

I, Katy Heath, am a Corporate Member of the Royal Institute of British Architects, having studied Architecture at Leeds and Leicester Polytechnics and gained my professional qualification at Leicester De Montfort University in 1990.

I am Managing Director of the Crosby based KVA Architects, established in 2011. Prior to this, for 5 ½ years, I was the Office Principal of the Liverpool office of Nightingale Associates.

Prior to working at Nightingale Associates (DH&T), I worked for 9 years in an East Midlands based private practice, Stephen George & Partners, where I specialised initially in housing projects – both new build and refurbishment for private developers, Local Authorities and Housing Associations. I worked on several hostel projects for Mencap, providing residential accommodation for children with both physical and mental disabilities.

My subsequent field of work was the refurbishment of several DSS Caller Offices for Benefits Agencies Estates - projects varying from £30K to £900K. This involved liaising with various Government Agencies, Local Offices and other Consultants to formulate a brief for each refurbishment and then, acting as Architect and Lead Consultant, taking the project through design, approvals, tender, contract administration, construction and completion. The Benefits Agency work involved altering the Caller Offices to make them more accessible to all - including wheelchair users, people with mental health problems, learning difficulties, sensory impairments and ambulant disabled people.

I joined Derek Hicks and Thew (which was subsequently taken over by Nightingale Associates) as Project Architect in early 1998 after a family move home to Liverpool. I was promoted to Associate in May 1999, Director in November 2002, Executive Director in May 2005 and Office Principal in October 2005. I managed the office finances and led a team of up to 42 architects and technical staff. I was responsible for resourcing, project management, programming and team co-ordination.

I have acted in the role of Project Architect/Lead Consultant on a variety of church, health, mental health, education & commercial projects, including: -

- Several re-ordering projects on Catholic Churches (including Listed Buildings) for the Archdiocese of Liverpool in the Wigan and St. Helens areas
- Aseptic Suite at Arrowe Park Hospital for Wirral Hospitals NHS Trust
- Refurbishment & conversion into offices, 3rd Floor St. Catherine's Hospital, Birkenhead for Wirral Health Authority
- Refurbishment & extensions to Leasowe Primary Care Centre, Wirral for Wirral and West Cheshire Community Trust
- Provision of Pharmacy to Leasowe Primary Care Centre, Wirral for Wirral and West Cheshire Community Trust
- Peacehaven House, Southport for Peacehaven House Trustees. Phase I – refurbishment works to introduce en suite facilities to bedrooms in Residential Care Home. Phase II – works to add further bedrooms by way of extension.
- Conversion of former ward accommodation to form Adult Mental Health Resource Centre at St. Catherine's Hospital, Birkenhead
- Access Guidance and Improvements for Liverpool John Moores University

- Mental Health Unit, Clatterbridge Hospital - Kings Fund: Enhancing the Healing Environment Project. Improvements to Patient / Staff / Visitors area and gardens.
- Access Consultant for the Public Realm areas of the £1bn Liverpool One retail scheme, which was completed in 2008. The Masterplan Team won a RIBA award for the scheme and were nominated for the RIBA Stirling Prize in 2009.
- Acted as lead on Higher Education projects delivered by the NA Liverpool office, which include working with LJMU and The University of Liverpool.
- Acted as Project Lead on the new build St. Michael's and All Angel's Catholic Church in Kirkby for the Archdiocese of Liverpool, which opened in September 2010.
- Acted as Project Lead on the new HQ Building for the Women's Organisation in Liverpool, which was a 5 storey £5m build opened in February 2011.

I have acted as project lead on many projects for adults and children with disabilities including: -

- Demolition of a garage and replacement with a new therapy suite with a wet room for adult, who is wheelchair dependent.
- Creation of a wet room and other works to property for a little boy with disabilities.
- Adaptation and extension to a house to provide a ground floor suite for a child with severe cerebral palsy and his carers including specialist bathroom, hoisting, therapy space and carers accommodation.
- Alterations for a terminally ill gentleman including the provision of a ground floor wet room.
- Alterations to cottage and annexe to provide accommodation for adult with severe learning disabilities and mobility problems, his family and carers.
- Demolition of dormer bungalow, design and construction of new two storey bespoke house for a former paramedic involved in a road traffic accident. The project included a specialist kitchen, specialist bathroom, therapy space, hoisting, glass through lift and carers accommodation for a wheelchair user, his family and carers.
- Alterations to bungalow for lady who is dependent on a wheelchair because of an above the knee amputation. Works included the provision of level access, wider doors, an accessible kitchen and wet room.
- Alterations and extension to a property to provide a bedroom, therapy room, specialist bathroom including hoisting and a pool house for a young boy with severe Cerebral Palsy, his family and carers.
- Demolition of dormer bungalow, design and construction of a new two storey bespoke house for a former Firefighter injured in an accident at work, having suffered burns, blast injuries and vestibular damage. The project included a specialist bathroom, gym, through lift and external landscaping for him, his family and carers.
- Alterations to a bungalow for a gentleman injured by falling steel work in the course of his job. Access in and out of the property was improved to facilitate wheelchair use and an accessible bedroom, shower room and kitchen were created to meet his needs. Hoisting was installed to his bedroom and to an external covered hot tub.
- Alterations and extensions to a bungalow and annex building to provide a bedroom, therapy rooms, specialist bathroom including hoisting and external covered hot tub for a child with severe Cerebral Palsy, his family and carers.

- Conversion of a garage to provide accommodation for a 24 hour care team for an elderly gentleman, who had been injured in a car versus pedestrian accident whilst walking his dogs. The bathroom to the bungalow was converted into a wet room.

I completed the RIBA Conservation Training course in November 2013, furthering my knowledge in Heritage and Conservation.

My interest in Inclusive Design has led me to specialise in Accommodation Expert Witness Reports for Clinical Negligence and Personal Injury legal action since 1998. I have advised on more than 600 cases. This has been followed through in some cases, by acting as Project Architect / Design Team Leader, helping families to purchase, adapt and extend their properties to accommodate the needs of a disabled family member, any necessary equipment and their associated carers. I have also completed two new build projects.

I am familiar with the regulatory and recommended best practice standards for people with various disabilities and health conditions, although each situation is unique. I have reported on and given expert opinion on behalf of Claimants and Defendants as Single Joint Expert or been Jointly appointed in both Clinical Negligence and Personal Injury Cases.

I have completed the Centre for Accessible Environments residential “Access Consultancy Course” and have undertaken extensive CPD and additional training in the field of “Inclusive Design” and “Access for People with Disabilities”.

I have completed Bond Solon’s Expert Witness Training courses in Excellence in Report Writing and Court Room Skills in December 2016. I also successfully completed my Cross-Examination Training Day and Examination in June 2017 and my Law and Procedure Examination in September 2017. I am an attendee and participant at the annual Bond Solon Expert Witness Conference to maintain my professional development.

I have lectured at Hope University and presented to organisations including Merseyside Spinal Injuries Association and a number of Solicitor’s Practices on Inclusive Design and my role as an Accommodation Expert Witness. I have presented workshops to Occupational Therapy companies promoting a more collaborative approach to improving housing for people with disabilities.

I have completed a 2 year term as national secretary of the Access Association – an organisation which supports, and champions’ disabled people’s needs and aspirations, alongside their rights to live, work and play in an environment that respects everyone’s dignity.