STOP, COLLABORATE AND LISTEN
RESOURCE PACK

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Welcome to your interactive Resource
Pack. We would like to take this opportunity
to thank you for attending the RIBA Guerrilla
Tactics Conference 2021.

This document offers a summary of the insights
shared throughout the conference and provides
links to recordings of presentations should you
wish to watch them.

Clicking the arrow icon, like the one below, on
each session summary will take you to the
recording.

Collaboration for Citizens in the Age of the Digital Twin

Stephen Hill, Public Interest Practitioner

Complex problems require collaboration

- Complex problems are best approached by leveraging our collective experience, not by individuals working in isolation, no matter how smart.

- Creating a digital twin model is a complex process, requiring collaboration between multiple stakeholders and access to sophisticated software.

- In order for digital twin technology to make a positive difference, quality needs to be the guiding principle.

The project team should act as citizens professionals

- All parties in a participatory project must bring their shared lives to the table. Professionals and politicians must remind themselves that they are citizen professionals.

- Ultimately, architects are the client for all their projects: it is our society we are affecting by our actions.

- The challenge for designers is not to design a finished scheme based on assumptions about future behaviour of its community but to provide a foundation for residents to continue building that community.

- Ethical practice must go further than professional best practice. The United Nation's 17 Sustainable Development Goals should underline architectural practice.

Learning from Service Designers

Emma Parnell, Head of Design, Joy

Understand the user journey

- From first point of contact to project completion or the delivery of a service, a client or customer is experiencing your services as a journey. A service provider must be conscious that they are the pilot of the user journey, and that it involves the whole team.

- Try to find opportunities to experience your own services, placing yourself in your client or customer's shoes. Query if you are delivering at every step of the way.

- Focusing on one stage only without consideringthe next risks passing problems on to another stakeholder in the project, perhaps one of your own team members.

Conduct effective user research

- Solicit regular feedback from the people who use your services to better understand their user experience.

- For user research to be effective it must capture the motivations, needs and wants of users.

- Service design is iterative in its nature, much as architecture is. Finding ways to test, or 'prototype' ideas with clients at the start of the project is an effective way to identify client wants and needs.

- Net Zero Carbon enabled: designed to be net zero whole-life carbon in use but lacking the actual in-use or end of life performance data to allow verification.

Green Knowledge Sharing

Alina White, FCB Studios; Sarah Broadstock, Studio Bark; Ross Holleron, Sero Homes

FCBS CARBON

Making carbon part of the design decisions

Sharing green knowledge with the profession

- Minimising operational energy consumption is increasingly well understood. But a building's embodied carbon footprint is harder to assess, while increasing in relative importance, as energy efficient design becomes the norm.

- To address the climate emergency, it is essential that embodied and whole-life carbon calculation is widely understood and applied to projects

- Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios have deep in-house expertise of calculating embodied and WLC and using the results to inform their designs. To give back to the profession, the practice developed a free whole-life carbon review tool: FCBS Carbon.

- Spreadsheet-based, FCBS Carbon is intended to inform decisions prior to detailed design, when most embodied carbon is locked in.

Strategies for reducing embodied carbon.

1. Build nothing: challenge the nature of the brief

2. Build less: repurpose, refurbish, reuse and/or optimise the space

3. Build efficiently: optimise structural efficiency and use low carbon materials

4. Minimise waste: use prefabricated components and improve construction practices

Advantages of the carbon calculator in practice

- Quick whole life carbon comparisons can be made: between double glazed and triple-glazed windows, for example. The upfront embodied carbon cost can be compared against energy savings and the projected decarbonisation of the electricity grid.

- Possibilities for reducing blockwork and plasterboard in partitions can be explored.

- Calculating carbon savings from specifying reclaimed or refurbished materials.

Supporting a more diverse profession

- Current educational structures have delivered little progress in terms of the ethnic diversity of the architectural sector.

- Small practices have an opportunity to offer practical experience to students, in particular those from underrepresented backgrounds.

- Large practices may be happy to offer financial support or partner on such projects. Do not be afraid to ask for support.

- Collaboration between public and private sectors in low-carbon housing.

- Cardiff based energy tech company Sero Homes have developed a process for the planning and delivery of Net Zero homes, both new and existing.

- The Sero Passport is a digital toolkit for delivering Net Zero homes. It captures building performance data including health hazards for residents, the lifespan of building components and the decarbonisation of the grid to inform appropriate strategies towards Net Zero.

- Financed by Welsh Government funding, the application is free to use for all RSL in Wales and intended to support the refurbishment and maintenance of their portfolio

Net Zero and mortgage finance

- There has been an observable shift towards lenders reporting on the carbon impact of their lending book. This means mortgage lenders are beginning to take an interest into the carbon performance of the properties they provide lending for.

- Net Zero Carbon enabled: designed to be net zero whole-life carbon in use but lacking the actual in-use or end of life performance data to allow verification.

Planning and Participatory Design

Gurmeet Sian, Director, Office Sian

Avoid jargon

- Community-based clients are more likely to appreciate commitment and understanding than 'archispeak'.

- Build engagement and trust with the potential client in any competition submission and subsequent interviews.

- While you should always evidence your design expertise, your understanding of procurement and your previous experience, try to avoid jargon and communicate like an 'ordinary human being'.

Make the case for community engagement

- Some clients are wary of community engagement. Make the case that it is the best way to achieve value for money: it is a route to a better project outcome.

- Making community engagement your default position, a non-negotiable part of your own work as an architect, can be a successful tactic.

Tactics for community engagement

- Even more so than with your client, avoid architectural jargon, such as references to foundations, structures or even sustainability.

- When working with young people, find a local angle or theme on which to base your workshop. This could be a place (e.g. a local park) or a shared cultural reference.

Build a network of local supporters

- Find local design champions and communicate the project to them. They might be musicians, artists, or those who run after school clubs. Invite them to lead on or assist with a workshop.

- Make the contractors part of the story too. Try to engage them as collaborators. They may have more control of the project in the later stages, so their commitment to a quality result is important.

- The outputs from community participation can be part of the planning application. Drawings, diagrams, audio and video from workshops can be introduced at pre-planning and planning stage.

Planning and Participatory Design

Cristina Monteiro and David Knight, Founding Directors, DK-CM
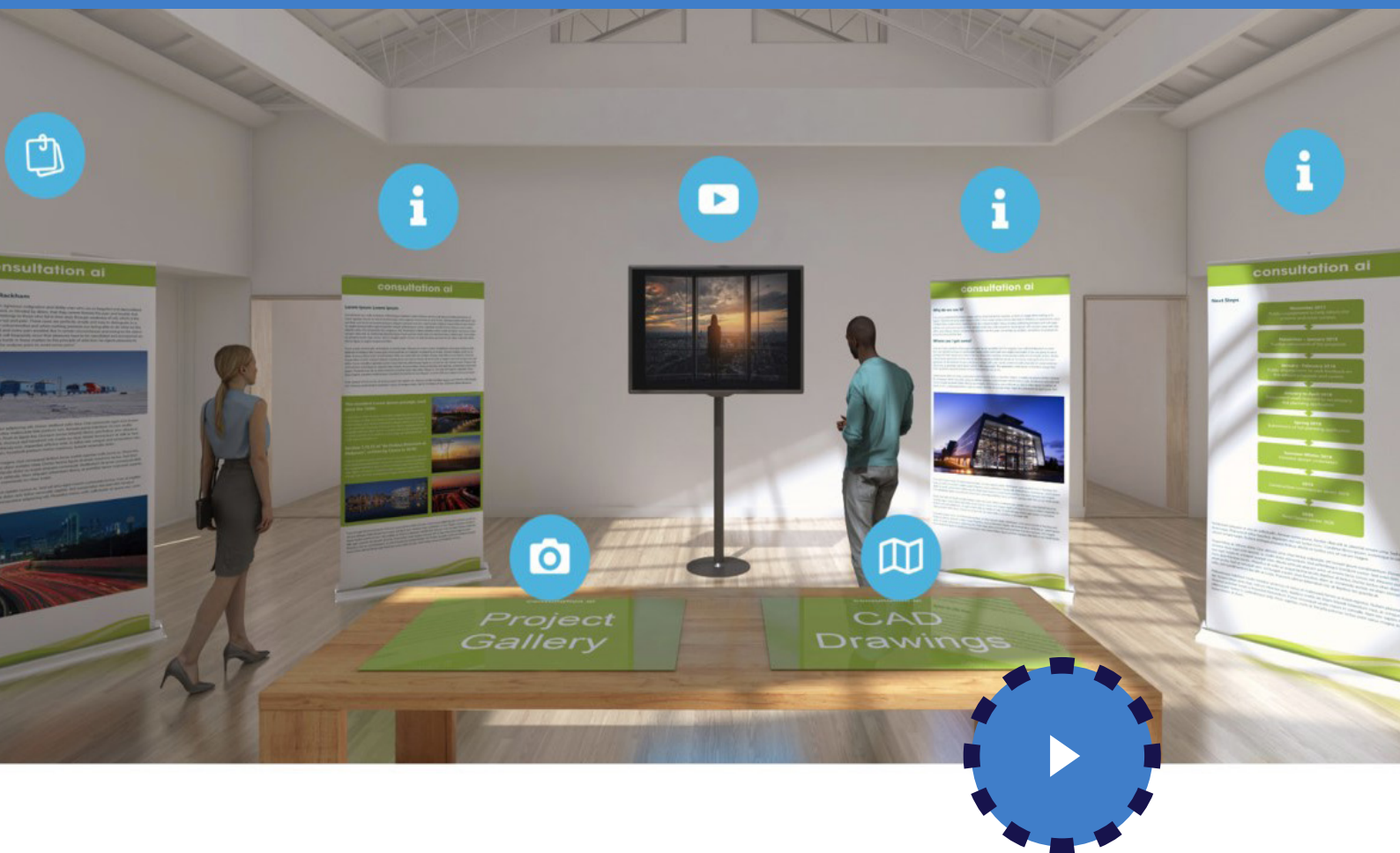
Community engagement is not a tick box exercise

- Often, community engagement is considered an add-on, or sometimes a hurdle.

- Rather, engagement should be considered a fundamental part of the project: it provides information that can be crucial to its success.

Develop a strategy for digital engagement

- Digital tools have broadened the means for engagement. Yet Architects should be mindful of the 'digital divide': 10 percent of the UK population does not use the internet.

- Develop a digital engagement strategy alongside alternative routes for engagement. Ensure nobody is excluded.

- Digital approaches need not emulate analogue ones: they can improve upon and complement the 'village hall' consultation model. Visual tools such as

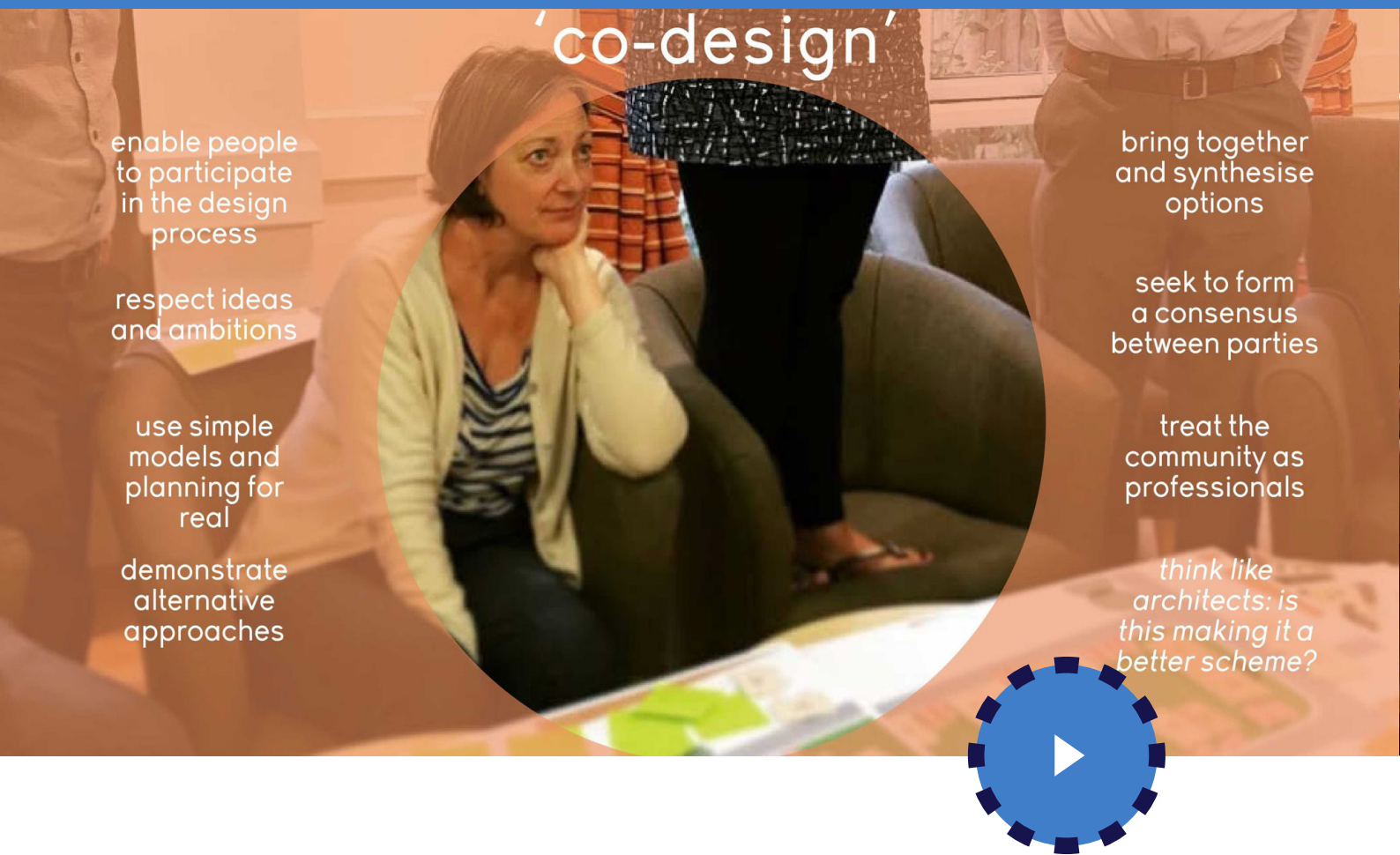Instagram and Pinterest can be very effective.

- Be aware that different demographics use different platforms. Do not just use Facebook, but also Instagram and perhaps TikTok.

- Identify the potential for your project to engage with what is already going on. Rather than inviting community members to engage with you, engage with existing digital activity, such as neighbourhood WhatsApp groups. These provide insights into the issues that the community finds important.

Aim for constructive debate rather than consensus

- It is highly unlikely that one solution will suit everyone. A consultation should be a platform for discourse and debate.

- Digital platforms can sometimes be more effective for registering diverging opinions than live events.

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Planning and Participatory Design

Sam Goss, Founding Director, Barefoot Architects

'co-design'

enable people
to participate
in the design
process

respect ideas
and ambitions

use simple
models and
planning for
real

demonstrate
alternative
approaches

bring together
and synthesise
options

seek to form
a consensus
between parties

treat the
community as
professionals

*think like
architects: is
this making it a
better scheme?*

The community are consultants on their area

- Community engagement should always be aiming to achieve better planning outcomes, better design and more sustainable places.

- Remember that local residents are consultants on their area and experts of their streets: they know what works and what does not locally.

Use different media to engage communities

- Physical models and foam cut-outs can be used to show house types, parking spaces, or gardens. Allow people to manipulate these models. This enables them to start thinking like architects.

- Basic VR can be very effective in sharing feasibility studies and design research with the community. For prospective residents and planning authorities, use 3D modelling to show all aspects of a design.

- Explain things at the right level. Know your audience, read the room. Moderate your language, use plain English. Never condescend. Inform, educated, listen, improve for next time.

Develop a shared understanding

- Provide community stakeholders with examples of relevant projects and organise in person 'study visits' if possible.

- First hand experience of exemplar schemes can build trust and inform opinions over what constitutes good design.

- If everyone feels as if they are a designer, they are more likely to become engaged contributors and passionate supporters of the project.

Planning and Participatory Design
Sophia de Sousa, Chief Executive, The Glass-House Community Led Design

Tap into the local authority network

- Tap into the relationships that the local authority has with place-based networks to invite diverse voices into the design process.

- Help local authorities raise their design ambitions by empowering communities to demand high quality design in their area.

Empower communities

- Build confidence and skills within communities to engage with the design process as contributors, not merely commentators.

- Use your technical knowledge to enhance their local knowledge, user experience, diverse skills and creativity.

- Unpack design principles such as density or building height to help communities and housing providers identify shared values and objectives.

Convince developer clients

- Make the case for participatory design as a means of building support for the community.

- Explain that community engagement can potentially avoid planning delays.

Planning and Participatory Design

Becca Thomas, Creative Director, New Practice

Shared decision making

- Participatory design could be considered as shared decision making.

- This develops the creative capacity of communities and connects people with the decision-making processes that underpin their lived experiences.

Understand the place and all its stakeholders

- An in-depth understanding of a locality can only be achieved via community and stakeholder engagement.

- Discuss with the design team how you can engage the right voices in a particular area

- Find the right approach for any given demographic. This might be a skateboarding or graffiti workshop for teenagers; or dusk walks with women and/or disability groups in areas they may not feel safe in.

Enhancing the social value of commercial developments

- Identifying ways to make areas more accessible, more interesting and safer is of benefit to local residents as well as businesses.

- Community engagement can reveal how developments can provide social value in mutually beneficial ways; such as changing ground floor usages of large buildings to support local businesses.

- Active travel, for example, is one social good that might be facilitated by a new development. Dialogue with city councils can help identify potential opportunities..

Academia + Practice

Jane Larmour, Arigho Larmour Wheeler Architects; William Burges, 31/44 Architects; Dhruv Sookhoo, Metropolitan Workshop
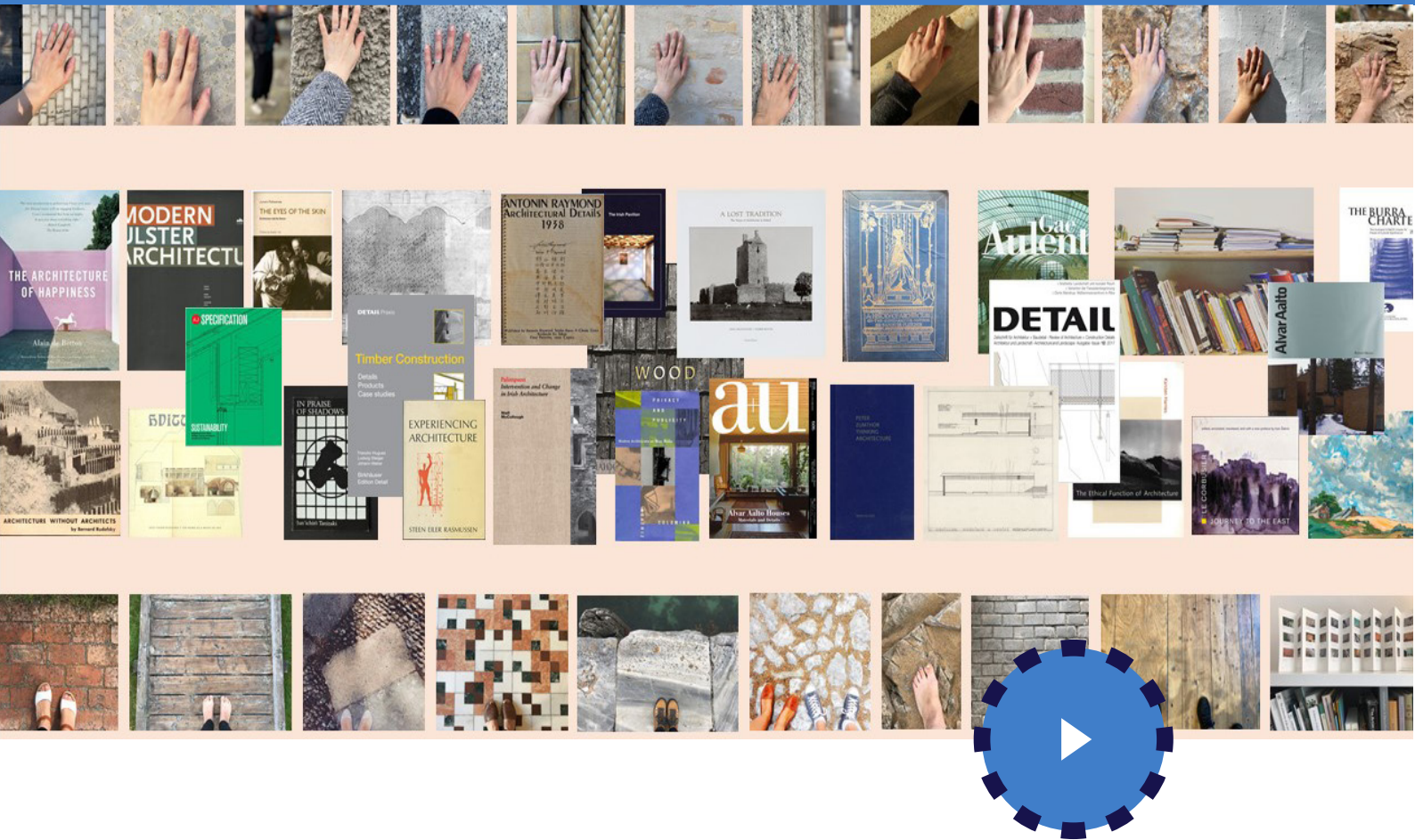
How teaching can benefit practice

- Teaching keeps an architect nimble as a designer. Having to analyse students' projects rapidly, week by week, fosters agility in problem solving.

- The range and scale of design challenges is typically much broader than professional day-to-day practice.

- In planning projects and lectures, an architect will be propelled to interrogate their own work also. There is an accountability to practice what you preach. Students and colleagues will be interested in your practice's work and how it relates to your curriculum content.

- Students challenge received ideas about architectural practice: whether they concern structural solutions, materials and/or sustainability.

- Students can often provide valuable research insights into local challenges of design, structure or planning.

- Architects can struggle to communicate effectively with non-architects. Teaching improves the ability to present to stakeholders, clients, consultants and planning officers.

Avenues into teaching

- Be bold: pick up the telephone, scrutinise job advertisements and contact university departments. Many universities are frequently looking for practitioners for teaching positions.

- End of year shows are a good opportunity to have conversations with course directors and perhaps discuss research proposals.

Embedding research in practice

- A researcher that is part of a practice has their academic research challenged and tested in a real-world context. Will other architects accept or reject your findings?

- Being a researcher within a practice requires consideration of the practice's needs and the time constraints of your colleagues.

Business benefits of practice based research

- Practice based research can help in defining and interrogating the practice' unique design approach and value proposition. Resulting publications can help to raise the practice profile.

- Research findings arising from past projects can inform future projects and improve practice.
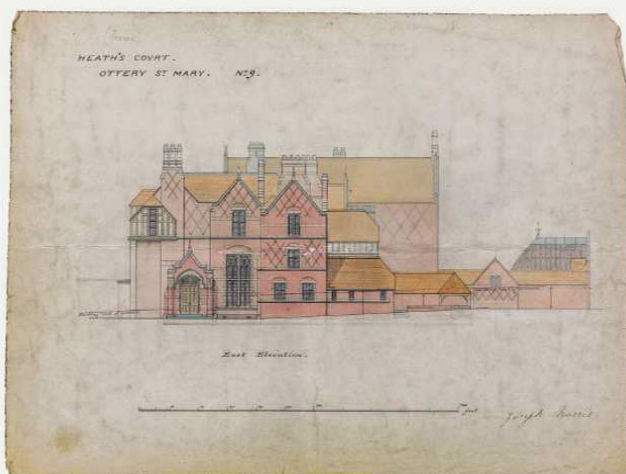
Transitioning Sectors Through Collaboration
Peter George, Programme Director, Meridian Water

Insights in public sector procurement

- For procurement below the threshold set by Find A Tender (FTS, which replaced OJEU after the UK's exit from the EU), every council may follow its own rules. This threshold ranges from £170,000-£180,000.

- Above the threshold there are national rules laid out by the UK government, which address value for money, fair competition, insurance waivers, environmental concerns and diversity.

- Below the threshold, Councils have the ability to appoint practices directly.Councils often use frameworks to appoint practices. Invariably, this will require a competition.

Opportunities for small practices

- The shift of the EU procurement statute onto the UK's statute may see a revision of the rules. This might place a much stronger emphasis on local providers.

- Practices should aim to foster strong relationships with their local councils to get on their radar for potential future commissions.

- Enfield Council's procurement is increasingly driven by social value. The diversity of the practice leaders and its team are a factor, as is a commitment to sustainability.

- Enfield Council can appoint via a single quotation up to a value of £25,000. This can be a valuable entry point for a small practice: a feasibility study which might lead to follow-up work, for example.

Addressing barriers to entry

- Turnover and insurance requirements remain challenging issues. It is possible that future frameworks could break down architectural work into smaller packages, with commensurate lower requirements.

- The experience requirements may be getting less onerous: the current GLA framework, Architecture+Urbanism, only asks for one past project.

- The application for a framework remains very burdensome for smaller practices in exchange for uncertain returns. The public sector needs to find ways to simplify the process.

Transitioning Sectors Through Collaboration

Shona Snow, Regional Procurement Strategy Manager, LHC
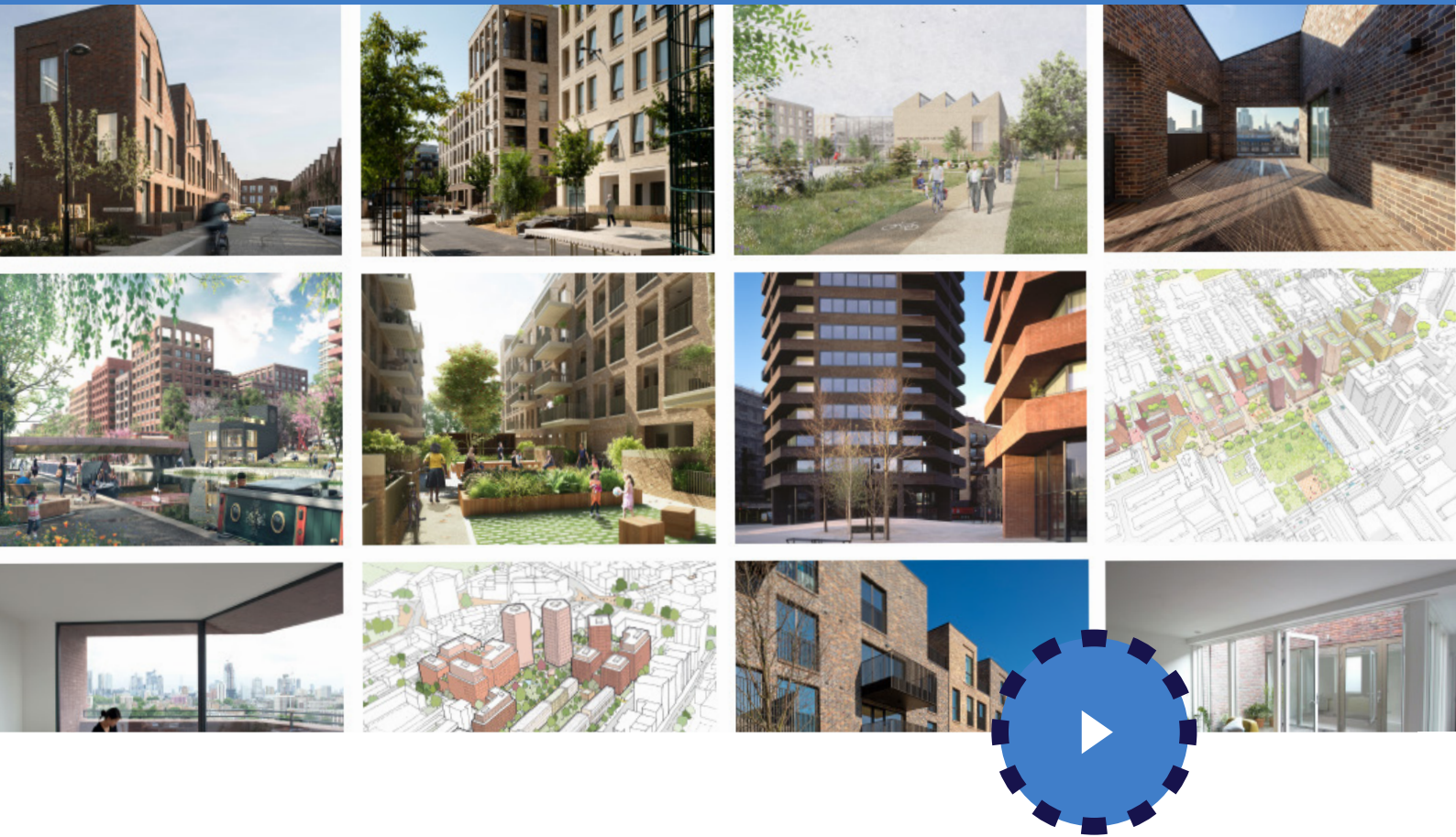
Advice to practices considering a framework application

- Applying to get on a framework will always be speculative work; ensure you weigh up the time and resource involved.

- Do not rush your decision to bid. In the public sector, there will invariably be new projects to apply for within a short time.

- Do your research. Look at urban regeneration and development plans; the GLA's Good Growth Strategy; Council Forward Plans; and other five-year strategies.

- Attend pre-tender events wherever possible. These are a chance to ask questions and get to know councils and clients.

- Look out for smaller contract work (beneath the threshold) to gain experience.

- It is always evident when a bid has been written by just one person. Ensure it is peer reviewed by another person in your practice.

- Learn how to tell your story. This is an architect's most important skill. Explain case studies; describe your experience; and introduce your practice.

Is your practice suited to collaboration?

- Collaboration does not suit everyone. Do you have the right practice culture and mindset?

A good collaborator will possess:

- robust management practices with accurate oversight of the business

- acute awareness of risk management and allocation of liability

- an established, talented lead for bidding and client contact

- excellent practice in invoicing clients and payments to subcontractors

Transitioning Sectors Through Collaboration
Paul Karakusevic, Director, Karakusevic Carson Architects

10 reasons practices should collaborate

- Expand their business
- Satisfy client criteria
- Challenge themself
- Work in different sectors
- Gain technical expertise
- Grow their network
- Support the next generation of architects
- Expand their horizons
- Diversify outcomes
- Make friends

7 essential ingredients for a good collaboration

- Remember that it is a two-way street
- Be open to new ideas
- Outline workstreams transparently
- Read the room
- Be sincere
- Be bold
- Work hard

Collaboration as a route to public sector work

- Small practices seeking to work for a local authority increase their chances through collaborations.

- Local authorities are increasingly beginning to broaden their procurement programmes and recognise that fostering collaborations is a way of giving opportunities to small and emerging practices.

Finding collaborators

- Developing a specialism and advertising this expertise may lead to opportunities for collaboration.

- Emerging practices should not be afraid to reach out to larger ones. Make sure you have researched a practice thoroughly before contacting them. An unsolicited call or social media approach is acceptable.

Empowering Practices to Punch Up
Siri Zanelli, Partner, Collective Works

Focus on the 'passion projects'

- A traditional route to scaling up in architecture is the open competition. But speculative work can be at odds with a practice's culture, especially if it is small and cannot spare the resources.

- Instead, a practice could focus on 'passion projects' and enjoyable collaborative schemes.

Finding opportunities in the local community

- Volunteering on a project that benefits a local community group – a school, a playground, a local charity – can often catch the local imagination. This may lead to fundraising efforts and a resulting commission.

- Plugging into the local community and a track record of making a project happen, can lead to local authority work.

- Collective Works won their first public sector commission after assisting a local community group with a CIL application: this led to work for Haringey council.

Empowering Practices to Punch Up

Tara Gboladé, Director, Gboladé Design Studio

Be proactive in seeking out collaborations

- People are the greatest asset of a practice. Collaboration challenges a practice in a positive way: its staff must work in different ways to adapt to others.

- Seek out opportunities for collaboration. This can be as simple as building relationships with professionals you like.

- A shared connection to the project – be that a link to the area or a particular social or ethical interest in common – is conducive to building trust among collaborators.

Earn the client's trust

- Consider that clients are themselves part of the team. This may literally be the case in a co-design project.

- Often community clients may be distrustful of 'outsiders' and may have had negative experiences in working with their local authority.

- If the team can have open and honest conversations with each other, the clients in turn feel they can trust you and your.

Weigh up the benefits and drawbacks

- A small practice may experience resourcing problems while working on a community project. A representative must be available, often at short notice, to respond to the many stakeholders.

- Not all offers of collaboration are based on strong foundations. Some are merely box-ticking exercises. A diverse practice quickly learns that many larger partners are only seeking a nominal collaboration.

Empowering Practices to Punch Up

Owen Pearce, Director, PEARCE+

Teaming up to offer an innovative package

- Micro practices can team up with similarly sized, like-minded collaborators to put together innovative, striking entries for competitions.

- For the East Quay project in Watchet, PEARCE+ partnered with a small engineering studio and design studio enabling them to build their proposed design for a series of live-in artist studios. This commitment helped win the competition.

Tips for collaborating with young people

- The process should be fun: collages, drawings and modelmaking are all effective tools for engagement.

- Provide children with materials that they can easily control: simple and unfussy tactile media.

- Make use of third-party expertise: an environmental psychologist can draw helpful conclusions from the children's output, for example.

Expect a changing cast of collaborators

- Projects typically take many years from inception to completion. This may mean that a multi-party collaboration can experience considerable churn of personnel.

- Be prepared to explain briefs, project aspirations and design expectations many times over to many different people.

- Be willing to compromise, but also to challenge those who refuse to compromise.

Empowering Practices to Punch Up

Catrina Stewart, Partner, Office S&M

Collaboration starts within the practice

- Be transparent about your practice processes: encourage the team to feel comfortable in contributing to decision making.

- This should be ingrained in the practice, from senior to junior levels. The Directors of Office S&M share an email address so each is aware of what the other is doing.

- Everyone should feel as if they are a stakeholder in the practice. Office S&M hold team meetings first thing in the morning and at the end of the day; there are also weekly all-staff reviews.

Building a reputation one step at a time

- Office S&M won several early commissions for small shop fit-outs and redesigns. In time, this led to work on 25 shops across the area.

This experience eventually led to the practice being appointed to work on a very large historic market complex.

- While not guaranteed to happen, it proves that pursuing small local projects can be the path to projects of a much larger scale.

Tell the right story

- A convincing narrative and presentation can help in leveraging limited experience in a particular sector.

- A small practice may be able to win a bid against much larger practices if they can marry a clear understanding of the brief to demonstrable understanding of local needs.

Team Work to Make the Dream Work

Dinah Bornat, Director, ZCD Architects; Pedro Gil, Director, Studio Gil
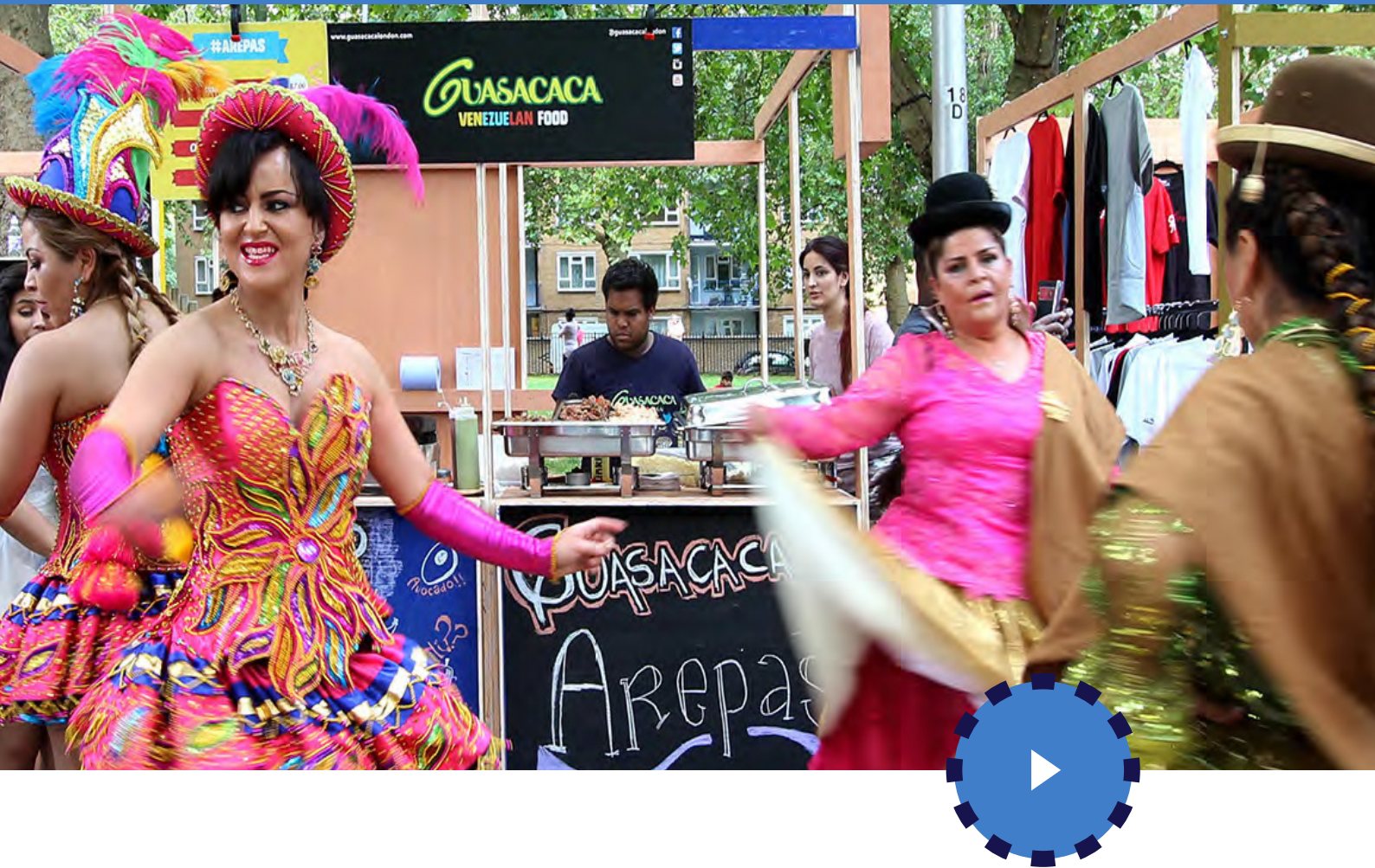
You are already in a collaborative network: you may just not know it

- Pay attention to opportunities close to home that are part of your existing community interests.

- Vacant shop sites, for example, might provide an opportunity to turn a commercial asset into a community asset and involve local traders and makers.

Be seen by the right people and listen to them

- Networking with potential clients or developers is not the only route to commissions. Being on the radar of other architects can eventually be just as fruitful.

- Follow your passion and develop your reputation as an expert. However, be attentive to the level of interest and demand within the industry.

- If there is little response from peers and clients then you may be working in too narrow a niche.

Research interests can lead to future work

- ZCD Architects conducted research for the London Borough of Hackney into child-friendly cities: best practice in providing safe and creative spaces for play; and the role such spaces play in building a healthy neighbourhood.

- This led to work with a range of other collaborators: larger practices, developers and many other local authorities.

Tips for successful collaboration

- Understand each collaborator's unique expertise and how they complement each other. This is particularly important if you are forming a consortium for a competition or framework.

- Understand each collaborator's organisation. How are decisions made and how do they run their projects?

- If your practice is the junior partner to a much larger practice, that does not mean settling for being treated like a subconsultant.

- Do not be afraid to discuss money. Agree fees at an early stage and discuss each party's insurance cover.

- Discuss expectations and agree on roles and responsibilities. Be clear about the expected scope and involvement to avoid tokenistic collaborations.

Is the Future of Collaboration Online?

Clare Nash, Clare Nash Architecture; Tom Vigar, Bauman Lyons Architects

Take advantage of the rise of remote working

- Ambitious projects can be delivered by small teams supported by a much larger network of external consultants which a practice has built up over time.

- Due to the coronavirus pandemic the industry has grown accustomed to remote working relationships.

- A practice may engage on a remote freelance Financial Director or answering service. These replicate the essential clerical and administrative services associated with the physical office.

Flexibility leads to greater employee satisfaction

- Staff appreciate the improved work/life balance that results from being able to work from anywhere in the world.

- Adjacent activities such as writing, teaching or volunteer work are not possible without a degree of flexibility.

- Many women leave conventional practice when starting a family. Remote working offers better opportunities for retaining female architects in the profession.

Understand the challenges of the virtual office

- The number of meetings may increase, and clients may have unreasonable expectations: that a practice should be responsive to meeting requests at any hour of the day or night.

- While sharing CAD models and providing virtual 3D walk-throughs can be very powerful, they do not offer the tactile quality of a physical model.

- Practices need to think harder about how to provide adequate learning and development to Part 1 and Part 2 students who miss out on the learning by osmosis.

- There are nuances to facial expressions and body language that do not translate to videocalls.

How to Set Up a Collective of Architects

Ryhs Cannon, London Architects Group

Why set up a collective?

- Collectives of architects can discuss solutions to common problems, share their experiences and frustrations and support each other in the real-world challenges they face.

Keep it simple

- Set up a simple website or just a holding page members can use to sign up to a mailing list.

- A Slack group is another simple collaborative tool used by many groups.Slack can cope with larger numbers and more numerous topics and s

- btopics than a WhatsApp group. It can keep a record of recommendations and issues.

Offer design review

- Design reviews are typically only commissioned for larger schemes.

- Members of a collective can offer peer-to-peer design review for smaller schemes; providing constructive criticism. Members can take turns to chair them and write up the minutes.

- These can be useful in developing design and access statements, demonstrating to planning authorities the degree of diligence attached to the process.

How to Set Up a Collective of Architects
Lànré Gboladé, Paradigm Network

Improving diversity in architecture

- An architects' collective can provide a valuable platform for championing underrepresented groups within architecture.

- Black and other minority ethnic architects rarely see people of similar background in leadership positions. A collective can provide visibility, showcasing practices led by people of colour.

Supporting individual's career progression

- The Paradigm Network provides formal CPD on all aspects of being a professional architect.

- It offers mentoring and networking opportunities, providing personal and professional support.

Challenges of time and resources

- Setting up a collective requires dedication and a strong sense of purpose.

- It requires a team of motivated individuals. Enlist like-minded fellow architects.

- An entrepreneurial mindset helps as funding is needed to support the collective's activities.

How to Set Up a Collective of Architects

Tom Bennett and Filipa Oliveira, Architects Climate Action Network (ACAN)

Look to inspiring organisational models

- A collective need not reinvent the wheel: find and test an existing organisational model.

- ACAN took inspiration from the growth of Extinction Rebellion in 2019, seeking to bring its energy and attitude to bear on changing the climate change discourse in architecture.

- ACAN has a non-hierarchical participatory structure. Its first public event was modelled on the idea of the People's Assembly.

Identify key areas of activity For ACAN these are:

1. Resource creation and knowledge sharing: ACAN host frequent meetings and webinars, which are shared on a YouTube channel.

2. Campaigns and responses to consultations: this has led to interest from government departments,
who have asked ACAN for input on policy and legislation.

3. Actions, stunts and media events: one-off events can be valuable in drawing attention to ongoing campaigns and strategic goals.

Make room for diverging member commitments and interests

- If some goals, topics or targets are not working for particular individuals, allow them the leeway to work on other related topics of their choice.

- Maintain regular meetings to check that research, ideas and activities are productive and that everyone stays motivated.

Make room for diverging member commitments and interests

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