

The Body Shop HQ

155 Tooley Street, SE1 2JP

24,000 sq ft

Achieving design harmony for The Body Shop HQ

The relocation of The Body Shop HQ from Croydon to London Bridge represented so much more than just a physical move. It was seen as a cultural opportunity to renew the company's vows to their brand values through sustainable and environmentally sensitive design and fit out.

A revitalised soul

155 Tooley Street's charismatic combination of three separate buildings was a fitting choice for the new heart of The Body Shop. The six-floored building is close to City greenery and riverside walks but conveniently lies cheek by jowl with London Bridge Station.

Old beams, exposed brickwork, timber floors and even unconcealed ceiling services were perfect examples of yesterday's heritage begging to be woven into The Body Shop's new soul. Uneven floor levels offered design opportunities to create transparent walkway and stairwell links, representing physical and symbolic connections.

The cultural brief

We all know The Body Shop. She is a familiar yet vibrant High Street friend. We all know that her roots are buried deep in ethical values, sustainability and environmental sensitivity.

It is no surprise then that the corporate culture mirrors these values. The HQ relocation was a physical opportunity to mimic and reinforce this and The Body Shop's lifeblood ran clearly through our brief.

The design and layout needed to facilitate the Body Shop family coming together, allowing the community to connect and collaborate with ease and transparency. Part of the mission behind the layout and furniture choice was to wipe out any remaining hierarchical barriers. And the architectural challenge, in true Body Shop style, was to retain, re-use and recycle as many features and existing materials the Tooley Street building had to offer.

In conjunction with the internal "Design Champion Team," we relished the chance to visually represent and liberate the true spirit of The Body Shop.

Fresh Body Shop welcome

A full immersion in, and instant connection to, The Body Shop personality underpinned our approach to the design and fit out of the welcome area. The whole space resounds with the brand, the prominent name emerging through lush green vegetation of a living, breathing wall.

Re-cycled timber fronts the welcome desk and the flamboyant, multi-coloured surface was moulded by compressing thousands of pieces of waste plastic fished from our oceans. Show-casing new products and reflecting the ever-changing retail outlet designs, a mock-shop adjoins reception.

Design heartbeat

Timber floors, rambling vines and flooded with natural light, the large ground floor break-out area is the beating heart of the office space. Visited by workers every day, it can be used to grab some refreshments or hide in a window booth armed with a laptop to indulge in some active time-away. Team togetherness is ramped up through holding town hall meetings in this multi-purpose, bright, fresh space.

Engaging the grey matter

Open-plan offices for the whole company aims to ensure every employee feels as important as the CEO. Desks are arranged in agile clusters allowing for optimum productivity. Top of the agenda is team wellbeing, so we ensured no-one works more than seven metres from natural daylight.

Privacy booths are located in designated quiet zones and a library allows for a mobile-free study area. Glass-fronted meeting rooms, individually named by the internal design team, achieve those more traditional needs whilst still delivering a sense of community. Anyone in need of a “bean-bag moment” is catered for in the attic where a TV and soft floor await. At the opposite end of the building, the basement accommodates a state-of-the-art teleconference room allowing for slick global connectivity.

Calming the nervous system

Respecting Body Shop’s deep connection to the environment, we ensured the team are always in touch with biophilia through striking planting and adopting recycled natural materials. An earthy yet vibrant and energising colour palette connects the office spaces and the same colour undertones are injected through the furniture and fabrics. The special carpets achieve better air quality by trapping pervasive allergens.

Proudly handing over 155 Tooley Street to this outstanding company felt like we had delivered a whole-body experience.

Ends