

Alexander Forbes scoops top honours

The Alexander Forbes headquarters in Sandton, Johannesburg, designed by Paragon Architects and Paragon Interface, took top honours in the built work category at the 2014 AfriSam-South African Institute of Architects Award for Sustainable Architecture, announced on October 9 at Johannesburg City Library.

Commendations in this category went to a further four projects: Unisa Phase 2 in Parow, Cape Town, designed by Michele Sandilands Architects; the Seed Library in Alexandra Township, Johannesburg, designed by Architects of Justice; Monaghan Farm near Lanseria, Gauteng, submitted by Claude Bailey Architecture & Design on behalf of Clewer Development Trust; and House Jones in Hurlingham,

Johannesburg, designed by Era Architects.

Employing a total of 2 500 people, the Alexander Forbes headquarters, occupied for two years, has already been confirmed as a Four-Star Rated Green Building. Reduced power consumption, re-use of water and recycling initiatives have contributed to lower water consumption by 70%, waste generation by 50% and energy consumption by 40%. The role of louvres, skylights, glazing and scallops assists with light while reducing the effect of heat and, at street level, the building edge is softened with xeriscaping, indigenous trees and plants.

"In acknowledging this building as the recipient of the AfriSam-SAIA Award for Sustain-



Andrew Bell/Paragon

Alexander Forbes won the recent AfriSam-SAIA Award for Sustainable Architecture.

able Architecture for 2014 in the built category, it is hoped that the Alexander Forbes headquarters will provide a beacon of inspiration, not only as a place to

work, but also as a worthwhile contribution to the urban fabric of Johannesburg and human experience in the area," said Stephan Olivier, AfriSam's CEO.

Salvage and re-use: a new trend in commercial moves



Excellerate Facilities Management recently renovated a 3 100m² standalone commercial property in Sandton, on behalf of Innovate Africa.

Excellerate

Greater awareness is growing among businesses about their sustainability responsibilities and the cost-related and associated benefits of doing so. This is according to Teuns Eksteen, project manager for Excellerate Facilities Management.

"In our line of work, we are constantly involved in renovations and tenant installations carried out on behalf of a wide range of companies," he said.

"Such projects are an ongoing occurrence in the commercial property market, as generally when a tenant relocates from a building and a new tenant moves in, the space is renovated."

Eksteen said that the move towards conserving resources is prompting a new trend which is most likely to become increasingly popular: salvaging and re-using old materials in renovation projects.

Smoothing over plastering problems



Successful plastering can be tricky, even for experienced contractors. The Concrete Institute provides guidelines in two free booklets.

The Concrete Institute

The most frequent technical enquiries directed to The Concrete Institute concern plastering.

Bryan Perrie, managing director of The Concrete Institute, said even experienced building contractors are not always sure how to evaluate acceptable plastering, mainly as a result of years without formal standards or regulations covering plaster quality.

"This makes it difficult for

homeowners and other clients to force a contractor to make repairs," Perrie said.

To help, the institute publishes two free leaflets with detailed guidelines on plastering: Successful Plastering and Common defects in plaster. Free copies of these two publications can be obtained from The Concrete Institute Information Centre in Midrand or downloaded from www.theconcreteinstitute.org.za.