30 St Mary Axe: Facts and Figures

Developed by Swiss Re and designed by architects Foster and Partners this 40-storey office building is situated in the heart of the City of London. The building officially opened in March 2004 and provides some of the most flexible and environmentally sound office space in London.

30 St Mary Axe is situated on a site of 1.4 acres and stands at 180 meters high making it the second highest building in the City of London. At its widest point the circumference of the building is 178 meters (only two meters less than its height) and tapers to the top and bottom giving the impression of even greater height.

The building provides approximately 500,000 sq ft of office space, private dining rooms and a restaurant and bar that boast unparalleled views of London. All of this is from a footprint of just under 50 meters in diameter, a great deal smaller than a rectangular building providing the same accommodation and which enables the provision of a landscaped plaza around the building for residents and the public to enjoy.

The building has won a number of accolades for its contribution to architecture including the prestigious Royal Institute of British Architecture's Stirling Prize which is awarded to the building that has made the greatest contribution to British architecture in past twelve months.

Other useful facts and figures:

- Over 35 km of steel weighing 10,000 tonnes was used to build 30 St Mary Axe.
- There are 24,000 sq m of external glass- equivalent to five football pitches.
- Despite its curved shape, there is actually only one piece of curved glass – the lens at the top of the building which is 2.4m in diameter and weighs 250kg.
- The glass dome at the top of the building provides 360 degree views of London.
- The top two floors of the building, 39 and 40, are available for the use of tenants of the building during the day and to external parties in the evenings (subject to Landlord's approval).
- There are 18 passenger lifts in the building, and, at any one time, 378 people can be vertically transported through the building at speeds up to 6m per second.
- Work began on the site in January 2001 and the first occupants moved in just 35 months later in December 2003