

wrigley fields

We've travelled down to Estover, just outside the famous Royal Navy town of Plymouth, to see the refurbished headquarters of one of the world's leading brands.

‘What? Plymouth? Leading global brand?’ we imagine hearing all you Londoncentrics shrieking. Yep, it's true – not all leading brands base themselves in the centre of the universe that is London.

Chewing gum, mints and confectionery giant The Wrigley Company (an organisation that, incidentally, boasts a phenomenal 96% share of the market) enjoys a relatively sedate UK existence on the border of Dartmoor National Park. And when we say on the border, the company's 42-acre manufacturing plant and UK and Ireland headquarters literally overlooks the breathtaking park.

The company's roots are of course in Chicago, with the first UK operation based in Wembley (there you go London fans) in the 1920s. The expansive Estover site was acquired and developed in the late 1960s by someone in the organisation who had a soft spot for this part of the world. ‘We needed bigger premises at that time and we needed good local skills,’ Wrigley UK Managing Director Gharry Eccles tells us. ‘With the docks here we had a lot of engineering and local skill base and also some of our ingredients come from abroad and we do of ▶▶▶▶



case study



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‘When we first looked at the facility we found offices and rooms all along the perimeter aspect,’ Richard continues, ‘so staff couldn’t see the view unless they actually went into one of these rooms. What we did from a design perspective was to park all the management team along the back, along the central hub, and place all the staff at the front, looking out onto the park. Everyone can now effectively look out onto this view.’

Another brilliant aspect to this scheme is the flexibility built into the facilities – and

especially the directorate and management spaces Richard and his team placed to the hub of each floor. ‘Each of the offices are dedicated to Directors or senior management,’ Richard confirms. ‘Although they are configured as offices right now, the idea here is that they can, within a couple of hours, be completely reconfigured into a meeting room. They are all big enough and we have put the angles in to ensure that they are able to do that job. It’s something of a signature design of ours to make angled offices because if you have a long oblong for an office, that flexibility is not built in. This ends up being a meeting room, a conference room and someone’s office. There is a lot of flexibility built into this.

‘These offices are also all floor to ceiling fully glazed, so that they can see their team

and their team, in turn, can see them. If the door is open then staff can simply walk in, and if the door is shut then they knock. It is as simple as that. Wrigley has straightforward and simple rules they abide by.

‘This building was extremely short of meeting space,’ Richard continues, ‘so we’ve also provided a number of one-on-one smaller meeting rooms and added a number of little breakout areas and soft seating – which is something they’d never had. Previously, meetings were conducted in offices.’

Further flexibility is built into the open plan working space. Each team ‘corral’ can be configured and reconfigured to suit team requirements – from teams of 12 or eight or even four. The smart Ahrend systems feature a large surface area and interesting organic curves. Supported by flat screen technology, space-freeing CPU holders and smart divisional screens that still maintain sightlines even when staff members are seated, the systems provide extremely comfortable and flexible working facilities.

We get the feeling from the enthusiasm and honesty shown to us by both Gharry and Richard that Wrigley must be a very nice company to work for today. The scheme lends itself to team working and interaction between individuals – we even noted that everyone we saw walking around the space was in pairs or small teams. There is a great amount of visibility and openness here, as well as a genuine leap of faith and willingness to advance. And they gave us free gum ●

essential ingredients

Client:	• The Wrigley Company
Design & Planning:	• westlake innes jordan associates 01440 785935
Main Contractor:	• County Contractors
Mechanical Engineer:	• T Clarke
Electrical Engineer:	• Waldons/T Clarke
Flooring Contractor:	• NKS Flooring
Ceilings:	• RMB Ceilings
Partitioning:	• First Choice/MHR
Joinery:	• D&I Joinery
Systems Furniture:	• Ahrend 020 8747 8383
Seating:	• Ahrend 020 8747 8383

