

Kew Herbarium, Library, Art & Archives Wing

Location: Richmond, UK

Client: Royal Botanic Gardens Kew

Started on site: 2007

Completed: 2009

Size: 5000sqm (GIA)

Construction cost: £15M inc. fit-out

Awards:

- RIBA Award 2011
- Building Design's Architect of the Year Awards - Public Building Architect of the Year
- Brick Awards Finalist

The new Herbarium, Library, Art and Archives wing provides excellent conditions for the priceless collection of dried plant specimens and rare botanical books and illustrations at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Kew.

The new wing secures the status of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew as the world leader for the study of plant diversity and conservation. Climate-controlled vaults safeguard existing and future collections of herbarium specimens, rare botanical books, illustrations and archives.

It has also created opportunities for more people to make the most of its unique resources. A condition for funding for the new Herbarium – as part of a World Heritage Site – was to open the collections up to a wider audience.

There are now large rooms for research and collaboration and a reading room open to the public by appointment. A new entrance with a generous reception area, facilities for school groups, and a dedicated space for visiting researchers all attract and encourage visitors.

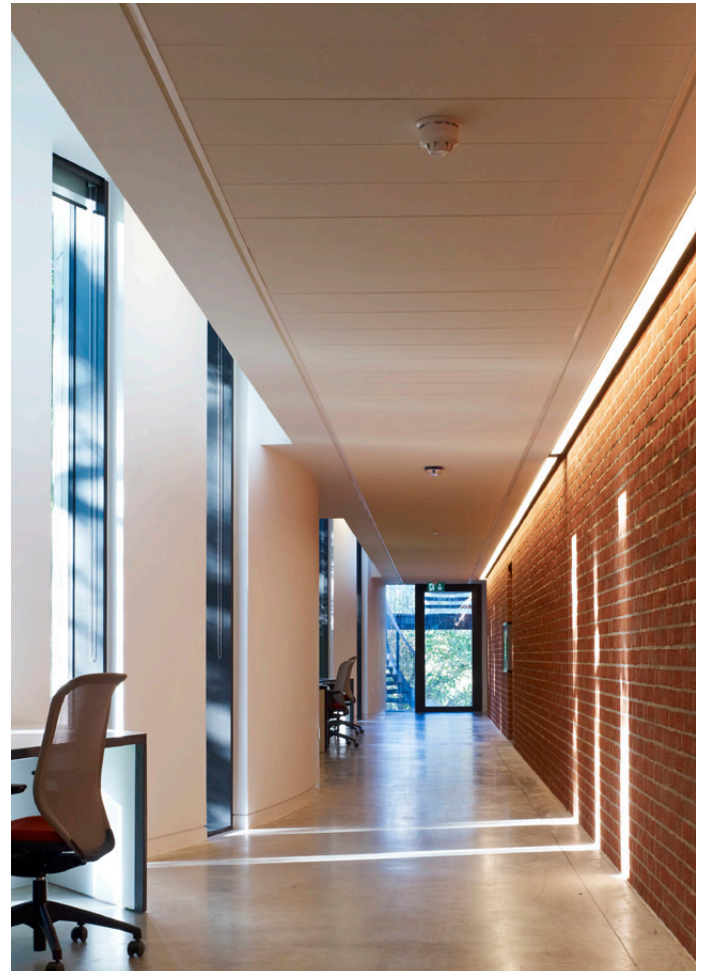
The new Herbarium is a beautiful, modern building and its curving forms sit sympathetically with a listed building and the magnificent trees on the bank of the River Thames.



Circular Reading Room on the first floor adjacent the Rare Books and Illustrations Archive.



The new building is linked to the old by a timber and glass drum, which houses a circular reading room, and the ground floor reception area is entered through a newly created south-facing courtyard.



Undulating study areas with plenty of natural light wrap around the climate-controlled, red brick clad archive box.