



**Urban Design  
Quarterly**

The Journal of the  
Urban Design Group

Issue **67** July 1998

Topic:

**Involving local  
communities in  
urban design:  
promoting good  
practice**

Case study:

**Architecture  
Foundation Roadshow  
Hammersmith &  
Fulham**

ISSN 0266-6480

**urban design**



**Enquiries and change of address:**

6 Ashbrook Courtyard, Westbrook Street  
 Blewbury, Oxon OX11 9QH  
 Tel: 01235-851415 Fax: 01235-851410  
 Email admin@udg.org.uk  
 Chairman **Roger Evans** 01865-377030

Patrons

- Alan Baxter**
- Terry Farrell**
- Peter Hall**
- Richard MacCormac**
- Les Sparks**
- John Worthington**

UDG Regional Activities

Regional convenors:

- Scotland **Leslie Forsyth** 0131 221 6175
- Northern Ireland **Michael Crilly** 01232 669384
- North **Bill Tavernor** 0191-222 6015
- Yorks/Humber **Lindsay Smales** 0113 283 2600
- North West **Andy Farrall** 01244-402213
- West Midlands **Peter Larkham** 0121-331 5152
- East Midlands **Vacant**
- South Wales **Sam Romaya** 01222-874000
- South West **John Biggs** 01202 633633
- East Anglia **Alan Stones** 01245-437642
- South East **Julie Witham** 01865-377030

Editorial Board

- Derek Abbott**
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- Judith Ryser**

Editors **John Billingham**

**Sebastian Loew**

Editor for this issue **John Billingham**

Book reviews **Tim Catchpole**

56 Gilpin Ave, London SW14 8QY

Art direction **Simon Head**

Print production **Constable Printing**

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ISSN 0266 6480

Material for publication: this should be addressed to  
 The Editor, 26 Park Road, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 1DS

**Websites**

The Resource for Urban Design Information (RUDI) contains general information on Urban Design and includes material from the Urban Design group including the contents of Urban Design Quarterly issue 53 onwards.

<http://rudi.herts.ac.uk/>.

The Urban Design Group also now has its own website

<http://www.udg.org.uk/>.

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Subscriptions: The Quarterly is free to Urban Design Group Members who also receive newsletters and the biennial Source Book at the time of printing.

Annual rates: Individuals £30 Students £14. Corporate rates: Practices £40 Libraries £40 Local Authorities £75 (2 copies of UDQ) Overseas members pay a supplement of £3 for Europe and £8 for other locations. Individual issues of the journal cost £4.

The subscription charge for Practice and Education Index entries is £100 per year covering an inclusion in four issues with a reduction for early payment. Those wishing to be included in future issues should contact 01235 851415.

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# Transports of Delight?

The long awaited white paper on transport is due to be published shortly. Nothing has been so keenly anticipated for some time that touches all sectors of the population and has a major effect on achieving goals of sustainability both locally and globally.

The connections with the brownfield/greenfield debate and the Llewelyn Davies study for LPAC (reviewed in this issue) which indicates the increases in density that are possible by reducing planning requirements are clear. Whether the various components of a sustainable transport and development strategy can be achieved without more direct intervention such as a greater acceptance of compulsory purchase action remains to be seen.

One of the key terms, apart from sustainable development, must be that it is an integral transport strategy that is needed, one that affects all parts of the environment, in reality the keystone that enables other parts of a holistic framework to be joined together.

Urban Design has similar objectives in achieving an integrated approach and it is important that a wider use of urban design strategies proceeds hand in hand with new transport policies to obtain the overall benefits of improving the quality of life.#

*John Billingham*



## Better Places - Better Lives

The RICS is carrying out a series of events around the country disseminating the results of the research project 'Quality of Urban Design: a study of the influence of private property decision makers in urban design' and on January 14th a seminar took place at the Caledonian University in Glasgow. The speakers were Alan Rowley and Charles Ward, University of Reading; Mike Hayes, Director of Planning and Development at Glasgow City Council; and Phil Miller, Director of the Miller Group. The seminar was chaired by Leslie Forsyth, Regional Convenor of the Urban Design Group in Scotland.

An audience of over 150 people drawn from planning, architecture, chartered surveying and property development heard three interesting contributions. The session opened with Alan Rowley and Charles Ward presenting the results of the research project and illustrating how the various people involved in the development process are all thinking about urban design but with different motives, "self conscious and un-self conscious urban designers". They described how good urban design can benefit investors by reducing the risk premium when trying to gain planning permission, by added perceived quality, by lowering depreciation and by resulting in higher rental growth. Also they mentioned the benefits for occupiers in a reduction in staff turnover and added value through a reduction in moving costs. In summary, all individual actors in the process can gain from good quality urban design.

Mike Hayes' presentation concentrated on public private

partnership and how this had contributed to many projects which had taken place in Glasgow in the last few years. He illustrated this through completed projects and through Glasgow's successful bid to be UK City of Architecture and Design for 1999. The second aspect of his presentation concentrated on the role of urban design in producing a flexible master plan as a direction for the process of development and in this case he used the example of the Crown Street Development in Glasgow and the "Homes for the Future" competition. Both of these illustrated the value of an urban design master plan acting as a framework for the architecture which then took place within that plan.

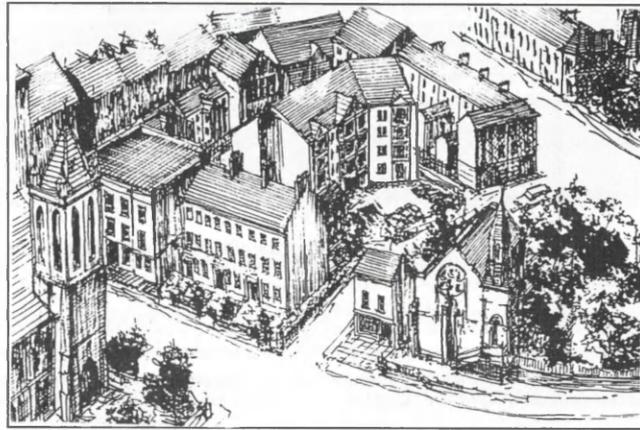
In his introduction Phil Miller confirmed developers' interest in good urban design but made it clear that good design costs money and asked how much more we are prepared to pay to achieve it. He suggested that there are a complex series of issues and a group of stakeholders in the process who have not been brought together successfully and the questions which arise are not exclusive to the design community, since, in his opinion, a design award means that probably a building is unable to be let. He went on to criticise what he termed the "old tool kit" of the planning system and to suggest a new one. He criticised the planning process as being too slow and unable to cope with reality as well as the lack of local authority investment in development. His suggestions for a new tool kit included partnership arrangements, risk sharing and quality control by the investors themselves.

The example he used to illustrate his case was the development of Edinburgh Park. This was a partnership between Miller Developments and Edinburgh City Council for a business park between Edinburgh and the airport. The master plan was drawn up by Richard Meier. Three points which resulted in achieving quality in Edinburgh Park were the initial investment of £6

million by Miller in the infrastructure, the very detailed management and control of the construction process and the common areas of the site during that process, and the framework for development including the design review committee which considered all projects in a four stage process. The Park was now showing a high return on investment and there was a long waiting list of prospective occupants.

The questions and discussion focused around four main areas. Firstly the difference in involvement and expectations between large scale investors and individuals and also the difference between those involved in long term and short term investments. The second topic was the issue of mixed use. Attention was drawn to the fact that the maintenance of this was easier than new build and the conditions to achieve mixed use were becoming easier. At this point the need to experiment was emphasised, to try out new ideas in the knowledge that some of those experiments would fail but that this was necessary in order to achieve progress. The third topic was partnership. Here there seemed to be consensus that almost 90% of building which takes place today is some form of partnership. The final question, which was raised so late in the proceedings that discussion on the topic was not possible, addressed the issue of the quality of out of town developments, suggesting that they were mono-use and car-oriented. The questioner was of the opinion that many of the qualities associated with urban life were missing from such developments and the basis for them was not sustainable. #

*Leslie Forsyth*



Recent urban infill project in Belfast.

### Regeneration and Urban Villages

On 5 March the UDG, RTPI and the Belfast Civic Trust joined forces under the UDAL banner for the first time in Northern Ireland, to investigate models for sustainable urban living.

The debate surrounding the benefits of urbanism has moved beyond prescriptive solutions on built form, to mechanisms for change and procedures that improve individual lifestyle choices. Michael Gwilliam, Civic Trust Director, addressed some of the institutional and sociological barriers to such change. Demographics, economic partnerships, information technology, local agenda 21, devolution and the growth in regionalism will all be forces for urban restructuring. Part of the work of the Civic Trust, both nationally and locally, has been to understand these trends and challenge false assumptions underlying some of the current responses - "it is not a simple push-pull argument between urban and rural area and we do not all want a four bedroom semi in the suburbs". He believes cities will become "alive" when there is real community engagement in goal-setting and urban management and when cultural values are changed by successful examples of good urbanism.

His emerging themes for urban regeneration are:

- Better urban design focusing on more small interventions and repairs to existing built fabric.
- Economic 'sticks and carrots' which have a local dimension and link

'greenfield' development taxes to reinvestment in the existing urban areas.

- Mechanisms for land assembly, linking several small in-fill sites into single development packages.
- Applying the findings of a raft of new research into urban regeneration and intensification.
- Investigation of culturally specific models for urban form and management.

The best means of championing urban areas is tackling the mechanisms for change. His message is we have the argument, the skills and the successes. We are developing partnerships but we are still lacking the right financial levers for urban renewal.

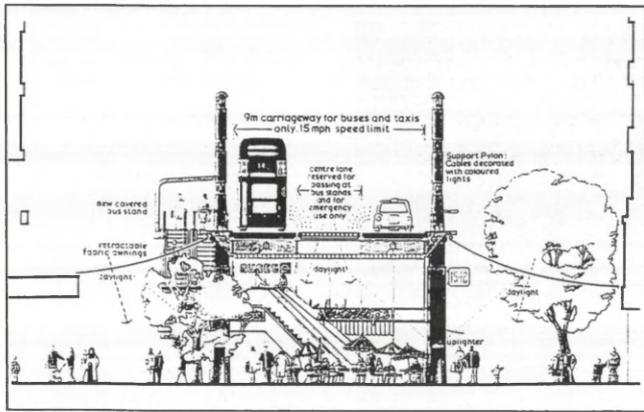
David Rudlin (URBED) presented the experience of the Sustainable Urban Neighbourhood Initiative and his own personal reflections on urbanity and change. The SUN Initiative is exploring new models of built form appropriate for urban locations, to replace the discredited modernist and suburban/garden city models. However, reflections suggest that the real challenge is political, changing the underlying attitudes and aspirations that link social status to a rural idyll. The professionals' role is to raise awareness of good examples of high-density living. The emphasis will be on a design-led approach, as no single substantive model will be appropriate for each locality, particularly in Northern Ireland. New sustainable-vernacular forms can emerge whenever locality-specific issues of

climate, context and community are combined.

The ensuing debate, interspersed with the UDAL travelling exhibition, was informed by presentations from community representatives from existing Belfast urban villages and by local architect, Arthur Acheson. This raised specific regional issues from a number of small developers who prefer brownfield sites and infill locations where the mass house builders lose their economies of scale. These locations by their very nature, require a design-led approach (in contrast to standard suburban house types) and can be uneconomic unless planners, who are still applying suburban density standards, adopt a more flexible approach to determining applications. Local institutional inflexibility was the key barrier to raising environmental quality and creating viable urban villages.

To borrow from Bob (Kafka) Jarvis's parable on urban design door-keepers - the Northern Ireland policy-makers do not even know where the keys are. If the UDAL is willing to expend energy in the regional context to open the door they will find an extremely receptive audience. #

*Michael Crilly*



**Oxford Street: The Future**

6

The third UDG event on the theme of Movement which was held on March 11 brought together a panel of three speakers, each one with a different view on Oxford Street: Jake Brown, a former GLC architect, Bryan Avery, an architect in private practice and Terence Bendixson who defines himself as an activist. The discussion was chaired by Kelvin Campbell who set the scene by placing "Britain's High Street" in its context: the best connected street in the country, bounded by major activity centres and large estates, but declining at its eastern end and congested throughout.

Jake Brown reiterated the problems of Oxford Street: the smart shops are no longer located on it and the street is performing well below expectations; it has been turned into a sewer for its surroundings. Traffic is a disaster but pedestrianization would be no better. His talk was illustrated by a few slides which made interesting points through metaphors. Central London was compared to a molecule with nucleus and membrane: to resolve the traffic problems of Oxford Street, the circulation in the whole of central London had to be looked at - hence a great leap of the imagination was necessary.

Whilst not disagreeing with Brown, Bryan Avery put forward a scheme for the street which he first designed in 1981 and considers is still valid. Since this is almost the only east-west route in central London, traffic cannot be eliminated altogether without serious consequences

all around. The congestion on the footpath is caused mostly by tourists (not necessarily from abroad) and at present there is not enough physical space to accommodate everybody. So he proposes building a viaduct over the middle of Oxford Street, under which there would be shops and a pedestrian promenade protected from the weather. To resolve the problem of intersections and interchange, the viaduct would drop down at Oxford Circus where there would be a "feature" of some kind. This seemed like a variation on Buchanan's proposal circa 1963 and has as much chance of being implemented.

Terence Bendixson's approach is that of someone who walks, an activity which can be described in a number of ways (ambling, hiking, window shopping, etc). Though walking down Oxford Street is done mainly for shopping, other kinds of "moods" must be allowed. At the same time, pedestrians like and need drama and eliminating traffic altogether would not do, though maybe only buses should be allowed. Bendixson suggested that the City of London's ring of steel should be taken as an example: first a relatively small ring should be created in which all non-essential traffic would be banned, and then gradually, as it became accepted, it should be enlarged.

A lively debate followed emphasizing the difficulties surrounding the subject. Comments were made about the lack of imagination of London Transport regarding different modes, technology, fares etc; about the problems created by the lack of a single

Proposals for Oxford Street by Bryan Avery 1981-1983.

London authority (soon to be reinvented); about the political dimension of the problem; about the lack of public realm awareness. Representatives of Westminster City Council and of the Oxford Street Traders Association had been invited to the debate but failed to turn up. This was a pity as it would have been interesting to hear how they envisage the future of this complex High Street. As it was, the ideas put forward, whilst valid, were nowhere near the great leap suggested by Brown. The only sign of hope was given at the end by Terence Bendixson who referred to the recently published report by Phillip Goodwin for the DETR which suggests that when banned from an area, traffic "evaporates" in part. This needs to be the subject of another UDG evening. #

*Sebastian Loew*

**An Integrated Transport Policy for London**

Despite a heavy fall of snow on 15 April immediately prior to this event causing the inevitable chaos on London's transport system, an audience of over forty was sufficiently undeterred and gave a warm welcome to Professor Peter Hall and his four panellists.

The cast in order of appearance began with Peter Collins of London Transport Planning who

said that an integrated transport policy for London must have three components. These were first a sustainable land use, transport and environmental strategy, secondly an integrated transport network and thirdly a well co-ordinated public transport service. According to the GLA White Paper a new Mayor of London would have responsibility for all three such components.

Gareth Williams of GoL said that an integrated transport policy must meet wider objectives relating to the environment and there must be consensus on five key areas, namely getting the administrative structure right, dealing with congestion, improving public transport, maximising the existing infrastructure and providing the necessary funding.

Richard Pout of Transport 2000 focused on one of these areas, namely maximising the existing infrastructure. He said that London could have an inner ring rail utilising existing tracks on the North London, East London and West London Lines and this would reduce the number of orbital movements currently made by vehicles. The cost would be marginal compared with that of the current widening of the North Circular Road.

Mark Hepworth of Local Futures said his company had recently been involved in creating a sustainable development strategy for London. The strategy addresses three policy areas, namely economic competitiveness, social cohesion and environmental sustainability. London as a world city must have a good transport infrastructure; it must reach all parts of London if possible and, if not, then other types of infrastructure needed to be explored, eg tele-working.

In the discussion that followed it was clearly agreed that an integrated transport strategy needed to be linked to other areas of policy and that a change in administrative structure was required to implement such a strategy. It was also pointed out by several

participants that a fundamental change in people's mentality was needed for the strategy to succeed. The starting point suggested could be the closure of the Houses of Parliament car park. #

*Tim Catchpole*

### Obituary for Robin Clement

Robin Clement was a Member of the Urban Design Group and Deputy Chief Planner of the London Planning Advisory Committee. He addressed the Group at two conferences, namely the Vision for London conference in 1988 and the Shaping London conference in 1992.

Robin joined LPAC from the GLC. He was in effect the sole survivor from the GLC to retain a role in the strategic planning of London and for the past 12 years he has single-handedly flown the flag of strategic urban design and environmental policy in the capital. He has done so with bravura and initially with an outspoken condemnation of the DoE who showed little support for urban design in the late 1980s. He was responsible for initiating several worthwhile studies including those of London World City, London's Urban Quality, London's State of the Environment and London's Skylines and High Buildings.

Robin died in office, having suffered the debilitating effects of diabetes for several years. His contribution to the post-GLC era of planning in London has been immense. His latest advice on high buildings - prompted by the planning application for the Millennium Tower and other mega buildings in the past year - has been officially stamped the Robin Clement Memorial Advice. #

*Tim Catchpole*

# Regional Responses

John Biggs



I have been the convenor for the South West Branch of the Urban Design Group since October 1997. I want to share with members the fantastic response I have had to my efforts to communicate with people in my region. With any luck it might encourage other regional convenors to make closer contact with their fellow members.

When I lived in London I was a member of the Executive Committee and organised some of the earlier Conferences in the Regions. Even then I was conscious of the need to involve the members outside London and the South-East but I never really appreciated the depth of feeling behind the frequent complaints that the Urban Design Group was too London-centred and did not do enough for the Regions.

In 1988 I moved out of London to Poole and within 6 months I had resigned from the Committee. I could not face leaving work early to get to evening meetings and returning home in the early hours of the next morning. And it was expensive. I soon lost contact with the Committee and rarely managed to make it to the events. It was a difficult time of my life, young family at school, new job, new house etc, but I was not aware of very much urban design talk going on in the regions beyond the occasional Annual Conference taking place in Bristol or Leeds. I accept that regional members were organising these conferences but there was little evidence of grass roots involvement by a wide spectrum of the membership. That seemed to me to be the difference between London and the Regions. There was no regular forum for urban design debate.

When Roger Evans took over as Chairman of the Urban Design Group in 1997, one of the objectives he set for his incumbency was greater involvement of the membership by encouraging more dialogue with the regions. He modified the committee structure so that the Policy Committee takes place in the afternoon, four times a year and all twelve Regional Convenors are entitled and encouraged to attend.

This is a bold move and a tremendous opportunity for the Regions, through the Regional Convenors, to make closer contact with other Regions and the London Committee and even influence the policy of the Group. The opportunity has to be taken or it may well go away again. Regional Convenors should make every effort to attend the Policy Committees. I admit that travelling down from Scotland or Liverpool for a two hour meeting every three months is a heavy burden on the time of busy urban designers, but surely one or two meetings would not be impossible.

My fear is that, unless more regional Convenors attend, Policy Committee meetings will return to evening starts. If we in the Regions fail to take this opportunity, how can we expect to be listened to if, in future, we complain again about the Urban Design Group being too London-centred and out of touch with the Regions? Greater involvement and empowerment of regional members will not be given to us on a plate by the good nature of the Policy Committee. It is up to the Regional Convenors and the Regional Members to take the opportunity. I am certainly intending to do so on behalf of the membership of the South-West.

The South-West had a membership of just over 60 when I first became Convenor, though, since the recruitment drive, we are now over 80. We have had three "Regional Forum" meetings since December 1997. Twelve members turned up to the first meeting, 20% of our

membership! Our first regional event was a one day conference, entitled "The Waterfront and Urban Design in Bristol", in May. Over 45 delegates took part and a report will appear in the next UDQ. One group of members is organising a seminar on the government "Integrated Transport Strategy" and another is planning a series of workshops on the issue of design by volume housebuilders, possibly leading to a conference later in the year. In a forthcoming issue of UDQ, the South-West branch will publish their section of the "Good Place Guide", as a pilot for the national project. These initiatives are not something for which I can take all the credit. They are led by individuals or groups of members of the South-West branch. My role has simply been to act as a line of communication, a conduit for the energy and enthusiasm that was already there. I do not see why the South-West should be special and why such a response should not be found in other regions.

I do not know whether this will be of help, but these are the steps I took in the South-West.

- I wrote to all the members of the region, introducing myself, suggesting a date for a meeting in Bath (near the greatest concentration of members) and I asked for someone to volunteer to arrange a venue (luckily, someone did, but if they hadn't I would have arranged it myself).
- At the first meeting (an informal affair but with an agreed chairman) we established a set of ideas outlining what the branch should be doing in the next year, agreed the frequency of meetings, and decided to make a real target of completing the Region's Good Place Guide (this was an ideal and convenient project to bind the group). We set a date and place for the next meeting and someone to arrange it.
- I attended the Policy Committee meetings in London. If you haven't been, you will be surprised by how much is going on.

- I have sent out a regular "newsletter" to members informing them of Policy Committee proceedings, minutes of the last regional forum, other local news and a reminder of the next meeting.

That is quite a lot of work for one person and I am enormously fortunate in receiving the support of my boss and the help of work colleagues who are also members of UDQ. If six UDQ members in one office (Borough of Poole, Planning Design and Control Unit) is not a national record, I'd like to know. Moral support, advice on ideas and help stuffing envelopes is invaluable!

Susie Turnbull, at the UDQ office, can supply address labels and there is a regional fund for items such as postage, hire of venues for meetings, though for the sake of our meagre funds it might be prudent to look for alternative sources first! It is policy that 20% of a region's membership subscriptions can be returned against agreed expenses. The new computer system will mean that Susie can supply all regions with a disc containing membership information.

I would welcome the thoughts, ideas and comments of other regional convenors or any members on the subject of how to achieve the greater involvement of regional members. You can write to me at 45, Caledon Road, Poole, Dorset BH14 9NL, contact me at work on 01202 633331, email at [j.biggs@poole.gov.uk](mailto:j.biggs@poole.gov.uk) or why not write your own views to be included in UDQ. #

*John Biggs*

# The Presumption Game

James Bruges

As urban designers we need to be at the heart of the 'City of Tomorrow' debate which has been given priority status for funding by the European Commission.<sup>1</sup>

The process can be seen as a game played out between the community, planners, developers, lawyers, architects etc with none holding the trump cards. The present development game uses the rules of the Planning Acts with current guidance emphasising plan-led development, but the final arbiter on any proposal is appeal to the Secretary of State who makes his decision with presumption in favour of development.

The new game is handed down from the UN Security Council as Agenda 21 for sustainable development. They accept that mankind has reached the limits of growth. Territorially we can no longer expand into the wilderness. Environmentally we are pushing the limits - CO<sub>2</sub> is affecting the climate, clean water is running short, ozone depletion is threatening life, organochlorines are reaching dangerous levels and we have passed the threshold for radiation unless we look after 437 nuclear power stations properly for the next 250 millennia. These are only the well known environmental thresholds that have become news items, there are many more waiting in the wings.<sup>2</sup>

The purpose of the game is to pass our cities down to our children in a form that they can pass to theirs and they . . . ad infinitum. In our children's lifetime 70% of human population will be living in cities, so sustainable human life is synonymous with sustainable cities.

Consider a game of chess, it had three aspects. There is the purpose, to win. There are the rules which must be absolutely binding or there is no point in playing the game. And there is the skill of the players which is where the fun lies.

In our new game the purpose is to achieve sustainability. There is no shortage of players whose skills will be unlocked once the rules are in place. What we lack is the rules. So the need is not to imagine the result - what tomorrow's city will look like - but to write the rule book.

The purpose of the old game was to achieve economic prosperity and development; this has been successful but it has pushed us to the environmental thresholds. We now have no choice but to play within these thresholds. We do not want to discourage the quest for prosperity and development, we could not if we tried,



Kanchipuram  
Tamil Nadu, India.  
A street not yet  
annexed by cars.

but I suggest that this quest has to change places, it should now be treated as a skill of the game rather than being the primary purpose. The players must use their skills to achieve development within the rules of sustainability.

Although the old game achieved prosperity and development it is questionable whether it has been improving the quality of life. We measure economic success by GDP and the GDP has risen 50% over the past twenty years. However road accidents, ill health from pollution, children unable to walk to school, crime - all raise the GDP. Another yardstick is the ISEW, developed by the New Economics Foundation,<sup>3</sup> which distinguishes between the bads and the goods. By this standard our quality of life has fallen 12% over the same twenty year period.

On a recent visit to India I was struck by the friendly vitality and the obvious enjoyment of life one sees in rural areas, the way young children freely play in public spaces and walk to school. One can't say this without the qualification about destitution in the cities etc, but neither should it be ignored. Interestingly, Keralans statistically equal Americans in terms of birth rate, infant mortality, literacy, longevity, basic health care etc at 1% of American consumption. We can look in detail at aspects of our own society and contrast for example our "battery children" - the dramatic decline on their freedom and independence due to reduced opportunity for unsupervised travel and play. This is one instance where increasing prosperity has seriously reduced our quality of life.

Now for the rules. We are never going to

persuade people to consume less and pollute less unless we can show that this need not reduce their quality of life. In the old game, *urban quality* was one of the skills of the development game, encouraged by government and planners and to be achieved if possible by the players, but often it was not achieved. It is now not just desirable, it is essential. It has moved from being a skill to being a rule because consumption of resources cannot reduce unless people find greater enjoyment in their immediate surroundings. This puts boosting the quality of the public spaces in our cities at the heart of the rule book.

The rules of nature for sustainability have been established by The Natural Step<sup>4</sup> through a consensus of scientists, but their relationship to urban planning would require a whole article to itself. If we take just one of the issues: *carbon dioxide* is affecting climate so it has become one of the most publicised environmental thresholds to have been reached. Nature can only cope with half of our present emissions and these emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> are set to double. This is only one threshold, already broken, which could produce an environment out of a Ben Elton novel<sup>5</sup> - not something I would wish for my children! The West is responsible for the present level of emissions and the East therefore has a right to catch up to a certain extent, having much more pressing economic needs. In the UK we are responsible for 10 tons/capita annual emission of CO<sub>2</sub> while the globally sustainable figure is 1.7 tons/capita. Reductions on this scale have to be written into the rule book and it is not difficult to see that this will have an effect on such things as car use well beyond the goals of our present policies.

We can all rehearse arguments for putting *good public transport* into the rule book, so I will just repeat a comment from *The Economist* which struck me recently: "Not a single passenger has been killed on any express line in Japan since the *shinkansen* operations began in 1964. If the hundreds of millions who travel on these express lines each year switched to car travel, it is estimated that there would be at least 1,800 extra deaths and 10,000 serious injuries each year".

The *tax system* will be in the rule book. When each activity is taxed to internalise its full environmental cost, planners will be under pressure to favour the less polluting activities which do not deplete nature. To quote the same article again (I like quoting *The Economist* because it cannot be accused of 'alternative' tendencies): "Swedish Railways has a distinct advantage because transport taxes are based on environmental costs, such as pollution and noise, thus strengthening rail's competitive position against road and air".

*Reducing waste* to levels that can be absorbed naturally will be in the rule book. In nature there is no waste, life is cyclical, what one process discards becomes food for the next. Waste in our cities should not just be seen as end-of-pipe management but a whole attitude to permanence and re-use applied to materials, vehicles, emissions, water etc. For example we have somehow got used to changing kerbs and road surfaces every few years whereas in the past paving, once down, was expected to last several hundred years.

We have cause for optimism because human ingenuity has demonstrated our

amazing abilities once we identify what we want to achieve, accept the rules of the game and use our skills to pursue it. If we can put a car and driver on the moon and manipulate a vehicle around Saturn and Mars, we can surely solve some of our terrestrial traffic problems. Our electronics, communications and predictive skills release endless possibilities for social change, we can make our buildings 'intelligent' and use roof area to increase nature, we can harness solar and wind power. There is little doubt that our cities in due course will look very different from now.

I have my ideas on how things might change but these may differ from yours, and everyone's ingenuity needs to be harnessed. How do we concentrate the minds of planners, developers, architects, lawyers etc on achieving the aim of sustainable development? The DETR has put this question to us in *Opportunities for Change*.<sup>6</sup>

10

If we go back to the beginning. An application for development is initiated. There are objections. Ultimately the argument is resolved by the Secretary of State, taking all issues into account but with the unwritten presumption in favour of development.

To concentrate everyone's mind on the new game John Prescott simply has to change one word in the guidelines he gives to his inspectors. The Secretary of State's decisions at appeal should be based on presumption in favour of . . . sustainability. #

James Bruges

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# The 'New' Essex Design Guide? Penelope and Michael Tollit

Michael and Penelope Tollit outline their views on the new Essex Design Guide for Residential and Mixed Use Areas, which draws together much of the current thinking on housing estate and mixed use design.<sup>1</sup>

The new guide hopes to "demonstrate how, by employing 'best practice' it is possible to create new places of quality and identity where people will want to stay"<sup>2</sup> rather than developer produced consumer products which have little or no environmental quality. In view of the Essex proportion of the 4.4 million houses to be accommodated, which constitutes "a considerable impact on both town and country . . . it is important that [they] get it right"<sup>3</sup>.

Whilst "a great deal has been done to improve the standard of individual houses, the general effect [of grouping and layout] has too often been dull and depressing".<sup>4</sup> This might have been a quote from the first Design Guide for Residential Areas, the so-called Essex Design Guide, [DG/E'73] published in 1973, and heralding a new generation of supplementary design guidance. In fact it predates that by 20 years. Sadly, the opportunity to assess estates built according to the '73 guidance to inform the revised guide has been missed. EDG'97 does not contain, or refer to, a systematic appraisal of the lessons learned, both good and bad, from earlier estates. We are thus left none the wiser as we grapple with this recurrent problem: how do we perceive, finance, design, and build mass housing? Can it really be claimed that results or case studies illustrated in EDG'97, generated by a search for greater coherence and integration of townscapes of the past - creating urban instead of suburban environments - reflects the lifestyles and aspirations of UK residents about to move into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? How relevant will the contents and criteria contained in the guide be at the time for re-writing in say 2023?

And why, despite the centuries-old desire of England's urban residents of an 'Arcadia of pastoral peace and pleasantness' - "this green and pleasant land"<sup>5</sup> which lies deep within the national consciousness, is there still such professional discomfort with the 'Arcadian dream'?<sup>6</sup>



1



2



3

Above: If 1 is the "suburban dream", and 2 is the "suburban reality", why is 3 the urban solution?

Below: Indicative elevations give no guidance on how to, for example, maximise solar gain within the desired aesthetic.



## Aims of the Guide

Unlike many documents, EDG'97 does not contain a specific section outlining how it should be used and by whom, the basic structure, nor its aims. However, throughout there are a varied collection of aspirational statements. All fall within the general overall aim "to encourage the best practice in design and layout of residential and mixed use development".<sup>7</sup> The four below would seem central to the ethos of the guide, and form the structure of this assessment.

"... one of the aims of this guide is to demonstrate *principles for the structuring of large developments*"<sup>8</sup> and "The aim... is the creation of a pedestrian scaled environment by means of *enclosing space and structuring chains of spaces*".<sup>9</sup>

"... it is our intention that new development should underpin the *environmental sustainability* of the settlement pattern in Essex rather than undermine it".<sup>10</sup>

"Local authorities in Essex wish to see the creation of *stable communities*...".<sup>11</sup>

"It is the aim of this guide to encourage new development to *respect and fit in with the character* of traditional Essex towns and villages".<sup>12</sup>

It is excellent that EDG '97 puts the 'space between buildings' at the centre of attention, recognising a weakness in DG/E'73 which "did not address... the structuring of development."<sup>13</sup> The car is demoted from its customary role, as "the design of the street system should start from the need to establish a clear, legible, articulating structure for the area, not from the technical demands of traffic".<sup>14</sup> A permeable "street layout that encourages walking and cycling... in that it is well connected and offers a choice of direct routes to all destinations"<sup>15</sup> should be established. Pedestrian and cyclist safety is achieved by the demand for houses to front all roads and paths, and for a blanket 20mph speed limit within new estates. A very useful compendium is included on ways to achieve this speed limit.

Encouraging walking and cycling is one of the main planks to the guide's approach to sustainability. "Environmental sustainability", it is explained, "is a range of concerns to do with ensuring that new development does not impose unacceptable burdens on local ecosystems."<sup>16</sup> This is a strange underselling of the significance of sustainability and the role of development process on global systems.

The guide also explains how, since DG/E'73, "a new concern has been environmental sustainability and design

for energy efficiency in terms of passive solar gain".<sup>17</sup> However, whilst indicative house types at Appendix E show a general aesthetic to be achieved, there is no guidance as to how to combine the conflicting demands of, for instance, altering glazing proportions according to orientation and maintaining surveillance within this general aesthetic. And beyond solar gain, what of other methods of achieving energy efficiency? Simple devices - draft lobbies for instance - are not required,<sup>18</sup> and indeed some indicative house types show the front door opening into the living room.

How do we achieve, for instance, significant reductions in primary energy consumption and water demand and approach zero CO<sub>2</sub> emissions unless these things are demanded of developers in supplementary planning guidance? By contrast, the categorical statement that mixing uses in close proximity "will reduce the need for travel"<sup>19</sup> would seem to be an overstatement. Despite the emphasis on transport, no reference is made to the environmental implications of the transportation of materials to and from site. On another theme, safeguarding existing habitats is encouraged "as far as possible",<sup>20</sup> but there is no requirement that ongoing landscape management plans are to be drawn up for the benefit of wildlife. Thus there is no overall mechanism in the guide to ensure "that new development should underpin the environmental sustainability of the settlement pattern".<sup>21</sup>

But even the apparent centrality of sustainability in the demands of promoting walking and cycling as a method of estate structuring are uncertain, as the "form should be established by urban design [townscape] criteria"<sup>22</sup> and only subsequently "plumbed" for traffic circulation, pedestrian use or cycleways".<sup>23</sup> Some urban designers might be surprised that pedestrian desire lines are not an 'urban design' criterion.

The emphasis on establishing an attractive townscape as the primary form generator is derived from "the contention of this guide... that an attractive place to live will also be an attractive place to visit and that those historic towns and villages that are most sought out by the tourist often make the most successful living environments".<sup>24</sup> But those historic areas which the guide regards as having good qualities of townscape were structured principally through the demands of pedestrian movement, the resultant townscape created almost entirely without attention to conscious aesthetic design, but from local 'direct participation' and craft skills.

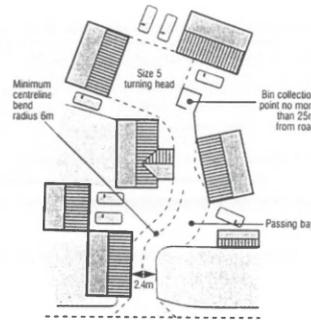
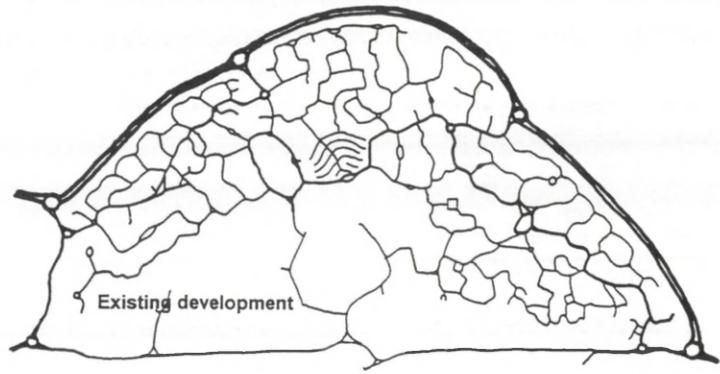
This problem of using historic townscapes in structuring larger areas is demonstrated

in the overall case study layout at the back of the guide.<sup>25</sup> Whilst townscape may help in constructing individual streets and squares, it gives no guidance as to how these individual elements connect together into a larger whole, because of the tendency for tight historic townscapes to be isolated from the looser morphology of later times. Historic townscapes alone thus provide no rationale for any 'strategic' layout, making the overall legibility of the extension to the town hard to grasp.

There is a recognition of the role of 'tight townscapes' in providing a traffic calming function. To reinforce this the guide argues "that it is preferable to use changes of alignment i.e. bends rather than physical obstructions such as speed humps and chicanes".<sup>26</sup> But this, surely, establishes the technical demands of the car as a form of generator, "... more enclosed and twisting streets ... are necessary to reduce traffic speeds",<sup>27</sup> despite the statement to the contrary. Similarly, whilst the car has been demoted from prominent frontage on plot parking, there is a reliance on on-street parking in case studies 2,3 & 10 and on parking squares in case studies 1,5,7& 8 - thus cars will still dominate the street scene.<sup>28</sup>

But are we in danger of forgetting that "on foot ... you need direct routes - an extra quarter of a mile really matters when walking or in a wheel chair"<sup>29</sup> or carrying shopping or pushing a pram, and pavement widths of a minimum of 1.8m?<sup>30</sup> Providing twisting streets as shown in the case study master plan, to slow the car, will quickly add that quarter mile to the journey. It is the chosen method of calming the car which, yet again, makes a greater influence on the structural layout than the needs of pedestrians, or indeed townscape considerations, as nearly straight roads can have interesting townscapes.

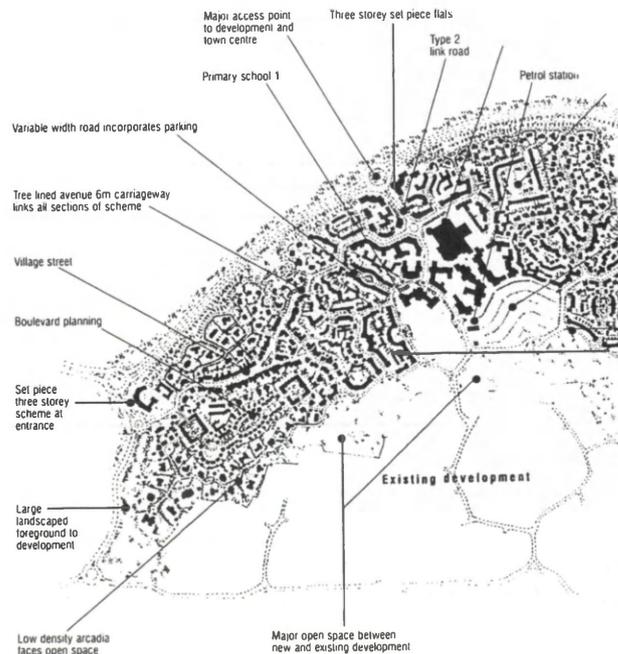
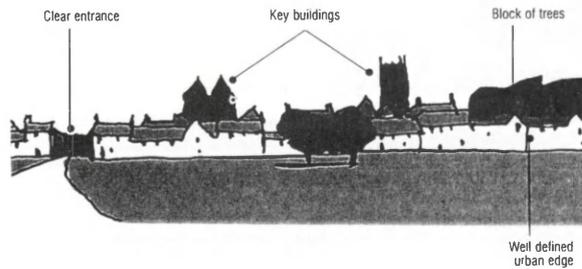
So we might ask the question, how much, apart from an urban townscape, has EDG'97 done to tackle the problems that designers perceive of what we comfortingly call suburbia? "However unsatisfactory suburbia may be it is a particularly British phenomenon. The semi-detached house was invented in this country. When the Danes adopted it they called it semi-attached - and there is a wealth of social comment in these two descriptions",<sup>31</sup> and "depending on which prism is used, the resulting view of suburban ... development can vary widely. Moreover, like many other evolving and unresolved subjects, it very much depends who is doing the looking."<sup>32</sup> Whether the concern is that of bringing up children, safety from traffic or living in a 'clean' unpolluted area, does it matter if suburbia is a "visual failure"?<sup>33</sup> Surveys seem to suggest that much of the concern with aesthetics might be less important to



Left: Is putting house frontages about 3m apart going to generate 'community' - or antagonism, or will people vote with their mortgage and choose not to live in this environment?

Above: Road infrastructure according to EDG'97 abstracted from case studies drawing. Are we in danger of forgetting 'on foot you need direct routes - an extra quarter of a mile really matters when walking or in a wheel chair'.

Below: The "well defined urban edge" is not substantiated in the overall case study layout which is edged around by 'arcadia' - the "suburban dream" and "a large landscaped margin".



residents' needs and aspirations when they have a "strong preference for quiet leafy areas rather than urban locations".<sup>34</sup>

### People's Values

However, the criteria for achieving "good basic design"<sup>35</sup> which the guide hopes to set out, so elevating design above "opinion and taste",<sup>36</sup> can lead to the question of 'whose taste' if such a body of knowledge recording what residents value about the estates on which they live is not reflected in the principles contained in any design guide.

The problem, that we do not know people's preferences, arises largely because of the restriction of choice in new housing: "finding the right house in the right place at the right price could result in there being no choice at all".<sup>37</sup> With the active participation of residents living on estates built according to

DG/E'73 - alongside other environments - it would have been possible to avoid design guidance becoming "too much of a dialogue between planning authorities and developers thereby too prescriptive, to the exclusion of residents' views".<sup>38</sup>

PPG1 directs local authorities to include with such design guidance not only a statement of consultation undertaken but Also the LA's response to representations made.<sup>39</sup> This begins to develop a process which is as inclusive as possible, not left to the professionals alone to implement according to their training, reflecting the fact that "one of the fundamental prerequisites for the achievement of sustainable development is public participation in decision making".<sup>40</sup> Inclusivity is, likewise, at the heart of the concept 'community'. The guide's hope to see the creation of stable communities would seem to be part of the misguided assertion which is abroad in the later 1990s that one can foster, through the physical form and layout of estates, a local community.

The simplicity of form of traditional settlement reflected a simple - and shared - social structure. Are we naively seduced by such coupled simplicity and should we be aware this is no valid reason for continuing or even emulating the physical expression of a life no longer sustainable in the hope of re-establishing 'community' in our modern complex social world?

History is dangerously appealing, therefore, not only in its apparent social simplicity, but also in its coupled simplicity of built form. However, there appears to be a world of difference, by employing 'best practice' in the creation of new places of quality and identity, between learning from the past and attempting to copy by contrivance. Such

learning requires detailed background research and analysed results, for each different place, and without these the claim for the former is seen in fact to be the latter. It would be "miserably mistaken to attempt to recreate by ill considered and foundless conscious design the detailed effect of irregularity".<sup>41</sup>

### Local Characteristics

PPG1 stipulates that LPAs should not attempt to impose a particular architectural taste or style arbitrarily. Instead "design policies should be based on a proper assessment of the character of the surrounding built and natural environment", taking account of the "defining characteristics of each local area".<sup>42</sup> This would appear to be a prerequisite if new designs are to "respect and fit in with the character of traditional Essex towns and villages".<sup>43</sup>

Surprisingly, however, the guide gives little help in this regard, describing the characteristics of Essex in something less than one page.<sup>44</sup> Yet "the Essex County Council team . . . has been involved in the analysis of small historic towns and villages since the 1968 Civic Amenities Act".<sup>45</sup> It could be expected that each designer and developer should carry out their own assessment of the local character, (as required in the revised PPG1) similar to the site assessment required.<sup>46</sup> If this is the expectation, there is a missed opportunity to educate designers, developers and lay people in the best approach to such a local community assessment.

The guide is, however, specific in the qualities it wishes to see in new developments.<sup>47</sup> But if these are not derived from an analysis of the morphology and building types of traditional Essex settlements, how valid is the title *Essex Design Guide*? How are these generally applicable principles adapted to specifically reinforce Essex character? Where, for instance, are the boulevards in Essex and whence came the Mews Court or Urban Village? How many formal or landscaped squares can be nominated from the historic towns and villages in Essex to form a body of researched morphological examples which can legitimately become 'best practice'?

This whole complex issue of character - which Essex is not alone in facing - is probably amongst the hardest issues, both at a philosophical and practical level, with which those involved in a sustainable built environment design have to grapple.

If the aim really is to reinforce local character, the application of a standard set of criteria (wherever those criteria have been

derived from) can only result in the replication of similarity, not the cultivation of difference. Cotswold villages have "buildings joined together directly fronting the street without front gardens . . . of shallow plan . . . with the skyline enlivened by chimneys and dormers"<sup>48</sup> . . . but they are very different from Essex villages. Is difference what is special about local character?

Somehow we need to find ways to seek out and celebrate what is different, as well as what is essentially the same, and how to differentiate. "No two sites, no two locations, no two microclimates are the same, and these have to be the start points . . . Each problem is site specific, each building project unique".<sup>49</sup>

But there is a second complication embedded within the issue of character - that character grows stronger and more individual as places are changed and adapted by successive generations. We have a problem that the majority of our urban environments are new - a function of population growth over the last 100 years. They have not yet had a chance to gain the 'patina of time' But those new estates of the '70s which looked when built so open and windswept are now softened by use. To many planning and design students today, those estates are 'home', and thus the professional aversion to them is a source of confusion, as different emotions are generated by the same environment,

The risk is, to overcome this discomfort, this 'shock of the new', we try to build 'instant' character, as if the built environment was a fixed product, a prisoner of time, instead of recognising its dependence on evolution and change to support a sustainable development. We also risk building 'architectural compositions' which will disallow the process of adapting to suit one's own values, tastes and needs - without upsetting the intended harmonious 'collection'. The irony is that much of the aesthetic is derived from places which were never designed.

### Place Making

We therefore have a second challenge, not only to celebrate differences of geography, but to encourage differences through time, incremental changes that help to make a place feel real in our increasingly virtual world - if that is what people want.

We are sure that the authors of EDG'97 would agree that "good design demands historical understanding, not to copy the past, but to provide a foundation both for preservation and informed innovation".<sup>50</sup> It is perhaps a great opportunity missed that the authors have not shared with the public and potential designers of new Essex, their

knowledge built up over 30 years of the idiosyncrasies of Essex places that give them their special quality, as it is only with "a confident grasp of history" that design can be rescued "from the slide into a trite and tokenistic approach to 'heritage'".<sup>51</sup>

Within design guidance there is a strong school of thought surrounding the issue of seeking out and supporting the essence of the townscape of our historic towns and villages, and in this EDG'97 is no exception.

And by means of conserving, preserving and enhancing, by invoking best practice in the guide's ability to create new places of quality and identity (by implication traditional), 'where people will want to stay', could be said to be moving forward with the aid of only a rear view mirror.

It should not be denied that the past, present and future are linked in the endless chain of historical process, and surely it is agreed that history is, as Burckhardt informs us, "the break with nature caused by the awakening of consciousness . . . is the long struggle of man, by the exercise of his reason, to understand his environment and act upon it".<sup>52</sup>

Within the process that is history lies our perceptions and interpretations of tradition. To Eliot, tradition is a matter of much wider significance, which cannot be inherited, and if you want it you must obtain it by great labour. "If the only form of tradition, of handing down, consisted of following the ways of the immediate generations before, it should be positively discouraged".<sup>53</sup> To obtain tradition means expending, over time, effort alongside the acquisition of continually developing skills. 30 years is such a period of time to have acquired significant understanding of the tradition needed to complement the historic towns and villages of Essex.

## Conclusions

Acquiring skills by a continued development implies an educative process at work. In order that design guides be of ongoing practical value to sustainable development surely they need to have a clear 'how to do' rather than an over-prescriptive 'what to do' scenario. The need to assist in collective capacity building across the whole spectrum of people involved in developing a structuring strategy for all sizes of development for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Such an interactive educative process might include local residents - who know their place - and businesses, developers, professionals, along with other skills focusing upon the incremental changes suburbia requires to assist its evolution on to its next phase.

Likewise participation reflecting the dynamic

rather than stable communities which are likely to exist in the coming century, via communicative community capacity confidence building reflects the ethos of Agenda 21. This supports the coming into being of sustainable development by means of its transparent process coupled with a respect for the character of local ecological identity and distinctiveness.

Instead of reconstituting suburbia surrounded by Arcadia or regurgitating the urban village panacea, might not our 'new vernacular tradition' arise from it being energised by an 'historical sense' enabling the crafting of skills to develop our own chain of space/form relationships which may reflect for their allotted time the dynamic communities of the early 21<sup>st</sup> Century?

However efficiently we may accommodate the unpredictable, the unsettling changes which are to come, the matching of place to community needs should not be just a "matter of enhancing, articulating, interpreting and promoting past heritage . . . Reference to heritage, alone, only reminds us of our fear of the future".<sup>54</sup> #

*Penelope and Michael Tollit*

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9. *ibid* pp 17, emphasis added
10. *ibid* pp 1, emphasis added
11. *ibid* pp 1, emphasis added
12. *ibid* pp 4, emphasis added
13. *ibid* pp 2
14. *ibid* pp 10-11
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16. *ibid* pp 9
17. *ibid* pp 2
18. See, for instance, *Sustainable Settlements*, UWE/LGMB, 1995 pp234
19. EDG'97 pp 9 emphasis added
20. *ibid* pp 10
21. *ibid* pp 1
22. There is no section of the guide entitled 'urban design criteria', but by inference, they would seem to be the "criteria for the creation of urban space at densities over 20 dwellings per hectare" (pedestrian scale; height of buildings and width of spaces; dynamic spaces, static spaces, the problem of oversized spaces, length of spaces, continuity of route, character of the space, use of landscape in urban spaces, and treatment of ground surface.)
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24. *ibid* pp 2
25. *ibid* pp 80
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**Urban Design  
Quarterly**

The Journal of the  
Urban Design Group

Issue **67** July 1998

**Involving local  
communities in  
urban design**

Promoting good  
practice

A special report on the  
Urban Design Group's  
Public Participation  
Programme

Supported by the Department  
of the Environment, Transport  
and the Regions

ISSN 02666-6480

**special report**

**Involving local communities in urban design: promoting good practice**

A special report on the Urban Design Group's Public Participation Programme

Compiled by **Nick Wates** with assistance from **John Billingham, Roger Evans, Arnold Linden, Jon Rowland, Susie Turnbull** and **Emma Collier**

Design **Jeremy Brook, Graphic Ideas**

Photographs **Nick Wates** unless otherwise acknowledged.

Print production **Constable Printing**

Published by the **Urban Design Group** as part of **Urban Design Quarterly** Issue 67 July 1998

Supported by the **Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions**

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© Urban Design Group, other pages

ISSN 0266 6480

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**Editorial comment and enquiries:**

Nick Wates  
7 Tackleway  
Hastings  
TN34 3DE  
Tel: 01424 447888  
Fax: 01424 441514  
Email: [nick@wates.demon.co.uk](mailto:nick@wates.demon.co.uk)  
Web: [www.wates.demon.co.uk](http://www.wates.demon.co.uk)

**Orders and all other queries:**

Susie Turnbull, Administrator  
Urban Design Group  
6 Ashbrook Courtyard  
Westbrook Street  
Blewbury  
Oxon OX11 9QH  
Tel: 01235 851415  
Fax: 01235 851410  
Email: [admin@udg.org.uk](mailto:admin@udg.org.uk)  
Web: [www.udg.org.uk](http://www.udg.org.uk)

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Design workshop session, Oxpens Quarter Initiative Public Workshops, June 1997.

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## Introduction

What are the best ways of involving the public in urban design? What approaches work best? How does one get started? How can good practice be developed and promoted?

Two years ago the Urban Design Group established a Public Participation Programme (PPP) to find answers to these questions. With funding from the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, twelve public participation events in England have been assisted and evaluated and ten workshops held on a variety of themes. Experience has also been drawn from other activities, research programmes and literature.

This special report presents the main findings and good practice guidance arising from this experience to date.

The **UDG** intends to continue working with the Government and others to ensure that good practice in this vital area is further developed and adopted more widely. The Group is convinced that improving the quantity and quality of public involvement in urban design is one of the keys to improving the quality of the built environment.

In particular, work will be continuing over the coming year on a **Community Planning Handbook** to be published in 1999. Funding from the Department for International Development will allow material from other countries to be gathered so that a comprehensive and international guide to the most effective approaches can be produced.

Feedback on this report would therefore be most helpful. We are particularly keen to hear from anyone with photos, sample documents or other material on methods and processes not covered so far. We would also be delighted to hear from anyone able to assist the **UDG** in securing the implementation of the recommendations opposite.

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## Summary Conclusions

### 1 Widespread desire

There is enormous demand by local communities for involvement in the planning and management of their built environment. Also, it is now widely understood by people in all sectors of the development industry that such involvement can lead to more appropriate and sustainable development solutions and stronger citizen groups and communities.

### 2 Lack of knowledge

There is almost universal uncertainty as to the best way of involving local communities in any given situation. Currently the choice of approach is largely ad hoc, depending on the experience and knowledge of those initiating activity. There is a shortage of adequate good practice guidance and little knowledge of what does exist. Most practitioners have experience of only a small range of the options available. As a result, inappropriate approaches are all too often adopted.

### 3 Unsympathetic environment

Many planning, development and management systems are not conducive to participatory approaches. As a result, public participation activity is all too often unrelated to real development timetables leading to frustration and wasted effort.

### 4 Clear framework needed

An important first step in understanding the options available is the adoption of a simple but workable framework for discussing and analysing community planning activity. We propose that it is helpful to identify - and distinguish between - general 'principles', specific 'methods' and overall 'processes'. This is the framework used in this report.

### 5 General principles

General principles can be identified which apply to virtually all community planning situations. These are outlined in the form of twenty-two points of general advice on pages 18 and 19. Perhaps the most important are to involve all parties affected as early as possible and ensure that the process is 'owned' by the local community.

### 6 Vast range of methods

A vast range of methods is now available, all with different uses and characteristics. The methods - which include activities, events, places and organisations - are still evolving and being refined and new ones continue to emerge. The most effective tend to be universal in character and good practice can be fairly precisely outlined. Fifty-six of the most common methods are listed on pages 20 and 21 and ten are explained in more detail on pages 22 to 31.

### 7 Tailor-made process

For any particular situation, practitioners need to design a tailor-made process incorporating one or more methods. The nature of this process will depend on local circumstances and timescales, on energy levels and resources. Sample processes covering a range of development scenarios can be identified but a unique process has to be designed for each locality. Pages 32 and 33 contain a helpful planning chart and four sample processes.

### 8 Thoroughness required

Effectiveness in the short-term depends largely on paying attention to detail. Methods can be carried out well or badly and relatively minor omissions can significantly reduce effectiveness. Using good practice guidance can help dramatically.

### 9 Integration vital

Whether community planning initiatives achieve their long-term potential depends on the extent to which they are integrated with the overall planning and development context. Even methods well managed may be ineffective if the statutory framework mitigates against the outcome being taken forward.

### 10 Changes to planning system

To achieve the benefits that are possible when local communities are properly involved in urban design, the statutory planning and development system needs to be adjusted to incorporate the growing experience of participatory practice and the variety of methods and process options now available.

## Recommendations

### 1 Review of statutory procedures

A comprehensive review of planning, development and management procedures is urgently needed to ensure they incorporate the best participatory practice now available. This should cover:

- preparing local plans
- preparing development briefs
- planning application procedures
- public inquiry procedures
- urban management procedures

### 2 Centre for activity

A new centre, or network of centres, on community planning should be established to disseminate good practice, provide advice, and evaluate and follow up on events and activities.

### 3 Practitioner listing service

An index of experienced practitioners should be established to help local authorities, developers and community groups obtain the best expertise available. The Register of Expertise started by the UDG PPP provides a useful starting point.

### 4 More good practice information

More good practice guidance needs to be produced, made available and kept up to date. This special report and the Community Planning Handbook will be useful contributions. Other items needed include:

- Catalogue of information already available with ordering facilities;
- How-to-do-it information on the whole range of methods;
- Toolkits of sample documents and formats for organisers;
- Contact data for getting in touch with others with relevant experience.
- Training packs and programmes.

### 5 Lobbying for resources

Multi-agency co-ordination, resources and leadership are needed if progress is to be made. A systematic programme of lobbying is required to secure the resources necessary for carrying out the recommendations above and to secure increased resources for participatory urban design activity at local level.

The UDG would be delighted to work with others in helping to put these recommendations into practice.

# General principles for public participation

Whatever community planning approach is chosen, there are general principles which apply to virtually all situations. Some of the most important are covered here in the form of points of general advice.

## 1 Involve all those affected

Community planning works best if all parties are committed to it. Involve all the key stakeholders as early as possible, preferably in the planning of the process. Activities in which key parties (like landowners or planners) sit on the sidelines are all too common and rarely achieve their objectives completely. Time spent winning over cynics before you start is well worthwhile (although there may sometimes be parties who cannot be convinced at the outset in which case keep them informed and give them the option of engaging later on.)

## 2 Local ownership of the process

The community planning process should be 'owned' by local people. Even though consultants or national organisations may be providing advice and taking responsibility for certain activities, the local community should take responsibility for the overall process. Employing local people where possible to organise activity invariably pays off if they are well supported.

## 3 Plan your own process carefully

Careful planning of the process is vital. Don't rush into any one approach. Look at alternatives. Design a process to suit your own circumstances. This may well involve combining a range of methods and inventing some of your own.

## 4 Agree rules and boundaries

There should be a common understanding by all participants of the approach adopted. Particularly in communities where there is fear – for instance that others may be trying to gain territorial advantage – it is vital that the rules and boundaries are clearly understood and agreed.

## 5 Quality not quantity

There is no such thing as a perfect participation process. The search for one is healthy only if this fact is accepted. Generally, the maximum participation by the maximum number of people is desirable. But any participation is better than none and the quality of participation is more important than the numbers involved. A well organised event for a small

number of people can often be more fruitful than a less well organised event for larger numbers.

## 6 Involve all sections of the community

People of different ages, backgrounds and cultures almost invariably have different perspectives. Ensure that a full spectrum of the community is involved. This is usually far more important than involving large numbers.

## 7 Spend money

Effective participation processes take time and cost money. Over-tight budgets invariably lead to cutting corners and poor end results. Remember that community planning is an important activity, the success or failure of which will have important implications for future generations as well as your own resources. The costs of building the wrong thing in the wrong place can be astronomical and make the cost of proper community planning pale into insignificance. Budget for it properly.

## 8 Get value for money

There are community planning methods and processes to suit a range of budgets. A certain amount can usually be achieved with very little cash if the energy exists. But as with most things in life you need money to do it well and the more money you have available the better you will be able to do it.

## 9 Accept different agendas

People will want to be involved for a variety of different reasons: curiosity, protection of interests, altruism, fear of change, academic enquiry, financial gain, socialising. This is not a problem but it is useful to be aware of what people's agendas are.

## 10 Accept varied commitment

Far too much energy is wasted complaining that people don't participate when the opportunity is provided. All of us could spend our lives many times over participating in trying to improve our local environment. Everyone has their own priorities in life. If people don't participate its either because they are happy to let others get on with it,



**Involve all sections of the community**  
Children present their ideas for the future of their community. Report back from youth workshop, Ore Valley Action Planning Weekend, 1997.

they're busy with things which are more important to them or you have not made the process sufficiently engaging enough.

### 11 Be honest

Be open and straightforward about the nature of your activity. If there is only a small chance of anything happening as a result of people participating, say so. Avoid hidden agendas.

### 12 Be transparent

The objectives and people's roles should be clear and transparent. The importance of name badges at events to prevent them being dominated by the 'in-crowd' can't be stressed enough.

### 13 Learn from others

One of the best sources of information is people who have done it before. Don't think you know it all. No-one does. Be open to new approaches. Get in touch with people from elsewhere who have experience. Don't be afraid of 'consultants' but choose and use them carefully. There's no need to re-invent the wheel.

### 14 Accept limitations

No community planning activity can solve all the world's problems. Neither can it compensate for shortcomings in community infrastructure. But that is seldom a reason for holding back and community planning activity can often act as a catalyst for other improvements.

### 15 Use experts

The best results emerge when people who live and/or work in a place work closely and intensively with experts from all the necessary disciplines. Creating and managing the environment is very complicated and requires a variety of expertise and experience to do it well. Don't be afraid of expertise, embrace it.

### 16 Use outsiders carefully

A central principle of community planning is that local people know best. But outsiders, if well briefed, can provide a fresh perspective which can be invigorating. Getting the right balance between locals and outsiders is important; avoid locals feeling swamped by "foreigners".

### 17 Use facilitators

Orchestrating group activities is a real skill. Particularly if large numbers of people are involved, ensure that the person (or people) directing events has good facilitation skills. If not hire someone who has.

### 18 Be visual

People can participate far more effectively if information is presented visually rather than in words. A great deal of poor development, and hostility to good development, is due to people not grasping what is intended. Use graphics, illustrations, cartoons, drawings and models wherever possible. And make the process itself visible by using flipcharts, post-its, coloured dots and banners.

### 19 Follow up

Lack of follow-up and continuity is the most common failing, usually due to a lack of money. Make sure you budget for writing up, disseminating and acting on the results of any community planning initiative. Development processes are invariably lengthy, the participation process needs to stay the course.

### 20 Maintain continuity

Continually monitor progress to ensure that initiatives are built on and objectives achieved. Keep the process going. If there is a break, start from where you left off. Periodic review sessions can be very valuable to maintain momentum.

### 21 Have fun

Getting involved in creating and managing the environment should not be seen as a chore. It can be a great opportunity to meet people and have fun. The most interesting and sustainable environments have been produced where people have enjoyed creating them. Community planning requires humour. Use cartoons, jokes, and games whenever possible.

### 22 "Go for it"

This is the phrase used most by people who have experienced community planning when asked what their advice is to others. You are bound to have doubts but unlikely to regret taking the plunge.

*"Public participation should be an indispensable element in human settlements, especially in planning strategies and in their formulation, implementation and management; it should influence all levels of government in the decision-making process to further the political and economic growth of human settlements."*

**Delegate communique, United Nations Habitat 1 conference, Vancouver, 1976.**

*"Local people should participate actively in the preparation of plans from the earliest stages so that they can be fully involved in decisions about the pattern of development in their area."*

**Department of the Environment, Planning Policy Guidance Note 12, 1992.**

*"Participatory strategies that rely on empowerment of residents to identify community priorities, plan and undertake interventions and safeguard improvements are key to defining sustainable development strategies."*

**Harvard University, Graduate School of Design,**

International Training Programme prospectus, Unit for Housing and Urbanisation, 1994.

*"Community involvement has been shown to make a positive contribution to planning and development processes. At its best, community involvement can enable:*

- *processes to be speeded up;*
- *resources to be used more effectively;*
- *product quality and feelings of local ownership to improve;*
- *added value to emerge;*
- *confidence and skills to increase – for all;*
- *conflicts to be more readily resolved."*

**Department of the Environment, Summary of planning research programme, 1994.**

*"Putting cities back on the political agenda is now fundamental. What's needed is greater emphasis on citizens' participation in city design and planning. We must put communal objectives centre-stage."*

**Sir Richard Rogers, Architect, Reith Lecture No 1, 12 February 1995.**

## Methods Listing A - Z

Here is an annotated list in alphabetical order of some of the methods now available for involving people in urban design. They include activities, events, organisations and places and they range in scale from visual display techniques to national support programmes. Some are specific to participation in urban design, some have other uses as well.

On the following pages, ten of the methods (those highlighted) are covered in more detail. The main features and uses of each are summarised together with tips, sample formats and checklists to help people get started. The selection is not intended to indicate greater importance, they are merely the methods focussed on by the **UDG** PPP over the last 2 years. The forthcoming Community Planning Handbook will provide details of more of the methods and will include details on how to find further information on their use.

The following notation is used:

- Main features of each method
- 📌 Tips on using the method

### Action Planning Event

Carefully structured collaborative event at which all sections of the local community work closely with independent specialists from all relevant disciplines to produce proposals for action.

### Activity Mapping

A way of getting people to plot how they use places as an aid to understanding how best to improve them.

### Adaptable Model

Flexible 3D model of an area or building which allow people to test out alternative design options.

### Appreciative Inquiry

Group working process which builds on potentials, solutions and benefits to create change.

### Architecture Centre

Place aimed at helping people understand, and engage in, the design of the local built environment.

### Architecture Week

Week of activities designed to promote interest in, and debate on, architecture. Usually includes opening interesting buildings to the public.

### Awareness Raising Day

Day of activities designed to promote interest in an urban design issue, normally held prior to a planning day or other intensive activity.

### Best Fit Slide Rule

A discussion tool designed to examine the consequences of alternative ways of inserting new buildings in an existing street. Similar to Elevation Montage.

### Briefing Workshop

Working session of users and professionals held at an early stage in a building or planning project to establish a brief.

### Capacity Building Workshop

Event organised primarily to establish partnerships between the public, private and voluntary sectors on development issues.

### Community Appraisal

Survey of the community by the community to identify needs and opportunities. Sometimes referred to as a Community Audit.

### Community Design Centre

Place providing free or subsidised architectural, engineering and planning services to people who cannot afford to pay for them.

### Community Indicators

Measures devised and used by communities for understanding and drawing attention to important issues and trends.

### Community Plan

Plan for the future of a community devised by local community interest groups.

### Community Planning Forum

Multipurpose session lasting several hours designed to secure information, generate ideas and create interaction between interest groups. 📌 page 24

### Community Projects Fund

Fund for making grants to community groups for employing professionals to undertake feasibility studies on environmental projects.

### Design Assistance Team

Multidisciplinary team which visits an area and produces recommendations for action, usually after facilitating an Action Planning Event. Also known as Urban Design Assistance Teams (UDATs) or Regional/Urban Design Assistance Teams (R/UDATs).

### Design Day

Day when architects and local people brainstorm for design solutions to particular building problems, usually in teams.

### Design Game

Method for devising building and landscape layouts with residents using coloured cutouts on plans.

### Design Workshop

Hands-on session allowing groups to work creatively developing planning and design options. 📌 page 25

### Development Trust

Independent, not-for-profit organization controlled by local people which facilitates and undertakes physical development in an area.

### Elevation Montage

Display technique for helping people to understand and make changes to streetscapes. 📌 page 30

### Environment Shop

Shop selling items and providing information which help people get involved with improving their environment.

### Fish Bowl

Workshop technique where participants sit around, and observe, a planning team working on a problem without taking part themselves.

### Forum

Non-statutory body for discussing a neighbourhood's affairs and acting as a pressure group for improvements.

**Future Search Conference**

Highly structured two and a half day process allowing a community or organisation to create a shared vision for its future.

**Guided Visualisation**

Group process using mental visualisation techniques for establishing a community's aspirations.

**Interactive Display**

Visual display which allows people to participate by making additions or alterations.  page 28

**Mobile Planning Unit**

Caravan or mobile home converted into an office/studio as a base for undertaking community planning activity on location.

**Mock Up**

Full-size representation of a change or development, usually on its proposed site, prior to finalising the design.

**Neighbourhood Planning Office**

Local office established to co-ordinate community planning activity.

**Open Design Competition**

Open competition for ideas for improving a neighbourhood aimed at stimulating creative thinking and generating interest.

**Open House Event**

Event allowing those promoting development initiatives to present them to a wider public and secure reactions informally.  page 26

**Open Space Workshop**

Structured workshop process for generating commitment to action in communities or organisations.

**Parish Mapping**

Arts-based way in which a community can explore and express what they value through the creation of maps made out of a wide variety of materials.

**Participatory Appraisal**

Set of methods for gaining a rapid in-depth understanding of a community, or certain aspects of it, based on the participation of that community and a range of visual techniques.

**Participatory Building Appraisal**

Method for users and providers to jointly assess the effectiveness of buildings after they have been built.

**Planning Aid**

The provision of free and independent information and advice on town planning to groups and individuals who need it and who cannot afford consultancy fees.

**Planning Day**

Day when people work intensively on developing urban design options for a site or neighbourhood.  page 23

**Planning For Real**

Technique for community involvement in planning and development focussing on the construction and use of flexible 3D models and priority cards.

**Planning Weekend**

Highly structured, intensive procedure in which professionals work with local people over a long weekend to produce proposals for action.  page 22

**Process Planning Session**

Event organised to allow people to determine the most appropriate process for their particular purposes.  page 31

**Resource Centre**

Place designed to provide community groups with the facilities they need to make the most of their energies and enthusiasm.

**Roadshow**

Series of linked public workshops, exhibitions and forums to explore the potential for improving the built environment.

**Round Table Workshop**

Workshop process for engaging the main stakeholders in generating a vision and strategy for an area.

**Street Stall**

Way of securing public comment on planning issues by setting up an interactive exhibition in a public street or square.  page 27

**Table Scheme Display**

Simple way of securing comment on design proposals by taping drawings on a table top and requesting people to vote with sticky dots.  page 29

**Task Force**

Multidisciplinary team of students and professionals who produce in-depth proposals for a site or neighbourhood based on an intensive programme of site studies, lectures, participatory exercises and studio working, normally lasting several weeks.

**Topic Workshop**

Session at which a group, usually aided by a facilitator, explores problems, dreams and action needed in relation to a particular topic.

**Trail**

Carefully planned walk through an area designed to help people understand the problems and opportunities.

**Urban Design Game**

Way of helping people to understand the planning process and the views of others by simulating future scenarios and using role-play.

**Urban Design Soapbox**

Huge video screen linked to booths allowing people to broadcast their views on local planning issues.

**Urban Design Studio**

Unit attached to an architecture or planning school which focuses on involving local communities in live project work.

**Urban Studies Centre**

Centre of environmental education, usually focusing on the immediate surroundings.

**Visual Simulation**

Techniques for showing how buildings will look when constructed using photomontages.

**Web Site**

The use of the Internet to provide discussion groups or interactive material. This can be used on urban design projects.

# Planning Weekend



**Reconnaissance**  
Team members being shown round the area at the beginning of a planning weekend, Ore Valley, 1997.



**Public presentation**  
Team members presenting their proposals for the area to a public meeting after four intensive days of briefings, topic and design workshops, brainstorming and team working, Ore Valley, 1997.

**Planning Weekends are an elaborate but highly effective way of getting all parties involved in producing a plan of action for a site, neighbourhood or city.**

- Planning weekends comprise an intensive and carefully structured programme of activities spanning a weekend. They usually last for 4 full days - Friday to Monday - but may be longer or shorter. The main workshop sessions are open to the general public.
- The weekends are facilitated by a multidisciplinary team.

This may be comprised of outsiders or locals or a combination of the two.

- The end result is a set of proposals for action which is presented to the community on the last evening and produced in exhibition and print form.
- ✎ Planning weekends work best when there is at least 6 months preparation time and a commitment by all parties to follow up afterwards.
- ✎ The most effective long-term results are likely to be when events are organised locally with

back-up and support from people who have done it before.

- ✎ Employing a local resident as event co-ordinator can help ensure local support and follow up.
- ✎ Get journalists to take part, preferably as team members.
- ✎ Planning weekends can be expensive. Average costs are likely to be in the region of £18,000 excluding organisers time and assuming team members come free.

## Sample timetable

14.00 - 18.00	<b>THURSDAY</b> <b>Setting up.</b> Room lay out. Equipment delivery. Sign making.	15.30 - 17.00 17.00 - 19.00	<b>Design workshops 2</b> <b>Breather.</b> Minute writing, exercise.
18.00 - 20.00	<b>Organisers final meeting.</b>	19.00 - 23.00	<b>Team brainstorm dinner.</b>
20.00 - 22.00	<b>Team arrivals.</b>	<b>DAY 3</b> 11.00 - 12.00	<b>SUNDAY</b> <b>Team editorial meeting.</b> Presentation structure. Production strategy.
<b>DAY 1</b>	<b>FRIDAY</b>	12.00 onwards	<b>Report, exhibition and slide show production.</b> Writing, editing, drawing, slide making. Review sessions as necessary. Team only. Sleep and eat as and when.
10.00 - 10.30	<b>Event launch.</b> Welcome by hosts.		
10.30 - 12.30	<b>Reconnaissance.</b> Tour of area by bus, train, plane or foot with visits to interest groups.		
12.30 - 13.30	<b>Buffet lunch.</b>		
14.00 - 16.00	<b>Briefings.</b> Short presentations by key interested parties outlining opportunities and constraints.	<b>DAY 4</b> All day	<b>MONDAY</b> <b>Report, exhibition and slide show production.</b> <b>Report to printers.</b> <b>Colour slides processing.</b> <b>Clearing up.</b> Tidying and packing up.
18.00 - 19.00	<b>Team review meeting.</b>	Late as possible	<b>Public presentation.</b> Slide show. Discussion. Formal thanks. Distribution of report.
19.00 - 20.00	<b>Dinner and social.</b>	Late as possible All day	<b>Farewell social event.</b>
<b>DAY 2</b>	<b>SATURDAY</b>	19.00 - 21.00	
9.00 - 10.00	<b>Team briefing and preparation.</b>	21.00 - 23.00	
10.00 - 11.30	<b>Topic workshops. Session 1</b> Open to all. Several parallel groups, ending with a plenary report back.		
11.30 - 13.00	<b>Topic workshops. Session 2</b>		
13.00 - 14.00	<b>Lunch &amp; walkabouts.</b>		
14.00 - 15.30	<b>Design workshops 1</b> Open to all. Ending with plenary report back. In parallel groups of 10-15.		
			<b>Ideal numbers: 100 - 200. Team: 10 - 30.</b> Larger numbers can be catered for if enough space and workshop facilitators.

*"In many ways, the process has transformed the way that Americans shape community development policies and take those actions that most directly affect their community's growth or change."*

**American Institute of Architects,**  
R/UDAT Handbook, 1992.

# Planning Day

**Planning Days are a good way for getting the key parties to work creatively together to devise and explore options for a site, neighbourhood or city.**

- Participants will normally be personally invited. The aim is to have a cross-section of the main stakeholders.
- A briefing pack is sent to all those attending. As well as setting out the aims of the day, the pack will contain background information about the area and the development process so that everyone starts the day with the maximum up-to-date knowledge.
- Workshop formats are designed to encourage the development of creative ideas (see Design Workshops, page 25).
- Facilitators will often be from outside the area to provide a measure of independence.
- A printed summary is produced as soon as possible afterwards and the proposals may be exhibited to a wider public (see Open House event, page 26).

- ✍ Personal invitations are a good way to get a balanced attendance. But avoid criticism of exclusivity by having spare places for others.
- ✍ One-day events can generate a wealth of information and ideas which can easily be lost. Make sure there are resources available for recording, presenting and following up the results.
- ✍ Holding an Awareness Raising Day a couple of weeks beforehand can be helpful to generate momentum.



### Workshops

Participants divided into groups working round tables with flipchart to side. Planning day, Oxpens Quarter Initiative, Oxford, 1997.



### Plenary session

Reporting back from the workshops. Planning day, Oxpens Quarter Initiative, Oxford, 1997.

23

## Sample timetable

- 10.00 **Arrivals and coffee**  
 10.30 **Introductions and briefings**  
 11.00 **Topic workshops: issues and opportunities**  
 Participants allocated to one of four workshop groups, eg:  
 1 Transport (access and movement)  
 2 Activities (land uses)  
 3 Strategic issues (regional context)  
 4 Quality of life (environment)
- 12.15 **Plenary session**  
 Report back from workshops
- 12.45 **Lunch and site walkabouts**
- 14.00 **Design workshops: options and proposals**  
 Participants work in one of several design workshop groups focussing on different aspects of the site, eg:  
 1 Regional context  
 2 Town context  
 3 The site  
 4 The river edge  
 5 A new square?
- 15.15 **Plenary session**  
 Report back from workshops.
- 15.45 **Tea**
- 16.15 **Next steps.**  
 Planning future activity.
- 17.30 **Presentation.** To councillors, press.
- 18.00 **Reception.**

### Ideal numbers: 40 - 80.

Larger numbers comfortable if enough space and facilitators; 10 max per workshop.

## Sample invite letter

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I have pleasure in inviting you to participate in a special planning day on Tuesday 25th April at 25 High Street. A timetable, guest list and briefing pack will be sent out prior to the event.

The aim is to help develop practical but exciting development options for the area and encourage further collaboration between those concerned. The outcome will form the basis for wider public consultation shortly afterwards.

The format of the day has been carefully designed to achieve results. As well as all major local stakeholders we are also inviting a few specialist advisors to provide the breadth of input required. If there are others you think should be present please let me know though space is limited.

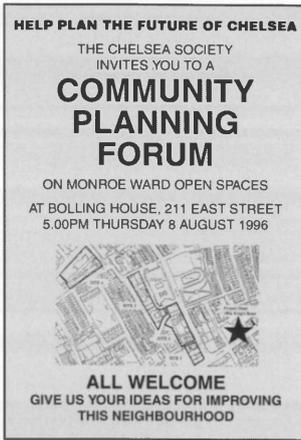
To help our planning please confirm that you can attend.

Yours sincerely

*"We need more events like this."*

**Participant, Planning day**  
 Oxpens Quarter Initiative,  
 Oxford, 1997.

# Community Planning Forum



**Sample advertising leaflet.**  
 Key components: Slogan summarising overall purpose; venue; time; date; statement of immediate objectives and perhaps some background information; map of area with venue marked; name of organisers.

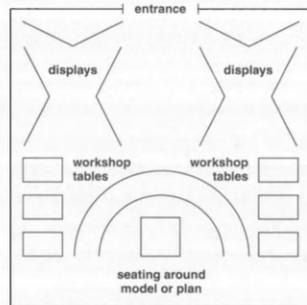
**Community Planning Forums are open multi-purpose events lasting several hours, designed to secure information, generate ideas and create interaction between interest groups.**

- Community Planning Forums can be organised at any time but are particularly useful at an early stage in a participation or development process.
- Forums can be organised by any

interested party and can be organised at short notice.

- The format combines interactive displays, an open forum, workshop groups and informal networking.
  - Key ingredients are a leaflet advertising the event, a means of distributing it, a venue and a facilitator.
- ✎ Keep the atmosphere informal to get best results. Good refreshments worthwhile.

- ✎ Particularly useful for students engaged in urban design projects which may not necessarily relate to any 'real' development process timetable.
- ✎ Getting students to organise the format themselves can be highly educational, particularly if linked with a process planning session (see Process Planning Session, p 31). Providing a framework may be helpful (ie arranging publicity and venue in advance).



**Ideal layout in a large hall.**

## Key roles at forum checklist

- Facilitator
- Hosts as people arrive
- Rapporteurs for each interactive display
- Forum facilitator
- Workshop facilitators
- Workshop and forum recorders
- Photographer

## Sample Community Planning Forum Format

**1 Interactive displays**  
 As people arrive they are guided towards a variety of interactive displays where they make their input using post-its, marker pens or stickers (see Interactive Display, p 28). General mingling and discussion.  
 Refreshments. (45 mins)

**2 Open Forum**  
 People are seated in a horseshoe shape, perhaps with model, plan or drawing on a table in the centre. Introductions by organisers. Feed back on interactive displays by pre-warmed rapporteurs. Open debate chaired by organiser. (45 mins)

**3 Workshop groups**  
 People are divided into groups and work around tables on various topics/areas. (45 mins)

**4 Networking**  
 Informal mingling and discussion.  
 Refreshments. (45 mins)

**Total running time:**  
**3 hours**  
**Ideal numbers 30 - 150**



**Open forum**  
 Debate in a horseshoe arrangement following a warm up interactive display and before dividing up into workshop groups. Richmond, Virginia, USA, 1976.

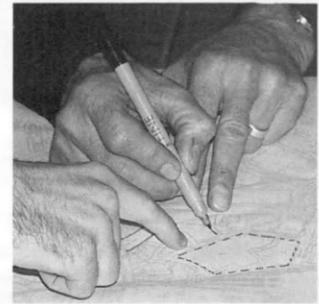
# Design Workshop

**Design Workshops are hands-on sessions allowing small groups of professionals and non-professionals to work creatively together developing planning and design ideas. They will normally be held as part of a Planning Day or other event.**

- People work in groups around a table with plans or a model. Different groups can deal with different areas or the same area at different scales. Groups can be allocated a topic.
- A structured workshop procedure is often followed, especially if people have not worked together before (eg in Sample Workshop Format below).

Groups can vary in size (8-10 is a good average to aim at).

- ✎ Using felt-tips and tracing paper is often more suitable than using models because little preparation is needed.
- ✎ It helps if the facilitator has previous experience of design workshops and urban design expertise.
- ✎ Get people going by telling them that "no idea is too big, no idea too small".
- ✎ Get everyone to sign drawings at the end and draw up a tidy version for presentation.



**Hands-on.**  
*Devising improvements to Leeds City Centre, 1996.*



**Report back.**  
*Participant explains design workshop outcome to a plenary session. Duke Street/Bold Street, Liverpool, 1997.*

## Sample Workshop Format

Format for a free-standing workshop. If separate topic workshops already held, items 3 - 5 can be omitted.

- 1 Arrangements.** People choose a workshop group. Encourage roughly equal numbers. Facilitator for each group identified in advance. Groups sit round tables with props as shown in box to right. (5 mins)
- 2 Introductions.** Facilitator asks people to briefly introduce themselves. Identify a Notetaker and Flipcharter for each group if not done in advance. (10 mins)
- 3 Brainstorm - issues.** Facilitator asks each person to write on separate post-it notes (colour A) 3-5 issues facing the area in relation to the workshop theme. (10 mins)
- 4 Categorising.** Categorise by facilitator reading out and placing post-its on flipchart sheet in groups. Use wall (see right) or place sheet on table. (5 mins)
- 5 Brainstorm and categorise - goals and actions.** Repeat steps 3 & 4 for goals (post-it colour B) and actions needed (colour C). Actions needed can be categorised under headings 'Now', 'Soon' or 'Later'. (30 mins)
- 6 Design options.** Develop sketch proposals using felt-tip pens on tracing paper and mini post-its (drawing encouraged throughout entire process). (15 - 45 mins)
- 7 Report back preparation.** By one or several participants to plenary. (15 mins)

**Running time: 90-120 mins.**  
**Ideal numbers: 8-10 per workshop.**  
Sit people comfortably around table.

## Workshop Props Checklist

- On table:**
- Base plan of area.
  - Tracing paper overlays (large sheets and A4 pads) taped with masking tape.
  - Felt-tip pens (set per workshop)
  - 3" square post-it notes in 3 colours (min 75 each colour per group).
  - Ball point pens (one per person)
  - Lined A4 writing pads (2 per group)
- To one side:**
- Flipchart and marker pens.
  - Pin up space with 3 sheets of flipchart paper marked up as shown below right (blue-tak or drawing pins needed).
  - Attendance sheets.
  - Site photographs.
- If using model:**
- Base model with movable parts.
  - Spare cardboard or polystyrene.
  - Scissors.
  - Post-it notes and cocktail sticks.

Issues	Goals	Action
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Now <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Soon <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Later <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	

**Flipchart sheets with post-its**



**Creative working.**  
*Design workshop using tracing paper over a plan, mini post-its and felt-tip pens. Part of a planning weekend. Duke Street/Bold Street, Liverpool, 1997*

# Open House Event



**Inviting people in**  
Pavement sign encouraging passers by to visit an Open House event in a vacant shop on the future of the area. Farnham, 1997.

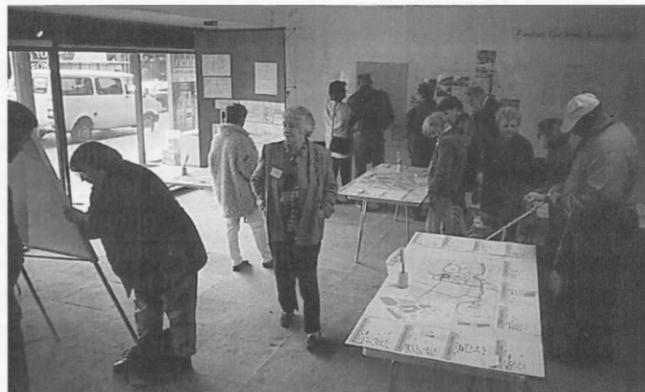
**Open House Events are a way for those promoting development initiatives to present them to a wider public and secure reactions in an informal manner.**

- Open House Events can be organised at any stage of the design and development process by any of the parties. They can last from a few hours to several weeks.
- The venue will be arranged with a number of displays on the

proposals and options using a variety of interactive display techniques (see plan below). Organisers will normally be present to deal with queries and engage in informal debate.

- Material collected will be analysed afterwards and used to further develop the initiative.
- ☞ Good way to gauge initial public reaction to development proposals or options.

- ☞ Good way to get public involvement in the ideas emerging from a Design Workshop or Planning Day.
- ☞ There's no need to present drawings in an elaborate way but careful thought needs to be given to drawing out the main points and on how reactions are obtained.
- ☞ Prominent on-site venues work best, for instance an empty shop.

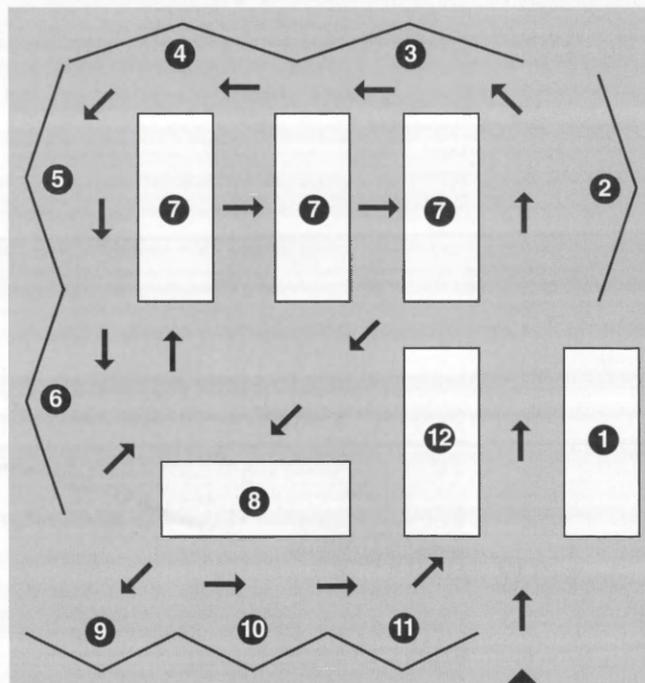


**Relaxed atmosphere**  
People move freely from display to display. Farnham, 1997.

- 1 Entry desk.** Take post-its, pens, sticky dots (Red=Dislike. Green=Like. Yellow=Not sure).
- 2 Welcome panel.** Read about history and aim of present initiative.
- 3 Participant data.** Stick dots on panels to show where you live/work, age group and other relevant statistics.
- 4 Issues, goals and action needed.** Use post-its to make additional points to those listed.
- 5 Likes and dislikes.** Put stickers on map to show favourite and least favourite buildings/spaces.
- 6 Visions.** Add post-it comments to sketches of area visions (preferably before and after).
- 7 Table scheme displays.** Use sticky dots to make your views known on proposals already drawn up.
- 8 Draw your own.** Sketch your own ideas with felt-tips on tracing paper laid over base plans.
- 9 What next.** Read about it.
- 10 Help.** Sign up if you can offer any assistance.
- 11 Comments.** Write on flip charts any comments not already covered.
- 12 Further information.** Write your name and address if you want to receive further information as things develop.

*"I've been a councillor for 12 years and I've never been involved in an exercise like this before. We should be doing this for all of our towns instead of development control which is awful."*

**Leader of Waverley Borough Council, November 97.**  
after a design workshop and open house event



**Sample layout in shop unit**

# Street Stall

**Street Stalls make it possible to secure the views of larger numbers of people than is normally possible indoors.**

- A highly public location is selected and exhibition and interactive display material mounted for a selected period.
- Facilitators are on hand to encourage people to make comments and engage in debate.
- The event may be advertised in advance but this is not essential.

- ✎ Particularly useful where the views of people using a particular street or public space are required.
- ✎ Arcades and colonnades are good venues as they provide shelter from the rain. Ideal if you can also have the use of a shop.
- ✎ Can benefit from, and be attractive for, radio and television coverage. Fliers can also be handed out to passers by and placed in shop windows.
- ✎ Be careful when using post-its and leaflets if windy conditions are likely - they may blow away!
- ✎ Getting formal permission to set up stall in a public area can take forever. Plan well ahead or just do it and be prepared to move if necessary.



*"The street stall proved to be an invaluable and invigorating experience for us all. We were overwhelmed by the interest taken... and all subsequent developments of our scheme were made against the backdrop of what the people of Bath wanted to see."*

**Student report, Prince of Wales's Institute of Architecture, Bath Project, 1996.**



*"The day had a certain verve which boosted - and was reinforced by - the strong level of interest of passers-by. It was good for the Trust to be involved in something as popular and constructive - we are often portrayed as being elitist and negative."*

**Timothy Cantell, Chairman, Planning Committee, Bath Preservation Trust**  
letter, March 1997.



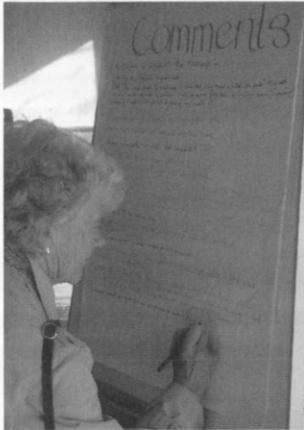
**Taking to the streets**

*Shoppers join in a debate on the future of the town centre by writing post-its, sketching their own ideas and holding discussions with the organisers. Over 2,000 post-its were posted up over 5 hours on a cold winter day and two books filled with comments. The results were used to prepare a scheme for one of the most important development sites in the town. Bath, 1997.*

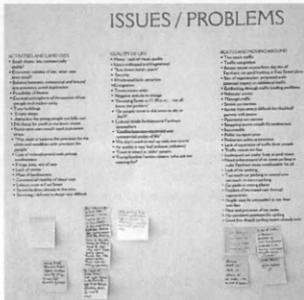
# Interactive Display



**Tools for participants.**  
Post-its and sticky dots (several colours), pens and felt-tips.  
Farnham 1997.



**Flip chart comment sheet.**  
More visible than a book.  
Farnham 1997.



**Cumulative comments.**  
Adding points to those typed up from previous workshop.  
Farnham, 1997.



**Post-it board.** Comments build up in response to a simple question, Bath, 1997.

**Interactive Displays allow people to engage in the issues and debate, on their own and in an enjoyable way, by making additions or alterations to pre-prepared exhibits.**

- Interactive displays can be used as part of a forum, workshop, exhibition, conference or other event.
- The displays can range from blank sheets with simple one-line questions to drawings or models of complex development proposals.

- A dynamic develops as people's comments build up on the displays over time.
- Thoughtful design is required to ensure that the information is presented simply and clearly and that people's responses are recorded in such a way that they can be used afterwards.

- ✎ Have facilitators on hand to help people get going. Once responses start to build up, the process develops its own momentum.
- ✎ Shop front or on-the-street venues work well as people are attracted by others taking part (see Street Stall, p 27).

## Interactive display ideas

### Verbal likes, dislikes and ideas.

Put large sheets of blank paper up with suitable headings (see box left) and get people to put their responses on post-its.

### Visual likes, dislikes and ideas.

Ask people to mark their most and least favourite buildings and spaces on maps or photos using post-its or sticky dots.

### Comments on proposals

Get people's views on development proposals or options by placing sticky dots or post-its on prepared cards linked to plans or drawings. (see Table Scheme Display).

### General thoughts

Use flip charts or comment books to get general comments.

## Post-it board ideas

Headings for four blank boards which people can stick post-its on:

- What do you like about the area?**
- What do you dislike about the area?**
- What improvements could be made?**
- What can you do to help?**



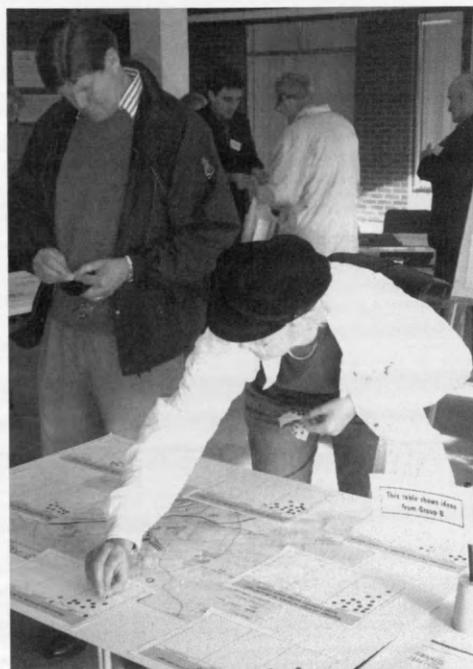
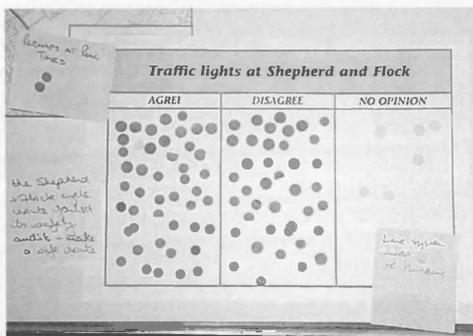
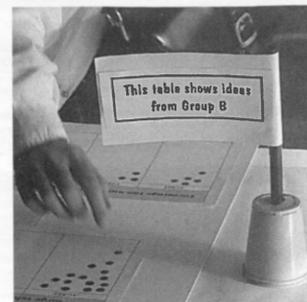
**Sticky dot display.** Voting for liked and disliked buildings and spaces, Farnham, 1997.

# Table Scheme Display

**Table Scheme Displays allow a large number of people to understand and make an input into development proposals with or without engaging with others. They can be used as part of an exhibition or Open House Event.**

- Drawings or a model of a proposed scheme are placed on a table with the main elements identified on separate sticky dot sheets around the edge.

- Separate tables are used for different scheme options.
  - People vote on what they like or dislike by placing sticky dots on the sheets.
  - More detailed comments can be made using post-it notes either on the tables or on a separate display.
- ✎ Works particularly well for getting comments on rough sketch schemes developed by Design Workshops. Redrawing is usually not necessary though it can help if time allows.
  - ✎ Good way of introducing people to the design process. Have a spare table with a blank plan for those wanting to draw up their own ideas in more detail.



**Sample instructions**

**The main elements of the sketch schemes are highlighted**  
Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the ideas by using the stickers provided.  
**Green = Agree.**  
**Red = Disagree**  
**Yellow = No opinion**

**You may have your own ideas or suggestions**  
Please write these on the comment sheet or sketch them on the plan provided. It will help if you add your name and address.

**Table scheme display**

*Voting with sticky dots on town centre improvement ideas proposed by a design workshop focussing on transport. Part of a one-day open house event, Farnham, 1997.*

# Elevation Montage



**Wall-mounted.**

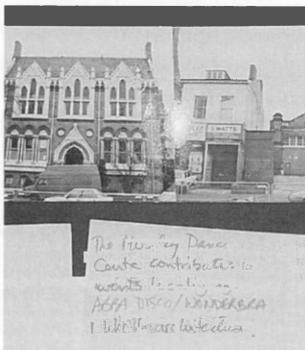
Resident pasting a post-it note on a wall-mounted montage, Birmingham, 1994.

**Elevation Montages show the facade of a street by assembling photos of individual buildings. They can be useful for helping people gain an understanding of the building fabric and devise improvements.**

- An elevation of a street is created by assembling a series of individual photographs. Both sides of a street can be done and pasted either side of a plan.

- Simple instructions ask people to make comments on post-its and stick them underneath the relevant section (what they like/don't like/would like to see)
- The build up of post-its generates a dialogue amongst participants and useful data for later discussion and analysis.

- 📌 Table mounted displays make it possible to have both sides of a street opposite each other on a plan. Wall mounted displays only work if it doesn't matter treating both sides separately.
- 📌 Useful debates can take place around the exhibit. Keep a notepad or tape recorder handy.



Detail of above wall-mounted montage with comment.

## Advantages of elevation montages

- Good icebreaker at the beginning of workshop sessions
- Helps participants and design professionals gain a visual understanding of the environment they are dealing with.
- Secures the views of people lacking the confidence to speak in group discussions.
- Can be left as part of an unmanned exhibition over a period of time.

## Disadvantages

- Can be costly to prepare and may not be cost-effective compared with other methods.

## Tips on montage making

- 📌 Stand the same distance from the building line when taking all photos unless there are setbacks in the buildings when you should move closer.
- 📌 If relating to a plan then it is best to mount it on a long table. If on a wall then one elevation will be upside down.
- 📌 Digital OS mapping which can be re-scaled is useful for adjusting the plan to fit the elevation
- 📌 The plan is more understandable if photos are placed directly on the building line.
- 📌 Elevations are more understandable if photos are stuck together so that shop signs are readable even if there is some mismatch at roof level.

**Table-mounted.**

Photomontages at Kingswood as part of a workshop aimed at generating urban design proposals, 1996.



Photo: Roger Evans Associates

# Process Planning Session

**Process Planning Sessions allow people to work together to determine the most suitable public participation process for their particular situation and which methods to use.**

- As many as possible of the key stakeholders are invited to ensure that the outcome is supported by all parties.
- Participants are introduced to the various options available and helped to design a process of their own, usually by an external facilitator.
- A formal workshop format is normally followed (example in box below left) to make the procedure equitable and transparent.
- Sessions are held periodically whenever there is a need to review the overall process.
- ☞ Make people feel comfortable and relaxed. Spanning lunch can work well with people seated around circular tables.
- ☞ Be on guard for sabotage by those who don't want any kind of process to take place.
- ☞ Invite external facilitators to present options but keep ownership local from the start.



**Planning participation**  
Police, residents and other stakeholders taking part in an evening session in a community centre. It led to an Action Planning Weekend seven months later. Ore Valley, Hastings, 1997.

## Process Planning Session Sample Format

- 1 Introductions.** Facilitator explains event objectives and structure. Everyone says briefly who they are and what their hopes are for the session. (15 mins)
- 2 Presentation.** Slide show or video of possible processes to provide inspiration (45 mins max).
- 3 Aims.** Short debate on overall objectives and specific constraints (15 mins).
- 4 Refreshment break.**
- 5 Individual ideas.** People fill in the Process Planner (see box) OR develop their ideas on a blank sheet of paper (10 mins min).
- 6 Group ideas.** People are divided into groups (4 – 8 ideal). Individuals present their idea to group. Group votes to pursue one idea only and develop it further (20 mins min).
- 7 Report back.** Each group makes semi-formal presentation of their idea to plenary of all participants (5 mins each group).
- 8 Selection.** Vote on which idea to pursue and then discuss improvements and next steps (10 mins min).

**Ideal numbers: 16 - 20.**  
Larger numbers no problem.  
**Running time: 2 - 4 hours.**  
3 hours comfortable.

**Note:** This format can also be used for general training purposes with no specific location or issue in mind.

## Sample Process Planner

Customise and leave space for responses.

### Aims

- 1 What do you want to **achieve**?.....
- 2 What are the main **issues**?.....
- 3 What geographical **area** are you concerned with?.....

### Process

- 4 What **methods** do you favour?.....
- 5 **When** should activities take place?.....
- 6 **Who** are the key people to involve?.....
- 7 What **expertise** do you need?.....

### Organisation

- 8 Which **organisation/s** should lead?.....
- 9 Who else should **help**?.....
- 10 How much will it **cost** and **who pays**?.....
- 10 Who does **what next**?.....
- 12 **Other** thoughts and ideas.....



## Stakeholders process planning.

Hotel lunch session for key players (property owners, authorities, amenity groups) to determine a development process for a major town centre regeneration initiative. It led to an urban design workshop and open house event one year later. Farnham, Surrey, 1996.

## Planning the process

How do you get started with community planning? How do you decide which methods to use, and when? How do you design the overall process?

Many factors need to be considered such as:

- What are the main objectives? Is it to develop creative ideas, or test out ones already developed?
- What is the timescale? Is there an immediate threat requiring an urgent response or is there more time to consider things?
- Who should be involved and at what stage?
- What resources are available or can be found? Costs can vary immensely depending on the support in kind available.

The approach adopted in each case

will be different and there is rarely a quick fix solution or blueprint. Each community needs to devise its own community planning process carefully to suit local conditions.

But there are common patterns which have proved successful. On page 33 opposite, four sample processes for a variety of development scenarios are illustrated. The main methods used are identified together with an indication of sequence and timescales. Sample processes such as these can be used for inspiration and guidance but should not be copied slavishly.

In most cases it is unlikely that a total process can be planned precisely from the outset. Flexibility is important to be able to respond to new circumstances and opportunities. But planning a

provisional process is a useful discipline so that everyone understands the purpose of each stage.

To help work out the best approach try doing some or all of the following:

- Sketch out a timeline similar to those on page 33.
- Complete your own community planning process chart (see below).
- Produce an itemised budget and allocate responsibilities.
- Organise a Process Planning Session as shown on page 31.

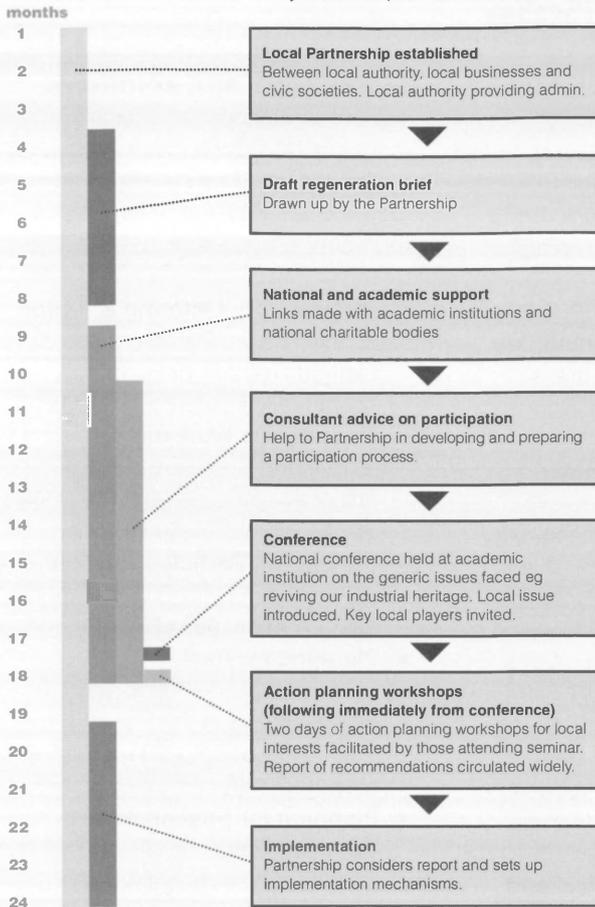
### Sample community planning process chart

Example used: largely residential urban neighbourhood.

Method	Who involved?	Timescale (from start)	Purpose	Responsibility
Initial meeting	Resident groups Agency reps	1 month	Discuss process	Agency officer
Process planning session	Resident groups Agency reps Speaker/facilitator	2 months	Decide process	Area Forum
Youth project	Local schools Youth clubs	4 months	Gain children's ideas and support	Youth leaders
Press release	General public	5 months	Launch event initiative Public awareness and involvement	Co-ordinator
Action planning event	All stakeholders	7 months	Develop strategy options	Area Forum/ Technical College
Interactive exhibition	General public	8 months	Feedback on options	Area Forum/ Housing officers
Local plan revision draft	Local authority	12 months	Improve policy Formalise action plan	Planning officers
Local planning centre	General public Urban designers	18 months	Implement action plan Improve agency coordination	Area Forum Housing agency Planning officers
Local plan formal consultation	General public	20 months	Statutory obligation	Local authority
Planning day	All stakeholders	24 months	Review progress	Area Forum

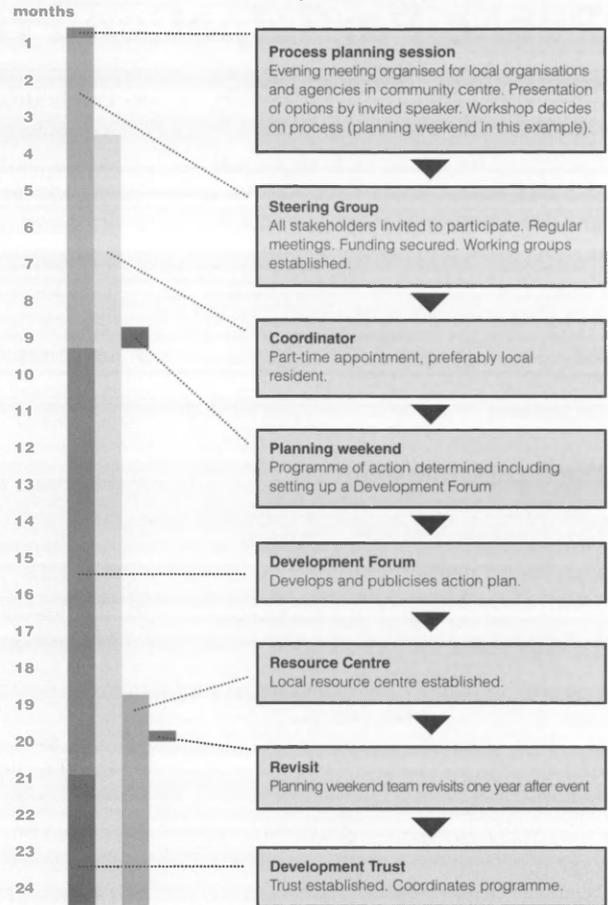
### Industrial heritage re-use

An academic institution wishes to assist a local authority with the regeneration of a run-down industrial area in a variety of ownerships which has considerable heritage value.



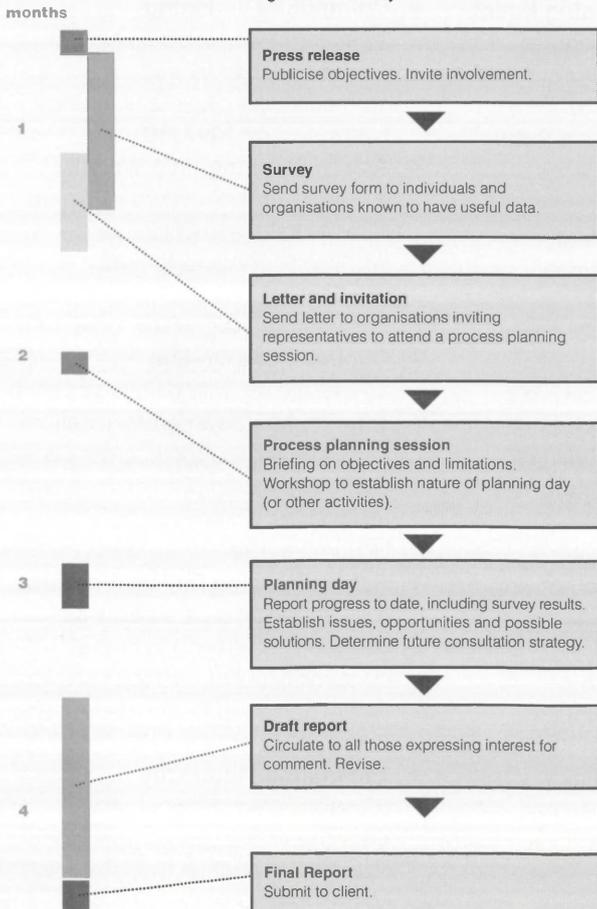
### Local regeneration initiative

Local people in a run down neighbourhood and agencies working with them want to speed up the regeneration process.



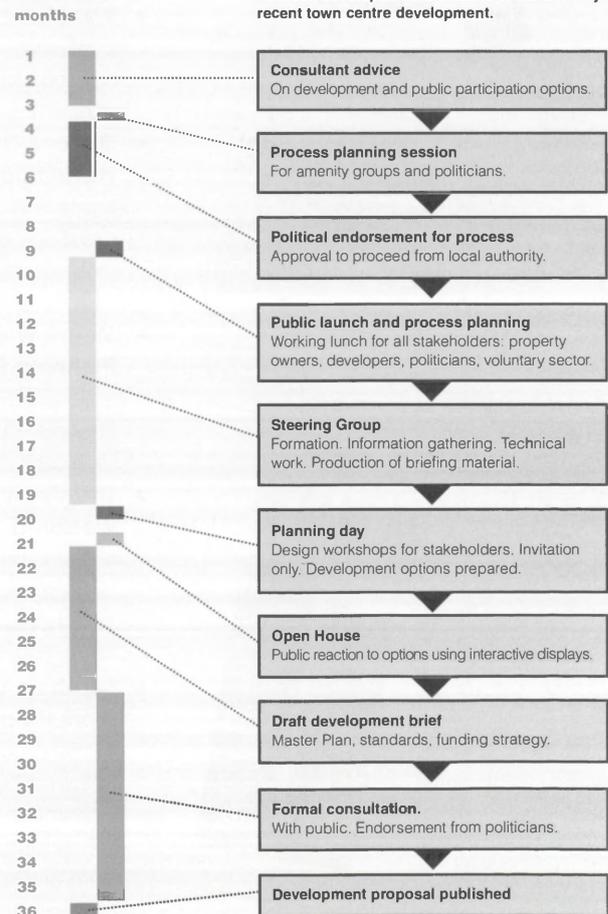
### Rapid consultant study

Planning consultants are asked by a local authority to prepare a study of the potential of a large sector of a city. The timescale is short.



### Town centre upgrade

The planning department wishes to initiate development of part of the town centre without the normal conflict between developers and citizens or the banality of much recent town centre development.



# About the Urban Design Group Public Participation Programme

The Programme has explored good practice through assisting and evaluating twelve participatory urban design events throughout England and contributing to the organisation of ten seminars and workshops. Experience from other participatory activities in the UK and overseas has been drawn on and a preliminary study of available literature undertaken.

## Participatory events

The twelve events covered a variety of approaches in a variety of contexts. More details are provided on Information Sheets (numbers in brackets):



- **Leeds Urban Design Workshop**  
a one-day multidisciplinary workshop to explore ideas for Leeds City Centre, 9 November 1996 (3).
- **Kingswood Public Workshops**  
a one-day workshop to establish local views on Kingswood Town Centre, 16 November 1996 (4).
- **Hastings Action Planning Day**  
a one-day event to progress Agenda 21 activity in Hastings, 16 November 1996 (5).
- **Farnham Launch Seminar**  
a seminar for stakeholders to launch a regeneration initiative for Farnham, 21 November 1996 (7).
- **Ore Valley Process Planning Workshop**  
an evening workshop to plan a participation process, 17 February 1997 (8).
- **Bath Action Planning Day**  
an interactive street exhibition to involve the public in proposals for a City centre site, 7 March 1997 (10).
- **Liverpool Planning Weekend**  
a five-day event to develop proposals for the Duke Street/Bold Street area in the City centre, 13-17 March 1997 (11).
- **Wakefield Action Planning Event**  
a two-day workshop testing a strategy for an industrial waterside site, 4 & 5 June 1997 (15).
- **Oxpens Quarter Initiative Public Workshops**  
a one-day action planning event developing an urban design strategy for a central area of Oxford, 21 June 1997 (17).
- **Mount Wise Community Action Planning Event**  
an eight-day event to develop a strategy for a deprived part of Plymouth, 11-18 Sept 1997 (19).
- **Ore Valley Action Planning Weekend**  
a four-day event to develop a strategy for a depressed housing and industrial area in Hastings, 12-16 September 1997 (20).
- **Farnham Urban Design Workshop and Open House**  
a one-day Urban Design Workshop followed by an Open House interactive exhibition to evolve development options for a key central part of the town, 3,7,8 November 1997 (21).

## Workshops and seminars

The ten workshops or seminars focussed on approaches not covered by the events. More details on some are provided on Information Sheets (numbers in brackets):

- **Participatory Learning & Action**  
an evening workshop on innovative methods used in developing countries, 6 February 1997 (6).
- **Open Space Workshop**  
an evening workshop on this distinctive process from the United States, 6 March 1997 (9).
- **Comparing Participation Methods**  
a two-day seminar in Northampton, 25 & 26 April 1997 (12).
- **Planning for Real**  
an evening workshop looking at developments in the Planning for Real method using 3D models, 8 May 1997 (13).
- **Planning for Sustainable Communities**  
a workshop session as part of a one-day conference in Dorchester to produce an action plan for sustainable development in the area, 17 May 1997 (14).
- **Community Visioning**  
an evening workshop looking at new techniques for helping communities make plans for their future, 5 June 1997 (16).
- **Action Planning on a Website**  
a presentation of Oxford's Oxpens Quarter Initiative, which used a Website to encourage public involvement in developing urban design proposals, 30 October 1997.
- **Communities On-line**  
an exploration with on-line sessions showing how new communications technologies like the Internet can assist in building partnerships and facilitating involvement, 20 November 1997.
- **Action Planning for Reconciliation**  
a presentation on the ability of community planning to create consensus out of conflict; review of recent activity in Berlin, Belfast and Beirut, 12 February 1998.
- **Taming the Motor City**  
presentation of a community planning and urban design task force in El Cerrito in California, 12 March 1998.

**Further information**

Copies of the following material relating to the Programme can be obtained from the **Urban Design Group** or source indicated for the prices indicated in brackets. (Please note that black and white photocopies of reports will be supplied if original versions are out of print. Prices include postage)

**Information sheets**

A series of A4 information sheets (£5 for a complete set):

- 1 About the Programme
- 2 Information for contributors (now obsolete)
- 3 Leeds Urban Design Workshop - project summary
- 4 Kingswood Public Workshops - project summary
- 5 Hastings Action Planning Day - project summary
- 6 Participatory Learning & Action - community design forum report
- 7 Farnham Launch Seminar - project summary
- 8 Ore Valley Process Planning Workshop - project summary
- 9 Open Space Workshop - community design forum report
- 10 Bath Action Planning Day - project summary
- 11 Liverpool Planning Weekend - project summary
- 12 Comparing Participation Methods - seminar report
- 13 Planning for Real - community design forum report
- 14 Planning for Sustainable Communities - workshop report
- 15 Wakefield Action Planning Event - project summary
- 16 Community Visioning - community design forum report
- 17 Oxpens Quarter Initiative Public Workshops - project summary
- 18 Evaluation - notes on purpose & process
- 19 Mount Wise Community Action Planning Event - project summary
- 20 Ore Valley Action Planning Weekend - project summary
- 21 Farnham Urban Design Workshop and Open House - project summary

**Evaluation reports**

Evaluations of ten events covered by the Programme (£1 each):

- A** Leeds Urban Design Workshop
- B** Kingswood Public Workshops
- C** Hastings Action Planning Day
- D** Bath Action Planning Day
- E** Liverpool Planning Weekend
- F** Wakefield Action Planning Event
- G** Oxpens Quarter Initiative Public Workshops
- H** Mount Wise Community Action Planning Event
- I** Ore Valley Action Planning Weekend
- J** Farnham Urban Design Workshop and Open House

**Project reports**

Reports on Programme events (not produced by UDG PPP):

**Urban Design Strategy – Kingswood Town Centre**, Kingswood Regeneration Partnership & South Gloucestershire Council, Roger Evans Associates, 1996. (inspection at REA only)

**Kingswood: Town centre update**, South Gloucestershire Council for the Kingswood Regeneration Partnership, Spring 1997. (£1)

**Making it Happen** – summary and full reports from *Our future in our hands* Action Planning Day, 16 November 1996, Hastings Local Agenda 21 Forum and Hastings Borough Council. (summary report, £1; full report £2.50)

**Duke Street/Bold Street Planning Weekend, Liverpool**, 14-17 March 1997, John Thompson & Partners. (summary 80p; full report £18)

**Wakefield waterfront; Building on the past with a vision for the future**, report of an Action Planning Event on 4&5 June 199. (80p)

**The Oxpens Quarter Initiative; the public's vision for the future**, Roger Evans Associates, Sept 1997. (inspection at REA only)

**More Valley**; report of the Ore Valley Action Planning Weekend, September 1997. (80p)

**Mount Wise Community Action Planning Event**, newsletter, September 1997. (50p)

**What's happening around East Street?**, leaflet, February 1998. (30p)

**Mount Wise: the way forward**, July 1998. (£6)



# Publications and film

**An annotated selection of useful and interesting material in alphabetical order by title. Emphasis on the practical rather than theoretical.**

The following information is provided:

**Title**, subtitle, author/editor/director, publisher, date of latest edition, ISBN, price, annotation, (where to obtain if non-standard publisher).

## Books and Reports

**Action Planning**; *how to use planning weekends and urban design action teams to improve your environment*, Nick Waters, Prince of Wales's Institute of Architecture, 1996, 1 898465 11 8, £10. An illustrated how-to-do-it handbook. (POWIA, 14 Gloucester Gate, London NW1 4HG 0171 916 7380)

**Action Planning for Cities**, *a guide to community practice*, Nabeel Hamdi and Reinhard Goethert, John Wiley & Sons, 1997, 0-471-96928-1, Textbook on the theory and practice of community planning in developing countries.

**Building Homes People Want**; *a guide to tenant involvement in the design and development of housing association homes*, Pete Duncan and Bill Halsall, National Federation of Housing Associations, 1994. Useful guide by and for practitioners. (NFHA, 175 Grays Inn Rd, London WC1X 8UP.)

**Co-design**; *a process of design participation*, Stanley King et al, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1989, 0-442-23333-7. Lovely, well illustrated guide to conducting design workshops based on 197 case studies in the United States.

**Community Architecture**; *how people are creating their own environment*, Nick Waters & Charles Knevit, Penguin, 1987, 0-14-010428. Overview of movement for community participation in architecture and planning.

**Community Design Primer**, Randolph T Hester, Jr, Ridge Times Press, 1990, 0934203067. Great introduction to community design USA style with do-it-yourself training exercises for the would-be community designer.

**Community Participation in Practice**; *a practical guide*, Wendy Sarkissian, Andrea Cook and Kelvin Walsh, Institute for Science and Technology Policy, Murdoch University, 1997, 0 86905 556 9. Excellent detailed description of processes pioneered in Australia. (Publications Officer, ISTP, Murdoch University, Murdoch, Western Australia, 6150. Email: oyoung@central.murdoch.edu.au)

**Community Involvement in Planning and Development Processes**, Department of the Environment, HMSO, 1994, 0 11 753007 7, £17. Results of an important

planning research study which demonstrates the value of community participation.

**The Connected City**; *a new approach to making cities work*, Robert Cowan, Urban Initiatives, 1997. 1 902193 008. Includes checklists for preparing action plans for cities or neighbourhoods. £10 + £1 p&p (Urban Initiatives, 35 Heddon Street, London W1R 7LL)

**Creating a Design Assistance Team for Your Community**; *a guidebook for adapting the American Institute of Architects' Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) Program for AIA Components and Chapters*, American Institute of Architects, 1990. A how-to-do-it. Particularly useful for organisations wanting to set up action planning support programmes. (AIA, 1735 New York Avenue, NW Washington DC 20006, USA (tel 202 626 7300)

**Future Search**; *an action guide to finding common ground in organisations and communities*, Marvin Weisbord and Sandra Janoff, Berrett-Kohler, 1995. 1-881052-12-5. A step-by-step guide to running future search conferences.

**Good Practice Guide to Community Planning and Development**, Michael Parkes, London Planning Advisory Committee, 1995. £46. Detailed guide with case studies by a seasoned practitioner. (LPAC, Artillery House, Artillery Row, London SW1P 1RT 0171 222 2244)

**The Guide to Effective Participation**, David Wilcox, Partnership Books, 1994. 1-870298-00-4. Overview of participation methods. (Partnership Books, 13 Pelham Square, Brighton BN1 4ET)

**Involving Communities in Urban and Rural Regeneration**; *a guide for practitioners*, Piedad Pic, Department of the Environment, 1995, 1 85112201 X. £20. Useful overview to general approaches with handy checklists and summaries.

**Making Cities Better**; *visions and implementation*, Ziona Strelitz, George Henderson and Robert Cowan (eds), Vision for Cities, De Montford University, 1996. 0 9527500 0 7. Report on a series of 20 Vision for Cities workshops held in the mid 90s throughout England.

**Open Space Technology**; *a user's guide*, Harrison Owen, Abbott Publishing, 1995, 0-0618205-3-5. A step-by-step journey through the open space workshop method.

**Participation Works!**; *twenty-one techniques of community participation for the twenty-first century*, Julie Lewis, Catherine Unsworth and Perry Walker (eds), New Economics Foundation, 1998. Standard summary profiles on a varied range of general participation methods. Publication assisted by the UDG Public Participation Programme. £7 individuals/£12 organisations + 10% p&p

(20% overseas). Bulk orders: 5 for £15. (NEF, 1st floor, Vine Court, 112-116 Whitechapel Road, London E1 1JE Tel 0171 377 5696)

**Participatory Design**; *theory & techniques*, Henry Sanoff (ed), North Carolina State University, 1990. 0-9622107-3-0. Rich compendium of interesting theoretical and practical material, particularly from USA experience.

**Participatory Learning & Action**, *a trainers guide*, Jules Pretty, Irene Guijt, John Thompson and Ian Scoones, International Institute for Environment and Development, 1995, 1 899825 00 2. Excellent handbook on general participatory methods used in developing countries (IIED, 3 Endsleigh Street, London WC1H 0DD)

**Plan Design and Build**; *21st century halls for England*, Alan Wilkinson, ACRE, 1997, 1 871157 48 X, £14.50. Excellent how-to-do-it on creating community centres including community involvement methods.

**The Power in our Hands**; *neighbourhood world shaking*, Tony Gibson, Jon Carpenter Publishing, 1996, £10. 1-897766-28-9. Powerful account of the potential for bottom up initiatives.

**A Practical Handbook for 'Planning for Real' Consultation Exercises**, Neighbourhood Initiatives Foundation, 1995. Handy brief guide. (NIF, The Poplars, Lightmoor, Telford, Shropshire TF4 3QN Tel 01952 590777).

**R/UDAT Handbook**; *a guidebook for the American Institute of Architects' Regional and Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) Program*, American Institute of Architects, 1992. How-to-do-it guide for the highly successful USA R/UDAT programme. (AIA, 1735 New York Avenue, NW Washington DC 20006, USA Tel 202 626 7300)

**The Thin book of Appreciative Inquiry**, Sue Annis Hammond, Kodiak Consulting, 1996, 0-7880-0917-6. Handy introduction to this technique.

**Tools for Partnership-building**. Compiled by Ros Tennyson. Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum, 1994, How to build development partnerships between the public, private and voluntary sectors. In all central European languages and as a video.

**Urban Design in Action**; *the history, theory and development of the American Institute of Architects' Regional/Urban Design Assistance Teams Program (R/UDAT)*, Peter Batchelor and David Lewis, North Carolina State University School of Design and the American Institute of Architects, 1985. Classic work on the beginning of action planning in the USA.

## Acknowledgements

**User Participation in Building Design and Management**, David Kernohan, John Gray, John Daish with Duncan Joiner, Architectural Press, 1996, 0 7506 2888 X. A useful how-to-do-it on participatory evaluations of buildings after they have been erected. Well-thought through process. Good drawings.

**Workshop Checklist; community participation in practice**, Wendy Sarkissian and Kelvin Walsh, Institute for Science and Technology Policy, Murdoch University, 1994. 0-869053027. A systematic and detailed how-to-do-it on organising community participation meetings, forums and workshops (Same as Community Participation in Practice.)

### Film

**Listening to All the Voices**, Jennifer Gherardi, Institute for Science and Technology Policy, Murdoch University, 1994. Examples of participatory planning and design methods in action in Australia. Somewhat academic at times but deals frankly with some tricky issues. (Same as Community Participation in Practice.)

### Magazines

**Urban Design Quarterly**  
(from **Urban Design Group**)

**No 28**, September 1988. Special issue on Action Planning issues.

**No 41**, January 1992. Reports of **UDG** organised participatory event in Russia. (Event report also available.)

**No 49**, January 1994. Special issue on 'Involving people in urban design'. Articles by: Steve Bee, John Billingham, Anthony Costello, David Lewis, Jon Rowland, Alan Simpson, John Thompson, John Worthington and Charles Zucker.

**No 58**, April 1996. Special issue related to Action Planning based on a **UDG/RTPI** one-day conference.

### UDG Public Participation Programme Steering Group

John Billingham, Roger Evans, Arnold Linden, Jon Rowland

### Project Manager

Nick Wates

### Project Evaluator

Emma Collier, University of the West of England (Year 1 only)

### Administrator

Susie Turnbull

### Advisors

Lesley Klein, Alan Simpson, John Worthington

### Auditors

Haines & Company, Chartered Accountants & Registered Auditors

### Visual identity

Jeremy Brook, Graphic Ideas

### DETR contact

Stephen Batey

### Special thanks to:

Nick Allen  
Hilary Barton  
Philip Beisley  
David Black  
Charles Campian  
June Cannon  
Timothy Cantell  
Robert Cowan  
Robin Deane  
Peter Eley  
Steve Foreman  
Christine Goldschmidt  
Suzanne Gorman  
Val Greenwood  
Richard Hands  
Brian Hanson  
David Harrison  
Ian Haywood  
Mandy Heslop  
Charles Kneviatt  
Richard John  
Marcus Laphorn  
Pam Lee  
Julie Lewis  
Sebastian Loew  
Fred London  
Andrew Longley  
Mike Luton  
Lee Mallett  
Steve Manwaring  
Tony Meadows  
Geoff Miller  
Michael Mutter  
Jenneth Parker

Alan Parks  
Peter Powlesland  
Jules Pretty  
Richard Pullen  
Debbie Radcliffe  
Nigel Ray  
Therese Sedgewick  
Andrew Sheppard  
Romy Shovelton  
Bill Skilki  
Miriam Solly  
Lindsay Smales  
Sandra Stevens  
Miller Stevenson  
John Thompson  
Stephen Thwaites  
John Turner  
Perry Walker  
Dick Watson  
Mike Westley  
David Wilcox  
Margaret Wilkinson  
Beverly Winchester  
Julie Witham

### and to:

1066 Housing Association  
Bath Preservation Trust  
Centre for Community Visions  
Business in the Community  
City of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council  
Department for International Development  
Department of the Environment, Transport & the Regions  
Dorset County Council  
English Partnerships  
Halcrow Fox  
Hastings Agenda 21 Forum  
Hastings Borough Council  
Hastings Trust  
Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies York  
John Thompson & Partners  
Leeds Metropolitan University  
National Council of Civic Trust Societies  
Neighbourhood Initiatives Foundation  
New Economics Foundation  
Prince of Wales's Institute of Architecture and Projects Office  
Oxford City Council  
Plymouth City Council  
Roger Evans Associates  
South Gloucestershire Council  
University of Plymouth School of Architecture  
Waverley Borough Council



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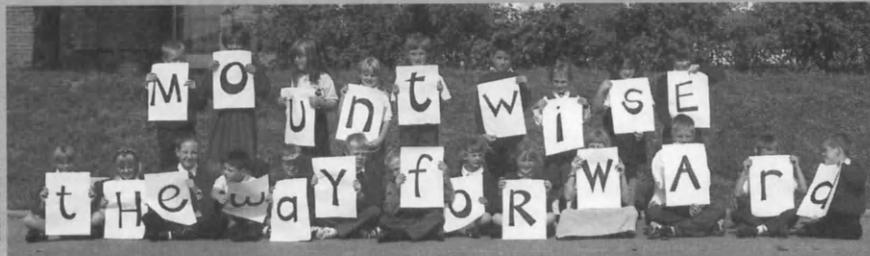
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Photo: Mount Wise Event



8

**1 Reporting back**

Workshop participant presents the conclusions of a Design Workshop to a plenary session, Leeds Urban Design Workshop, November 1996.

**2 Model making**

Planning for Real training session at a Community Design Forum, May 1997.

**3 Mapping**

Participants compare spatial perceptions of different cultural groups, Participatory Learning & Action seminar, February 1997.

**4 Agenda setting**

Participants sign up for what they want to spend the evening debating, Open Space Workshop, March 1997.

**5 Group planning**

Workshop session on Agenda 21, Hastings Action Planning Day, November 1996.

**6 Prioritising**

Participants decide on priorities for action, Action Planning Workshop, Planning for Sustainable Communities Conference, Dorchester, May 1997.

**7 Raising interest**

School children publicise a forthcoming Community Action Planning Event, Mount Wise, Plymouth, September 1997.

**8 Reconnaissance**

Team members being shown round a factory by the owner, Wakefield Action Planning Event, June 1997.



**Chairman's Report  
by Roger Evans  
13 May 1998**

These are auspicious times for the Urban Design Group with urban design now firmly in the agenda of government, the media, community groups and every professional institute concerned with the urban environment. The strength of the Group lies in the commitment and conviction of its membership, and for many years our members have been lone voices patiently arguing the case for urban design issues to be given proper consideration in the evolution of our towns and cities. Michael Gwilliam of the Civic Trust paid us a gratifying compliment when he commented at the annual conference that while other organisations were now signing up to the Urban Design Alliance, it was the Urban Design Group who had "kept the flag flying through thick and thin". Much credit for this has to go to my predecessor Jon Rowland, who forged links with other institutions to bring UDAL into being at long last. It is notable that at the UDAL launch all the speakers were UDG members. As Alan Baxter later commented, like the cuckoo, it is sometimes necessary to lay your eggs in the nests of others. The Alliance with RTPI, RIBA, RICS, The Landscape Institute, Institute of Civil Engineers and The Civic Trust provides us with a much more significant platform with which to lobby government.

The advent of UDAL is a staging post for the Group which now allows us to concentrate on involving and equipping our membership to focus on issues and local initiatives while others share the task of keeping urban design on the political agenda. To this

end, a number of changes to the running of the group have been made and fresh initiatives implemented.

**Membership**

You will already have seen the new leaflet setting out the aims of the Group and inviting membership. This has so far been mailed to 38,000 readers of *Planning and Building Design* and has resulted in a 20% increase in our membership. Communicating to people *outside* the membership has to be a continuing process and a budget has been allocated to continue this.

**UDG Web Site**

The UDG has had its own web site courtesy of the RUDI (Resource for Urban Design Information) project pioneered by Oxford Brookes University and the University of Hertfordshire. This is now receiving 1,000 'hits' daily and will continue to be developed. With our membership spread out throughout the regions (the second biggest category is the overseas membership) the Internet will be an ideal way for members to play an active role, wherever they are.

**Internet Discussion Group**

We have now set up an Internet discussion group facility. This will make a democratic and co-ordinated response to a draft PPG, for example, much easier to co-ordinate and enable us to cream the minds of the very great experience and skills within the group. Some discussion groups will be open to anyone, others will be restricted to UDG members and will require a password.

**Patrons**

The Board of Patrons appointed in 1992 had more than served its time and it was felt appropriate to review its composition. I am delighted that Alan Baxter, Terry Farrell, Peter Hall and John Worthington have agreed to serve for a further term, and welcome on board Les Sparks and Richard MacCormac. Many thanks to departing patrons for

their support, who I hope will continue to be involved with some of the Group's activities.

**Main Committee Meetings**

In order to more fully involve the whole membership, the main committee meetings now include the Regional Convenors (or their nominations). To make attendance easier, there are just four meetings a year which take place during the afternoon to facilitate travel. If your convenor is unable to attend, make sure that someone else does so!

This has been a busy year for the Group's existing programmes. The DETR funded a research programme into *Public Participation in Urban Design*, and with the project manager Nick Wates' guidance, a large number of events have now taken place and have been evaluated. (The first fruits of this are reported in this Quarterly.)

**The Regions**

These continue to stop-start. In the south-west John Biggs has harnessed much latent energy while many other areas lie dormant. If your area is quiet do contact your regional convenor to get things moving or pass the torch to others. Organising events is time consuming and new faces are always needed and very welcome.

**Study Tours**

There has been one overseas study tour during the last year to Montpelier and Nimes, which was a great success thanks to Sebastian Loew. Trips are planned this year to Italy in July and Barcelona in the autumn.

**Finance**

The only source of income is from membership subscriptions. While this year we have managed to balance the books, the new growth in the membership should in future years enable us to expand our activities further. A special account has been set up to fund a re-design of the Quarterly to maintain its position as a leading urban design journal.

**Events**

A wide range of events have been held ranging from lectures

to panel discussions. The Annual Conference on the theme of 'Public Spaces: People Places' held at the RICS in London was a huge success. Special thanks go to the London events committee and particularly Barry Sellers.

I began by saying the strength of the Group lay in its membership, and it's a fact that all of the events, publications and other activities of the Group are only possible by members giving of their time. I would like to thank everyone who has contributed over the last year, particularly my past and vice chairs Jon Rowland and Tony Lloyd-Jones, and also our Administrator and Secretary Susie Turnbull who manages to keep the wheels turning so smoothly.

Our new brochure invited prospective members to 'join the debate'. That debate has been conducted over the last year with great vigour and if any members have ideas or initiatives they would like to see the UDG carry forward, do please let me know.

#### Elections

Roger Evans was elected as Chair for two years and Terry Lloyd Jones for a similar period at the 1997 AGM, so continue in office. John Peverley was elected as Treasurer. Susie Turnbull was elected as Secretary.

#### Website/Email

Note that the UDG website is <http://www.udg.org.uk/>  
The UDG Email address is [admin@udg.org.uk](mailto:admin@udg.org.uk)

#### Treasurer's Report

by Arnold Linden

Simon Rendel began the year as Treasurer and following his death Arnold Linden took over those responsibilities for the rest of the financial year.

The office is still being run from Blewbury but we anticipate a move in the autumn when the 3 year lease expires and the landlord has indicated he would like the office for himself. Susie

has started to look around for an alternative office. We have spent about £1500 this year updating the office computer.

After a recent membership drive we are at last over the 1000 mark - a total of 1095 members. Further membership drives are planned for later this year.

The 1997/98 accounts follow. A different accountant has been used this year hence the accounts have been presented in a different way. A comparison with last year's accounts shows the income to be about the same but the expenditure has been less. Excluding tours income and expenditure, we are still below the VAT threshold.

#### Balance Sheet as at 28 February 1998

##### Fixed Assets

Computer at cost	1474.64
Less depreciation	368.64
	<u>1106.00</u>

##### Current Assets

Cash at bank (current account)	1345.96
Balance in COIF	12724.84
Cash float	50.00
Deposit (Boat Trip)	155.00
Loan - PPP	1500.00
	<u>15775.80</u>

##### Overall total

Represented by:	
Retained profit b/f	14561.70
Adjustment	1584.37
	<u>12977.33</u>

##### Surplus for year

	3904.47
<b>Overall total</b>	<b>£16881.80</b>

#### Income/Expenditure Summary for 1997/98

##### INCOME

##### Administration

Subscriptions	30,190
COIF Deposit	858
UDG:PPP	1,932
	<u>32,980</u>

##### Publications

Practice Index	5,045
Practice Profile	450
Sales	387
Adverts	480
Source Book	34
	<u>6,396</u>

##### Events

London Lectures	603
Annual Conference	1,447
Tours	6,124
	<u>8,552</u>

##### Overall Income

£47,928

##### EXPENDITURE

##### Administration

Salaries	5,641
Rent/Rates/Exp.	4,764
General admin	803
Post & stat.	999
Bank Charges	610
	<u>13,186</u>

##### Publications

UDQ Print	16,063
UDQ General	2,073
	<u>18,136</u>

##### Events

Annual Conf	1,392
Tours	5,122
	<u>6,514</u>

##### Publicity

New Brochure	4,796
Adverts/mailshot	1,314
	<u>6,110</u>

##### Regions

Expenses	77
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##### Overall Expenditure

£44,024

##### Surplus for year

£3,904

**Reclaiming the City**

Editor Andy Coupland  
E & FN Spon London 1997  
Paperback £29.95

This book on property development is valuable to all those currently involved with urban design, when 'brownfield' sites are on the political agenda. Its subtitle of *Mixed Use Development* is one of the pertinent tools for achieving a human and sustainable environment, that now overworked phrase. The authors believe that sustainable cities will need to use the car less and need higher densities.

From a perspective of urban renewal over the last three decades, techniques built up from precedent and careful direction are more likely to be successful in the future: working with the property market, reusing old buildings and heritage in its widest sense, and thoughtful new build design in context are the ways of making really worthwhile developments.

Mixed use principles of city change, development and reuse, have been promoted since Jane Jacobs wrote her classic (1960s) text, "fine grain and intensity of use", and previously in Government planning documents for new towns, but we have generally lacked guidance on how to set about it. This book draws on real research. Topics covered include the history of mixed uses as agents of sustainability, tourism and cities, the property market, urban design, crime, local policy and why developers build them.

This book is the result of research work by the School of Urban Development and Planning at the University of Westminster in London, which has given the book a well rounded view of the subject. Generally the chapters are the work of individual authors who have also referred to international research.

The public unease about the sameness of development, the 90s recession and many empty buildings, and the greater campaigning of professionals getting together, such as the



Richard MacCormac's proposals for redeveloping Spitalfields.

formation of the Urban Design Group, Urban Villages Forum, the new PPGs 1 and 6, and the English Partnerships Agency have strongly encouraged the mingling of uses, variety, green thinking etc, as a more definitive formula for sustainable neighbourhoods. The early examples of enlightened developers, realising the entertainment value of shopping, eg Camden Lock as a catalyst, the value of redundant buildings of quality construction and place, the reuse of northern mills and the industrial heritage, have acted as valuable precedents of what can be done, and have fuelled the research for this book.

The introductory and concluding chapters are the meat of the argument, sandwiching a range of excellent and recent case studies, both reuse and new build, which are elaborated in the text. It would have been even better to have them presented in a more consistent and comparative way, such as the amount of floor space stated for each case, tabulated against common criteria, so that cross comparisons could be made more easily. However it is always difficult to extract this with consistent diagrams and plans at the same scale for each case study. Many recently completed schemes have been tracked down, including North America (eg Seattle and Toronto), British (eg Birmingham, London, Halifax and Bristol) and some German examples. Conclusions are drawn, with full references listed

with each chapter. For this reviewer more plans and photographs would have been welcome.

Addressing the extent of mixed use and the right size of a successful development, is a vexed question. The authors state the advantages and disadvantages of mixed use in their introduction, that it is incapable of precise measurement and whether mixed uses should be in one large building, or whether it is satisfactory to have a number of mixed uses on separate sites within a local area. New schemes tend not to be a copy of the previous ones, due to extent, cultural geography, extant buildings and site circumstances. An enlightened developer and local authority, the appropriate market context and the ability to spot the sticking points early on, are the elements of a successful mixed use development. Area improvements can provide a vision, with "something to show on the ground", increasing confidence in an area, so that more activities are drawn in.

The chapter on mixed use development and the property market is particularly useful in communicating to architects and designers, setting out the 'engine' for property development. All too easily designers do not understand that schemes cannot come about by the magic of designs on paper, without the essential market appraisal for development worked over by professional valuation and

estate expertise during the design and drawing up phases. Comparative investment opportunities are also explained distinguishing between primary and secondary property, the latter fitting more easily with mixed use development. Recent property reports are analysed concluding that this form of development can proceed in the 90s within a context of cautious optimism. This can help meet part of the "National housing shortage" by the year 2016, together with the conversion of secondary offices into housing and hotels and the "loft movement", particularly in the capital, which provides current opportunities for mixed use development.

The authors conclude that "mixed development is no panacea, but its contribution to improve towns and cities should not be underestimated". This is what we as different developers, planners, architects and urban designers want to hear, who strive for positive change in our urban fabric, to make towns and cities more liveable. #

Peter Eley

**Towns and Cities:  
Competing for Survival**

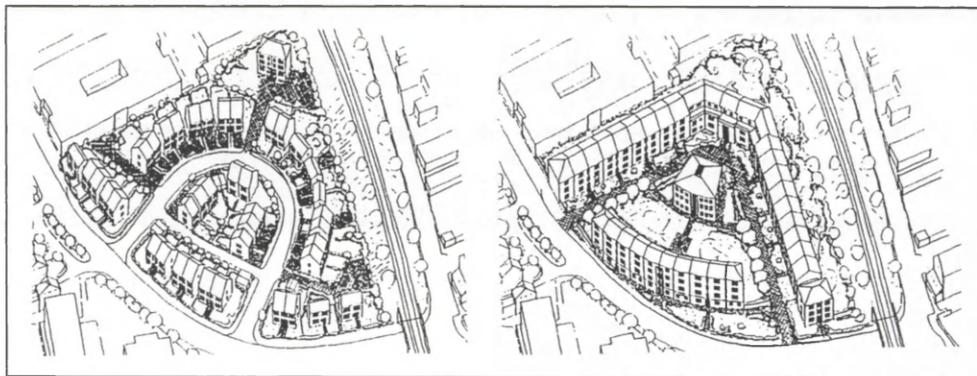
Angus McIntosh  
E & FN Spon  
London 1997 £27.50

It's been a long time since Donald Appleyard observed that books on urban design never have any costs in them and books on property development never have any illustrations, but there is still quite a gap in the market - and between the two perspectives.

Towns and Cities has a lot of illustrations - aerial views of out-of-town centres, parking lots, motorway intersections and cute little urban villages all new and shiny and ready to move into. Illustrations that, differently captioned and set on the page could have been published by Ed Ruscha, except they're of Birmingham (UK) and Chandlers Ford rather than LA.

This book ought to have appealed to me. It starts with a broad attack on planning as having got wholly the wrong emphasis and having never really understood the reality of real estate. It has enough tables of land use change and new patterns of development to provide Martin Pawley with a few months' columns in the AJ pointing out that the future has arrived while we were looking at the street furniture.

The problem for me is that the great engine that McIntosh worships as driving the seemingly inevitable property development is close cousin of Moloch "the relentless onward march of technology" whose hymns chorus several chapters. But as designers (should) have known since the heady days of Chris Jones, Nigel Cross and David Elliott in the Design Discipline at the Open University in the 1970s, there is simply no such thing. There are people individually or collectively as corporations or even nations, sometimes openly, sometimes behind closed doors, sometimes deliberately, sometimes accidentally, making choices about what is permissible and what is desirable and what this "technology" is and does. To genuflect so absolutely before



Two options in the Llewelyn Davies study  
*Left:* UDP policies giving net density of 232 habitable rooms/hectare.

*Right:* No parking provision included resulting in a net density of 358 habitable rooms/hectare.

this imaginary, indivisible, unstoppable juggernaut in the way McIntosh does is no way to design - though it may be good for the profits of property developers. #

Bob Jarvis

**Sustainable Residential Quality**

Llewelyn-Davies in association with Urban Investment Partnership  
London Research Centre and Savills  
£48 available from LPAC

This report commissioned jointly by LPAC, GoL and the DETR, is a contribution to the debate on how and where to accommodate the additional households expected in London and the South-East in the next twenty years. It differs from most studies of this kind in that it is not limited to quantity: it aims at showing that substantial numbers of dwellings accessible to public transport can be provided while maintaining housing quality and enhancing the environment.

The report is divided into three main parts plus two annexes. The first part is the justification for the rest of the study: it analyses the future housing demand figures to give an indication of what kind of housing will be needed in terms of size, tenure type and

accessibility. It establishes six strategic principles to ensure sustainability and quality: intensifying the use of urban land and buildings, encouraging long term quality in design, contributing to urban regeneration, maximising pedestrian access to facilities and public transport, reducing the need to own cars and enhancing the quality of the environment. This part concludes with six *Key Design Principles*, a two page illustrated spread which should be reproduced and distributed widely to *anyone* involved in residential development.

The second and the substantial part of the report looks at the potential for new housing and introduces the concept of Ped-shed: "the areas within 10 minutes walking distance of a town centre which offer a range of amenities, services and employment opportunities as well as access to public transport". Research indicates that a substantial number of new dwellings can be provided on small sites within and outside Ped-sheds, through backland development and the conversion of houses into flats, and environmental quality can be improved at the same time. But planning policies and standards may have to be adapted to allow these developments which must be design led. Therefore the third part of the report which suggests changes in planning policies is more of an exhortation to change attitudes: planners should be more pro-

active and more flexible at the same time. This chapter should join the Key Design Principles in their widest distribution.

In order to show that the report's recommendations are not airy-fairy ideas that cannot be implemented, Appendix 2 presents 48 design exercises which look at a variety of real situations and in each case evaluate their potential for housing under three options: compliance with current UDP standards, secondly enhanced design and reduced car parking and thirdly nil parking. The architecture suggested may be questioned but otherwise this provides a fascinating catalogue of urban design schemes and a very useful source of information.

The report was prepared for London and the research is based on the capital but the information and recommendations have a more universal application. They correspond to a number of current concerns and deserve a much wider circulation. Perhaps a commercial publisher could produce an edition in a handier format (the report is A3 landscape) and at a more accessible price. #

Sebastian Loew

## Modern Architecture in Historic Cities

Sebastian Loew  
Routledge London 1997 £50

The subtitle for the book is "Policy, planning and building in contemporary France". Many of us have visited and passed through the Republic onto places further south, but as far as the subject matter and content of this book are concerned we are generally indeed very ignorant.

The author is very well qualified in writing this book as he is bilingual, born in France, and has lectured at Universities in both countries, and is expertly curious about the differences and similarities of the two cultures of Britain and France. It provides a full background to the history of planning and heritage in France, the control of new construction, information about clients and their agents, and participants in control of development. The extensive bibliography lists the relevant architectural criticism and urban design texts from both French and English speaking countries.

The whole apparatus of how another country works in the areas of building and planning is gathered together here for practitioners concerning the legislation, how it is implemented, the participants in the process, together with building control and the making of buildings. The book is also valuable for professionals world wide, to look again at their own practises by understanding the practises of another country, without necessarily copying foreign ones.

The methodology used in structuring the book is an empirical study based on the analysis of case studies, interviews and participant observation within an operational context of case studies in a variety of urban situations, from a limited range of small towns to large cities, including Pontoise, Quimper, Chartres, Lille and Paris.

The comparisons that can be made with French practice reflect the concern which has taken place in Britain regarding

the rôles of planners in design control and their relationships with architects, and the involvement for better or worse by Prince Charles. In the last twenty years France has had a deliberate policy in the promotion of modern architecture, resulting in some spectacular schemes such as the Grand Projets in Paris, and has been much bolder in their choice of, and architects working in, a modern idiom for Government schemes within the case studies selected.

The text is technical, dense and detailed, but set out clearly. There are useful conclusions at the end of each main chapter, and the best way to read them is to start with these, and work one's way back through the more technical descriptions. The most valuable part of the book are the conclusions and lessons where France and Britain are compared. In France, planners are not the only professional advisers in design matters, and the 'ABF', the locale architecte des Batiment de France's role is important as part of an institution unique to France. Legislation and plans are much less flexible, scope for negotiation is much narrower, particularly on aesthetic issues. The rôle of the public sector as patron, leader and developer is not part of the British scene, whereas in France frequently the developer and the equivalent authority planners are both part of the public sector and have similar objectives.

The book is timely and required reading for English speaking architects and planners who are already working and practising in France, and for the serious European and world wide professionals entering competitions there, and those working with a local French practice. #

*Peter Eley*

## Creating Neighbourhoods and Places in the Built Environment

Edited by David Chapman  
E & FN Spon £17.99

This book, edited and partly written by David Chapman, Head of the School of Planning at UCE, Birmingham, is one of a series of textbooks, aimed at undergraduate students on built environment courses, but also relevant to other disciplines and postgraduate students.

*Creating Neighbourhoods* is highly structured, containing ten chapters under three main headings of The Development of Settlements, The Qualities of Places and Creating People-Friendly Places.

Apart from the first and fifth chapters, all others are written wholly or jointly by the Editor and his staff at the University of Central England. So is there a consistent message throughout this book, related to creating neighbourhoods and places? In fact, no one theme emerges from nearly 250 pages, mainly text but some diagrams and illustrations. However there is a strong emphasis on the social, political and economic factors that create neighbourhoods.

As a textbook will it be helpful to students? It is difficult not to feel that the book's apparent complexity, and lack of clear direct visual language, makes the student's work harder than it need be. Each chapter states specific objectives which students should be able to understand, recognise, or identify and there is much interesting and worthwhile information, even if one has to dig hard to find it.

The chapter on Nature and Settlement by John Wright includes several good plans of natural features and urban forms; in particular those of Valletta, New York, Passau and Bern. The text on climate is also good, even though the sketches showing climate and house design are very weak. Settlements and Growth by Peter Larkham has interesting diagrams showing population movement and change and the

descriptions of the Moorish town, and post-war Nuremburg are good, although photographs or 3D sketches as well as plans would have been welcome.

The chapter on Variety and Vitality by Martin Bradshaw, former Director of the Civic Trust, is scholarly, and his piece on 'The European Lesson' should be particularly valuable for students and it compensates for the rather North American orientation of the book as a whole.

Environment and Space by the Editor and Les Sparks is enhanced by lively sketches and this section emphasises the essential lessons of townscape and urban design. However surely mention should have been made of the work of Patrick Geddes in discussing surveys.

The concluding chapter, Making Connections by the Editor, makes some very good points which might well have been included in the introduction, eg "The idea of neighbourhood in planning has been very influential . . . Their plans for integrated mixed use areas where most facilities are within walking distance are being echoed today, with ideas of compact cities and urban villages . . . But the idea of neighbourhoods as entities . . . is not solely what we mean here. Rather we are concerned with qualities . . . which the term 'neighbourhoods' evokes". All fair comment; but what lets this book down is the format, perhaps due to the publisher, in which alternating white and grey pages, the latter showing examples, do not make easy reading for students. #

*Derek Abbott*

### **The Connected City: A New Approach to Making Cities Work**

Robert Cowan  
Urban Initiatives 1997 £10

Cities continue to fascinate those who try to understand them and want to turn them into better places. The Chicago school came up with the organic city, Ebenezer Howard with the garden city; Sant'Elia, Archigram and others conceived utopian cities; social reformers saw the city as the source of all social ills and conversely, Donnison proposed 'the good city'. Planners designed rational cities contained by green belts, economists talked about world cities and edge cities and those preoccupied with the future of the planet started to demand sustainable cities.

Robert Cowan's 44 page pamphlet goes a step further. The latest state of the art is 'the connected city'. In his usual concise and clear style he encapsulates the ideas and practices of establishing connections between physical city fragments as well as between the professions trying to make cities work. Quoting great minds of the 20<sup>th</sup> century who have loved and loathed cities - among them Jane Jacobs, Colin Ward and Lewis Mumford - he concludes with Bill Hillier that 'good space is used space'.

Howard's three magnets, city, country, city-country, have become process, product and structure for Kelvin Campbell. Cowan sees a pendulum swinging madly between these poles to the delight or dismay of the regeneration industry. Instead, the interests of the city are reached in a holistic approach which aims to balance these three poles by using forces of economic and social change creatively. Visions of sustainable development hatched at the Earth Summit conference and translated into Agenda 21 projects at the local level are seen as vehicles which enable communities to conceive visions of a sustainable future. Inspired by de Bono's four types of conflict resolution (fighting, problem

solving, negotiation and creative collaboration), Cowan moves from such a static end state vision of sustainability - which would mean dead cities - to a process of active collaboration enabling city stakeholders to adapt continuously to changing needs.

The real urban designers are those who shape the city in carrying out their jobs, not those attending conferences. The latter would do better to learn by doing, drawing on (albeit little explained) techniques such as 'future search' and 'open space'. Experiments like 'Imagine Chicago' or 'Places for People' in the UK and others listed in the five page appendix are all empowering people to achieve things for themselves and their communities which are beyond the reach of public sector initiatives. Instead of creating non-urban, non-rural nowheres, the successful cities of the information age will accommodate overlapping networks of people who organise themselves through connections and co-operation at different scales within the city region and far beyond while recreating a public realm. Gated fragments of development, housing as well as workplaces and commercial premises supervised by CCTV disconnect the connecting city networks and places where people pass through and carry out their activities. Step by step reconnection of an urban fabric, built on history and memory, can occur by creating mixed uses, better access, open street frontages, increased densities around traffic nodes, concentration of activities and public spaces surrounded by civic buildings. These connections have to be established with the full participation of those using them. A newly created "connected city network" intends to disseminate information on places where people have been able to establish successful urban connections.

So far, the pamphlet is informative, mildly polemic and presented in a lively manner

with good illustrations. However, when it comes to the 'action plan for a connected city or neighbourhood' disappointment sets in. Here one is strongly reminded of a conventional proscriptive planning tool. The action plan enumerates stages in a linear fashion and lists do's and don'ts in three checklists of connections of people, places and movement respectively. A matrix shows how elements of these checklists can be placed against symptoms and people's responses in preparation of a concrete action plan. This approach is very familiar and - just like the criticised conferences - often ineffective. What a pity, especially as the pamphlet sets out as a conceptual instrument, uncluttered by case studies, explaining in essence what a connected city is meant to be. The step between this exciting vision and how it can be put into practice by the many stakeholders referred to remains to be seen. #

*Judith Ryser*

### **British Town Planning and Urban Design: Principles and Policies**

Eleanor Smith Morris,  
Longmans 1997 £20.99

Despite the constant bombardment from publishers with 'introductory' texts on planning, I started this book with some considerable interest as few (so far) have attempted to make the important link between planning policy and its physical manifestation as urban design. In this context the book clearly fits within a wider trend driven by the re-emergence in the 1990s of the physical dimension of planning in the UK.

The introduction to the book confirms this, stating that "This presentation of the evolution of British town planning takes the physical planning approach, as against a social, economic or policy planning approach". In doing this, the author argues the work merely reflects a return to the roots of planning in Britain and that even though over the last 50 years social, economic and planning policy have come to the fore, they have always been underpinned by physical planning implementation.

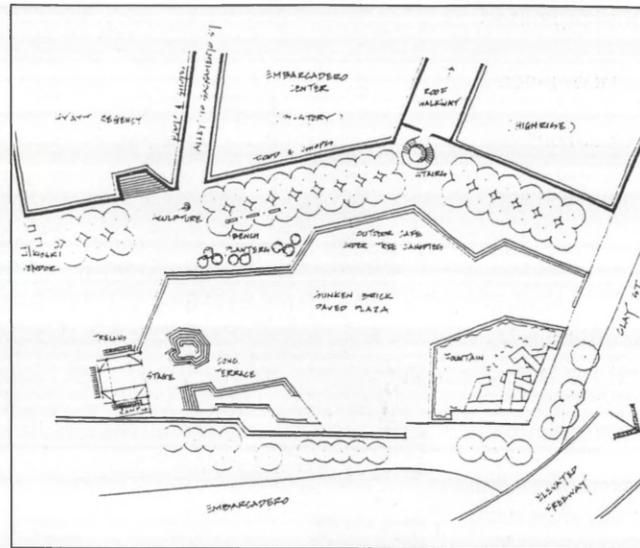
Hence, the author takes the perhaps contentious view that "a plan for an area is a predominantly physical process which, in its development, pays attention to but is not dominated by current economic and social forces. In this statement lies the book's strength, but also perhaps its chief weakness, in that although this historical treatment of planning's physical dimension represents a valuable addition to the stable of introductory planning texts, the resulting low emphasis on wider statutory planning process may leave students with a slightly skewed view of the planning remit. This, however, is a minor criticism, because the perspective of the book is clearly established at the start and the reader reads from that perspective. The book is split into four parts, the first taking the reader from antiquity to the impact of the modernist utopian dream. Part two examines the post-war

consensus on town planning, with a particular emphasis on the new towns programme and on attempts at large scale spatial planning into the 1970s. The third part of the book interrupts the historical flow with an examination in greater detail of some of the physical processes and techniques of post war urban renewal, design and conservation. Finally, part four brings us up to the present day, taking the reader through planning policy evolution in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, to the re-emergence of urban design in the 1990s, before briefly focusing on the transformation of planning into the twenty-first century.

As an introductory text, the book covers much ground and nothing in great detail. Nonetheless, the text is accessible and well illustrated by numerous little drawings. This is therefore a useful book which would make a valuable contribution to any introductory course on British town planning as one of the basket of such books now available.

Within the context of a planning course that explicitly attempts to make the link between planning and urban design (such as that on which I teach) an introductory book of this nature is particularly welcome. The book will also help students coming from a more purely design perspective, such as architects, to make clear and desirable connections between their disciplines and the scope, impact and potentially positive rôle of town planning. #

*Matthew Carmona*



Site plan of Justin Herman Plaza, San Francisco.

### People Places Design Guidelines for Urban Open Space

2nd Edition Edited by Clare Cooper Marcus and Carolyn Francis  
Van Nostrand Reinhold £29.95

The editors of and contributors to this book are all from California and it is therefore not surprising that their concerns are mostly North American and more specifically, Californian. They acknowledge that they are dealing with that particular climatic, physical and cultural environment and are not trying to recreate the European piazza. Neither are they interested in the debate surrounding the decline in public life. Their aim is to recognise the character of the American public open spaces, understand the way that people use them and make recommendations for their improvement through design, according to criteria they have developed through their studies. Since Europe in general and Britain in particular, are far from fulfilling their own romantic image of Siena's piazzas around each corner and share a number of characteristics with North America - for instance the increase in the number of privatised spaces or the neglect of public spaces - the book has clear resonance in this country as well.

In order to achieve their aim, the authors have classified open spaces in categories: neighbourhood park, minipark,

urban plaza, campus outdoor space, elderly housing outdoor space, child care open space and hospital outdoor space. Whilst the last four have specific needs, it is not always clear how the first three differ. In addition, each of the latter has been subdivided into several additional categories (street plaza, corporate foyer, urban oasis, transit foyer, etc), not unreasonable for the researcher but not particularly helpful for the reader. Nevertheless the book is clearly organised and covers a substantial amount of ground: each chapter includes a historic introduction, a literature review, design recommendations, a bibliography and case studies, but these sections are adapted to the need of the category considered. For instance, neighbourhood parks includes a discussion on their bleak present but possible better future through specialisation.

The design recommendations are detailed and include comments on what works or does not work in particular situations; it is perhaps unavoidable to have a certain amount of repetition but these sections would have benefited from more illustrations. The case studies are better illustrated and include a section on users, and another on successful and unsuccessful features. At the end of each chapter a Design Review Checklist includes a series of questions designers and their clients should ask when looking at a scheme. This reflects the purpose of the book as a

working tool: few people will read the text sequentially from cover to cover; mostly practitioners, users or clients will refer to the particular type they are concerned with.

This revised version of *People Places* reflects changes in society and in regulations since the book was first published in 1990, particularly in terms of personal safety and accessibility for all, both of which are considered throughout. In addition the authors have included a final chapter on their methodology of post-occupancy evaluation: to understand what is or what is not successful, direct and systematic observation, recording and analysis are needed. These used to be undertaken by various public bodies in Britain but sadly the last date quoted for such a study is 1970. The methodology described offers a ready made project for an academic department and should be taken up. It is the most replicable part of the book. #

*Sebastian Loew*

# Architecture Foundation Roadshow

Sebastian Loew

A series of "design workshops" organised by the Architecture Foundation took place during March at nine different locations in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham.

The areas included an under-used public open space at Wormwood Scrubs, the underside of Hammersmith Flyover, a stretch of river frontage and the vibrant but declining market in North End Road. The aim was to get local people involved in the planning and design of parts of the public realm in their neighbourhood. A firm of architects was assigned to each area and their job was to interpret in design terms the wishes expressed by the community at the workshops.

The resulting designs were exhibited in the Kings Mall Shopping Centre (central Hammersmith) throughout May ending in a one-day symposium, at which the results of the exercise were reviewed. The discussion was based on topics such as town centres, brownfield sites, riverside strategies, parks and open spaces and raised general issues well beyond the boundaries of Hammersmith and Fulham. The local Council was involved mostly as an enabler: the sites were chosen after discussion with Councillors and officers, and the latter were available to provide information and advice during the workshops. However it had to be made clear that the events were independently organised and not run by the Council.

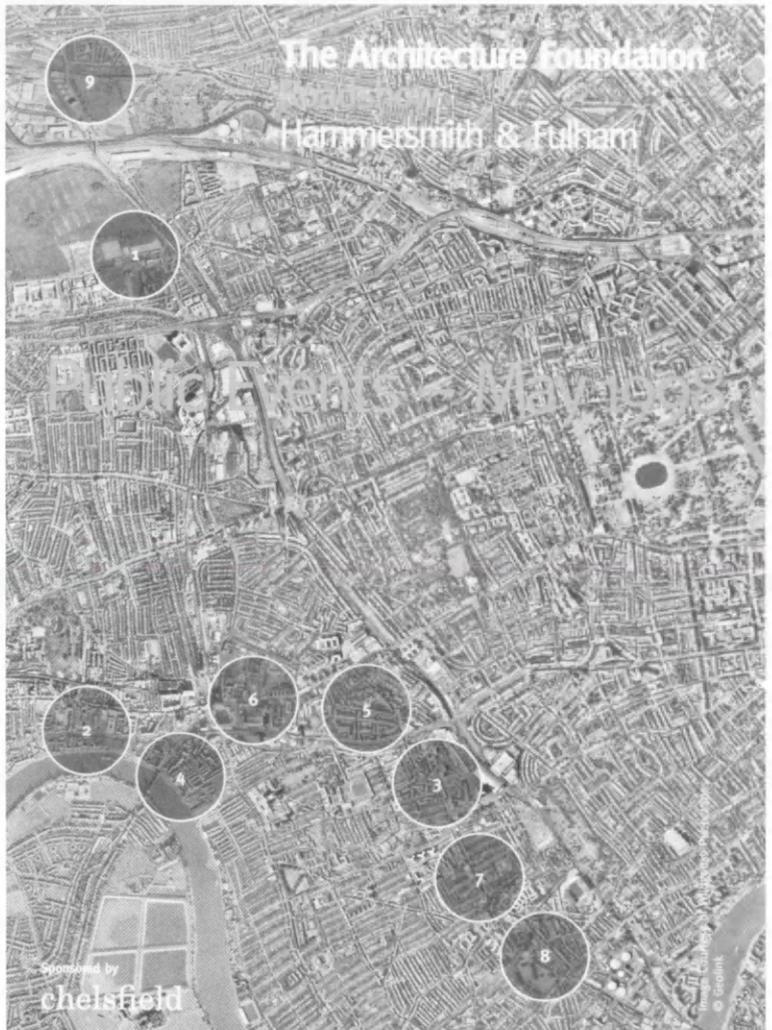
The designs were the subject of an exhibition in the Kings Mall Shopping Centre (central Hammersmith) running throughout May, ending in an evening debate at the town hall at which the results of the exercise were reviewed and more general issues were raised, well beyond the boundaries of Hammersmith and Fulham. Speakers included local councillor Sally Powell, who is keen on implementing at least some of the proposals, Lord Rogers, Edward Jones, Sandra Morris and Sir Norman Foster.

### North End Workshop

Each workshop had a moderator whose function was to facilitate the discussions and to ensure that all those present were heard. I was invited to fulfil this role for the North End Road workshop which took place on a Saturday from 10 to 4.30 at the Fulham central library. The architectural firm chosen for the areas was Geoff Kahane & Associates.



Top: Workshop on Woodmans Mews/Wormwood Scrubs.  
Left: Riverside Walk Workshop.  
Below: Location of nine workshop sites.



Previously, the Architectural Foundation had worked with a local school with the hope that parents would be interested to attend; the market area had been leafleted and the local press had advertised the events. Before opening the doors for business, we prepared two "comments walls", one about the past and another about the future, hoping that people would write their memories of the area and/or their wishes for change. A slide show prepared by the Architectural Foundation was available but not used. The programme included a general discussion in the morning, smaller issue-based discussions in the afternoon, and a general meeting at the end.

The room assigned for the event was not easy to find and the library itself was not immediately near the market; in addition Saturday is the busiest day for the traders. These may be the reasons for the disappointing attendance: at most a total of 25 people turned up but never more than 5 locals at one time, and quite a few of these were part of organisation (councillors or former councillors, local amenity societies, legal aid). Some did not participate in the discussion: either they took a questionnaire and left or wrote something on the walls, talked to one of the organisers and left. Nevertheless from about midday onwards we managed to establish a discussion which lasted until the end of the event at about 4.15. Although the participants changed, the discussion continued uninterrupted and those that were there were more than willing to express their opinions and discuss them. They all showed a genuine concern and a wish to improve the area.

A number of issues were discussed but they were not necessarily those foreseen by the local authority and their consultants, Ove Arup. For instance, contrary to expectations, the traffic on North End Road was not seen as much of a problem and neither was parking. Mostly people were concerned by the decline of the market and the tattiness of the environment. The Council was repeatedly blamed for most of the problems and for wasting money, for instance on pedestrianisation and environmental improvements which were seen as ill-thought out and counter productive. The fact that the workshop was not a Council event had to be repeated many times during the day to avoid pointless Council-bashing. On certain issues there was consensus and they were all design related: standard stalls, bins, lighting and other street furniture could be incorporated to achieve more discipline in the market; a better image could attract better shops to the area. Because none of the participants were market traders, a second meeting at which only these were invited took place ten days

later: some 15 of them attended. The event was clearly dominated by the leader of their organisation: his comments differed from those of the residents except in the attacks on the Council. The lack of parking in the surrounding area was seen as a problem. The traders welcomed the idea of standard stalls and were as keen as the residents to improve the image of the market though they did not believe it lacked discipline.

In addition, there was a high response to questionnaires handed out to traders and shop keepers and mailed to a residents association. It was a pity that the various groups were not together at the same meeting as a clearer image of their differences and points in common might have emerged. Nevertheless the design team managed to extract ideas to follow up and Geoff Kahane produced an imaginative scheme, which includes traffic calming measures and an improved image for the market including permanent stalls which can be folded in the evening and could be financed by advertising.

#### Other Workshops

Attendance at other workshops varied: the Riverside Walk one was the most successful from the numbers point of view (around 65 people) and as a result discussions were focused on key issues; similarly the workshop on Gwendwr Gardens was well attended and managed to shed light on local concerns. Two facts may have helped in these cases: the active support of the local residents associations which brought their people out; and the clarity of the issues involved, security in the case of the gardens and the opportunities offered by the river frontage in the other case. On the other hand, the workshop concerned with the underside of Hammersmith Flyover was poorly attended, perhaps because it is difficult to identify a 'community' directly involved with it.

The final discussion at Hammersmith Town Hall was very well attended and exuded enthusiasm; there was a feeling that the audience was genuinely interested in what was being offered. Each exhibited scheme had been commented upon by a number of locals and a parallel exhibition of children's projects was a great success.

In his closing remarks, the Director of Environment Peter Bishop indicated that the Council had learned very useful things from the roadshow and could see an urban design strategy for the Borough emerging from it. If this was to become a reality it would validate all the efforts of the Architecture Foundation.

#### Conclusions

Public participation in design of the public realm is not easy to achieve, even with the best intentions. The Architecture Foundation Roadshow will move to Tower Hamlets in the autumn and undoubtedly the team has learned a lot from the Hammersmith experience. From my limited involvement in one of the workshops, I would suggest that some of the lessons may be:

- Choice of sites: there must be an existing local concern in relation to the site, preferably focusing on a number of clear issues.
- Advance preparation is essential: local groups have to be identified and discussions with them should take place in advance. House to house leafleting and local press interest help but do not ensure people's involvement.
- Comments: walls on which people can write their comments, memories or wishes can help involve those that are too shy to participate in a general discussion; the written comments can also be used to focus the discussion. Questionnaires can serve similar purposes.
- Design Ideas: a presentation by the design team of various design options may help focus the discussion, although it would have to be emphasised that these are just preliminary ideas.

At the end, the success of the Roadshow will have to be measured in relation to achievements, which to a large extent depend on the actions taken by the Council. If Hammersmith and Fulham manage to implement at least part of the design proposals and these are seen to correspond to the community's wishes, the balance will be positive. It may not seem so, but even this modest objective is far from easy to achieve. #

*Sebastian Loew*

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Fax: 0118 931 0268  
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Fax: 01420 477346  
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AADipCons ARB RTPI IHBC

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Tel: 0171 603 1618  
Fax: 0171 603 5783  
Contact: Asad A Shaheed BA Arch MArch

Area and site planning, town centre renewal, waterfront regeneration, traffic calming studies, conceptual design, visual impact assessment.

**Hyder Consulting Ltd**

29 Bressenden Place  
Victoria London SW1E 5DZ  
Tel: 0171 316 6000  
Fax: 0171 316 6138  
Contact: Phil Bonds BA Dip MA (UD) MLI

Urban design and regeneration expertise within a multi-disciplinary infrastructure engineering consultancy. Specialists in strategic plans, streetscape and public open space design and implementation, impact assessments, consultation and action planning, introducing legibility, connectivity and sustainability. Related services include landscape architecture, ecology, transport and economic planning, highway, structural and traffic engineering. HCL operates 80 offices in 23 countries.

**Landscape Design Associates**

17 Minster Precincts  
Peterborough PE1 1XX  
Tel: 01733 310471  
Fax: 01733 53661  
Oxford: Tel: 01865 887050  
Fax: 01865 887055  
Contact: Roger Greenwood Dip LA ALI MILAM  
Robert Tregay BSc (Hons) Dip LD FLI

Urban and landscape design, landscape planning, development masterplans, environmental strategies, urban regeneration, town and village studies. Feasibility to implementation.

**Derek Latham & Company**

St. Michael's, Queen St  
Derby DE1 3SU  
Tel: 01332 365777  
Fax: 01332 290314  
Contact: Derek Latham Dip Arch RIBA DipTP MRTPI

Specialists in the 'Creative Reuse of Land and Buildings', the Company brings its planning, landscape and architectural expertise to highlight both urban and rural opportunities in sensitive areas of change. Town and City Centres, National Parks, Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, combining the new with the old. Master planning, development proposals, E.I.A.s.

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6 Southernhay West  
Exeter EX1 1JG  
Tel: 01392 210428  
Fax: 01392 413290  
Also in London tel: 0171 229 6469  
Contact: Andrew Leithgoe DipLA FLI

Landscape Assessment, Planning, Design and Maintenance. Hard and soft Landscape solutions. Experienced in working with Architects and Engineers. Clients include PSA/DoE, Local Authorities, Property Institutions, Universities, Private clients.

**Gordon Lewis Associates Limited**

Westgate Court, Westgate St  
Cardiff CF1 1DD  
Tel: 01222 231401  
Fax: 01222 399287  
Contact: Gordon Lewis BSc, BArch, RIBA, FFB

Architecture, planning and urban design. Public and private sector. Development strategies, business plans and public realm studies. Business park, residential and health estate planning.

**Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners Ltd**

14 Regent's Wharf, All Saints St  
London N1 9RL  
Tel: 0171 837 4477  
Fax: 0171 837 2277  
(also in Newcastle upon Tyne)  
Contact: Nicholas Thompson BA BPI MA (UrbDes) MRTPI and Iain Rhind BA MPhil DipUD (Dist) MRTPI

Independent planning, urban design and economics consultancy, combining analysis with creativity. Masterplans: all sites, all uses. Residential schemes. Urban regeneration. Town centres. Visual appraisal. Conservation.

**Livingstone Eyre Associates**

35-42 Charlotte Road  
London EC2A 3PD  
Tel: 0171 739 1445  
Fax: 0171 729 2986  
Contact: Georgina Livingstone

The design of the space between buildings in urban or rural contexts; master planning and feasibility studies; rehabilitation and regeneration of the urban landscape; building the places we design.

**Llewelyn-Davies**

Brook House  
2 Torrington Place  
London WC1E 7HN  
Tel: 0171 637 0181  
Fax: 0171 637 8740  
Contact: David Walton BA MRTPI FIHT

Architecture, planning, urban design, development and masterplanning; urban regeneration, town centre and conservation studies; urban design briefs, landscape and public realm strategies.

**David Lock Associates Ltd**

50 North Thirteenth Street  
Central Milton Keynes  
Milton Keynes MK9 3BP  
Tel: 01908 666276  
Fax: 01908 605747  
Contact: Will Cousins DipArch DipUD RIBA

Strategic planning studies, public inquiries, urban regeneration projects, master plans, area development framework plans, environment statements.

**Lyons + Sleeman + Hoare**

Nero Brewery  
Cricket Green  
Hartley Wintney  
Hampshire RG27 8QA  
Tel: 01252 844144  
Fax: 01252 844800  
Contact: Andrew Aldridge BA Dip Arch RIBA or Colin Darby BSc DipTP Dip Urban Design MRTPI

Architecture, planning, master planing, urban design - commercial practice covering broad spectrum of work - particularly design of buildings and spaces in urban and historic contexts.

**MacCormac Jamieson Prichard**

9 Heneage Street  
Spitalfields, London E1 5LJ  
Tel: 0171 377 9262  
Fax: 0171 247 7854  
Contact: David Prichard BSc DipArch (Lond) RIBA

Master-planning, development briefs, urban regeneration studies, land use studies, rural settlements. Planning in historic and sensitive sites.

**Andrew Martin Associates**

Croxton's Mill, Little Waltham  
Chelmsford, Essex CM3 3PJ  
Tel: 01245 361611  
Fax: 01245 362423  
Contact: Andrew Martin MAUD DipTP (Distinction) FRICS FRTP

Strategic, local and master planning, project co-ordination and facilitation, development briefs and detailed studies, historic buildings and conservation. Comprehensive and integrated planning of new and expanded communities, including housing, employment, shopping, recreation and leisure, transport and environmental considerations.

**Willie Miller Urban Design & Planning**

20 Victoria Crescent Road  
Glasgow G12 9DD  
Tel: 0141 339 5228  
Fax: 0141 357 4642  
Contact: Willie Miller Dip TP Dip UD MRTPI

Conceptual, strategic and development work in urban design, masterplanning, urban regeneration, environmental strategies, design and development briefs, townscape audits, public realm studies, open space networks, conservation, public art strategies, tourism and leisure projects.

**NFA**

Falcon House,  
202 Old Brompton Rd  
London SW5 0BU  
Tel: 0171 259 2223 Fax: 0171 259 2242  
Also at Bangkok, Beijing, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, LA, Melbourne, Paris, Singapore, Vietnam  
Contact: Peter Verity MArch MCP (Penn) RIBA

Architectural, Urban Design, Planning, Landscaping services internationally. Development Planning, Urban Regeneration, New Communities, Waterfront Regeneration, Tourism Planning and Design.

**Terence O'Rourke pic**

Everdene House  
Wessex Fields, Deansleigh Road  
Bournemouth BH7 7DU  
Tel: 01202 421142  
Fax: 01202 430055  
Contact: Terence O'Rourke DipArch (Oxford) DipTP RIBA MRTPI

Planning and Design Consultancy specialising in land use planning, landscape architecture, ecology, environmental assessment and urban design. Development Briefs, Master Plans, Urban Regeneration, Town Studies, Conservation and Public Realm Strategies.

**PRP Architects**

82 Bridge Road Hampton Court  
East Molesey Surrey KT8 9HF  
Tel: 0181 481 8100  
Fax: 0181 481 8111  
Contact: Peter Phippen OBE DipArch (RWA) RIBA

Social and private housing development, special needs housing, including housing for elderly people, mentally handicapped and single people, healthcare, urban redevelopment.

**Anthony Reddy Associates**

The Malt House  
Grand Canal Quay  
Dublin 2 Ireland  
Tel: 00 353 1 670 4800  
Fax: 00 353 1 670 4801  
Contact: Anthony Reddy BArch FRIAI RIBA DipPm MAPM / Paul Duignan BArch FRIAI

Architecture, planning, urban design, project management. Project types: Masterplanning, Development Frameworks, Urban Regeneration Projects, Town Centre Renewal, Residential, Business Parks.

**Rothermel Thomas**

14-16 Cowcross Street  
London EC1M 6DR  
Tel: 0171 490 4255  
Fax: 0171 490 1251  
Contact: James Thomas BA (Arch) DipTP FRIBA FRTPi FRSA FIMgt

Urban design, conservation, historic buildings, planning, architecture. Expert witness at planning inquiries.

**Jon Rowland Urban Design**

65 Hurst Rise Road  
Oxford OX2 9HE  
Tel: 01865 863642  
Fax: 01865 863099  
Contact: Jon Rowland

Urban design, urban regeneration, development frameworks, site appraisals, town centre studies, design guidance, public participation and master planning.

**Shepherd Epstein and Hunter**

14-22 Ganton Street  
London W1V 1LB  
Tel: 0171 734 0111  
Fax: 0171 434 2690  
Contact: George Georgiou

The provision of services related to architecture, planning, landscape architecture and the CDM regulations.

**Skidmore, Owings & Merrill Inc.**

46 Berkeley Street, London W1X 6NT  
Tel: 0171 930 9711  
Fax: 0171 930 9108  
Also Chicago, New York, Washington, San Francisco, LA, Hong Kong  
Contact: Roger Kallman

International multi-disciplinary practice. Master Planning, Landscape Architecture, Civil Engineering and Urban Design. Project types: urban regeneration schemes, business park master plans, university campus design, transportation planning. Associated services: environmental impact assessments, design guidelines, infrastructure strategies.

**Symonds Travers Morgan Environment**

24-30 Holborn London EC1N 2LX  
Tel: 0171 421 2000  
Fax: 0171 421 2222  
Also at Reading: 01734 573330  
Contact: Marie Burns BA (Hons) MAUD Dip LA ALI

Multidisciplinary Practice of urban designers, landscape architects, planners, ecologists, noise and air pollution expertise - undertaking environmental and visual impact assessments, traffic calming studies; town centre and waterfront schemes, contamination remediation, new build housing and estate refurbishment.

**Taylor Young Urban Design**

The Studio, 51 Brookfield  
Cheadle Cheshire SK8 1DQ  
Tel: 0161 491 4530  
Fax: 0161 491 0972  
Contact: Stephen Gleave MA DipTP (Dist) DipUD MRTPI

Urban Design, Planning and Development. Public and Private Sectors. Town studies, housing, commercial, distribution, health and transportation are current projects. Specialist in Urban Design Training.

**John Thompson and Partners**

77 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6BP  
Tel: 0171 251 5135  
Fax: 0171 251 5136  
Contact: John Thompson MA DipArch RIBA

Multidisciplinary practice, working throughout the UK and Europe, specialising in architecture, urban design and masterplanning, urban regeneration, new settlements and community consultation; addressing the problems of physical, social and economic regeneration through collaborative interdisciplinary community based planning.

**Tibbalds Monro Ltd**

31 Earl Street, London EC2A 2HR  
Tel: 0171 377 6688  
Fax: 0171 247 9377  
Contact: Andrew Karski BA (Hons) MSc (Econ) FRTPi

Multi-disciplinary practice of architects, planners, urban designers, landscape designers, tourism specialists and interior architects. The firm provides consultancy services to institutional, public sector and corporate clients.

**Town Planning Consultancy Ltd**

118 Southwark St  
London SE1 0SW  
Tel: 0171 928 1400  
Fax: 0171 928 5631  
Contact: Colin Pullan BA (Hons) Dip UD.

One of the largest independent planning consultancies operating throughout the UK. Masterplanning, urban design, urban regeneration, GIS, design strategies, analysis and assessments. Professional leaders in retail, leisure & commercial planning for the public and private sector.

**Tweed Nuttall Warburton**

Chapel House City Road  
Chester CH1 3AE  
Tel: 01244 310388  
Fax: 01244 325643  
Contact: John Tweed B Arch RIBA FRSA

Architecture and Urban Design Masterplanning. Urban waterside environments. Community teamwork enablers. Design guidance and support for rural village appraisals. Visual impact assessments and design solutions within delicate conservation environments.

**Urban Design Futures**

97c West Bow  
Edinburgh EH1 2JP, Scotland  
Tel: 0131 226 4505  
Fax: 0131 226 4515  
Contact: Selby Richardson DipArch DipTP MSc ARIAS

Land use planning, development feasibility and site layout studies, urban design strategies and appraisal, town centre and village studies, environmental improvements, traffic calming, design guidelines.

**The Urban and Economic Development Group (URBED)**

41 Old Birley Street  
Manchester M15 5 RF  
Tel: 0161 226 5078  
Fax: 0161 226 7307  
Contact: David Rudlin BA MTP

Urban regeneration / town centres / housing including health checks, environmental audits, urban design, master planning, analysis and strategy development.

**Urban Initiatives**

35 Heddon Street  
London W1R 7LL  
Tel: 0171 287 3644  
Fax: 0171 287 9489  
Contact: Kelvin Campbell BArch RIBA MRTPI MCIT FRSA

Urban design, transport planning, infrastructure and development planning to include master planning, town centre studies, conservation, environmental improvements, traffic calming and design guidelines.

**Weston Williamson**

Architects and Urban Designers  
70 Cowcross Street  
London EC1M 6BP  
Tel: 0171 608 0894  
Fax: 0171 608 0896  
Contact: Chris Williamson RIBA MAPM MRTPI FRSA

Weston Williamson consider all aspects of the urban environment integrating the smallest detail with the overall concept.

**White Consultants**

35 Severn Grove  
Cardiff  
Tel: 01222 640971  
Fax: 01222 664362  
Contact: Simon White MAUD Dip UD (Dist) Dip LA MLI

A qualified urban design, environmental planning and landscape architecture practice working throughout the UK. Specialising in multi-disciplinary urban regeneration, design briefing, public realm improvements, town centre and village studies for public and private sector clients.

**University of the West of England,  
Bristol****Faculty of the Built Environment**

Frenchay Campus  
Coldharbour Lane Bristol BS16 1QY  
Tel: 0117 965 6261  
Fax: 0117 976 3895  
Contact: Richard Guise  
MA/Postgraduate Diploma course in Urban Design. Part time 2 days per fortnight for 2 years, or individual programme of study. Project based course addressing urban design issues, abilities and environments.

**University College Dublin  
School of Architecture and  
Department of Regional and Urban  
Planning**

Richview Clonskeagh  
Dublin 14 Ireland  
Tel: 00 353 1 706 2757  
Fax: 00 353 1 283 7778  
Contact: Philip Geoghegan, Course Director  
MSc in Urban Design is an Interdepartmental Postgraduate Programme in Irish and European Design offering study within the framework of developing urban design policy at European level.  
1 year full-time or 2 years part-time.

**Edinburgh College of Art/Heriot  
Watt University  
School of Architecture**

Lauriston Place Edinburgh EH3 9DF  
Tel: 0131 221 6071/6072  
Fax: 0131 221 6606/6157  
Contact: Leslie Forsyth  
Diploma in Urban Design: 1 year full time or 3 years part time. MSc in Urban Design: 1 year full time or 3 years part time plus 1 year part time. Recognised by the RIBA for the RIBA Urban Design Diploma.

**University of Greenwich  
School of Architecture and  
Landscape**

Oakfield Lane Dartford DA1 2SZ  
Tel: 0181 316 9100  
Fax: 0181 316 9105  
Contact: Philip Stringer  
MA in Urban Design for postgraduate architecture and landscape students, full time and part time with credit accumulation transfer system.

**Leeds Metropolitan University  
School of Art, Architecture and  
Design**

Brunswick Terrace Leeds LS2 8BU  
Tel: 0113 283 2600  
Fax: 0113 283 3190  
Contact: Edwin Knighton  
Master of Arts in Urban Design consists of 1 year full time or 2 years part time or individual programme of study. Shorter programmes lead to Post Graduate Diploma/Certificate. Project based course focusing on the creation of sustainable environments through interdisciplinary design.

**University College London  
Development Planning Unit,  
The Bartlett**

9 Endsleigh Gardens, London WC1H 0ED  
Tel: 0171 388 7581  
Fax: 0171 387 4541  
Contact: Babar Mumtaz  
M Sc in Building and Urban Design in Development. Innovative, participatory and responsive development and upgrading of urban areas through socially and culturally acceptable, economically viable and environmentally sustainable interventions.

**University of Newcastle upon Tyne  
Department of Architecture**

Claremont Tower  
University of Newcastle  
Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7RU  
Tel: 0191 222 6024  
Fax: 0191 222 6008  
Contact: Dr Peter Kellett or  
Dr Ali Madani-Pour  
MA/Diploma in Urban Design. Joint programme in Dept of Architecture and Dept of Town and Country Planning. Full time or part time, integrating knowledge and skills from town planning, architecture, landscape.

**Oxford Brookes University (formerly  
Oxford Polytechnic)  
Joint Centre for Urban Design**

Headington  
Oxford OX3 0BP  
Tel: 01865 483403  
Fax: 01865 483298  
Contact: Dr Georgia Butina  
or Ian Bentley  
Diploma in Urban Design 6 months full time or 18 months part time. MA in Urban Design 1 year full time or 3 years part time. MPhil/PhD by research (full time and part time).

**University of Strathclyde  
Dept of Architecture and Building  
Science**

**Urban Design Studies Unit**  
131 Rottenrow  
Glasgow G4 0NG  
Tel: 0141 552 4400 ext 3011  
Fax: 0141 552 3997  
Contact: Dr Hildebrand W Frey  
Urban Design Studies Unit offers its Postgraduate Course in Urban Design in CPD, Diploma and MSc modes. Topics range from the influence of the city's form and structure to the design of public spaces.

# Three Quarters

Somewhere between the urgent deadlines of the trade weeklies with their clipped news notes that keep us up to date with the corridors of power, the corruption of committee rooms and the shifting sands of architectural trends on the one hand, and the new generation of serious intellectual urban design journals, with small grey photographs and greyer footnotes which keep academics in the citation business but maybe not much else on the other, there is a small but colourful array of quarterly journals that map the territory of urban design and speak directly, without the pressure of the weekly scoop, institutional trumpeting or research ratings.

The content, style and even layout of these more direct communications reveal different approaches to urban design that might be overlooked, their similarities and differences transect a shared professional terrain. Three of them arrive on my doormat regularly: one shrink wrapped across the Atlantic, one bundled up with product sheets, and the third you are reading now. They all started in the 1980s, expressing new concerns for the quality of places and keeping far flung professionals in touch. Two of them started as stapled newsletters, proto-professional fanzines that have grown - one to become a journal of a new institute (as of this year) and the third started as an academic journal but which has shed that heavy carapace.

Seen as material for analysis you could read the ordered columns, gridded up photographs, and resolutely themed issues of *UDQ* as the expression of some subconscious architectural desire to organise and structure the whole world of knowledge. The balanced frame around the theme features, a mix of news of events, book reviews and practice listings makes connections with a wider world, in a cool hands-off way, with no messy products or users to deal with. The feature articles hold to this: short, focused but distant so that practices write about their work in the third person professional. It's the journal of a network making links and connections, but maybe never close enough to get the blame when things don't turn out right. How different is *Context*: packed with trade ads, its pages a dense mix of first hand how to thatch and mix lime mortar and close loopholes in the arcana of conservation law. There are contributions from engineers and garden historians, archaeologists and planners, there are survey forms you can photocopy and use and views and comments on current cases and appeals. Books are reviewed for their practical application, academic texts scorned. The language is direct, but flowery: regular columns are by "Sir Titus", "Gazebo" and "mLearned Friend". This may now be the journal of The Institute of Historic Building Conservation but there are people in there, fixing the details and stopping the rot.

*Places* is one from the heart. Its layout a mix of overlapping typefaces and photographs with texts that flow through illustrations, large set captions that read like poems, it muses on, reflects and engages with the places it reports. There was an issue on Light (not lighting) and the latest issue, in memoriam Charles Moore, is a supreme example of this style that fits easily in a tradition that runs from Mark Twain, through the Beat Poets and JB Jackson. The editorial column is always called "Caring About Places". That fits. #

*Bob Jarvis*

**Notes**

*Places* is published by The Design History Foundation, PO Box 1897, Lawrence KS 66044-8897, USA. *Context* publishing department Hall McCartney Ltd, Heritage House, PO Box 21, Baldock, SG7 5SH.



## Barcelona

### UDG Tour 30 October - 2 November 1998

A visit to Barcelona has become a must for architects, planners and urban designers. Cerdà's plans for the city's enlargement in the 1850s were a landmark in nineteenth century urban development, and later on, Gaudí made his mark on the city with both private buildings and public developments (Sagrada Família and Parque Güell). Earlier in this century, Barcelona organised a major international exhibition which justified the development of the Montjuïc hill. This has been renovated during the city's preparation for the 1992 Olympic Games; one of the attractions is the reconstruction of Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona Pavilion of 1929. The same Olympic Games justified enormous investments in infrastructure, including numerous new public spaces and the development of a new neighbourhood on the sea front, Nueva Icaria. And throughout the transformations of the city, there remained the medieval core, the Barrio Gótico. This four day trip will show the various stages of the city evolution.

The provisional programme for the tour is to leave London on 30 October with visits that day and on 31 October and 1 November, returning on 2 November.

Cost per person including flight, bed and breakfast in a central hotel: £300 in shared double room, £330 in single room.

For further details about the programme, contact Sebastian Loew, phone or fax on 0171 240 2659.

Bookings are made through the UDG office, 6 Ashbrook Courtyard, Westbrook St, Blewbury, Oxon OX11 9QA.

A deposit of £50 should be made by 1 August specifying if a single room is required.

