

LIGHTFRAME CANOPY SOFFIT · FRANKFURT, GERMANY

Fabric interiors

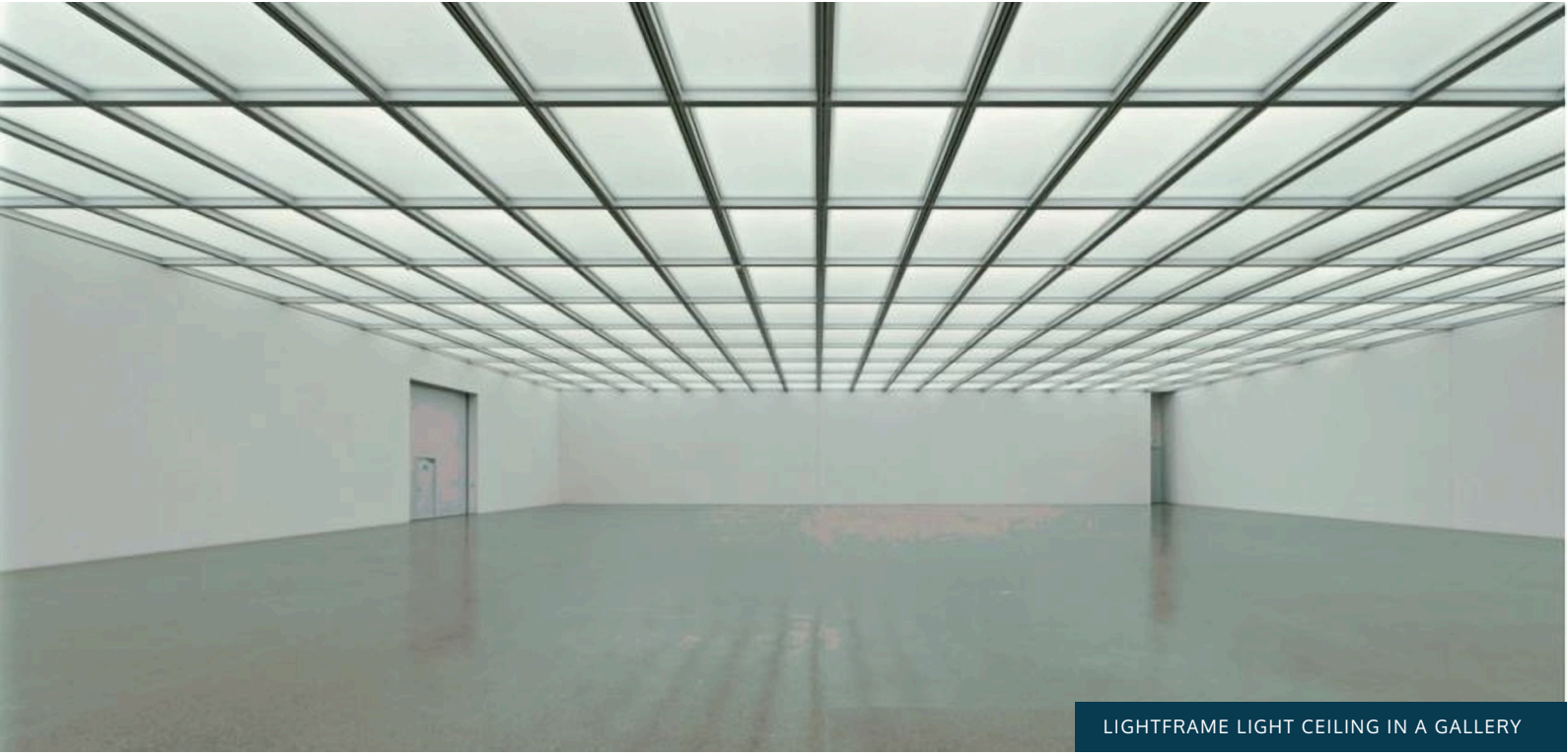
Lightframe fabric ceiling system

Slim aluminium frames skinned with light-diffusing fabric, for ceilings, walls and canopy soffits that glow evenly, soften sound and hinge down for access. Designed, made and installed by one team, from our factory in Chepstow, UK.

architen.com · +44 (0) 1291 638 200

INSPIRE · INNOVATE · PERFORM

ARCHITEN LANDRELL



LIGHTFRAME LIGHT CEILING IN A GALLERY

Who we are

Tensile fabric and ETFE structures, designed and made in the UK

Architen Landrell designs, engineers, fabricates, installs and maintains tensile membrane structures. Since 1983 we have built roofs, canopies and fabric interiors on six continents, including lit Lightframe ceilings and soffits for galleries, shops and offices.

We work hand in hand with architects, engineers, lighting designers and contractors, from the first sketch to maintenance. Every Lightframe panel is made to size in our own factory, and we design and install the lighting with specialist lighting designers and manufacturers.

Inspire

We draw on our experience, other industries and the natural world to create inspiring designs.

Innovate

We challenge existing ways of doing things to push boundaries, improve structural and environmental performance, and make the seemingly impossible possible.

Perform

We deliver high-quality products that meet the design and performance requirements of every project.

1983
founded in Chepstow, South Wales

6 continents
where our structures stand

2,000 m²
of production space in our Chepstow factory

In-house
design, engineering, manufacture, installation and maintenance

Company information

The Architen Landrell Group

Four specialist companies, one integrated offer: from bespoke landmark roofs to modular structures, steelwork, coatings and the keder that holds it all together.

Bringing these capabilities together under one group means clients, architects and contractors can come to a single partner for the membrane, the structure that supports it and the components that fix it.

Architen Landrell

ARCHITECTURAL TENSILE FABRIC AND ETFE

Tensile fabric and ETFE architectural structures. Complex and bespoke projects around the world.

architen.com

Metafab Structures

STEELWORK AND COATINGS

Advanced architectural and structural steelwork fabrication for strong modular buildings, tensile structures and rapid construction. Advanced coatings with Metacoatings.

metafabs.com

Fabric Architecture

MODULAR AND SMALL-SCALE STRUCTURES

A standard range of tensile fabric canopies and shade structures, popular with schools and colleges. Full turnkey solution including groundworks.

fabricarchitecture.com

UK Keder

KEDER PRODUCTS

Supply of high-quality keder products for a wide range of applications, from tensile structures to caravans.

uk-keder.com

Our services

From concept all the way through to handover, then maintained

We design, engineer, make, install and maintain every Lightframe ceiling ourselves, so one accountable team carries the design intent from the first sketch to the finished ceiling and beyond.

Runs through every stage — **Project management** — One dedicated project manager and a single point of contact, from design to maintenance

Design
Panel layout, profile and access

Engineering
Support grid and fixings

Manufacturing
Frames and fabric made to size

Lighting
Daylight, LEDs and controls

Installation
Our own teams, in occupied buildings

Maintenance
Cleaning, inspection, new panels



LIGHTFRAME SYSTEM · GALERIE CARATSCH, ZÜRICH, SWITZERLAND

Overview

What is Lightframe?

Lightframe is a modular ceiling system of light aluminium frames with fabric tensioned across them. The panels hang like a suspended ceiling, and the fabric spreads daylight or lighting evenly across its surface, so the whole ceiling seems to glow.

Each panel is made to size, in almost any shape, and hinges down to reach the lights, ducts and sprinklers above. It is used for galleries and museums, offices and lobbies, shops, and the soffits of entrance canopies, where it gives a bright, calm surface by day and by night.

6 × 3.2 m
largest panel, made to size in almost any shape

85%+
of the light passes through, as soft, diffuse light

≈ 2 mm
joint between panels, so the lit surface looks continuous

80 mm
deep frame, so a self-lit ceiling fits a shallow void

B-s1,d0
usual fire class of the fabric, with A2 available

Every panel
hinges down to reach the services above

How it works · fabric on a frame, hung like a suspended ceiling

Frame
Aluminium profiles with a narrow, half-elliptical edge that keeps shadows off the lit surface. Three profile types suit different jobs.

Fabric
Held in the frame by a beaded edge and pre-stressed, so it stays smooth and free of wrinkles. Chosen for light, sound and fire rating, and it can be printed.

Back layer
An ETFE foil or a second layer of fabric on the back evens out the light, softens sound and keeps dust and insects out.

Support
A simple grid hung from the structure above, from existing steelwork or within a suspended ceiling. Panels can also hang alone as lit rafts.

Access
Panels hinge or fold down to reach lights, ducts, sprinklers, detectors and speakers. Gas dampers can lower a large panel slowly.

Indoors and out
The frames need no cross bars, so the same panels form the lit soffits of outdoor canopies, as at the Majestic in Leeds and Selfridges in Manchester.

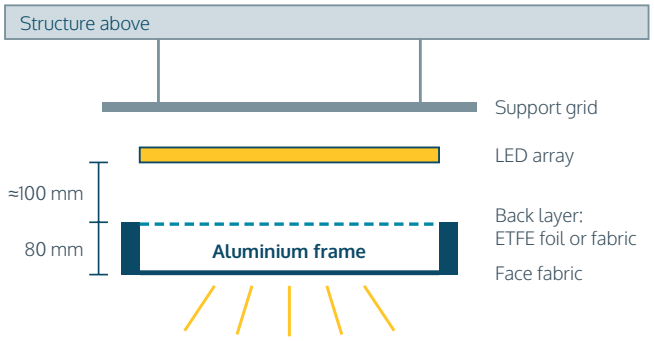


SELFRIDGES MANCHESTER TRAFFORD · MANCHESTER, UK

Panels and profiles

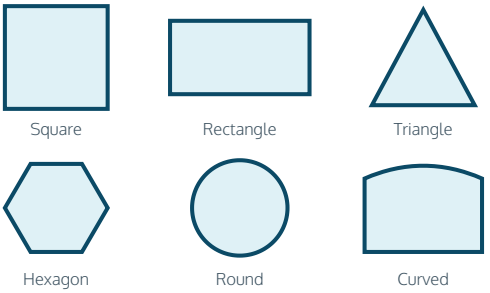
Any panel shape, on a slim frame

Section through a self-lit panel



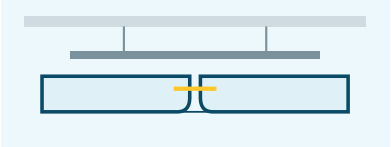
Even, diffuse light: 85%+ passes through the fabric

Panel shapes, made to size up to 6,000 × 3,200 mm



A typical panel is about 2,500 × 1,500 mm. Panels can form a whole ceiling, single lit rafts, walls or canopy soffits.

Three frame profiles · we recommend the profile for each project

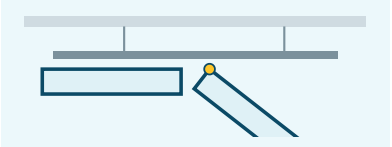


Type A

Large, continuous light ceilings

The slimmest, lightest frame and the narrowest joints. Locking screws draw neighbouring frames together and pre-stress the fabric. Square, rectangular, triangular, hexagonal or round panels.

Access: panels come down by reversing the assembly.

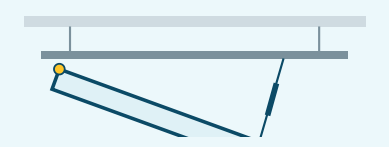


Type B

Rigid single panels, can be coupled

No tensioning on site. Joints are wider than type A, and panels hang by hand on a visible or hidden support.

Access: each panel folds down on built-in locking bolts, with no special tools.



Type C

The largest panel sizes

A rigid frame for the biggest panels, with joints wider than type A.

Access: each panel comes down without special tools, and gas dampers lower it slowly.

Source: Architen Lightframe brochure.

Even light from daylight or LEDs

Fabric scatters the light that passes through it, so a panel with a single light behind it looks evenly lit and the fabric itself seems to be the light source.

Lightframe fabrics let through 85% of the light or more, most of it diffuse, and the light passes evenly across the visible spectrum, so colours below look true. The fabric can soften the daylight from a glass roof or hide the lights in a ceiling void, and built-in LEDs sit about 100 mm above the 80 mm frame, so a self-lit ceiling fits where there is little depth.

Daylight

Under rooflights or a glass roof, the fabric spreads the light and hides the structure above.

LEDs

Low-energy LED arrays behind the fabric, with DALI or DMX drivers for dimming, colour washes and changing scenes.

Constant light

LEDs can mimic daylight and link to the building controls, with sensors that hold a steady light level through the day.

Designed with you

We design and install the lighting with specialist lighting designers and manufacturers, as at Selfridges and the Majestic.



By day

THE MAJESTIC, LEEDS, UK

Under daylight, the fabric soffit of the entrance canopy reads as a smooth, plain surface that suits the 1920s building.



By night

THE MAJESTIC, LEEDS, UK

After dark, the same soffit glows evenly, lit by lights we designed and installed above the fabric, and welcomes people in.



BLAVATNIK BUILDING, TATE MODERN · LONDON, UK

Featured project

Lit gallery ceilings at Tate Modern

Tate Modern's Blavatnik Building, designed by Herzog & de Meuron, opened in 2016. Its two main fifth-floor galleries needed close control of light: one is lit by daylight and artificial light together, the other by artificial light alone, and the architect wanted the same evenly lit ceiling across both.

We designed, made and installed 72 Lightframe panels, with light-diffusing fabric below and a white ETFE foil above. The largest are 4.2 × 2.2 m, sized to the room and to the artwork lifts that carried them to the fifth floor: the crates only just fitted. The final panels were made to measure on site tolerances of a few millimetres.

The result is a clean, bright ceiling that lights the art without shadows. Every panel hinges down, so the lights and air ducts in the void can be reached quickly as exhibitions change.



A fifth-floor gallery open to visitors

72 panels
across two fifth-floor galleries

4.2 × 2.2 m
largest panel, sized to the artwork lifts

Build-up	Diffusing fabric below, white ETFE foil above
Light	Daylight and artificial light
Access	Every panel hinges down
Completed	2016

Acoustics and materials

A light ceiling that also absorbs echo

Quieter rooms

One ceiling for light and sound

Glass, concrete and plaster reflect sound, so rooms with hard finishes echo and voices carry. A Lightframe ceiling absorbs part of that sound while it lets the light through, so the room feels calmer and conversation is easier.

How much it absorbs depends on the fabric and what is behind it. Open-weave and acoustic fabrics absorb more, and so does a double layer, with a foil or a second fabric behind the face and sometimes insulation in the void. In the fabric maker's echo-chamber tests of double-layer set-ups, absorption peaked above 0.9 between 200 and 2,500 Hz, which covers most of the range of speech.

Tested absorption figures for the fabrics we use are on our Acoustic fabrics page at architen.com.

Where it helps

Galleries and museums

Even light for the art, and a quieter room.

Offices and meeting areas

A lit ceiling over open-plan zones that also softens the noise.

Receptions, lobbies and showrooms

A calm, bright ceiling in rooms full of hard surfaces.

Cafés and shops under a glass roof

Softer daylight and less echo.

Building up a panel

Choosing the fabric and what goes behind it

Our engineers choose the build-up for the light level, the sound and the fire rating the space needs.

Layer or option	What it does	How the space feels
Face fabric	Light-diffusing architectural fabric; 85%+ of the light passes through	The ceiling reads as one soft, glowing surface
ETFE foil behind	Evens out the light and keeps dust and insects off the fabric	Steady brightness, and a clean face for years
Second fabric layer	More diffusion and more sound absorption	Softer light and a calmer room
Insulation in the void	Absorbs more sound behind the panels	Less echo in rooms with hard finishes
Printed fabric	Carries an image, a pattern or a brand	A ceiling or wall with its own character
Fire class	Set by the fabric: usually B-s1,d0 to EN 13501-1, with A2 fabrics available	Meets the fire strategy for the space

Lit soffits, showrooms, offices and foyers



Selfridges Manchester Trafford

MANCHESTER, UK

A lit fabric soffit under the store's new entrance canopy. We designed, made and installed fourteen Lightframe panels, each with two layers of light-diffusing fabric on an aluminium frame, and the lighting above them.

The panels arrived fully assembled, crated in the order they were fitted. They hinge down to reach the lights, and our team still looks after the soffit, with early-morning visits before the store opens.

14 panels
forming the canopy soffit

46 m²
of lit fabric soffit

Build-up	Two layers of diffusing fabric
Completed	2020

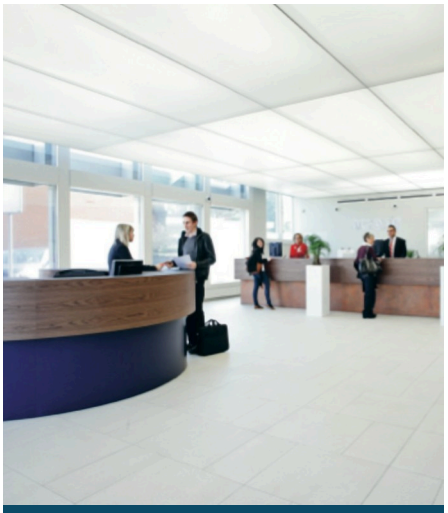
The Lightframe system in other settings



Showrooms

LIGHTFRAME SYSTEM · NEW YORK, USA

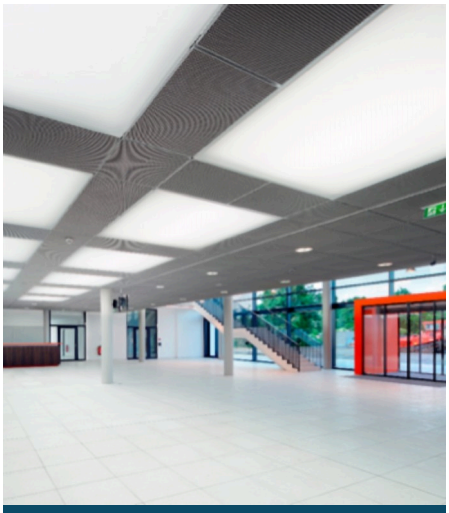
Light walls and ceilings wrap a car showroom in even, shadow-free light, so every line of the car shows.



Offices and receptions

LIGHTFRAME SYSTEM · GOSSAU, SWITZERLAND

A bright, calm ceiling over a banking hall and reception, which also softens the noise of a busy room.



Foyers and public spaces

LIGHTFRAME SYSTEM · FRANKFURT, GERMANY

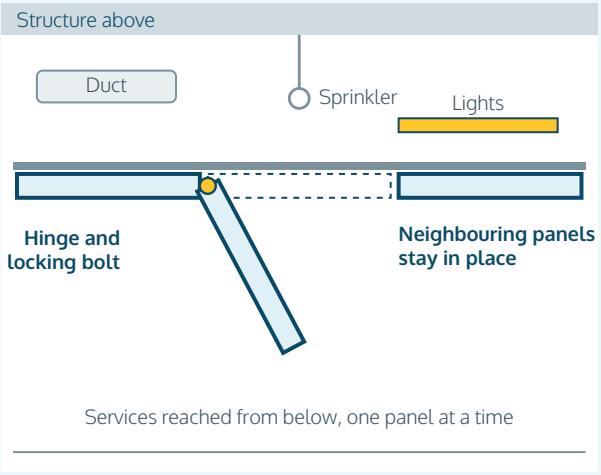
Lit panels set into an open ceiling grid give a large foyer a clear, daylight feel.

Access

Every panel hinges down

Lights, sprinklers, ducts and speakers above a ceiling all need reaching. With Lightframe, any panel opens from below in minutes, and the ceiling never has to come apart.

How a panel opens



Each panel opens on its own, with no special tools, then closes back into line with its neighbours.

Open in minutes

Panels hinge or fold down on built-in locking bolts. No special tools, and no film to unclip or refit.

Safe for large panels

Gas dampers can be fitted so a big panel lowers slowly and under control.

Spaces stay open

Change a light or reach a duct one panel at a time, so galleries, shops and offices keep working around it.

Easy to renew

A single panel, or new printed fabric when artwork or a brand changes, can be made in our factory and swapped in.

Planning and specifying Lightframe · the questions our engineers will ask, or we can guide you

01
Ceiling, wall or soffit?
Indoors or outside; a whole ceiling, a raft or single lit panels.

02
Panel layout and shape
Up to 6,000 × 3,200 mm. We work out the joints and the grid.

03
Light source
Daylight, lights in the void or built-in LEDs, with DALI or DMX controls.

04
What needs access?
The services above, and how often they are reached.

05
Fire rating
Usually B-s1,d0 to EN 13501-1; A2 fabrics available.

06
Sound
Any acoustic target sets the fabric and what goes behind it.

07
Fixings and void depth
An 80 mm frame, with LEDs about 100 mm above it.

08
Access and timing
Lifts and doorways for large panels; out-of-hours working.

Specification

Architen Lightframe System

H90 clause available

Manufacturer	Architen Landrell Manufacturing Limited
Size	As per architect's drawings
Fabric, lower layer	To be confirmed with Architen Landrell
Upper layer	ETFE foil, a second fabric, or none
Lighting	None, or LED array with DALI/DMX drivers
Effects	Daylight or colour wash

Questions about Lightframe

The questions architects, lighting designers and clients ask us most often.

Frequently asked questions

What is Lightframe?

A modular fabric ceiling system. Light aluminium frames are skinned with tensioned, light-diffusing fabric and hung like a suspended ceiling, so a ceiling, wall or canopy soffit glows evenly from daylight or lights behind it.

How big can a panel be?

Each panel is made to size. The largest is 6,000 × 3,200 mm, depending on the fabric width, the frame profile and access to the site; a typical panel is about 2,500 × 1,500 mm.

How much light passes through?

Lightframe fabrics let through 85% of the light or more, most of it diffuse, so the surface looks evenly lit and practically free of shadows. We choose the build-up behind the fabric for the light level you need.

What fire rating does Lightframe have?

The rating comes from the fabric. Lightframe fabrics are usually B-s1,d0 to EN 13501-1, and A2 fabrics can be used where the space needs them.

Can Lightframe have built-in lighting?

Yes. LED arrays sit about 100 mm above the 80 mm frame. With DALI or DMX drivers they can dim, wash the ceiling in colour or mimic daylight, and link to the building controls. We design and install the lighting with specialist lighting designers and manufacturers.

How do you reach the services above?

Panels hinge or fold down, so lights, ducts, sprinklers, detectors and speakers can be reached without taking the ceiling apart. Gas dampers can lower a large panel slowly.

Does Lightframe help with acoustics?

Yes. The fabric absorbs part of the sound that hard finishes reflect, and acoustic fabrics, a second layer or insulation in the void absorb more.

Can Lightframe be used outdoors?

Yes. The frames need no cross bars, so panels can form the soffit of an outdoor canopy, as at the Majestic in Leeds and Selfridges in Manchester.

Can a single panel be replaced?

Yes. Each panel is separate, so one can be taken down and a new one, or new fabric, made in our factory and fitted without disturbing the rest.

Can the fabric be printed?

Yes. Lightframe fabrics can be printed, so a ceiling or wall can carry an image, a pattern or a brand.

Does a Lightframe ceiling need much looking after?

Very little. Every panel can be reached from below, and our maintenance team cleans the fabric and makes new panels when they are needed.



Let's talk about your ceiling

Working hand in hand with design, lighting and engineering teams

Maintenance and repairs

Already have a Lightframe ceiling?

Lightframe needs little looking after, and every panel can be reached from below. Our maintenance team cleans the fabric, makes new fabric or whole panels in our factory, and takes panels down and refits them for building works. We keep records of every structure we have built.

- Fabric cleaning, including at height
- New fabric or whole panels from our factory
- Panels taken down and refitted for building works
- New printed fabric when a brand or artwork changes
- Work planned around opening hours

Maintenance team: maintenance@architen.com

Contact

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Head office and factory

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