

**PRESS RELEASE**

October 2011

Fairhaven & Woods Celebrates Design Award

East Anglian based Fairhaven & Woods, craftsmen in stone, is celebrating scooping two honours for its work at The Narthex, St. John's Cathedral, within the conservation category of the Norwich Society's 2011 Design Awards for new buildings, held at the Assembly House, Norwich. At the ceremony the Narthex project won both a conservation award and the top honour of the Sir Bernard Feilden Conservation Award, which is presented each year for outstanding work.

The Catholic Cathedral in Norwich was constructed between 1882 and 1910, to designs by George Gilbert Scott jnr. Opened in March 2010, the new Narthex was added to provide further public facilities at the Cathedral. The Narthex adjoins the south side of the Cathedral and creates a new main entrance with level access to the Grade 1 listed building.

Central to the project was the need to sympathetically design the new building to balance the architecture of the Cathedral. Russell Taylor Architects therefore designed the Narthex, based on an initial concept and design by architect Anthony Rossi, to complement the original building's neo-Gothic architecture, with Fairhaven & Woods responsible for the building's Clipsham stonework.

The Narthex is designed with a simple, elemental, classical range of shapes that can be seen as the stylistic ancestors of the Cathedral's Gothic architecture, thus bonding the two buildings. But to provide a continuity and further connection between the Cathedral and the Narthex it was essential to match the stone used in both structures. The Cathedral was constructed from Beer and Clipsham stone, with the latter used for cappings and for the boundary wall. Clipsham stone was therefore selected for the stone cladding at the Narthex since it is a hard wearing material. Meanwhile, architectural features, such as the design of the buttresses and copings also harmonized with the original building.

The Norwich Society commented: *"This building is a splendid addition to the Cathedral's public face. It is a skilful mix of traditional materials and modern techniques and workmanship. Inside, the small rotunda acts as a transition from the Cathedral to the new facilities which carefully incorporate the community hall at the far end. The spaces are flexible, well detailed and provide excellent space for a café and shop, both of which look*

onto the garden. There is a careful balance between the classic and the new throughout, and the stonework match enhances the connection between the Narthex and the Cathedral.”

Henry Broughton, Director at Fairhaven & Woods, said: *“We are delighted that our stonework has been recognised by the Norwich Society, for the Narthex project to have won two conservation awards is a great honour.”*

Fairhaven & Woods was also pleased to receive a commendation within the civic category of the awards for the Norwich Memorial Gardens. Fairhaven & Woods worked closely with NPS South East Ltd and Norwich City Council on a year long refurbishment project to bring the Grade II listed Memorial back to life.

A large and complex project, the work involved removing the complete garden stonework and replacing it on a new concrete platform. The Lutyens War Memorial was refurbished and relocated to its new position facing City Hall which now makes it accessible from St. Peter's Street. Its new position is more appropriate for Remembrance Day parades and civic ceremonies.

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Notes for Editors:

Fairhaven & Woods

- Fairhaven & Woods Ltd, owned by Lady Fairhaven, operates two stoneyards, one based in Bottisham, Cambridgeshire and the other in Norwich.
- Fairhaven & Woods has experience in all aspects of the stone trade, including restoration, carving, cleaning and conservation, flooring, paving and new build, all to the highest standards, as demonstrated by the level of repeat business.
- Both branches work closely together, combining their resources on larger projects.
www.fairhavenandwoods.co.uk

Norwich Society Design Awards for New Buildings

- This year 21 buildings were given awards or commendations for excellence by the Norwich Society at its awards ceremony. The Norwich Society began a systematic policy of awards for new building designs in 2005, in the hope that the Society would encourage recognition of the quality of new builds in Norwich city, thus raising standards and making large-scale pastiche schemes a thing of the past.
- In 2009 the Norwich Society introduced a new award for conservation architecture in memory of Sir Bernard Feilden (1919-2008), a former Honorary Secretary of the Norwich Society and international conservation architect. Lady Feilden presented the award to Father James, Dean of St John's at the ceremony this year. The award is a model of one of the Assyrian lions outside City Hall made by Norwich sculptor Do Philips.