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| **URBAN UPDATE** | **10th July 2015** |
| **Main news**  **Jobs** – London, Gloucestershire, Bristol, Hertfordshire, Kent  **English brownfield land development free for all?**  The City as Master Developer – Event Report  **Climate trends could yield 20-foot sea-level rise**  How tall buildings and heritage can blend into historic urban fabric  **Study connects low-cost building improvement with decreased crime**  Widespread ignorance of smart city initiatives | **from the Urban Design Group**  *A free service for all individuals and organisations who care about life in cities towns and villages ……… planners – landscape architects – architects – conservation practitioners – engineers –surveyors – masterplanners – managers – urban designers - urbanists – health professionals - politicians – public* |

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| **Forthcoming UDG Events**  **Weather in the City - How design shapes the Urban Climate**  **Monday 20 July – The Gallery, Cowcross Street London 6.20**    **L:\Swap\New Work\UDG\Events\2015-07-20 Weather in the City\Weather-in-the-City-Front-c.jpg**The launch of a book by Sanda Lenzholzer which brings an understanding of wind, sun, heat and air movements within the reach of any built environment professional.  Introduced by Professor Michael Hebbert with additional contributions from  Paula Cadima & Robert Huxford  Copies of the book will be on sale for £20 at the event – RRP £26  Standard UDG low admission charges apply  *See also…*  **The problem with the skyscraper wind effect**  <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-33426889> | **What software should students learn - Please help with this Online survey**  <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/5WFZD3F>  ***Results so far***  **Essential…**  \*Desk Top Publishing package  \*General graphics tools raster/vector rendering - Adobe Illustrator most used  **Important**  \*Urban Design Conceptual Masterplanning: CityCAD  \*2D - AutoCAD  \*3D – Sketchup, followed by Autodesk 3D Max  \*Mapping - Google earth pro, Promap, Arcview, QGIS  \*Photo editing package  **Packages to learn on the job**  \*BIM – Revit, followed by AutoCAD Civil 3D  \*Specialised CAD systems | | **The National Conference**  **on Urban Design 2015**  **Bristol 8-9-10 October**  This year’s conference is takes place in Bristol, one of the UK’s most vibrant and successful cities. It is also one of the UK’s leading experiments in civic leadership and governance, with George Ferguson as mayor.  The conference theme looks at town, cities and development in the 21st century and how better design quality can achieve health, wellbeing and prosperity while reducing costs to the public purse; and yet still make a profit.  We hope to see you in Bristol!  Details available later in July. |
| **Shared Space - a need to stick to principles**  It is now popular to call public realm improvement schemes shared space; and shared spaces are appearing in many masterplans.  Some schemes have emerged as hybrids, labelled as a shared space and but owing more to the “Design Manual for Roads and Bridges” style highway. This approach is fundamentally flawed. The space needs either to   * **look like a shared space and be used like a shared space** – with the driver understanding from the environment that they need to assume responsibility and to use their judgement judgment,, and drive carefully, and slowly with due regard for other road users; or * **look like a ordinary street, regulated** with the driver knowing that they must respect the rules and follow instructions – signals, signs, lines, speed limits.   The two approaches are totally different – there is no half way house. In fact research has shown that when people are given instructions, the decision making parts of their brains tend to shut down.  There are two main ways the Shared Space concept can be lost.  Firstly, where undertrained designers try to create shared spaces without fully understanding the concept.  Secondly where the Shared Space schemes is compromised as it goes into detailed design, or Road Safety Audit, and where the professionals involved are wedded to a conventional street design philosophy. (NB there is no requirement for schemes to be audited, other than trunk roads and motorways) So that what starts off looking like a shared space, ends up looking like a slightly odd conventional street paved expensive materials.    <http://bit.ly/1KSBeey>  This scheme in Gloucester replaced guardrails and a signal controlled crossing, with what was called a “shared space” and a large piece of public art. However, to the driver, the design provided a clearly defined carriageway, far reaching forward visibility and wide optical width – features that are known to give drivers greater confidence, and lead to increased speeds. To create a shared space, vehicle speeds must be low. The design of the space and the approaches to the space, must ensure that those low speeds are achieved. The Gloucester scheme is to be amended later this year with the addition of a courtesy crossing. Changes mooted for planning in England to boost house-building Proposals which are in a document to be published by Treasury ( Fixing The Foundations) on the promotion of the economy are thought to include   * Automatic planning permission to be granted on all "suitable" brownfield sites under a new "zonal" system * Scrapping the need for planning permission in London for developers who want to extend buildings to the height of neighbouring properties * A target that by 2020, 90% of viable brownfield sites should have planning permission. * Sanctions for councils are slow in handling planning applications * Powers for ministers to seize disused land * Enhanced compulsory purchase powers to allow more brownfield land to be made available for development   “Local people will still have control over planning”  Brownfield sites have in the past included world war II grass airfields (note the term field) in open countryside, miles away from any public transport, along with chalk pits, isolation hospitals and former asylums. It is unclear whether the system would allow developers to create brownfield sites by demolishing existing buildings.  **No incentive to invest in quality**  Ben van Bruggen commented: “the latest government publication is an all attack on planning. There is no recognition of the positive aspects of planning or how we can shape cities and towns. There is a rush to deliver housing numbers, not jobs, not services, not schools etc. Brownfield land is right to be developed but how does a laissez-faire approach deliver anything about quality? We are storing up a massive problem for the future. Not all developers will be seeking a long-term revenue from development, they have no incentives to invest in quality or things that they see as not providing capital, such as parks, open spaces, landscape etc. the stuff that makes places liveable.”  It is hoped that the Government in considering the need to provide housing, will also consider the need to ensure that the housing is in sustainable locations, and constitutes urban development, not just housing development.  See. ..  **Fixing the foundations: creating a more prosperous nation - HM Treasury 10 July 2015**  <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fixing-the-foundations-creating-a-more-prosperous-nation> | **The City as Master Developer – Event Report**  Event held in partnership between the Academy of Urbanism and the Urban Design Group – 8th July 2015  Chaired by **Steve Bee AoU**, Chairman of The Academy of Urbanism  **Professor Peter Bishop** UCL Bartlett  **Henk Bouwman**  Director of Urban-imPulse.eu  **Dick Gleeson**  Past City Planner, Dublin City Council  **Peter Studdert**  Chair of the London Legacy Development  Corporation Quality Review Panel  **John Worthington**  Guest Editor of Urban Design Edition 135  John Worthington provided the context for the evening, explaining that city should be thought of as both city hall and civil society. He gave a rapid history of cities in the UK, rapidly moving from the medieval to the industrial city, where philanthropists played an important role; the 1930s where the Modernist movement tore cities apart, and the post second world war era, where a development system emerged that was deeply adversarial system with developers, seen as greedy, with no sense of civic pride, and a welfare state creating a sense of dependency. It was at this time that the UK became very centralised, with typically 85 per cent of local authority funds coming from central government. Yet post 2008 there had been significant changes, including devolution and an increasing sense of power of the citizen.  Peter Bishop praised local authorities and their importance in city government. Though there were problems with local authorities being parochial, and not addressing issues outside the borough boundary, and of councillors being good at dealing with local issues but being challenged by the complexity involved in running a city.  City Government was all to do with long-term stewardship, and in his view 25 years was not long in the life of a city. He commended the work of John Thorpe, former Civic Architect at Leeds who, over the many years during which he served the city, had shown his ability to think outside the box, outside the city, and outside the boundaries.  Peter Studdert discussed the range of roles that a local authority needed to perform, including providing a vision, mediating between different interests, and acting as regulator and developer. However there were substantial obstacles, including multi-tiered government, (which he believed was on the wane), and a lack of powers over the things that matter, such as utilities, energy and buses. His prescription for improvement included:   * Coherent strategic planning across economic sub-regions * Unitary authorities with enhanced powers * Joined up central government – problems exist with the Department for Transport stop-start approach to strategic infrastructure which can derail local development projects, and the Ministry of Defence failing to use its landholdings in the overall interests of the UK, but rather acting as an isolated profit centre. * Fiscal Devolution – making the planning system self-financing * A move from a regulatory to a partnership relationship with the market   Henk Bouman talked about the approach to city planning in the Netherlands, mentioning the relationship with and respect for water that has developed over the centuries, and the need to give water space. There was an analogy when it came to city planning and development and the need for flexibility.  Nick Gleeson, spoke about the work in Dublin. A picture emerged of a far more holistic and joined up approach than in the UK. There was a strong acknowledgement in the vision for the future of the city to balance six themes: economic cultural, social, movement, neighbourhood and sustainability. In addition considerable effort was devoted to involving people and asking them about what made the place special. Finally there was a city manager with substantial powers.  **Fit for purpose city government**  The ensuing discussion rapidly developed into a debate on how to address the long term, or at least a period greater than the 4 year electoral cycle and ideally could span a generation or two property cycles. Development corporations were another model which clearly some of the audience liked, and some didn’t. One questioner asked whether city mayors were the answer. Good mayors were a good thing, but that bad mayors were a bad thing and could potentially spell disaster for a city. A council tended to spread the risk.  **Joined-up funding**  The essence of power is to be able to do things – and this means the ability to pay for them. John Worthington complained that cities in the UK had been denuded of the ability to make their own plans by the hold central government has over funds. Cities will say they have a vision for the city, but it is merely a 5 year vision. Cities are more used to putting in proposals for funding to central government, not for what they want, but what they think the person who is giving them the money wants them to do. The lack of joined up central government requires city authority to make the joins: - to apply for money from several different sources, in different government departments and agencies, to piece together for use locally in joined up schemes. The irony is that the funds come originally from a single source: the Treasury.  **Regulatory planning leads to negative involvement**  There was much concern about the decline in the role and power of local authorities. Nicholas Falk urged that a distinction be made between planning and the delivery of services; another contributor went further, saying that local authorities had been reduced to low level service-delivery organisations. Urban Design editor Sebastian Loew argued that the local authority planning function had two roles: one to provide a vision, and a second, to regulate. But the reality today was that councils were nearly 100 percent regulatory. The ordinary citizen knew only the regulatory side of the council. Without sight of a vision for the city there would be little for the citizen to become involved in. Add to this the adversarial nature of planning, the only way for citizen to get involved was to attack – to say no.  Peter Studdert mentioned three councillors who had worked tirelessly to win the community over regarding the development at Trumpington, explaining how people would benefit from better access to the countryside, a new secondary school for their children, and affordable homes.  **Send in the clones**  If some of scientists who live in Trumpington or the wider Cambridge area can clone these councillors, then our problems will be solved. But the situation as it stands in the UK is that councillors have the responsibility for providing the vision, yet they don’t have the training or experience to do it. They are no longer supported by a well-resourced and skilled planning service, and are mostly occupied with local service delivery and the demoralising stream of complaints that the public and press like to direct at councils. This is not the way to nurture great cities.  **Proposal to raise 20mph speed limits in York to 30mph contested**  A change of administration in the city of York has brought in a leader who is sceptical about 20mph limits and wants to scrap them. However 20s Plenty for Us have warned of the legal hurdles that stand in the way.  They include…   * The Equality Act 2010 and the need to have due regard to the needs of elderly and disabled people – failure to do so would render the council vulnerable to judicial review. * The common law duty of care owed to both careful and negligent road users, (and this would also include children) It is difficult to see how raising urban speed limits could be regarded as discharging that duty * There are also other general duties imposed on local authorities including the duty to protect children in need (Children Act 1989) which covers obesity; and the recent duties regarding public health and social value.   ***In the tabloids***  **Crazy eco rules that are turning modern homes into ovens: Experts warn drive for 'green' homes poses a potentially lethal risk** ‘The message is clear — if you super-insulate houses, then you’ll create over-heating issues where people will suffer.’ <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3155640/Crazy-eco-rules-turning-modern-homes-ovens-Experts-warn-drive-green-homes-poses-potentially-lethal-risk.html>  The article is quite a sophisticated example of the Straw Man fallacy – where an argument is deliberately exaggerated so that it can be easily defeated. | | |
| **Other events**  The number of events is on the wane as we approach the holiday period, but there are still events to go to for those that seek them…  **Festival of British Archaeology**  There are many events across the UK to go to, including walks, talks and site visits. It is an excellent way to understand more about how society operates as a system, and the position towns and cities occupy within it.  <http://www.archaeologyfestival.org.uk/whatson>  **Academy of Urbanism**  **Event / Mid-Year Review and Reception**  22nd July – London  <http://www.academyofurbanism.org.uk/events/mid-year-review-and-reception/>  Member only event  **BOBMK Events**  <http://bobmk.org.uk/our-programme/>  Next events autumn  **MADE**  <http://www.made.org.uk/events/calendar/> Museum of Walking **KingsXLost**  Thursday, 23 July 2015 from 18:30 to 20:30 (BST)  <http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/kingsxlost-tickets-17210924338> PTRCUrban Design London Events coming up – extensive programme some free, some charged/£175+VAT  (Free for subscribers)  <http://www.urbandesignlondon.com/?page_id=3251>  **Challenging Practice: Masterplanning**  Wednesday 15th July 2015, 9.45am to 15:30pm  **Network Meeting: How can Innovation help us?**  Tuesday 21st of July  2015, 9.45am to 16:30pm  **Design South East / Kent Design**  Event Calendar  <http://www.kentdesign.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Event-Calendar-2015-16-edited-14.4.15.pdf>  **Housing Led Urban Design Summer School: Designing the 21st Century Garden City**  Friday 10 July until Saturday 11 July 2015  **Architecture and Design Scotland**  <http://www.ads.org.uk/events> | **New Lectures  on UrbanNous**  **Urbanism: Improving quality and value**  **The importance of product, land and money**  Yolande Barnes - Savills  <http://www.urbannous.org.uk/urbanism-quality-and-value.htm>  **Garden Cities Past and Present. Potential morphologies explored**.  Dominic Papa S333 Architecture and Urbanism  <http://www.urbannous.org.uk/garden-city-morphologies.htm>  **Garden Cities: Is there a Business Case?**  Jim Coleman, Buro Happold  <http://www.urbannous.org.uk/garden-city-economics.htm>  **Health and Urban Design**  Lucy Coleman, GLA, TFL<http://www.urbannous.org.uk/health-and-urban-design.htm>  ***UrbanNous Catalogue available on-line***  *Go to the home page and move your cursor to where it says “Hover here to bring ideas to life”*  *Highlights include Christopher Alexander, George Ferguson, Hans Monderman and scores of others.*  [www.urbannous.org.uk](http://www.urbannous.org.uk)  **Jobs**  **Urban Designer/Masterplanner - EDP**  **Gloucestershire**  <http://www.udg.org.uk/jobs/south-west/urban-designermasterplanner-edp>  **Planner/Urban Designer - JB Planning Associates - Hertfordshire**  **Stevenage, Hertfordshire**  <http://www.udg.org.uk/jobs/london-and-south-east/plannerurban-designer-jb-planning-associates-hertfordshire>  **Urban Designer/Senior Urban Designer - Pegasus Group - Bristol**  **Equinox North, Great Park Road, Almondsbury, Bristol**  <http://www.udg.org.uk/jobs/south-west/urban-designersenior-urban-designer-pegasus-group-bristol>  **Chartered Landscape Architect | Traffic Engineer - Urban Movement**  **London**  <http://www.udg.org.uk/jobs/london-and-south-east/chartered-landscape-architect-traffic-engineer-urban-movement>  **Senior Urban Design Officer - Medway Council**  **Medway, Kent**  <http://www.udg.org.uk/jobs/london-and-south-east/senior-urban-design-officer-medway-council> | | Home  PROJECT OF THE WEEK  **Aytoun Street Holiday Inn, Manchester**  [Urban Innovations](http://www.urbandesigndirectory.com/practices/urban-innovations)  http://www.urbandesigndirectory.com/sites/default/files/styles/335x250/public/projects/Urban%20Innovations%20Aytoun%201.jpg?itok=RZ9IifEh  This new 306 Bedroom 3-Star hotel, complete with restaurant and conference facilities is due to open in 2015 and stands adjacent to Piccadilly Station in Manchester City Centre. The ground floor frontage will be animated with the entrance, foyer, bar and breakfast restaurant all overlooking the new public terrace.  The second bistro restaurant will extend along the full length of the Aytoun Street frontage.  More on…  <http://www.urbandesigndirectory.com/projects/aytoun-street-holiday-inn-manchester>  **Where do you read Urban Design? Prize competition**  The Urban Design Group will award two prizes to the best photographs taken during this Summer and submitted before 5th September 2015. The idea is to show interesting or original places in which members have read the journal. The competition is open to individual UDG members and the photograph (only one per member) should be submitted as a jpg at 300dpi for a minimum size of 190mm width, with your name, and the location of the photograph . The author of the best photograph, to be chosen by the Editors, will be given a year's free subscription to the journal; the runner-up will be sent a recent book about urban design and invited to review it for the journal. Both photographs will be published in the journal and online on the UDG website. |
| Urban Design around the WorldCanada **Revamped Queens Quay brings new frontier of emerging urban design to the waterfront**  <https://nowtoronto.com/news/a-quay-to-sharing-the-street/> Denmark **Artist Olafur Eliasson On How Urban Design Impacts Our Psyche**  <http://www.fastcodesign.com/3048184/slicker-city/artist-olafur-eliasson-on-how-urban-design-impacts-our-psyche> Japan **The Manhole Covers in Japan Are Absolutely Beautiful**  <http://www.gizmodo.in/design/The-Manhole-Covers-in-Japan-Are-Absolutely-Beautiful/articleshow/47990301.cms> India **Ancient Indian city of Ajmer awaits its ‘smart’ makeover**  <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jul/05/india-ajmer-modernise-smart-cities> Netherlands **Bright lights, big trees: Dutch designer imagines an 'urban forest'**  <http://www.theguardian.com/cities/2015/jul/03/bright-lights-big-trees-dutch-designer-imagines-an-urban-forest> UK **Broadway Malyan is 'people's choice' for Birmingham revamp**  <http://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/broadway-malyan-is-peoples-choice-for-birmingham-revamp/5076390.article>  **UK roundabouts set for wild meadow makeover**  <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/gardening/11717142/UK-roundabouts-set-for-wild-meadow-makeover.html> USA **Portland delegates' wheels turning after Copenhagen trip**  <http://www.pamplinmedia.com/pt/9-news/266114-139364-portland-delegates-wheels-turning-after-copenhagen-trip>  **"We’re legislating taste and being arbitrary doing it."**  <http://newsok.com/were-legislating-taste-and-being-arbitrary-doing-it./article/5431780>  **Downtown Pittsburgh's Promising Plan to Give Streets Back to the People**  <http://www.citylab.com/commute/2015/07/downtown-pittsburghs-promising-plan-to-give-streets-back-to-the-people/397838/>  <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jul/05/india-ajmer-modernise-smart-cities> Politics, Philosophy, Economics **By 2050 around 75% of all the world's population will be urban. Is this a good thing?**  <http://www.treehugger.com/urban-design/2050-around-75-all-worlds-population-will-be-urban-good.html>  *Possibly not if our cities are not lush and green…*  **Can you prescribe nature?**  <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-33368691>  **- walking among trees lowers blood pressure, pulse rate, and levels of the stress hormone cortisol**  We "evolved with nature and it's completely unnatural for us to be separated from it"… Nigel Dunnett, Professor of planting design and vegetation technology at the University of Sheffield,  <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-33368691>  **Urban planning that involves the people and alternative service providers gives far better results than top-down efforts from the government, finds an IIT-M study**  <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/urban-planning-solutions-can-come-from-the-slums/article7404502.ece>  **Study connects low-cost building improvement with decreased crime**  <http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2015-07/uops-rai070615.php>  **Some 96% of people are unaware of smart city initiatives being run by their local council, while one in four are unclear on any one main benefit.**  [**http://www.localgov.co.uk/Population-unaware-of-smart-city-initiatives-launched-by-councils/38970**](http://www.localgov.co.uk/Population-unaware-of-smart-city-initiatives-launched-by-councils/38970) | | Latest Research, Policy and PracticeEnvironment **Evidence from past suggests climate trends could yield 20-foot sea-level rise**  <http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2015-07/uof-efp070915.php>  **Volcanoes in USA may have brought end to Roman Empire.**  Massive volcanic eruptions in 535 and 539 AD, identified in new studies of ice cores created global high altitude dust layer which reduced global temperatures food output. The eruptions coincide with the Justinian plague (in 2014 the Justinian plague was identified as a strain of Yersina Pestis – Bubonic Plague). It has been suggested that the change in climate and the shortage of food led to rats coming into closer contact with humans, enabling an inter-species infection jump.  <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/science/science-news/11726459/Did-American-volcanoes-trigger-fall-of-Roman-Empire.html>  The question is, what would be the effect of such eruption in the 21st century?  **Future Cities: Going Off the (Water) Grid**  <http://news.discovery.com/tech/alternative-power-sources/future-cities-going-off-the-water-grid-150708.htm>  **Stronger action needed to transform the UK's energy system**  <http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2015-07/ucl-san070215.php>  **Decline in bumblebee species, and their habitats, caus ed by global warming**  <http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2015-07/uov-bta070215.php>  **Urban Beekeeping Gets a Boost from Innovative Hive Design**  <http://www.architecturaldigest.com/blogs/daily/2015/07/urban-beekeeping-honey-factory-milan>  **Pompeii falling into scandalous decline**  [**http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/fall-rise-fall-pompeii-180955732/?no-ist**](http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/fall-rise-fall-pompeii-180955732/?no-ist) Built Environment **Why not build houses the environmentally friendly way?**  <http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2015-07/s-wnb070915.php>  **What makes us more likely to take the stairs?**  <http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2015-07/cu-wmu070915.php>  **How tall buildings and heritage can blend into historic urban fabric**  <http://www.bworldonline.com/content.php?section=Opinion&title=how-tall-buildings-and-heritage-can-blend-into-historic-urban-fabric&id=111030>  **studio 1:1 creates an urban city for ants in the shape of Rotterdam**  <http://www.designboom.com/architecture/studio-11-urban-ant-city-exhibition-omi-rotterdam-07-09-2015/>  **Architectural expressions of individuality make global metropolises look more like each other**  <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/de91a5c8-23df-11e5-bd83-71cb60e8f08c.html#axzz3fQSyEseW>  **A city’s history fosters better urban planning: Amsterdam mayor**  <http://www.livemint.com/Politics/r80emhTN3rMgZv1V2o10uL/A-citys-history-fosters-better-urban-planning-Amsterdam-ma.html>  **Humans Health Society**  **Missing out on education may be as deadly as smoking**  <http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/site/ataglance/2015/07/education-and-mortality-study-finds-less-education-reduces-life-expectancy.html>  **Third of overweight teenagers think they are right size, study shows**  <http://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/jul/09/overweight-teenagers-think-they-are-right-size-study>  **Parents can pass on tendency to depression and anxiety to children**  <http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/health-news/parents-can-pass-anxiety-and-depression-on-to-their-children-study-suggests-10375509.html>  **Movement**  **Researcher creates 3 ft long shoes to put pedestrians in their own slow lane and change their experience of the sights of the city that are otherwise missed**  <http://www.wired.co.uk/news/archive/2015-07/06/excessively-long-shoes>  **Every citizen a driver: The technology for self-driving cars is here – so let’s use it**  <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/editorials/every-citizen-a-driver-the-technology-for-selfdriving-cars-is-here--so-lets-use-it-10370310.html>  **Driverless cars and 'super-Uber' robot taxis could 'cut carbon emissions by 90%'**  <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/driverless-cars-and-superuber-robot-taxis-could-cut-carbon-emissions-by-90-10369503.html> | |

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