

Minimal- Modernists Go Modular Mode

A new headquarters building and factory in Royal Leamington Spa has extensively used Velux modular skylights.

When Vitsoe, makers of minimal-modernist furniture, decided to build a new HQ and factory in Royal Leamington Spa Velux modular skylights were incorporated.

Typically for this company, that began designing furniture for the German market in 1959 before moving to the UK in 1995, the new HQ concept was unconventional, yet created a building with high levels of natural light and ventilation. The defining characteristic is that it creates a space where people enjoy working and are more productive.

Furniture principles

The approach was to treat the building design process as a furniture system in itself, just like Vitsoe's 606 Universal Shelving System, with the theory being that it could, if they wished, simply be taken to pieces and re-erected elsewhere. Central to the design is the saw tooth roof, providing high levels of daylight

and natural ventilation through 240 northlights created using the Velux system. The modular building construction is executed in beech laminate veneer lumber (LVL), a high performance engineered hardwood that permits beams and columns to have smaller cross sections.

Challenge

Much of the design for the project came from eminent yacht designer Martin Francis and his friend Vitsoe MD Mark Adams. With a strict budget the challenge for the pair was to use a select number of high-quality components that would form a kit of parts, allowing the building to be adapted for future requirements.

Solution

The interpretation of the brief was to create an economical, strong, yet elegant sawtooth roof-form that maximised indirect light, with banks of Velux modular northlights forming the

main visual and functional element. The northlights can be angled between 25-90 degrees to allow optimum levels of daylight to reach the rooms below. They are available in a variety of lengths and widths. The northlights at the Vitsoe factory provide soft and reflected lighting with minimal glare.

The skylights incorporate remote controlled actuators that open and close to allow natural ventilation. [i](#)

Pictures: Velux modular skylights have been incorporated into a new HQ and factory in Royal Leamington Spa.



Shining A Light On New Lanterns

The Charles Godfrey Memorial Award for Innovation is given every year to a product that has brought significant innovation to the building industry. The Korniche (by Made For Trade aluminium) roof lantern has been awarded this prestigious award for 2018.

Bradley Gaunt, Made For Trade (MFT) MD, said: "The Korniche was conceived to deliver to builders and installers a product that makes life on site easier and more cost effective, whilst providing a lantern look that is contemporary whilst holding on to a traditional style.

"We have been entered for many fenestration awards over the last couple of years but I think this independent award means more to MFT than any other."

Gaunt continues: "Roger Bisby's (the esteemed building products journalist) comments about Korniche's product, engineering and design and how it beats competitors were heart warming."

FIT

In 2019 Made For Trade have committed to continue the innovation delivered in the Korniche lantern with a new product launch at the FIT Show.

The Bisby babe

Roger Bisby, who tested the product himself, says: "The first thing I saw was the packaging. Every builder knows the frustration of having items arrive on site with damage. It slows the job down and causes hassle for the manufacturer – and the customer. Often there is a knock-on effect because other trades are unable to get on. With the Korniche lantern, every-



The 2018 Charles Godfrey Memorial Award for Innovation has gone to the Korniche aluminium roof lantern.

thing arrived in perfect condition. The next thing is the instruction booklet, which deserves an award on its own. A huge amount of thought and design has gone into this. Every stage is clearly shown with intelligent use of colours to show you the relevant components.

"Then there is the engineering. It all fits perfectly - no gaps or misalignment and no need for packers, shims or sealant. "The whole installation process went like a dream and I said at the time that I couldn't wait until I had the chance to fit another. It didn't take long. Without the slightest rush I fitted three on a roof in less than a morning and each one was perfect." **i**

Atlas Maps New Generation Lantern
What is described as a 'next generation' glazed roof lantern – called the Lantern 2.0 – has been launched by Atlas Glazed Roof Solutions.

The company says the product is the slimmest, lightest, strongest and most energy efficient lantern that it has produced. The firm also claims the non-bonded lantern is fitter friendly - and that it has claims on being the best looking lantern on the market...although competitors

may take umbrage at that suggestion. The lantern features a fully aluminium, thermally broken ringbeam, which has been reduced in size by 55% to make it light, yet more thermally efficient than previous Atlas offerings. The new lantern also incorporates a refined ridge topcap, which is 25% thinner than before, to achieve slim sightlines when viewed from below.

The height of the ridge top cap has been trimmed by nearly 50%, making it much less obtrusive because the it sits much lower than the bulkier systems atlas has previously provided.

Fitter friendly

As well as improving on appearance and performance, Atlas has also ensured that it simplifies the installation process for the fitter. The new ringbeam is now in one piece to do away with on-site assembly and make for a quicker and more straightforward installation. The ringbeam is simpler to drill to the kerb and it comes with fewer components to ease fitting further. And, as the lantern is a 'dry fit' system, which only requires silicone to seal the lantern at the kerb, it is neater, quicker and easier to fit than previous Atlas lanterns. **i**