success. I hope our insights helped the students see the wide range of possibilities available to them."

JDDK NEWS

JDDK Architects successfully appointed to new framework for heritage projects

A new professional services framework led by the North Eastern Universities Purchasing Consortium (NEUPC) in collaboration with Durham, Newcastle, Northumbria, Sunderland and Teesside Universities, is creating exciting opportunities for conservation and heritage work across the North East and further afield. Designed to support the delivery of high-quality conservation professional services, the framework provides a valuable route for North East universities, and other similar buyers of services, to access specialist experience in the sector.

We're proud to share that JDDK Architects has been named as one of just five architects appointed to this heritage-focused framework. This means we will be available for a range of conservation-led projects with the five North East Universities as well as other NEUPC members in other parts of the country.

The framework is set to run for up to six years and is part of a wider initiative to deliver best value and meaningful social impact across public sector construction and consultancy. For us, it's an exciting step forward - one that opens the door to even more work that aligns with our values and areas of expertise; strengthens our long-standing commitment to the region's architectural heritage; and gives us the opportunity to contribute to more projects that protect and enhance our historic surroundings.



New framework brings opportunities for heritage and conservation work for JDDK

Small changes, big differences: Hospice UK National Conference

In November, JDDK Architects attended the Hospice UK National Conference 2024 in Glasgow. The event's theme, "Hospice Care for All, for Now, Forever," focused on addressing key challenges within the sector, including improving equity of access, enhancing quality care, and ensuring long-term sustainability.



JDDK Architects attended the Hospice UK National Conference 2024

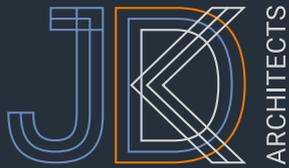
Stuart Franklin, Nicky Hodgson, Gavin Wu, and Mura Mullan, represented our team at the event, reinforcing our ongoing commitment to supporting the hospice sector through thoughtful and effective design. Since our earliest years as a practice, we have specialised in hospice and supported living projects, working with some of the UK's leading healthcare providers. Our ethos, "Small changes, big differences," is at the heart of our approach, ensuring that even the smallest design changes and details contribute to meaningful improvements in patient care, staff well-being, and overall hospice functionality. We aim to provide calm and supportive environments for patients, families, and staff, ensuring the best possible care experience.

Our work in this sector began with our award-winning design for St Oswald's Hospice in the 1980s. Since then, we have completed the design and construction of over 40 hospice projects across the UK, earning several architectural awards. These include the Building Better Healthcare Award for Patient Environment and Best End of Life Development, a RICS Award for Design Through Innovation and Sustainability, as well as recognition from the RIBA and Civic Trust Awards.

The conference was a valuable opportunity to engage with sector leaders, share insights, and reflect on how we can continue to contribute to the future of hospice care. We remain committed to applying our experience and expertise to support the ongoing development of high-quality healthcare environments.



JDDK and St Oswald's Hospice at the Hospice UK National Conference 2024



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