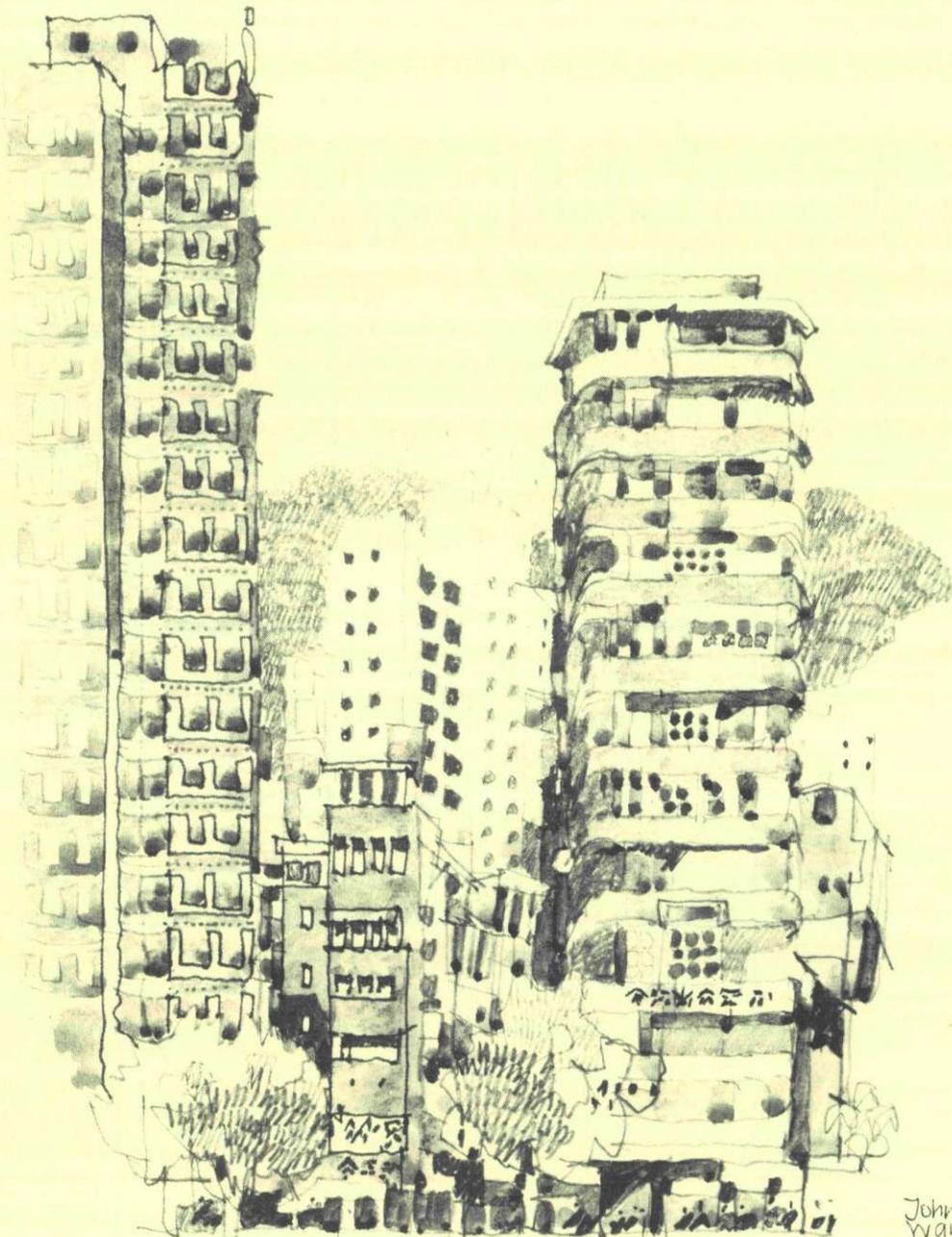


# URBAN DESIGN GROUP QUARTERLY

August/September 1981

50p



Johnston Road  
Wanchai  
Tony Mee tr 9/80

# News :AGM & Membership

The Second Annual General Meeting of the UDG took place on Wednesday evening 8 April 1981 at the Polytechnic of Central London and preceded the lively talk by Hugh Cannings which is described elsewhere in this issue of the Quarterly. The meeting was well attended and the Committee for the 1981-82 session was confirmed as follows :

John Billingham	(Regional Activities)	Robert Meadows	(Education)
Richard Ellis	(Member)	Tony Meats	(Assistant Treasurer)
John Evans	(Editorial)	John Peverley	(Treasurer)
Keith Ingham	(Events)	Peter Studdert	(Editorial)
Arnold Linden	(Education)	Francis Tibbalds	(Chairman)
Alexandra Marmot	(Publicity)	Tony Tugnut	(Secretary)

The Chairman reported a fairly busy year 1980-81. The principal activities included : evidence to the SSRC Planning Committee on the review of the funding of Urban Design Group; opposition to the RIBA SGM Motion to exempt architects from aesthetic control; representations to Michael Heseltine about the notorious Draft Development Control Circular (now Circular 22/80); contact with non-London-based UDG members; preparation of a draft Constitution and subsequent agreement with the Charity Commissioners; talks by John Evans, Dick Hargreavey Robert Rummey and Mel Dunbar, and Sherban Cantacuzino; support to the joint RIBA/RTPI Talk by John Collins - "Urban Renaissance : the quality of the product"; contact with the Schools and publication of what they offer; and very successful introduction of the Quarterly. The professional press had usually been supportive of the Group's initiatives and advertised our activities. Among the objectives for the next session were : boosting membership, streamlining membership records and subscription collection, establishment of regional groups and activities and closer involvement with the RTPI and RIBA. Following the Treasurer's Report the Meeting agreed to the annual subscription being raised to £4.00 and to the introduction of Bank Mandates to facilitate the collection of this relatively small sum.

The membership drive began in May and June with the objectives of firstly regularising the status of those on the mailing list who had not paid a recent subscription and secondly encouraging new members to join. This is going well BUT PLEASE NOTE :

- 1 WE NEED AS MANY MEMBERS (and £4s) AS WE CAN GET TO COVER THE PRINTING AND POSTAGE COSTS OF THE QUARTERLY.
- 2 WE CAN NO LONGER AFFORD TO KEEP ANYONE ON THE MAILING LIST WHO DOES NOT PAY THE SUBSCRIPTION.

If, therefore, for any reason you have not paid your June 1981 subscription please send your cheque and/or request for a Bank Standing Order Form to

John Peverley  
Hon Treasurer : UDG  
31 Onslow Gardens  
London N10.

Cover Illustration : Johnston Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong  
by Tony Meats

# Warsaw Impressions '81

The triennial congress of the International Union of Architects (UIA) in June this year gave 3000 architects from 90 countries the opportunity of visiting Warsaw, discussing international trends in architecture and learning of Poland's struggle for social and economic reform.

Warsaw's 700 year old built heritage was almost totally destroyed by the Nazi's during the Second World War which left the city mourning the loss of two thirds of its inhabitants and devastation of 85% of its buildings and infrastructure. A fact that Poles cannot forget is that most damage to the city occurred not during the invasion, nor during the Ghetto and Warsaw uprisings of 1942 and 1944 but during the last months of the war. Warsaw was then systematically dynamited and cleared following the plan prepared by the town planner, Pabst, for a segregated city of Polish labourers and German rulers with only one-tenth of the pre-war population. (1)

Liberation from the east by Soviet-led forces heralded a different future for the city. Several avant-garde Polish architects and planners had been active in CIAM and CIRPAC in the 20s and 30s. Under their influence, plans for Warsaw's redevelopment which had been prepared before the war or in underground studios during the years of occupation, could now be implemented. All of Warsaw's land was nationalised for this purpose. As in Rotterdam and other bombed cities, young planners grasped the opportunity provided by wartime destruction to reshape Warsaw as a 'functional city' characterised by separation of land uses, provision of extensive recreational open space, housing in tall blocks of flats, and emphasis on provision for rapid transportation. But at the same time, the need for connection with the past, for urban memory, led to the decision to faithfully reconstruct the Old Town, significant streets, palaces and national monuments.

The reconstructed areas serve two important purposes. Firstly they are a concrete statement of the Poles' refusal to accept the elimination of their national heritage. Secondly, they provide relief from the large scale, vehicular-dominated city of the present. In Old Warsaw one finds intimate pedestrian streets, well proportioned squares and a delightful variety of detail in building form, material and decoration so lacking in the newer areas. Modern Warsaw does have generous and well-landscaped parklands but is not a very human city. Roads are wide. City blocks are vast. Buildings are monotonous. Although the quantity of vehicular traffic is quite low, roads have been designed primarily for vehicular speed and pedestrians relegated a noisy walk to infrequent underpasses or crossings. Public transport is frequent and cheap though overcrowded. Underground routes projected in every plan, have yet to be realised though the last decade saw large investment in a major central railway terminus and several motorway schemes.

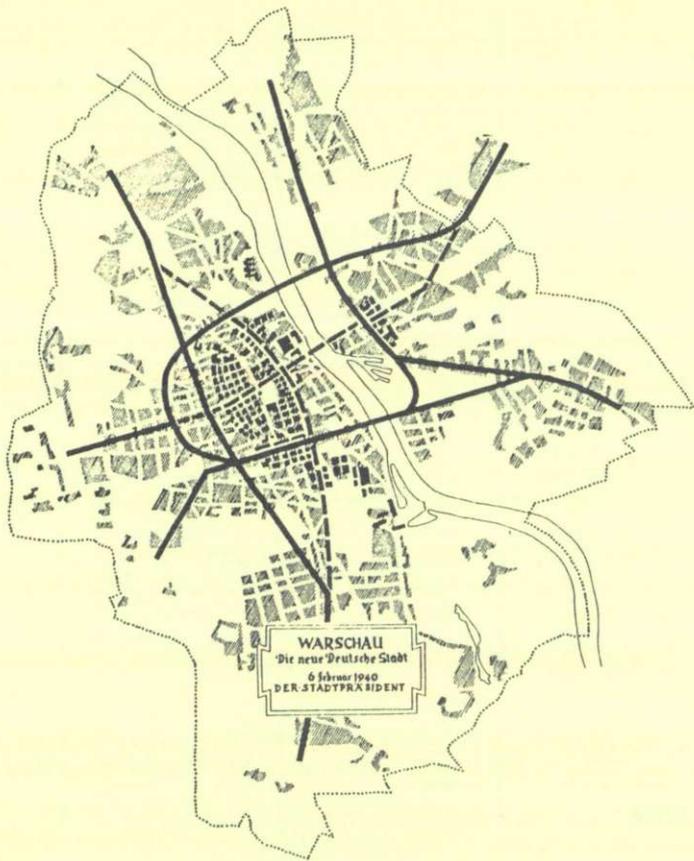
Housing is provided in two main forms: the predominant mode is repetitive apartment blocks on large estates built from the industrialised panel systems which dominate the construction industry. Space standards within the dwelling are low by comparison with Britain but provision of community facilities - kindergartens, schools, shops - is mostly generous. Apartment buildings include stripped classical blocks built in the Socialist Realist 50s, crudely functionalist assembly line blocks of the 60s and 70s and some recent examples of blocks of varied height, form and colour allowing personalisation of balconies and ground level gardens by residents. The second mode of housing provision accounting for about 10% of new dwellings in Warsaw and 40% in the

country is cooperatively- or owner-built single family housing on minimally serviced land purchased from farmers. The maximum allowable size is 110 m<sup>2</sup> per house and the dwellings display the ingenuity and varied tastes of those working outside the main housing system.

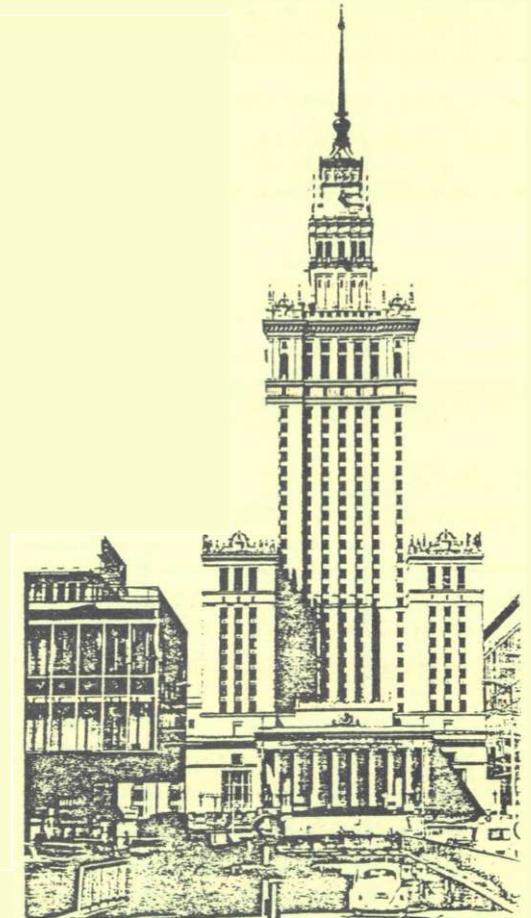
Warsaw's town centre is distinctly marked by the 700 ft high Palace of Culture in which the UIA Congress took place. (2,3) Designed by the Russian architect Rudnyev and built between 1952 and 1955, its similarity to Moscow's University and Ukraina Hotel is remarkable. The building was in fact a 'gift' from the Soviet people to the Poles. Apologists claim that its bulk is due to Polish greed in requesting that the gift contain extensive accommodation for congresses, the Academy of Science, theatres, museums and restaurants, and that its decoration is derived from Polish sources. But to most Poles the building is an inescapable symbol of influence of their eastern neighbour. They resent the building's scale and aloofness, and the sterilization of several city blocks which it has annexed to surround itself with the biggest open carpark in central Europe. The act of designing changes to the building and its setting is one way of expressing disapproval. Several Polish architects have suggested new streets around the Palace composed of low-rise mixed-use buildings (e.g. Andrzej Duszka's project in Architektura 7-8/79 and the project by the DOM group this year (4)). Hong Kong students at the UIA Congress proposed that the building's plan area become an open square while fragments of the carved up building could be redistributed to define parks, lakes and new city blocks (5).

Rethinking Poland's post war urbanism is now an engaging pastime combining debates from the West with Solidarity's struggle inside Poland. The DOM group ('Dom' is the Polish word for 'house' and their name also stands for 'House and City') of enthusiastic young designers have produced a Charter printed by Solidarity. In it they describe Warsaw as a city destroyed by war and also by the "meeting of contemporary urban doctrine with totalitarian socio-political doctrines". They argue against the repetition of forms on a large scale, against the pervasiveness of the architect-bureaucrat. They plead for the right of people in self-governing communities to express their own personality through design, for increased attention to architectural aesthetics instead of architectural technology, for the creation of Krieresque cities based on streets and squares and for architectural practice to allow choice of client by architect and architect by client. "An architect", they eloquently state, "does not have to build at any cost; it is better to be silent than to lie or to give consent to the degradation of his art under the pressure of casually fulfilling needs."

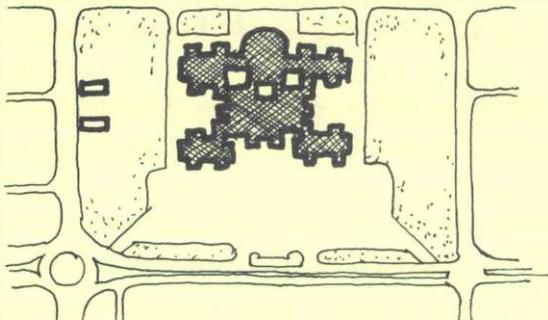
There are many ways in which Solidarity's success since August 1980 is influencing architects and planners as the trade unions demands have extended beyond the workplace into more general community issues. For example, one of the points signed by the authorities in the Gdansk agreement is that the average length of the housing waiting list be reduced from 15 to 10 years. In Cracow, workers protested against urban pollution from a large aluminium plant resulting in the closure of the plant while anti-pollution measures are taken and attention to control of pollution in other cities. In architectural and planning offices Solidarity branches are being formed and are exposing incompetent or corrupt practices (e.g. private sale of newly completed cooperative housing to those not on the waiting list) and questioning the professional standing and integrity of their bosses. In some offices and departments, new heads are being democratically elected by staff to replace political appointees. There is talk of making local planning and local government more responsive to the needs of residents. But for the present, however, these activities are eclipsed by the power struggle at the national level and the economic problems which have stultified building and urban investment.



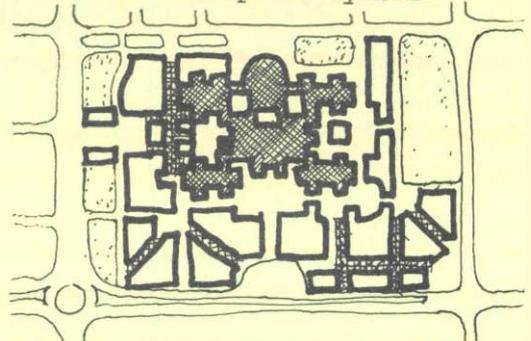
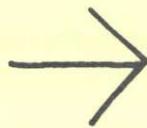
1 1940 Pabst plan for Warsaw superimposed on the pre-war city.



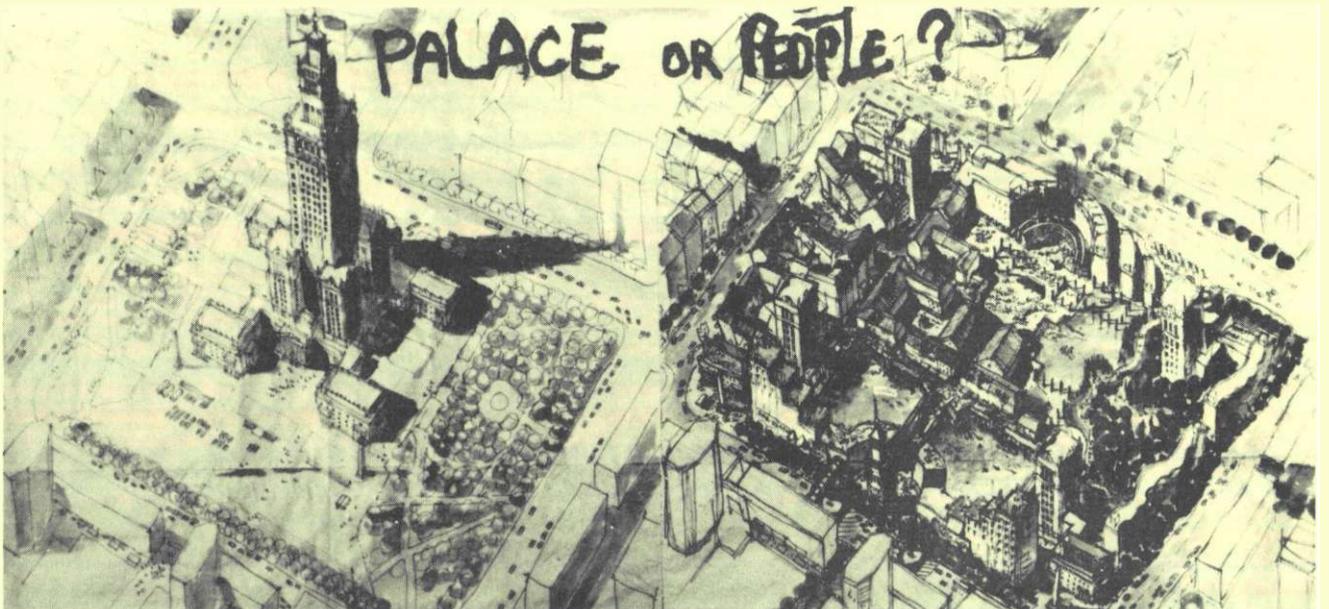
2 Warsaw's Palace of Culture, an inescapable symbol



3 Palace of Culture Existing Plan



4 DOM's proposal to encircle the Palace with defined streets.



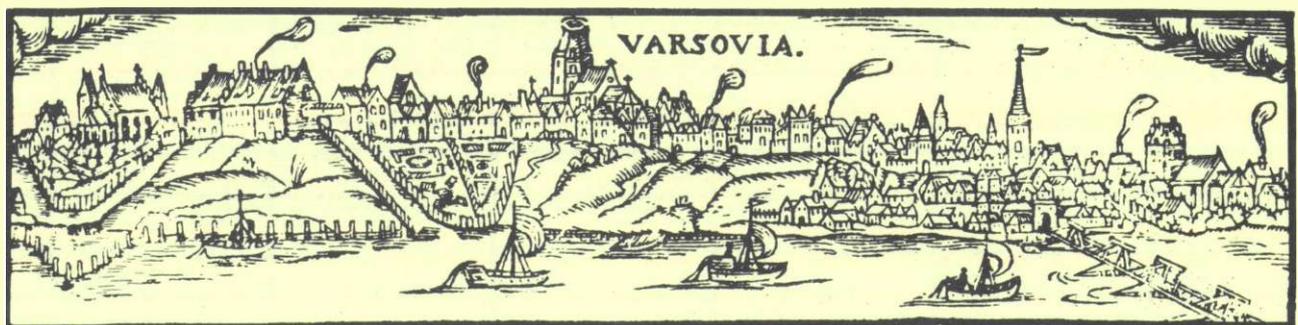
5 Proposal by Hong Kong students for a recreational area of Palace fragments. ^

Meanwhile, at the UIA Congress, architects from all over the world received messages from Brezhnev, Reagan and the Pope, flashed countless slides of their nation's prestige projects, and awarded well-deserved prizes to winners of the international student competition on renewal of a degraded urban environment. At sessions of the International Committee of Architectural Critics (CICA) the state of architectural criticism occasioned controversy. Modernists fought a rear guard action against post-and late-modernists disguised as neo-classicists: Third World critics claimed that their voices were not heard in the opinion-forming Western dominated architectural magazines: and it was predicted that the "street" would be the focus of concern for the next few years.

The Congress closed with the presentation of the Warsaw Declaration of Architects following the tradition of CIAM's 1933 Charter of Athens. At first glance the Warsaw Declaration appears to give no useful guidance to designers since it is filled with general pleas for unquestionable goodies such as human welfare and international peace - "Governments should stop production for war and use their resources for the improvement of conditions for all humanity". But buried within the statement are several departures from the urban design tenets of the Charter of Athens. While the earlier charter considered only the European city, the Warsaw Declaration is equally concerned with the problems of the emergent city in rapidly industrialising countries, and with the demands made by all urban dwellers on the natural environment. The need for energy-conscious cities is espoused. Instead of CIAM's functionally segregated city made up of distinct buildings, we should "create integrated multi-functional environments treating each building as part of a continuum"; instead of destroying the past to revel in the new we should "protect and develop the heritage of the society ... and maintain continuity of cultural development"; instead of designing for the needs of the private motor car we should "subordinate the private automobile to the development of general public transportation systems"; instead of imposing professionally designed end products we should work with others since "citizen participation in the building process should be considered as a basic right". Time will tell if the Warsaw Declaration has a significant effect on the future practice of urban design.

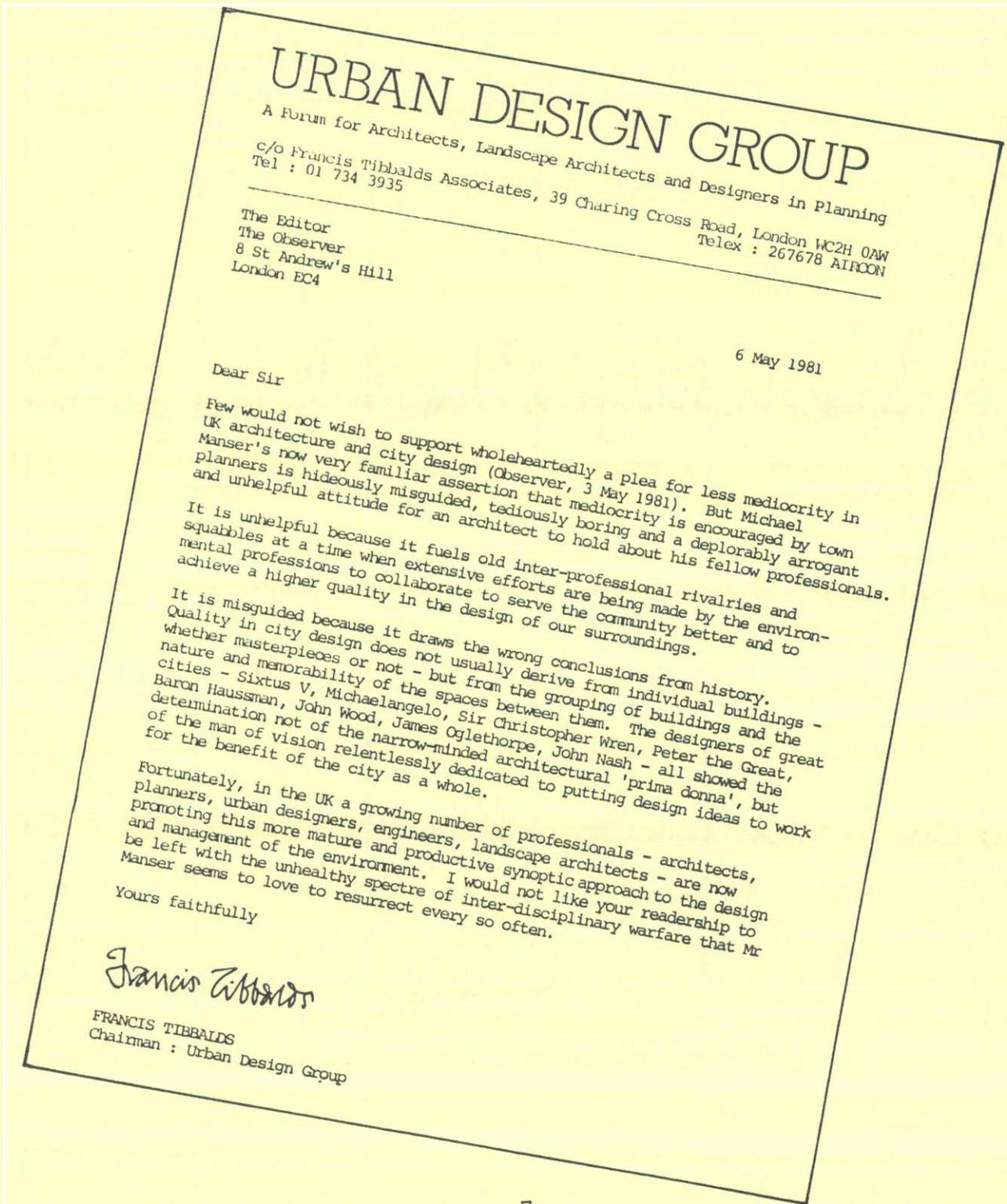
ALEXI FERSTER JVP\RMOT

The author would like to thank the British Council and London University's Hayter Travel Award Committee for making the trip financially possible and the Polish architects and planners who helped to interpret the city.



# Manser on Mediocrity

Many UDG members probably saw Michael Manser's broadside against town planners in the May 3 issue of the Observer. Two Sundays later strongly worded replies appeared. These included letters from RIBA Councillor Kate Macintosh, RTPI President John Collins, Royal Fine Arts Commission Secretary Sherban Cantacuzino and UDG Chairman Francis Tibbalds. The UDG contribution was not printed in its entirety. For the benefit of members who would like to see the full text it is reproduced below:



# URBAN DESIGN GROUP

A Forum for Architects, Landscape Architects and Designers in Planning

c/o Francis Tibbalds Associates, 39 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0AW  
Tel : 01 734 3935 Telex : 267678 AIRCON

The Editor  
The Observer  
8 St Andrew's Hill

London EC4

6 May 1981

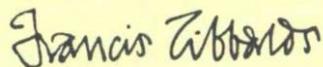
Dear Sir

Pew would not wish to support wholeheartedly a plea for less mediocrity in UK architecture and city design (Observer, 3 May 1981). But Michael Manser's now very familiar assertion that mediocrity is encouraged by town planners is hideously misguided, tediously boring and a deplorably arrogant and unhelpful attitude for an architect to hold about his fellow professionals. It is unhelpful because it fuels old inter-professional rivalries and squabbles at a time when extensive efforts are being made by the environmental professions to collaborate to serve the community better and to achieve a higher quality in the design of our surroundings.

It is misguided because it draws the wrong conclusions from history. Quality in city design does not usually derive from individual buildings - whether masterpieces or not - but from the grouping of buildings and the nature and memorability of the spaces between them. The designers of great cities - Sixtus V, Michaelangelo, Sir Christopher Wren, Peter the Great, Baron Haussman, John Wood, James Oglethorpe, John Nash - all showed the determination not of the narrow-minded architectural 'prima donna', but of the man of vision relentlessly dedicated to putting design ideas to work for the benefit of the city as a whole.

Fortunately, in the UK a growing number of professionals - architects, planners, urban designers, engineers, landscape architects - are now promoting this more mature and productive synoptic approach to the design and management of the environment. I would not like your readership to be left with the unhealthy spectre of inter-disciplinary warfare that Mr Manser seems to love to resurrect every so often.

Yours faithfully



**FRANCIS TIBBALDS**  
Chairman : Urban Design Group

# New Town Criticism

Hugh Cannings' talk reported by Peter Studdert

The New Towns have failed to provide public spaces which can satisfy the social and psychological needs of their inhabitants. Speaking at a UDG meeting on 8th April under the title 'Come back street - all is forgiven'<sup>1</sup>, Warrington and Runcorn Development Corporation's Chief Architect and Planner Hugh Cannings criticised New Towns such as Milton Keynes and Washington for the 'ordered sterility' of their road network.

Cannings felt that the visual character of the street at Milton Keynes was derived from a 'cosmetic notion of a boulevard', and it was often difficult to find the town centre or the local centres. Signposts were required to tell people the way. Moreover the residential areas within the road grid were structured from the inside out, so that the 'public domain' of the larger roads was skirted by meaningless and costly landscaped strips with only the backs of houses beyond.

Cannings thinks it important to recognise that our senses can tell us on their own about the structure of a city. Just by using our senses we can easily find our way around a medieval town because of the richness of symbolic meaning to be found about us. The same ought to be true in New Towns.

In Cannings' view the problem lay in the development process. There had been too little urban design input into the master plans, and in many cases the jump had been made from master plan to individual project without a full exploration of the design implications of the design on the ground. Another problem was that it is often difficult for the urban designer to put his views across, and the influence of the specialist, such as the estates surveyor, was increasing.

He was also critical of Design Guides (such as the Cheshire Design Guide) which contained a simplistic view of the role of the street. Why do residential streets have to be culs-de-sac?

Cannings described his current work at Warrington where he is trying to put more meaning into the design of streets. He is exploring the possibilities of gaining direct access onto local and district distributor roads, and he is giving a new lease of life to traditional urban symbols such as squares, gateways and fountains.

At Gorse Covert the frontages of local roads will be developed at a scale appropriate to their function. There will be a formal 'boulevard' approach with front doors facing the road, and the local centre will be designed around a square which will contain the primary school, shops and a pub. The detailed design of these buildings will take full advantage of the potential for social activity traditionally found in a square.

Cannings' views predictably stimulated a heated debate with the audience. Walter Bor felt that it was pointless to try to recreate the medieval street in a New Town because economical and social conditions were completely different. The problem in his view was the 'modern schizophrenia' which demands car ownership and an intimate environment at the same time. He defended the original master plan for Milton Keynes, and said that the outcome would have been better had the original plan been followed.

Milton Keynes' urban designer Stroud Watson also defended Milton Keynes - 'if you don't have the grid road you can't have the environmental area'. A lively discussion was started about the role of the petrol filling station: should it be located so as to encourage its potential dual role as a corner shop? The MK approach seemed to suggest that it should not, whereas the Cannings approach was that it should.

Ted Hollamby felt that what Cannings was really advocating was a suburban rather than an urban street, because in the latter the most important factors were safety and surveillance. Cannings replied that safety problems were just as important in New Towns as in the Inner City. In New Towns it was common for people to avoid subways at night and walk instead along the expressways, which were better illuminated.

Giving the vote of thanks, John Peverley expressed the view that a follow-up meeting should be arranged to continue the discussion of the issues raised. The UDG hopes to arrange this in the near future.

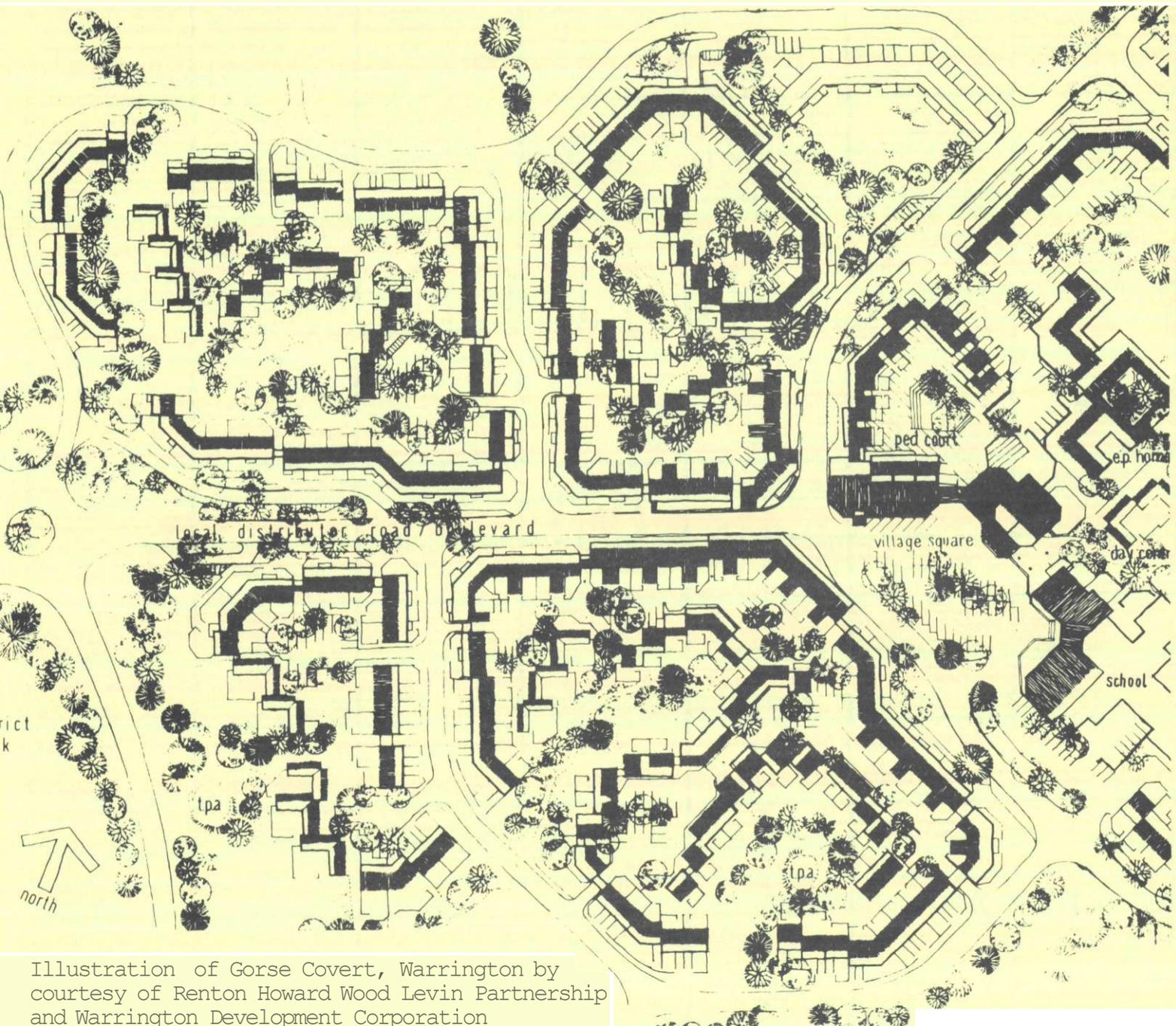


Illustration of Gorse Covert, Warrington by courtesy of Renton Howard Wood Levin Partnership and Warrington Development Corporation

# UDG Constitution

Notice is hereby given that the first meeting of the 1981/82 session (on October 13, 1981) will be a Special General Meeting to consider and hopefully adopt the proposed Constitution. Once the Constitution is adopted the Group will be eligible to seek charitable status). In order that UDG members may have adequate time to consider the proposed text it is reproduced below:

1. NAME

The name shall be the URBAN DESIGN GROUP

2. OBJECTS

The Group is established for the public benefit for the following purposes

- (1) To promote high standards of performance and interprofessional co-operation in planning urban design and architecture and landscape design in Great Britain.
- (ii) To educate the relevant professions and the public in matters relating to Urban Design.

In furtherance of the said purposes but not otherwise the Group through its Executive

- (1) To promote research into subjects directly connected with the objects of the Group and to publish the results of any such research.
- (2) To act as a co-ordinating body and to co-operate with related professional bodies and any voluntary organisations, charities and persons having aims similar to those of the Group.
- (3) To publish papers, reports and other literature.
- (-1) To rake surveys and prepare maps and plans and collect information in relation to any place, erection or building.
- (5) To hold meetings, lectures and exhibitions.
- (6) To educate public and professional opinion and to give advice and information.
- (7) To raise funds and to invite and receive contributions from any person or persons whatsoever by way of subscription, donation or otherwise; provided that the Group shall not undertake any permanent trading activities in raising funds for its primary purpose.
- 18) To acquire, by purchase, gift or otherwise, property whether subject to any special trust or not.
- (9) To sell, let mortgage, dispose of or turn to account all or any of the property or funds of the Group as shall be necessary.
- (10) To borrow or raise money for the purposes of the Group on such terms and on such security as the Executive Committee shall think fit, but so that the liability of individual members of the Group shall in no case extend beyond the amount of their respective annual subscriptions.

- (11) To do all such other things as are necessary for the attainment of the said purposes.

3. MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be open to all who are interested in actively furthering the purposes of the Group. No member shall have power to vote at any meeting of the Group if his or her subscription is in arrears at the time. Corporate members shall be such groups, associations, educational institutions or businesses as are interested in actively furthering the purposes of the Group. A corporate member shall appoint a representative to vote on its behalf at all meetings but before such representative exercises his or her right to vote the corporate member shall give particulars in writing to the Honorary Secretary of such representative. The subscriptions of a member joining the Group in the three months preceding in any year shall be regarded as covering membership for the Groups year commencing on following the date of joining the Group.

4. SUBSCRIPTIONS

The subscription shall be:-

Full members per annum £ \_\_\_\_\_

Corporate members per annum £ \_\_\_\_\_

Overseas members per annum £ \_\_\_\_\_

or such other reasonable sum as the Executive

and it shall be payable on or before 1 June each year. Membership shall lapse if the subscription is unpaid three months after it is due.

5. MEETINGS

An Annual General Meeting shall be held in or about May of each year to receive the Executive Committee's report and audited accounts and to elect Officers and Members of the Committee. The Committee shall decide when ordinary meetings of the Group shall be held.

Special General Meetings of the Group shall be held at the written request of fifteen or more members whose subscriptions are fully paid-up. Twenty members personally present shall constitute a quorum for a Meeting of the Group.

The Committee shall give at least 7 days' notice to members of all Meetings of the Group.

6. OFFICERS

Nominations for the election of Officers shall be made in writing to the Honorary Secretary at least 14 days before the Annual General Meeting. Such nominations shall be supported by a seconder and the consent of the proposed nominee must first have been obtained. The elections of Officers shall be completed prior to the election of further Committee members. Nominees for election as Officers of Committee members shall declare at the Annual General

Meeting at which their election is to be considered any financial or professional interest known or likely to be of concern to the Group.

7. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the management and administration of the Group. The Executive Committee shall consist of the Officers and not less than 6 and not more than 10 other members. The Committee shall have power to co-opt further members (who shall attend in an advisory and non-voting capacity.) The President and Vice-President may attend any meeting of the Executive Committee but shall not vote at any such meeting. In the event of an equality in the votes cast, the Chairman shall have a second or casting vote. Nominations for election to the Executive Committee shall be made in writing to the Honorary Secretary at least 14 days before the Annual General Meeting. They must be supported by a seconder and the consent of the proposed nominee must first have been obtained. If the nominations exceed the number of vacancies, a ballot shall take place in such a manner as shall be determined. Members of the Executive Committee shall be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting of the Group, and outgoing members may be re-elected. The Executive Committee shall meet not less than 4 times a year at intervals of not more than 3 months and the Honorary Secretary shall give all members not less than seven days' notice of each meeting. The quorum shall, as near as may be, comprise one third of members of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall have the power to fill up to three casual vacancies occurring among the members of the Executive Committee between General Meetings.

B. SUB-COMMITTEES

The Executive Committee may constitute such sub-committees from time to time as shall be considered necessary for such purposes as shall be thought fit. The Chairman of each sub-committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee and all actions and proceedings of each sub-committee shall be reported to and be confirmed by the Executive Committee as soon as possible. Members of the Executive Committee may be members of any sub-committee and membership of a sub-committee shall be no bar to appointment to membership of the Executive Committee. Sub-Committees shall be subordinate to and may be regulated or dissolved by the Executive Committee.

9. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

It shall be the duty of every Officer or member of the Executive Committee or Sub-Committee who is in any way directly or indirectly interested financially or professionally in any item discussed at any Committee meeting at which he or she is present to declare such interest and he/she shall not discuss such item (except by invitation of the Chairman) or vote thereon.

10. EXPENSES OF ADMINISTRATION AND APPLICATION OF FUNDS

The Executive Committee shall, out of the funds of the Group, pay all proper expenses of administration and management of the Group. After payment of the administration and management expenses and the setting aside to reserve of such sums as may be deemed expedient, the retraining funds of the Group shall be applied by the Executive Committee in furtherance of the purposes of the Group.

11. INVESTMENT

All monies at any time belonging to the Group and not required for immediate application for its purposes shall be invested by the Executive Committee in or upon such investments, securities or property as it may think fit, subject nevertheless to such authority, approval or consent by the Charity Commissioners as may for the time being be required by law or by the special trusts affecting any property in the lands of the Executive Committee.

12. TRUSTEES

Any freehold and leasehold property acquired by the Group shall, and if the Executive Committee so directs any other property belonging to the Group may, be vested in trustees who shall deal with such property as the Executive Committee may from time to time direct. Any trustees shall be at least three in number or a trust corporation. The power of appointment of new trustees shall be vested in the Executive Committee. A trustee need not be a member of the Group but no person whose membership lapses by virtue of clause 4 hereof shall thereafter be qualified to act as a trustee unless and until re-appointment as such by the Executive Committee. The Honorary Secretary shall from time to time notify the trustees in writing of any amendment hereto and the trustees shall not be bound by any such

such notice has been given. The Group shall be bound to indemnify the trustees in their duties including the proper charge of a trustee being a trust corporation) and liability under such indemnity shall be a proper administrative expense.

13. AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority of members present at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting of the Group, provided that 28 days' notice of the proposed amendment has been given to all members, and provided that nothing herein contained shall authorise any amendment the effect of which would be to cause the Group at any time to cease to be a charity in law.

14. NOTICES

Any notice required to be given by these Rules shall be deemed to be duly given if left at or sent by prepaid post addressed to the address of that member last notified to the Secretary.

15. WINDING UP

The Group may be dissolved by a two-thirds majority of members voting at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting of the Group confirmed by a simple majority of members voting at a further Special General Meeting held not less than 14 days after the previous Meeting. If a motion for the dissolution of the Group is to be proposed at an Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting this motion shall be referred to specifically when notice of the Meeting is given. In the event of the dissolution of the Group the available funds of the Group shall be transferred to such one or more charitable institutions having objects similar or reasonably similar to those herein before declared as shall be chosen by the Executive Committee and approved by the Meeting of the Group at which the decision to dissolve the Group is confirmed.

# Events

DIARY DATES : LONDON (unless otherwise notified, all meetings at 6.15 pm in the Polytechnic of Central London, Marylebone Road, London NW1)

Tuesday 13 October 1981	Special General Meeting (UDG Constitution) Talk by Ted Hollamby
Tuesday 24 November 1981	New Town Seminar (Hugh Cannings, Walter Bor, Stroud Watson and others)
Tuesday 26 January 1982	Talk by John Worthington
Tuesday 2 March 1982	Talk by Peter Smith
Tuesday 20 April 1982	Annual General Meeting Talk by Roy Worskett

## REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

To enable activities of the group to be organised outside London a number of members have agreed to act as Regional contacts. Their main function will be initially to contact the RIBA, RTPI and Landscape Institute Branches within the area concerned and try to arrange at least one joint meeting each year with an appropriate environmental topic. It is hoped that they will also act as a regular contact between the Urban Design Group Committee and views from members in other areas regarding future activities of the Group either in London or the various regions. A list of possible speakers has also been produced which may be useful in selecting a speaker for a joint meeting of the various environmental professions.

The Regional Contacts are as follows :

Scotland	Mike Galloway Glasgow City Planning Department	041 221 9855
North East	Bob Jarvis Tyne & Wear County Planning Department	0632 816144 Ext 258
North West	Kevin Eastham Assistant County Planning Officer Lancashire County East Cliff, Preston	0772 54868
West Midlands	Joe Holyoak School of Architecture Birmingham Polytechnic	021 356 6911
East Anglia	Alan Stones Planning Department Essex County Council	0245 67222 Ext 2545

It is hoped that contacts can also be provided for Bristol and the West and the Southern Region and other areas not adequately covered.

### Bath Forum

A weekend Forum is being arranged for Saturday and Sunday September 19 and 20 to be held on the University of Bath campus. The objective is to provide a location outside London to which regional members might be attracted and to give an opportunity for more extended discussion of Urban Design topics.

It is intended to begin the seminar/forum at 2.30pm on the Saturday afternoon and continue until about 6pm dinner and overnight accommodation will be available for about £16. On the Sunday morning the second seminar will begin at about 10am and continue until lunchtime.

The subjects of the seminars are expected to be 'Urban Design Objectives' and 'The Future of Urban Design' and each will be introduced by a variety of speakers from different backgrounds.

A small sum will be payable by participants to cover the hiring of a meeting space and incidental costs. It is also hoped to arrange visits around Bath on both the Saturday morning and Sunday afternoon for those who are able to arrive early or stay for a period after the seminar is over.

The Forum will be considerably more successful if it is well supported and it is hoped that a number of further bookings will be received.

Contact should be made with John Billingham  
at Oxford on 0865 49811 Ext 486  
or at his home number Abingdon (0235) 26094

## A Week at Oxford Poly

As part of our continuing coverage of Urban Design courses in Britain, Brian Goodey, Reader in Urban Design at Oxford Polytechnic, describes a typical week during the last academic year

### Monday

Course Leaders Meeting in Town Planning staff and i.e. the M.A. Urban Design I am involved in discussions of resources (declining), papers (increasing), field visits (already planning for our major visit overseas ... last year Barcelona and Dublin, this year Yugoslavia or the Netherlands?). The Joint Centre enjoys the long term support of both Departments though the fringes of both professions sometimes view the Joint Centre's mingling with suspicion. Late morning discussions with Ian Bentley (Architecture and Urban Design) and 5th Year Architecture student on video film being prepared for assessment by local groups and focused on contentious Oxford Station site. Noon. Introduction of third series of projects to urban design students who, in the first term, work on four group projects with some manipulation to mix nationalities and professional training. Two planners opt for my exploration of the backside of the Castle Centre in Banbury and we negotiate the level of pressure for three-dimensional proposals which will be applied. My threatened

demand for incorporation of a Wines/Sky element in the proposal may lead to interesting results. The majority of students opt to join Gordon Cullen (guesting for this project) or a group exploring the implications of Krier and the 'morphological' school for an area of Oxford. The projects to be juried in two weeks. First lecture of the afternoon to 1st Year Undergraduate planners. Early days in their first encounter with design ... a sketch project at Keble College has revealed hidden graphic skills (Teacher 'You can't draw ... we don't do Art to 'A' level here') and I begin to unravel the elements of British urban form from the medieval period. An hour's break to catch up on mail and applications then to 2nd Year Undergraduate planners and the second phase of discussing 'human needs' in the Environment and Behaviour course. The availability of Kira's key study of The Bathroom as an illustration of most aspects of human interaction with the environment ensures awareness ... and some hilarity ... in the late afternoon class.

### Tuesday

Morning tutorial with very active 5th Year Architecture student who is exploring Clerkenwell with a view to linking into my own work on urban interpretation and environmental education in the area. The best sort of encounter - I'm pushed, I learn new facts, I am asked to endorse rather than mould. Forsee suggestions in the first crit. (in Architecture) that the work is not 'Architecture' but from the halfway house of Urban Design we have several well-rehearsed answers. Next, Canadian student, now replete with both Diploma and M.A. in Urban Design, discusses revised extracts from thesis to be published by Department of Town Planning and wonders whether he should explore the Crossman archive for even more information on the emergence of New Ash Green.

Lunchtime sees our fortnightly Course Committee meeting where we try and cover twenty items in an hour ... we almost succeed and agree the bones of a part-time mode for the Urban Design Diploma, to be discussed during the R.T.P.I, visit next week. Exhibition for same visit discussed and three-line whip placed on Architecture colleagues to exhibit the jointed nature of the Centre during the visit.

Early afternoon a further enjoyable tutorial (Ian Bentley again) with a Brazilian M.A. student revealing her design for an urban university campus. This follows a detailed analysis of universities completed this summer but as we explore the context, photos and maps prove inadequate and a felt-tip battle develops.

To the studio to see how much was revealed after the first visit to Banbury ... a welter of planning facts required and more observation input needed but sane possible activity focuses emerge as the pace quickens.

### Wednesday

Today. Chair the introduction of the Option Programme in Urban Design. The print room has produced the written outlines and twenty candidates have to decide which two of eight optional courses they will take for the next fifteen weeks. Half the courses are keyed into Architecture and Planning programmes and this cross-faculty research/consultancy based programme has taken seven years a-building and is beginning to reap rewards. Nearly twenty staff have been drawn into the options programme which includes aspects of housing, conservation, landscape and third world studies. Urban Design Research Methods is a required course and next week I will lay the foundation for staff-led discussions of consultancy and competition projects.

Abrupt halt as I return to Undergraduate Planning Concentration in Environmental Design to discuss current ideas in retail centre design and view Boston, Minneapolis, Atlanta and Salt Lake City in the light of last year's Visiting Professorship at University of Colorado in Denver. Lunchtime spent with Diploma student, now returned to local authority planning department but completing village development study in a Hampshire setting. Reflect on the fact that we both began as geographers and have certainly covered scars ground since then. Now that he's back at the 'coalface' it is good to learn that we had passed on some useful skills and ways of viewing the world.

Afternoon in Town Planning Board, the supreme decision-making body for one of our co-owners - useful update on issues and attitudes in Planning, notes to be compared after Philip Opher attends the Architecture Board next week.

... Thursday ... Friday

Tomorrow at 9.30 I discuss the ancient history of our prizewinning Hull inner city scheme with the Graduate Planning option in Urban Design ... valuable if only to show that the written report (a planning skill?) can be integrated with three-dimensional design (the architecture skill) ... will no doubt reveal some of the lessons learned when an architect, a landscape architect, an artist and a geographer are challenged by their students to put up or shut up. An hour later I have a seminar with 5th Year Architects on 'Writing' ... following from a similar session by Paul Oliver last week. Nobody will tell me what Paul said, the aim being to see if we share a similar view ... James Agee, Reyner Banham and Susan Sontag will feature on my menu but instant creative writing is a tall order. Later a tutorial on rival proposals for the European Parliament building in Luxembourg (subject of a Mexican M.A. student's thesis) followed by a visit from two North American environmental education specialists to discuss Philip Opher's town trails and my work on the Schools Council Art and the Built Environment project. Evening to London to discuss the programme of work for interpretation in association with Clerkenwell Workshops and the Clerkenwell Trust.

On Friday I could be in Birmingham at a seminar on the Social Science Research Council's view of planning research but will probably be catching up on one of three or four writing projects which glare from the corner as I finish this note.

For me, a typical week ... we have touched on all my taught courses and most of my supervisees. No Council of Europe responsibilities save a phone call from Sweden, no lectures to Geographical Association branches (though two next week) and some brief coffee breaks to discuss recent ideas in the professional press. We are at mid-term, at the end of each day the mind is genuinely tired but there are enough small breakthroughs and ideas to combat the context of higher education cuts, grant difficulties and overseas fee hikes.

NOTE :

For a copy of the current course brochure please write to  
Brian Goodey, Joint Centre for Urban Design, Oxford Polytechnic,  
Headington, Oxford OX3 0BP or Phone Oxford 64777 and ask for Urban Design.

# RIBA, RTPI & UDG

At the RTPI Conference Andrew Derbyshire argued that design was a common area of concern in which architects and planners could come together. He urged the two institutions to open their doors to each other. RTPI President John Collins is known to support these views and had Derbyshire become RIBA President an unrivalled opportunity for constructive collaboration would have occurred and the need for the Urban Design Group to hold the 'middle ground' between the two would have diminished and even disappeared. As it is, Owen Luder has swept into the RIBA with a few subsequent Manser-like noises about planners and aesthetic control and we shall be watching carefully his impact on the often fragile relationship between the two Institutes.

In furtherance of his passionate belief that nothing but good can come out of greater accord between the RIBA and RTPI, UDG Chairman Francis Tibbalds has been persuaded by the Group to stand for Election to the Council of the RTPI. The UDG wishes him success and urges all its members who are also RTPI members to support him. We shall, of course, be seeking a similar opportunity to secure representation of the UDG on the RIBA Council in due course.

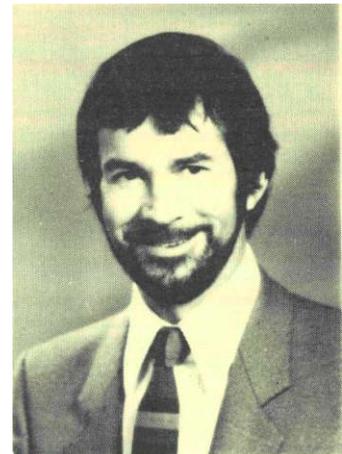
RTPI : ELECTION OF COUNCIL 1982 and 1983

STATEMENT BY FRANCIS TIBBALDS

Nominations have been encouraged by the Urban Design Group, of which I am founding Chairman and which has, over the past three years, established itself as the acknowledged informal body occupying the middle ground between the various environmental Institutes. I would welcome the opportunity to bring our experience and a fresh philosophy to the Council of the RTPI.

Greater collaboration is needed between the environmental professions. The two principal Institutes - the RTPI and RIBA - need to become friendlier and mutually supportive. Both Institutes have become regrettably polarised and remote from those they serve. Town planners have become too involved in systems and processes as ends in their own right : architects have become obsessed with 'going it alone' and breaking free from aesthetic and other planning controls. Both are seriously at fault. The public judges us by the quality - principally the physical quality - of what it sees around it. The primary concern is with the function and attractiveness of places as a whole rather than individual buildings, plans and procedures, however brilliantly conceived each of these may be. A fresh approach needs to be fostered by the Institutes and I'd like to help the RTPI take such an initiative.

FRANCIS TIBBALDS  
August 1981



Correspondence and material for publication should be addressed to :

The Editors  
Urban Design Group Quarterly  
c/o Francis Tibbalds Associates  
39 Charing Cross Road  
London WC2H 0AW

Telephone : 01 734 3935

Telex : 267678 AIRCON G