Accsys is proud to support unique community charity café project in Winchester

The Handlebar Café is cycle-friendly, socially-sourced, straddles an old railway line and was designed by the young minds of spudYOUTH, a RIBA award winning charity. Accsys has been supporting the project throughout its development, contributing both funding and sustainable, long-lasting Accoya® wood for its cladding and decking.

Accsys, together with its distributor James Latham (www.lathamtimber.co.uk), has provided the Accoya wood to help the students realise their dream project: a cyclist-friendly and community-centred café along the Viaduct Cycle Path at the foot of St Catherine’s Hill, south of Winchester.

After extraordinary community support from local businesses, individuals and the local authorities, over £350,000 was raised turning their concept into a reality with Handlebar Café officially opening for business yesterday.

A ‘model of sustainability’ and constructed largely from timber, the design was inspired by the train carriages that no longer run along the railway line. Fitting in perfectly to the project’s sustainability goals is the use of Accoya® wood for the exterior elements.

Accsys’ proprietary acetylation process transforms FSC® certified, sustainable, fast growing wood into a building material that can also outperform man-made, unsustainable or heavily carbon-polluting alternatives. This means the Handlebar Café will not only look great, but will also be locking up captured atmospheric carbon in the wood of its walls and flooring for decades.

As Accoya wood is so stable and durable, the trees used to make them will actually be regrown several times over during the lifetime of products made from it – and the carbon footprint for production is very low (or even negative).

Local children, working with the spudYOUTH charity, designed and planned the venue to provide ethically-sourced food and drink, cycle hire and repair facilities, and training and jobs for young and long-term unemployed people.

It will also provide a venue for charity and community activities, with up to 140 free architecture workshops per year for up to 20 young people each. The project also aims to promote healthy and environmentally friendly living – not only through encouraging cycling, but also through ethical, local and sustainable sourcing.

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Mark Drury, Director, SPUD said:

“this is the culmination of a tremendous amount of hard work by all the team involved. The support from the local authorities, local businesses and individuals has been truly incredible and without it we could not have reached this point. It’s been a fantastic journey working with all the team and in particular the young people. SPUD believes passionately in enabling young people to make take an active role in their community and make a real difference.”

Heather Evans, Director, Bespoke Biking said:

“We are passionate about encouraging and helping everybody, no matter what their age or ability, to cycle. After over five years of dreaming, planning and building, the Handlebar Café is now a reality. We are so excited and proud to see it complete and open for business in its beautiful Winchester setting. Alongside our main Bike Hub in the centre of town, we are delighted to offer the Handlebar Café as a fantastic destination to walk or ride to. We can’t wait for people to come and taste our great coffee, cakes and locally sourced sausage rolls, pies and pastries.

“Our aspiration is for the Handlebar Café to become a focal point for the local community and visitors, helping everyone appreciate the area’s fantastic natural environment. We are looking forward to continuing our partnership work with Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust to help enhance the area and encourage the public to come and enjoy everything that this wonderful beauty spot has to offer.”

Accsys is committed to sustainability for the built environment, and is pleased to support this unique project by some potential architects of the future.


Architects: architecturePLB
Construction Team: Bespoke Modular Developments and BlueFish Construction
Engineers: ARUP

Photos:
access on the press area of our contacts page: https://www.spud.org.uk/contact.

Please credit the appropriate photographers.

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Notes to editors

Accoya® Wood (www.accoya.com) is produced using Accsys’ proprietary patented acetylation technology that effectively converts sustainably grown softwoods and non-durable hardwoods into what is best described as a "high technology wood". Distinguished by its durability, dimensional stability and, perhaps most importantly of all, its reliability (in terms of consistency of both supply and quality), Accoya® wood is particularly suited to exterior applications where performance and appearance are valued. Moreover, the Accoya® wood production process does not compromise the wood’s strength or machinability. The combination of dimensional stability, durability and retained strength means that Accoya® wood offers a wealth of new opportunities to architects, designers and specifiers. These benefits result in lower maintenance and total cost of ownership while using a higher sustainable and environmental responsible building material. For a full archive of Accoya® news, visit www.accoya.com/news.

About SPUD
A world leader in developing collaborations involving art, architecture and education.

SPUD is committed to promoting quality design and increasing engagement for people of all ages in understanding and influencing the nature and quality of the places where they live.

We believe that a broad understanding within professionals and the public of what makes a good place in which to live and work is vital in creating healthy, vibrant and sustainable communities.

We deliver projects with people from all age groups, backgrounds and abilities - often bringing groups together who may not normally collaborate. This approach adds to the vibrancy and creativity of the work we do.

We can bring a wide range of experience and knowledge to projects involving education, training, consultation, strategy and advocacy, across the disciplines of the arts, architecture, urban design and placemaking.

SPUD has delivered projects nationally and internationally.
www.spud.org.uk

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About Bespoke Biking
Bespoke Biking is a not for profit, social enterprise. We are a team of people who love
cycling and enjoy cycling around the area. We are dedicated to helping people realise
how easy and fun cycling is, especially riding in a group. We have taught adults and
children who have never ridden; we also have a great team of mechanics ready to fix,
service or repair your bike. Added to that we take donated bikes, refurbish them and
find them new homes.

Major Sponsors:
Winchester City Council and Town Forum
Hampshire County Council
Sport England
Utilita
James Latham (timber)
Accsys Technologies (timber)
Redevco Foundation
Garfield Weston Foundation

Key Delivery Partners/Sponsors:
ArchitecturePLB
ARUP
Bespoke Modular Developments
BlueFish Construction

The Handelbar Café — a SPUD Youth Community programme and the brainchild of and
driven to fruition by Mark Drury.