



Wellness  
@work

BLYTHE VALLEY PARK



## CIRCADIAN RHYTHM: WHY IT MATTERS

**Did you know.... we all have a 24-hour internal clock that runs in the background of our brains that controls our 'sleep/wake cycle' - this cycle switches between sleepiness and alertness throughout the day and night.**

Studies have shown that, for most adults, the biggest dips in energy happen between 2am and 4am, and again from 1pm to 3pm. This dip in energy can cause issues for those of us that work 9 - 5 jobs, because it can be difficult to motivate yourself to work hard when you feel tired.

Companies have now recognised that employees need motivating during certain periods of the day, therefore they are changing the way they design offices to cater for the wellbeing of their workforce. Many businesses are creating 'breakout areas', where employees can get away from their computer screens, and others use bright colours that can generate a more positive working environment. Some companies at Blythe Valley Park, including PKF, Gymshark and Abbott, have taken this on board, and have created quirky and modern office spaces.

## 5 KEY THINGS THAT CAN BE INCORPORATED INTO OFFICE DESIGN TO CREATE A POSITIVE EFFECT ON WELLBEING OF THE WORKFORCE ARE:



### COLOUR

A study undertaken by the University of Texas in 2015 found that certain colours in the office can induce feelings of depression and sadness for employees.

Colour in the office can positively or negatively affect our productivity, not just our mood. Therefore, companies are now taking the 'psychology of colour' into consideration when designing their offices. Studies show that colours such as blue, green, red and yellow can make workers feel happier, more optimistic, energetic and work more effectively.

PKF and Abbott both use bright colours in their offices, through furniture and partitioning. PKF have incorporated fun and bold colours into their Park View office - these colours immediately make you feel happy and motivated, which, in turn, should make employees feel more driven and productive.

### STANDING DESKS

Studies have shown that sitting for long periods of time can be bad for your health, in fact it can increase the risk of developing heart disease and diabetes. As office workers, it's very difficult to avoid sitting for long periods of time - therefore, some companies are introducing 'standing desks'. Standing desks have been designed so employees can comfortably stand whilst working at their desk, some standing desks even have adjustable height, so you can alternate between sitting and standing.

Scientific studies have found that standing desks can have many health benefits, some of which are: improved mood and energy levels, lower blood sugar levels, reduced back pain, lower risk of heart disease, lower risk of weight gain, and increased productivity.

# BIOPHILIA

Biophilia can be understood as ‘an innate love for the natural world, supposed to be felt universally by humankind’. The term biophilia is now most commonly linked with building design – new buildings are often being designed with biophilia in mind, and studies have shown that nature inspired changes in the office can have a dramatic impact on worker’s wellbeing. In fact, some studies show that plants in the office can increase work productivity by 15%.

Research has also shown that just being able to see nature from your office window can boost attention. As you know, Blythe Valley Park is situated within 122 acres of country park, so all of the offices are able to see nature and greenery from their windows.

Abbott, PKF and Gymshark all have incorporated biophilia into their building design. In Gymshark’s HQ, they have gone for a neutral colour scheme – therefore, the plants and greenery in their office really stand out and act as a pop of colour. PKF have brought nature into their office in a different way – they have incorporated a fish tank into the office design. Studies have found that having nature in the office can lower blood pressure, positively impact attitude and overall happiness, and can also improve attentiveness. More research into biophilia has found that having water in the office can reduce stress and improve concentration. PKF’s fish tank could be having numerous positive effects on the mental and physical health of their employees.



# MOVEMENT

Studies have shown that promoting ‘movement’ in the workplace is important in improving collaboration in the office. Many companies are now creating exercise areas in their offices to encourage people to do more physical activity. Two of the businesses at Blythe Valley Park that have introduced exercise areas to their offices are PKF and Gymshark – At PKF, employees can get away from their desks for a few moments to play mini golf, practice yoga in their ‘wellness tent’ and even ride a bike around their cycling track.

In the brand new Gymshark HQ, they have created a gym for employees where they can do circuit training, weights, boxing, yoga and more. They even have their own table tennis table!





## BREAKOUT AREAS

The average office worker spends most of their day sitting at their desk, which can cause strain on the eyes and cause back pain from sitting for too long. Companies are now introducing breakout areas to offices, as having breakout areas can give employees a chance to 'recharge their batteries'.

Breakout areas can boost creativity, improve wellbeing and increase productivity, because it gives employees a chance to get away from computer screens to rest their eyes and brains, as well as making employees feel refreshed once they return to their desk.

Gymshark, Abbott and PKF have all incorporated breakout areas into their office fit outs. Abbott have created open sofa areas, booths and informal areas in their café where employees can take a break from their computer screen. Gymshark have communal benches, beanbags and even 'sleep pods' for employees so that they can feel refreshed and revitalised after a quick nap! PKF have a communal café area, a sports bar and they even have swings and trampolines in the office for employees to ensure that break out time is fun and relaxed.

To read more articles to do with Wellness at Work, visit the Blythe Valley Park bulletin or social media pages here:

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[www.twitter.com/BlytheValley](https://www.twitter.com/BlytheValley)  
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