





spinning tops

Although based in Saffron Walden, the spiritual home of *Mix* really lies a little over 200 miles to the North West in Manchester.

Its Publisher and Editor both originate from the North West, Henry supports Manchester City and Mick ‘Hatter’ Jordan supports Stockport County. And if by some miracle you hadn’t noticed, Manchester is also the source of Mick’s musical tastes. If you didn’t know before, you’ll know now why last year’s *Mixology North* felt like such a homecoming.

A lot of people have the idea that the now universally acclaimed regeneration of Manchester started with the IRA flattening a million square feet of it 12 years ago. But the history and development of Manchester over the past few years has a lot more to it than a need to fill a hole left behind by terrorists. It >>>>>



▶▶▶▶ has to be an important element in building their image. That same credibility is also reflected in the interior which has been developed to reflect the need to create more team based spaces, more places to



meet with clients and to take full advantage of the light and views offered by the architecture.'

Floors two to seven include training suites, meeting rooms, breakout spaces and touchdown points, each supported by a wide range of storage options. In each area there are six levels of storage suitable for long term storage and storage of reference material. Mobile shelving has increased the capacity for storage in the building by 40%. To minimise clutter, lockers are provided and each floor is equipped with extra storage areas for staff to deposit gym bags and other large personal items, and a clear desk policy has been adopted in order to maintain the 'clean lines' of the workspace.

Venture up one more floor and you're in the client suite, fronted by a dedicated reception and surrounded by views of Manchester rooftops and distant hills. As well as the obligatory boardroom there are two seminar rooms, 17 smaller meeting rooms, a 90 seat café and lounge.

The striking physical environment is underpinned by impressive technological infrastructure. As on the other floors, all meeting rooms, including the boardroom

and seminar rooms, are equipped with rear projection screens, video and audio conferencing, Crestron Touchpanels, TV, video, DVD, sound through ceiling speakers, portable wireless/radio mics and dedicated computers supplied by Viewpoint.

The brief from Halliwells was based around a very strong business case. 'One of the key aspects of the space we had to consider was its efficiency,' says Helen Berresford, head of ID:SR. 'We looked at six buildings, compared office designs and test fitted the floors. This process of building selection and working closely with the architects on the design of the floorplate meant we helped to create a building for Halliwells that is 24% more efficient than any others looked at. It was also important that as well as being efficient the space had to reflect the shape of the business. What's great about the new building is that it fits perfectly with how law firms structure themselves, with a core at the middle and glazed offices for partners at the outside. It also fits strongly with the Halliwells ethos – which is essentially young in its outlook and likes a business case before it makes decisions.'



case study

▶▶▶▶▶ As well as the ability to attract clients it was also important that the new building could be used to attract personnel. There's a bit of a tug for talent in the legal sector for the best people right now and, according to Tim Frankland, it's important that both the building and area are attractive for both current and prospective staff. 'The standards applied in the offices are exceptional,' he says. 'We understand how design and fit out coupled with the right building can be an important factor in attracting and retaining staff and that was incredibly important. The people who work for Halliwells are also blessed in the location of the building with a superb array of bars, restaurants, shops and leisure facilities on the doorstep.'

Ian Austin is typically positive about his firm's chances of working with the best people as a result of both their business culture and their location. 'In some areas it can be difficult to get staff,' he says, 'but we do get a healthy percentage of the best candidates around in any case. That will be helped by our move to the new offices.'

'The perception is that Manchester is a very vibrant and exciting place to work. Although some people were predicting a downturn in the city after the Commonwealth Games, that just hasn't happened. People thought the development of the city couldn't continue at the same pace – but it has.' ●

essential ingredients

Client:	• Halliwells
Design:	• ID:SR, Sheppard Robson www.sheppardrobson.com
Furniture Supply & Space Planning:	• Claremont Group Interiors www.claremontgi.com
Main Contractor & Fit Out:	• ISG www.isgplc.com
Systems, Meeting & Breakout Seating:	• Vitra www.vitra.com
Task & Breakout Seating:	• Dauphin www.dauphin.com
Breakout Seating:	• Orangebox www.orangebox.com
Partitions & Screens:	• Optima www.optima-group.co.uk
Meeting Furniture:	• K+N International www.kn-international.co.uk

