



# O'DonnellBrown

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## PRESS RELEASE

# THE COMMUNITY CLASSROOM, GLASGOW

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O'DonnellBrown has designed and built a prototype for an outdoor Community Classroom: an adaptable, demountable learning environment for schools and community groups, which employs a functional, rhythmic geometry and design. The entirely self-initiated project has been developed in parallel with the practice's ongoing community and educational projects, as a resource to explore connections between people, places and learning.

The classroom is intended to promote and support creative and independent learning in a healthy, versatile and fun environment. It has been designed in line with the Curriculum for Excellence and the National Improvement Framework, to facilitate inclusive learning and mental wellbeing.

The design approach was driven by an aspiration to produce an accessible, simple and demountable kit of parts which at its core was architecturally engaging, yet distilled to its purest functional form. Standard structural timber section sizes provide a skeletal frame, forming the basis for plywood modules to be placed and reconfigured to suit a diverse variety of activities and inhabitants. The kit comes complete with an easy-to-follow manual and modules may provide seating, shelving, worktops or even presentation surfaces, all while engaging and empowering its hosts in the creative process of constructing and defining their own environment.

Driven by a shared commitment to community engagement and learner-led activity, O'DonnellBrown worked closely with the national children's charity Barnardo's Works to identify young people to build the prototype with.

Other sponsors and stakeholders, including the RIAS and Saint-Gobain, have also been integral to the project, sharing the architects' vision and aspirations. Support has been provided in the form of materials, such as the timber for the structural framework, and structural engineering input.

The Community Classroom has hosted a number of community-based workshops and events, including a craft workshop programmed by Nan McKay Hall, a local community hall. O'DonnellBrown is working proactively to encourage future take-up of the system by a diverse range of users, increasing its reach throughout schools and communities, to improve provision for sectors integral to our collective well-being.

Tommy McDade, Barnardo's Works, said:

'We were delighted to be part of The Community Classroom - one of our project workers and a small team of young people volunteered to help build the classroom. The experience helped the young people understand more about the value of teamwork and effective communications, while also gaining insight into working in this sector. This has helped them



to further develop their job prospects and career ambitions.'

Jennifer O'Donnell, Director, O'DonnellBrown, said:

'Using our self initiated projects to pursue societal issues is important to us and we believe that the Community Classroom can help raise expectations for what an outdoor learning environment can be.'

#### NOTES TO EDITORS

<b>Address</b>	84 St Andrews Drive, Glasgow G41 4EQ
<b>Completion</b>	September 2019
<b>Gross internal area:</b>	24 m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Construction cost</b>	£10,000 (£416/m <sup>2</sup> )
<b>Client</b>	N/A (self-initiated)
<b>Architect:</b>	O'DonnellBrown
<b>Structural engineer:</b>	Design Engineering Workshop
<b>Collaborators &amp; sponsors:</b>	Three Four Five Joinery, RIAS, St Gobain
<b>Photography:</b>	© Ross Campbell

**O'DonnellBrown** is a multi award-winning Glasgow-based architectural practice with experience across a range of specialisms, and a keen interest in what it takes to make a positive contribution to our built environment. With work across the UK – currently concentrated in London and Glasgow – O'DonnellBrown is committed to bringing about confident change in the places they know and love.

Built works include: The Greenhouse, the studio's unique workspace in Pollokshields; and a new annexe building and outdoor learning space at Seven Mills Primary School in Tower Hamlets, London. Current projects include The Foundry, a development of 206 homes on the site of a former foundry in Glasgow, and feasibility for a new park pavilion community space and café in Pollokshields.

O'DonnellBrown was a finalist in The Architectural Review Emerging Architecture Awards 2019.

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