

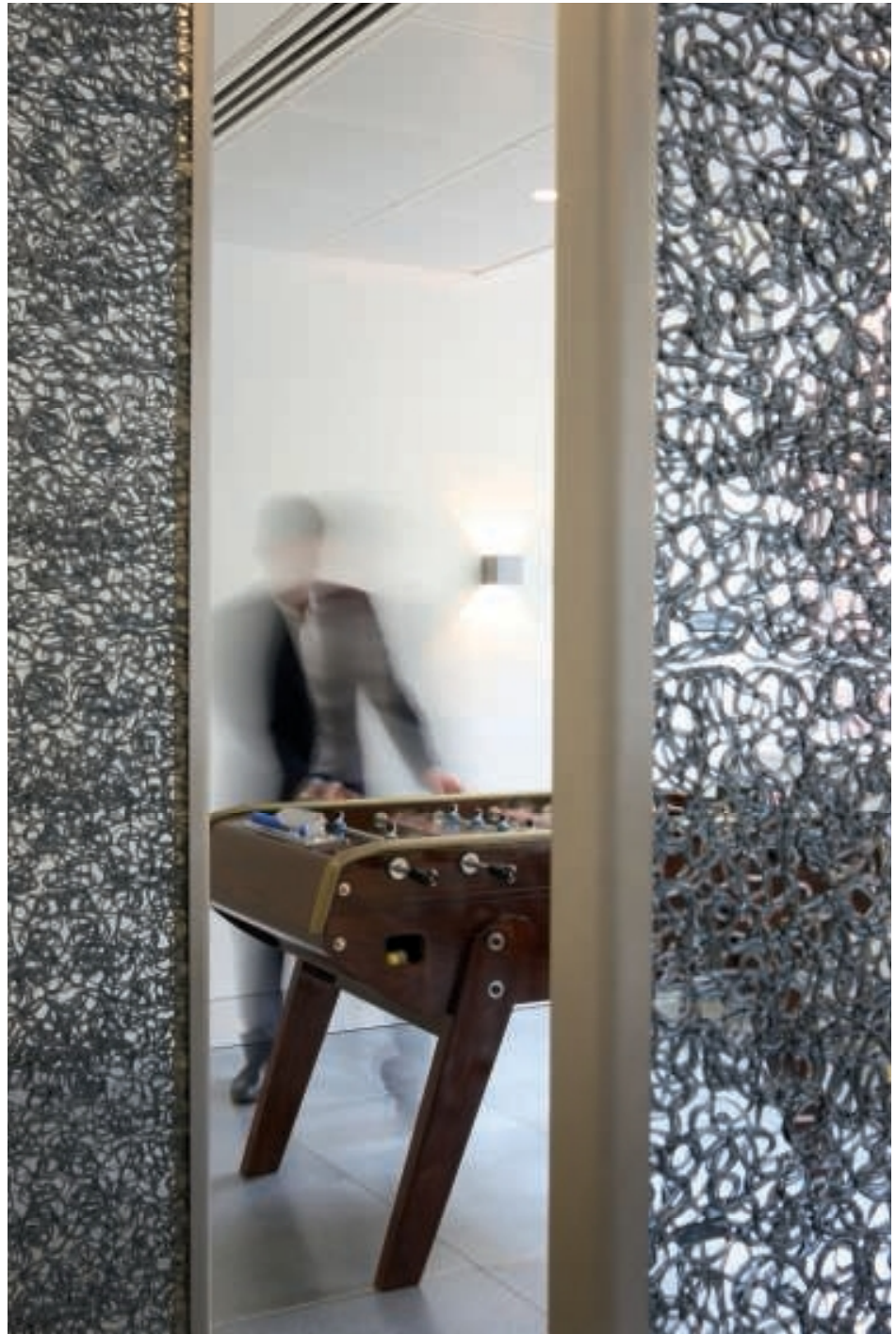
Fleet Foxes

In some ways, a leading trade magazine is a good barometer of its sector. After all, if a sector is struggling, it's only natural that its trade publication will soon follow suit. To put it into the most basic terms, no money results in a severe lack of advertising.

For this fine sector of ours, however, there is a much better barometer. Quite simply, if the major financial and legal firms are active, it follows suit that the rest of are – or soon will be. These institutions are the heartbeat of the corporate interiors market. If they are busy, somewhere along the line, so will all of us. Little trade magazines included.

It shouldn't be a surprise then that, when MoreySmith asked us to come a look at the new London headquarters of Powell Gilbert LLP – a boutique law firm specialising in intellectual property dispute resolution – we jumped at the chance. In other words, this is a good news story.

MoreySmith has designed the new Powell Gilbert London headquarters in Fleet Street. The practice led the project team, seeing the fast-track project from brief to completion within six months. ▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶



Case Study



Flexible Vitra chairs and Kusch tables enable the space to be easily reconfigured for different uses.

Moving on, we find a staff breakout space which connects the client areas with the workspace and is defined by a change in floor finish from carpet to exposed metal floor tiles. High-backed Bene Parcs sofas provide quiet booth seating – ideal for informal meetings – while café-style seating is provided by Vitra Vegetal chairs and tables by SCP. Bespoke screens made from Koziol panels define the corridor route and enclose a ‘foosball’ table.

Beyond the breakout zone is the open, bright Powell Gilbert workspace, which houses 17 cellular offices, with single and double occupancy. These facilities feature contemporary white desking with oak veneer details by Sagal and open bookshelves, to give a fresh, homely feel.

The adjacent functional, user-friendly open plan space features a fresh, bright colour scheme with turquoise fabric screens adding light to the space. Brown leather task chairs by Humanscale complement the white desks and storage.

A bespoke manifestation to the glazing runs through the office, adding a softer touch and echoing the Arts and Crafts wallpaper used in some of the meeting rooms, whilst at the far end of the office, a library creates another work setting for quiet study, with bookshelves and a large oak table topped with low-level lamps.

As a magazine we might not be the ideal barometer, but we can certainly gauge a happy client and a job well done when we see one ●



▶▶▶them that they would kick themselves if they didn't have the client suite, that this was a great opportunity. You could tell that they were very keen to have something, but weren't sure how far they should take it – they all had different ideas.'

Well, the proof is in the pudding, as they say, and – of course – Jenny was spot on. If we wanted proof in fact, the suite was being readied for a major event as we walked through. As Jenny wisely says, you don't miss what you've never had.

Moving through the impressive and wonderfully preserved entrance to the building, we move up to the Powell Gilbert home. The reception is a calm and welcoming space, with soft lighting and oak-plank flooring. This material, made from reclaimed whisky barrels, is used in various spaces throughout the client areas as both flooring and wall cladding. The slats are straightened and bonded into a solid tongue-and-groove board, with the inherent dark streaks giving an aged look.

A reception desk of white Corian and veined Volakas marble, complete with reeded glass lamp, is backed by a bespoke wall of ribbed metallic fabric. The same ribbed fabric detail is used on the meeting room doors, providing little shots of luxury throughout the crisp white space. Soft

seating by B&B Italia enhances the hotel lounge feel and is complemented by a bespoke brochure and book rack, displaying Powell Gilbert literature alongside books on Lutyens and local history.

Five meeting rooms lead off from the reception area, with various discreet breakout spaces located between. The rooms accommodate between six and 20 people and feature various flexible AV settings, including video conferencing.

The suite continues the high-end feel, with each room featuring a different scheme; a variety of upholstered chairs, soft smoky colour schemes and grey oak veneers, teamed with Arts and Crafts wallpaper on feature walls. Bespoke display shelving gives a library feel to one meeting room, and also doubles as space for case files during meetings.

These touches prevent the 'corporate identikit' feel of some meeting room suites – which, as Jenny explained, Powell Gilbert was so keen to avoid. Room names continue the local history theme with references to Christopher Wren, the neighbouring St Brides' Church, and the Telegraph and Express buildings opposite.

A folding wall allows two of the meeting rooms to combine to accommodate up to seventy people for seminars and events.

essential ingredients

Client • **Powell Gilbert** | Lead Consultant / Designer • **MoreySmith** 020 7089 1470

M&E Consultant • **GDM** | Cost Consultant • **Heasmans** | Main Contractor • **Collins Construction**

Systems Furniture • **Sagal** 020 7253 7390

Task Seating • **Humanscale** 020 7566 7990

Breakout Furniture • **Vitra** 020 7608 6200 | **SCP** 020 7739 1869

Bene 020 7689 1234 | **Kusch** 020 7336 7561 | **B&B Italia** 020 7591 8111