

# John Hope Gateway

**Location:** Edinburgh, UK

**Client:** Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

**Dates of involvement:** 2003 - 2009 (POE 2017)

**Size:** 2,762sqm

**Construction Cost:** £10.7M (inc. partial fit-out)

**Awards:**

- Civic Trust Award Commendation
- RIAS Scotstyle List of the top 100 Scottish buildings from the last 100 years
- RICS Scotland Sustainability Award
- CIBSE Award for New Build Project of the Year
- IStructE Award for Best Entertainment Structure
- Scottish Event Award for Best Unusual Venue

*“The impact has been excellent and the building is admired by staff and visitors alike. It works well as an entry building for people to get orientated before they set off. It’s also good as a meeting place and for high profile meetings and formal dinners. It sends a good signal about the botanic garden and its values and intent. All in all it’s a brilliant building that functions incredibly well and enhances any visit to the Garden.”*

David Rae, Head of Horticulture, RBGE



## Imagine a window into the secret life of plants.

The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) is a world leader in the education and study of the natural world. Allied to its scientific purpose is the mission to explore the world of plants with the public.

Named after one of the most visionary leaders in the history of RBGE, the John Hope Gateway is a threshold into the hidden world of the Garden, with exhibitions, a media studio, shops, a restaurant and a new bio-diversity garden.

Most visitors arrive through the glass-house porch, their first view focused on the Garden beyond before they turn and rise gently in to the main hall. A porous ground floor allows visitors to enter and leave the building from many other points and flow freely between different areas.

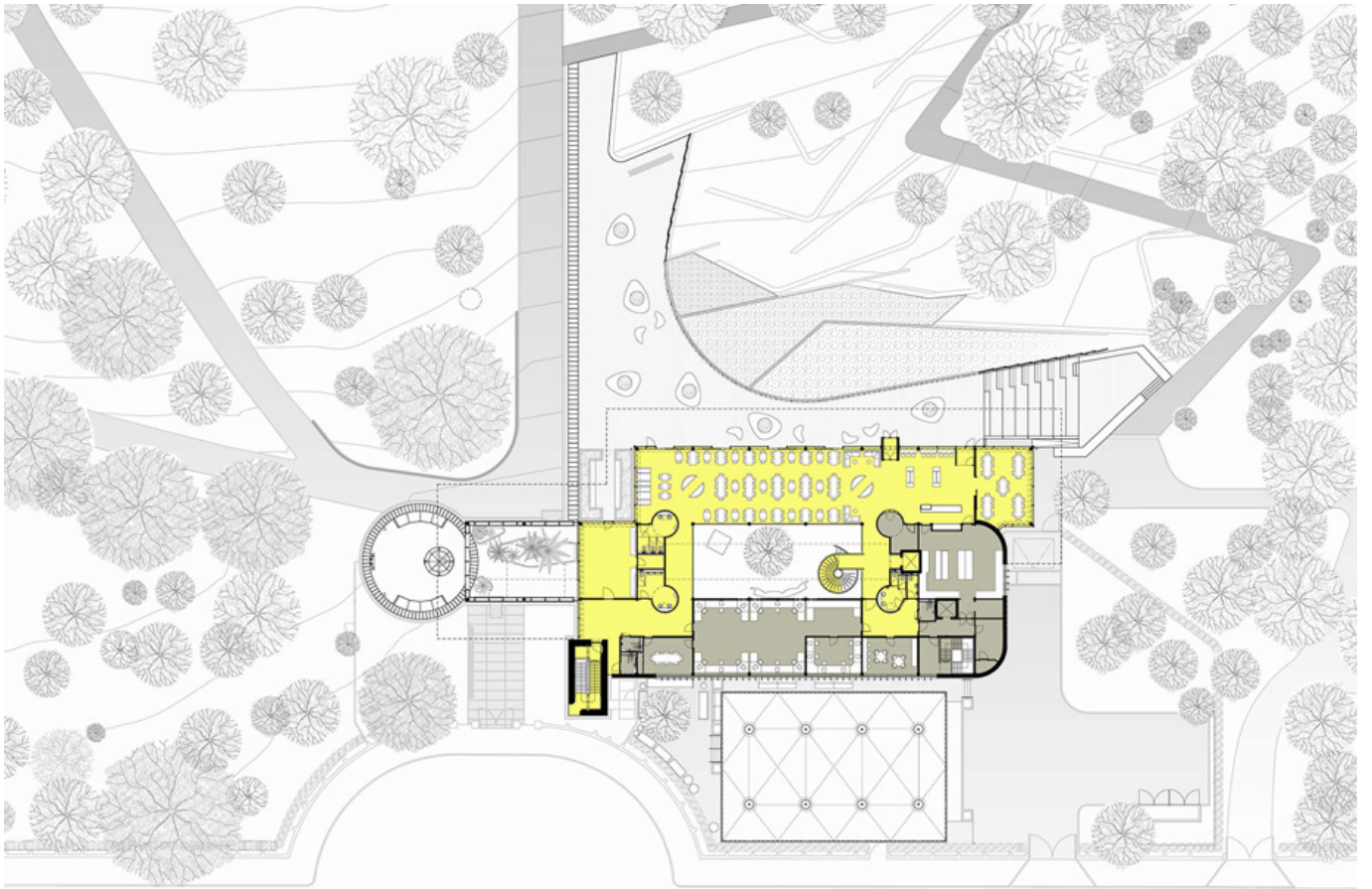
Stacked slate walls extend out into the landscape and help lock the building into its surroundings. A 60m curved glass wall looks out onto the bio-diversity garden to the zigzag beds of plant species essential to biodiversity.

Sailing above all is the timber roof, extending to create sheltered indoor and outdoor spaces and framing views of the arboretum. A sustainable, low-energy, minimum-waste approach to the building’s design became part of the message RBGE wished to convey to its visitors and the Gateway has many demonstrable environmental solutions.

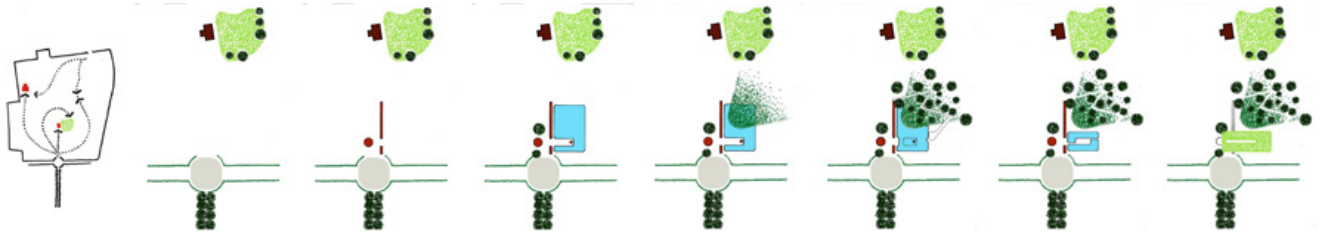
The roof floats over the entire building as a single horizontal plane, supported by a diagonal timber roof structure on pencil-thin steel columns. A series of coffered timber bays define each sub-space within the open plan area below.







Above: First floor plan



A long stone wall running adjacent to the building reinforces the axis between Inverlieth Park, opposite the entrance, and Inverlieth House in the Garden.

A ground floor plinth of exhibitions is offered to visitors at the threshold of the garden. A new biodiversity garden is 'carved' from the plinth.

A terrace overlooks the Garden; a green roof sits above all and frames the entrance.



Above: Elevation - horizontals set against the vertical trunks of the arboretum