



# Case study, London - UK

*"In a design-led practice like ours, people react best to aesthetically pleasing tools.."*

Huw Morgan – Dan Pearson Studio

## Overview

Dan Pearson Studio is a landscape design practice established in 1987 by landscape designer Dan Pearson. A familiar media figure, Dan Pearson began his career designing private gardens. Over time, he attracted commercial garden engagements and through that work, his design agency developed in 2003. Dan and his fellow designers now specialise in commercial garden design. They work with in close collaboration with architects, designers and craftsmen on a wide range of projects, from private domestic gardens through to large rural estates, public parks and civic landscapes.

Pearson, an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects, has recently been selected to be on the jury for this year's RIBA Stirling Prize, the UK's most prestigious architecture award.

## Location

London, UK

## Number of Employees

Nine

## Clients

Rogers Stirk Harbour & Partners, Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios, Jonathan Freeguard Architects, Guard Tillman Pollock, James Gorst Architects, Hawkins\Brown

## Results from Traffic

As a gardening and landscape design group, we don't fit the usual Traffic client profile. But Traffic fits us very well. We find that Traffic is not only appealing from a design and user point of view, the program supports every part of our business.

As Managing Director, I appreciate the variety of management reports that I can use to monitor the business. From my point of view, Traffic has been transformative. In the past, even though we have always been very successful, managing our company sometimes felt like being a boat floating on the sea; now we feel like an organisation that is on track and on target.

## Why Traffic?

Like many young agencies, we spent a number of years trying to organize ourselves using Excel spreadsheets and a certain amount of ingenuity. However, as the business grew, we found ourselves pushing the envelope on our homegrown solution. Timekeeping was a persistent problem in the agency and with several years of growth to our credit, we developed a more urgent need to schedule and manage in a more sophisticated way.

We resorted to the Internet to look for an answer. I "googled" using the key words "project management software" and discovered a large crop of possibilities. We quickly realized





that only a few, including Traffic, made sense to investigate more fully. As it turns out, I had heard about Traffic several years earlier but the need to act just hadn't gotten to the top of my "to-do" list until 2009.

The evaluation process was pretty simple. Unlike some of the accounting-based systems that were unfriendly to look at and confusing to understand, Traffic offered a very strong aesthetic appeal and was intuitive to use.

Implementation was fairly smooth; we outsourced the data transfer process which made the installation less time intensive for us. Staff acclimated to the system easily though I would say that, because there are so many features, it takes time to use Traffic in a comprehensive way.

### Bottom Line

People are much more aware of the time they spend on projects now and that information has made staff more efficient in managing their time. We also find that our estimates are more accurate than they used to be. Starting a project off with the right financial understanding is best for our clients and that guidance also keeps us on track. These advantages add up to making the whole agency more productive and business-like.

### Day to Day

In a design-led agency like ours, people react best to aesthetically pleasing tools. Traffic's look and feel compliment the way our staff like to work. For example, in the past, I really had to pester people to record time. Most people kept a paper record then transferred the information into Excel; it was a nuisance. With Traffic, it's natural and appealing to keep the program open all day to support our work. Time keeping is automatic and no longer feels like a burden.

### The Future

I am very pleased that Traffic helps me plan for needed staff expansion; it's easier now to stay ahead of the recruiting curve.

### Thanks to:

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