

SMART PRACTICE CONFERENCE 2018

VALUE-ADDED:
MAKING DESIGN QUALITY COUNT

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Welcome to your interactive Delegate Resource Pack. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for attending the RIBA Smart Practice Conference 2018. We hope you had an engaging and inspiring day. This document offers a summary of the insights shared throughout the day and links to recordings of all presentations should you wish to watch them again.

Clicking on this icon will take you to the video recording.



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WELCOME

Ben Derbyshire, RIBA President



On design quality

- Design quality is about outcomes that deliver wellbeing to humankind. Everything else, such as aesthetic criteria, should be in support of that.
- The RIBA has launched a Quality Tracker to re-establish the golden thread of quality across projects. That is how professional relationships work in other services: clients expect us to manage their risk.
- Post Occupancy Evaluation should become an integral part of projects. The RIBA is publishing a Post Occupancy Evaluation overlay to the Plan of Work, so that architects can offer POE as a standard service at the beginning of projects.

RIBA work on ethics and sustainable development

- Putting the public interest first is a priority. We need to step forward and be willing to be accountable.
- The profession needs to better reflect the diversity of the population we serve and enable architects to support sustainable development.

IN TWO MINDS: REFLECTIONS ON QUALITY

Neil Gillespie, Director, Reiach and Hall



Defining Quality

- Quality is not a set of fixed measurements; it relates directly to how we work, and how we work relates to people. One definition of quality might be: 'doing the right thing for the right people'.

'Imagination precedes experience' – Tim Ingold

- Architects should speculate: they should ask 'what would happen if we did this?' We supposedly have to have a measured route before we start. But imagination precedes experience: we must have an idea before we try to realise it.

'It is the character of things that matter, not their image' – Eduardo Chillida

- We exist in two states: we have a public life and a private life and architecture attempts to recon-

cile them. The word 'architect' originally referred to being a 'maker of plans', within an architecture that was grounded in community. We should look beyond the material to the context of a person within society.

'I used to be uncertain of my confidence, now I have confidence in my uncertainty'

– William Turnbull

- We should embrace ambiguity and uncertainty. Rather than measuring quality, we should be cultivating it. The ability to go out and find a route is worth developing: architects should hone the skill of 'wayfaring'.

[Neil Gillespie, Director, Reiach and Hall](#)

ENHANCING INFRASTRUCTURE THROUGH PLACEMAKING

Kay Hughes, Director, Khaa

Petra Marko, Co-founder, Marko&Placemakers



VeloCity approach to managing growth

- VeloCity's winning proposal in response to the National Infrastructure Commission's call for ideas for the Oxford–Cambridge growth corridor prioritises strategic densification of existing communities and a sustainable transport mix of cycling and rail.
- To combat the ongoing expansion of low-density new-build sprawl, VeloCity proposes more compact, high-density housing around historic village cores, and to connect small villages to form 'village clusters' to support the viability of essential services.
- Health and sustainability are promoted as cycling is incentivized as the main commuting method within village clusters. Existing roads are used for deliveries while each cluster is linked to a main train station.

- Proposed incremental development generates local employment by doing away with the need for large national construction frameworks. It also avoids large infrastructure costs at the outset.
- Village clusters share social, health and retail resources between them. As a critical mass of people living in these villages is reached, more services are added and the distance to access these services decreases.

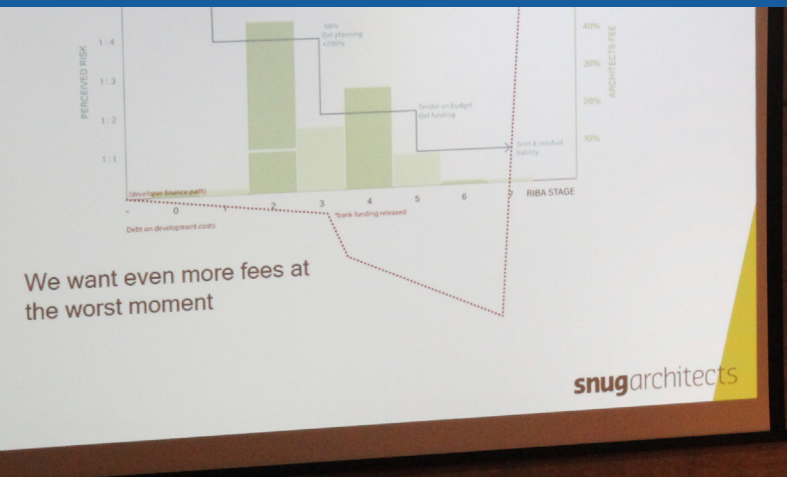
Key Takeaways

- Good placemaking successfully integrates infrastructure with housing
- Focused environments lead to healthy people
- A 'loose fit' incremental infrastructure accommodates shifts in technology over time

[Kay Hughes and Petra Marko, VeloCity](#)

ADDING VALUE WHERE IT MATTERS TO THE CLIENT'S BUSINESS MODEL

Paul Bulkeley, Managing Director, Snug Architects



Why your client's business model matters

- The key measure of design value is not the architect's but the client's satisfaction.
- By understanding their client's business model and aligning their work to suit it, architects can deliver better projects and increase their fees.

Know your client type

- There are three client types with different core business models: patron, purpose and profit clients.
- Patron clients commission and retain buildings for their own use. They may not need to borrow money and may not need to make a profit.

- Purpose clients, such as a charity or local authority, retain the building but may be running it for an organisation. They may need to borrow money, may receive a grant, but might not need to make a profit. Utility is their main aim.
- Profit clients, such as housing developers or contractors, need to sell the building to make a profit. They will almost certainly need to borrow money. They need to manage risk carefully, and they care about the project programme and schedule.

Aligning values with the client

- Understanding the client's business model allows architects to align their fee structure accordingly and secure higher fees/avoid payment issues.

- Fees should track the services rendered and the value added, while payment schedules could track a client's perceived risk throughout the project.
- Developers have significant upfront risk and are very unwilling to spend money early in the project. Postponing fee payment to a later stage can secure higher fees. This requires good cashflow management and a financial buffer.
- Practices can share the developer's risk in securing planning permission in return for an agreed share of the land's later value.

Question the brief

- The tyranny of the 'or' (in which a client can only have either this option or that option) should be replaced with the power of the 'and' (they can have both this option and that option).
- Demonstrating that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts is crucial in convincing a client

to revise a brief to achieve the 'and'. This requires forensically scrutinising the client's cost plan.

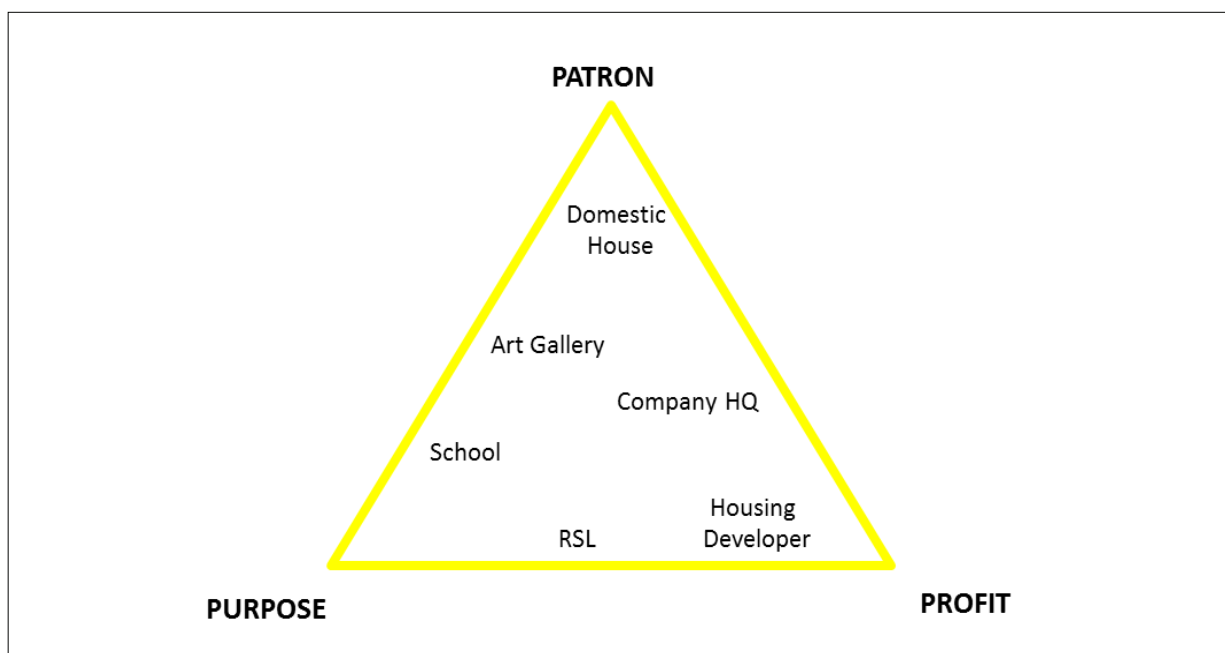
Case Study: beach huts at Milford-on-sea

- After a process of public engagement, Snug convinced their client, New Forest District Council to dramatically enlarge the original brief. Snug built the required beach huts but also incorporated new public realm and infrastructure improvements.
- By demonstrating that the whole (a multi-functional infrastructure) is greater than the sum of its parts, Snug convinced the client to invest more capital. This resulted in a much larger return for the client on their investment.

Key Takeaways

- Know your client
- Align value
- Achieve the 'and'

[Paul Bulkeley, Snug Architects](#)



COMMUNICATING YOUR ADDED VALUE TO CLIENTS

Tomas Millar, Director, Millar+Howard Workshop



Understanding customer value

- Customer value can be described as the satisfaction the customer experiences by taking an action, relative to the cost of that action. It can be summarised as an equation: $\text{Customer Value} = \text{Benefits} - \text{Cost}$

Emphasise the benefits, not the costs

- This equation too often focuses on the cost (fees), not the benefits (satisfaction). Architects need to shift that focus.
- If architects wish to increase their perceived value, they need to emphasise the benefits they deliver for clients when presenting their fees.

- Consider your practice's unique value proposition that differentiates it from its competitors

Segment the market

- M+H Workshop successfully use a 'segmentation approach', offering customisable pricing packages (basic, enhanced and premium) with detailed lists of services and deliverables.
- Highly detailed fees packages may appear complex but allow practices to educate their clients about the services they offer and reduce the risk of fees disputes.

The added value of Virtual Reality (VR)

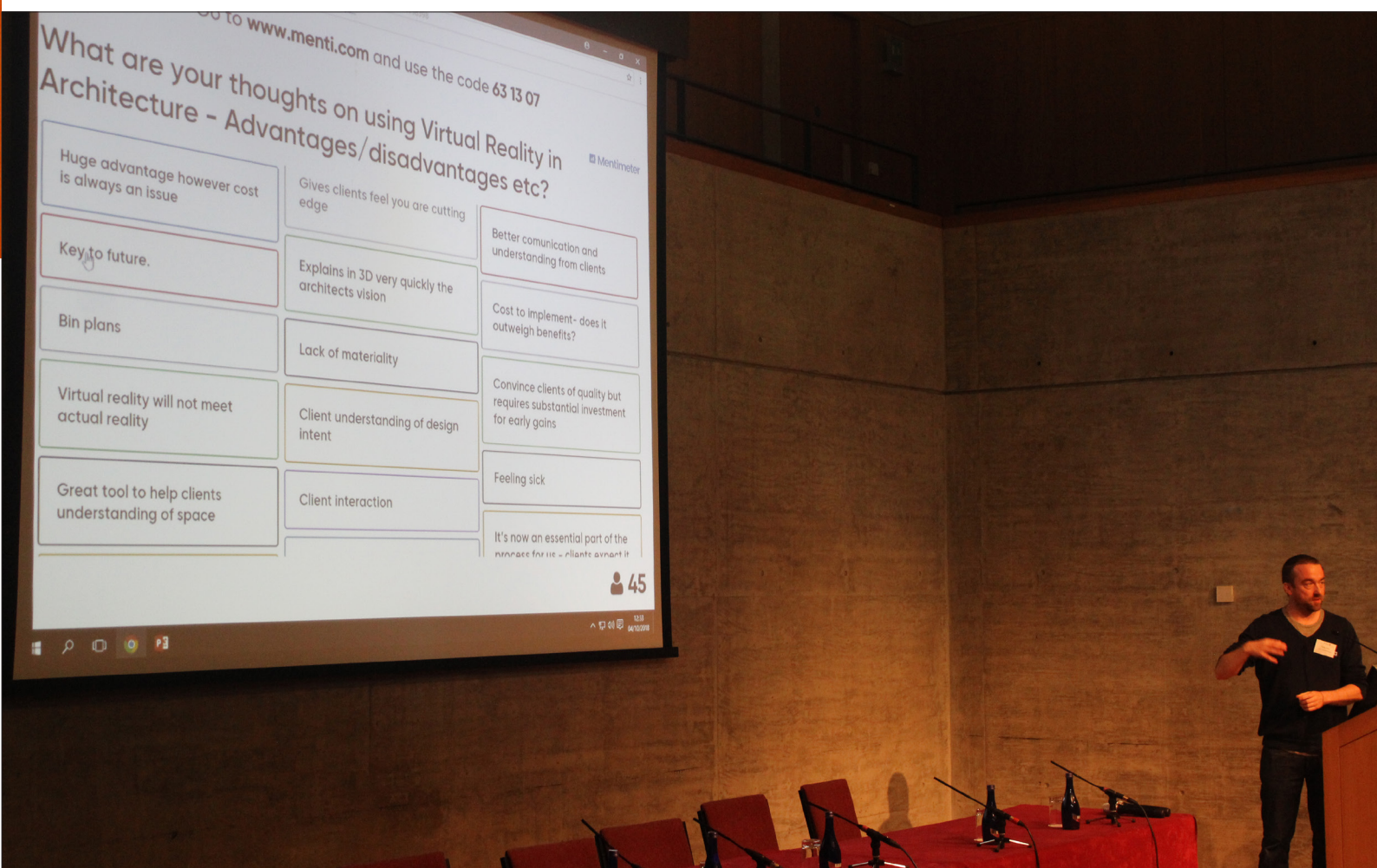
- Architectural drawings are sets of information produced for clients who often lack the ability to read them properly. Many clients are embarrassed to admit to that, resulting in information gaps and misunderstandings. VR can bridge this gap and demonstrate the architect's added value by allowing clients to experience a space more tangibly than through drawings and renderings.

- It can support a more human-focused architecture by showing how our bodies move within these spaces.

Key Takeaways

- Compete on services and benefits, not on price
- Differentiate your practice from your competitors
- Segment your market with different service levels

[Tomas Millar, Millar+Howard Workshop](#)



DELIVERING VALUE TO HOUSING CLIENTS

Claire Bennie, Director, Municipal



There is a great cultural gulf between architects and housing clients that needs to be bridged. Architects need to change the way they are perceived and convince housing clients of their value, not just their cost.

Who is the client?

- There are two kinds of client: short-term (build-to-sell housebuilders); and long-term (housing associations, local authorities and the build-to-rent sector).
- Only around a third of housing is built for the long-term client, but this sector is growing.
- Councils are building housing again, and will account for a growing share of architects' clients.
- Housing residents should be considered as clients, too, and are the most affected by what is being built.

Know the housing stakeholders within local authorities

- Politicians want delivery as soon as possible, yet do want to see quality buildings.
- The Property team want to maximise land value as soon as possible
- The Housing team want to maximise the amount of affordable housing and minimise the cost of maintenance.
- The Finance team want the lowest possible initial cost and the maximum long-term income.

- Legal & Procurement require zero-risk procurement. They prefer experienced practices with a good track record.
- Delivery teams need to distil everything down to the lowest cost by a specific deadline.

Preparing a bid

- Choose frameworks sparingly: target the clients you would really like to work for.
- Get to know your prospective clients.
- Make your submission interesting, different and personal.

Good practice for architects

- Understand housing clients' business model.
- Get to know housing clients by attending key housing conferences and engage in regular communication.
- Discover more about resident life, such as the specifics of what goes wrong day-to-day in social housing.
- Focus upon financial performance for a social

housing client: learn to design affordably and robustly.

- Be forensic in analysing the long-term costs of a scheme, and excel at working with constructors.
- Revisit your schemes after five, ten, or even twenty years to learn about what works; speak to residents and maintenance teams.

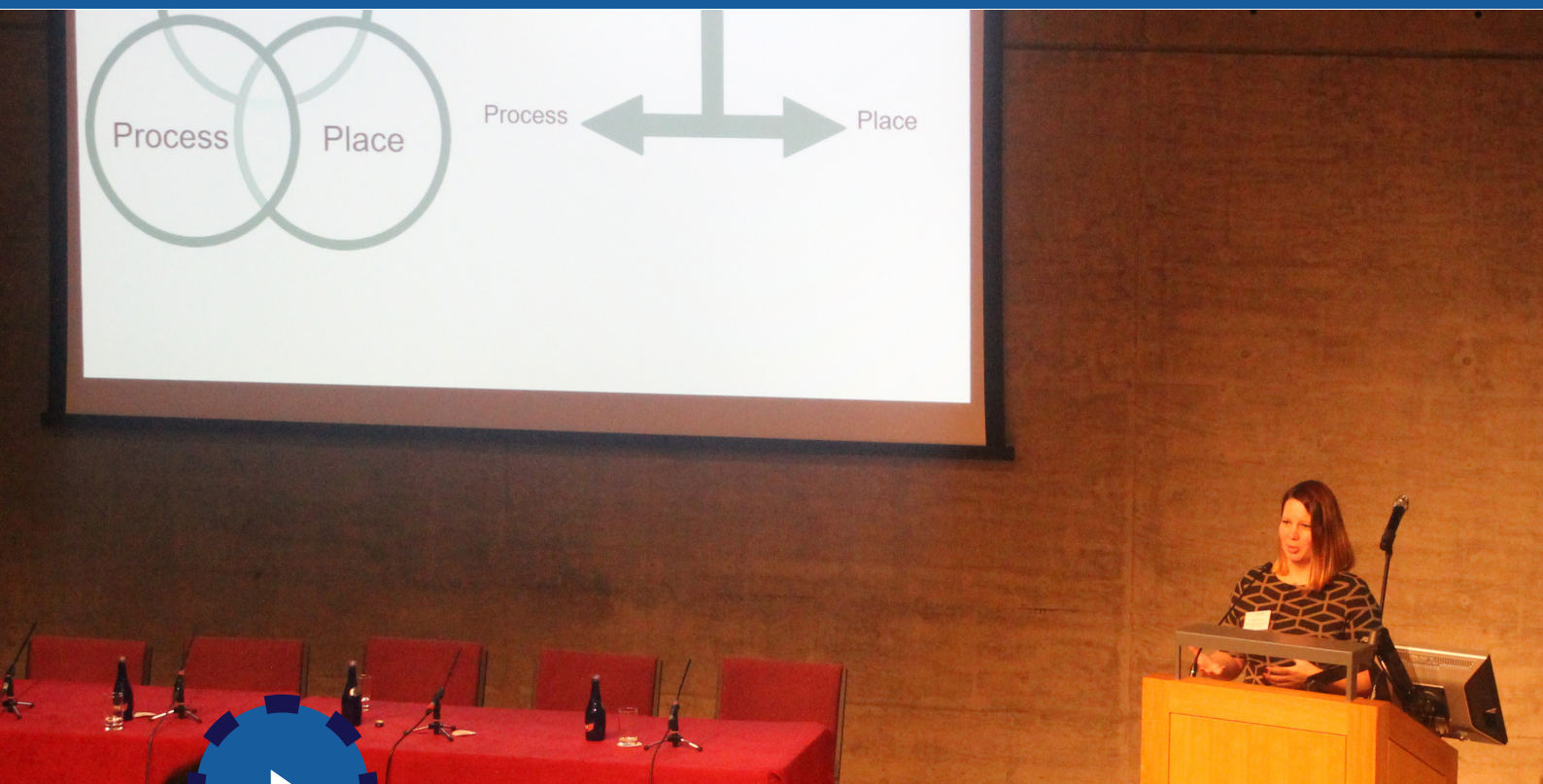
Good practice for housing teams

- Procurement and appointment practices within housing need to be reformed.
- It would be beneficial if housing clients could be persuaded to spend more in the short term and less in the long term.
- Clients should commit to a meaningful site role for the design team and allow architects to revisit housing for evaluation.

[Claire Bennie, Municipal](#)

EVALUATING THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF DESIGN

Dr Jennifer Thomas, Head of Built Environment, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government



Design quality and social value

- Design quality is not about aesthetics but about outcomes – positive impacts on people and places.
- Post Occupancy Evaluation is an essential part of delivering social value. They should be based on: whether an aspiration has been delivered; how it has been delivered; and what impact it has had.

Social value and government policy

- Sustainable development (social, economic and environmental) is one of the UK government's National Planning Policy Framework's main goals.

- The government's Soft Landings framework also focuses on social value, assessing not just a building's performance, but positive impacts on the people within it.
- The 2018 Housing White Paper introduced the principle of 'building the right houses in the right places', emphasizing quality over quantity alone.
- The government's 2013 Green Book on appraising and evaluating projects and programmes also sent a clear signal that social value is on the agenda.

Evaluation

- There remain barriers to widespread adoption of Post Occupancy Evaluation (POE) in practice.
- There is often little or no money left for POE at the end of a development. However, housing clients are increasingly including POE when going out to tender.
- The Logic Model (or outcomes approach) is a useful evaluation method: start with the outcomes – what you want to achieve – and work backwards.

Critical tensions

- Ideally, a project should result in people, process and place all working well together; yet they often pull in different directions.
- Environmental considerations, such as energy efficiency, may conflict with those of human wellbeing.
- Social impacts may even contradict each other, such as conflicts between social interactivity and security or privacy.

Evaluation: key principles

- Be selective and outcomes-led
- The evaluation should be independent of the designer and focused on the user.
- Aesthetic value is only important from the point of view of the end-user's wellbeing (such as pride in the space or a sense of community).
- Evaluation should take place at least a year after occupation: users will have experienced the building across all seasons; they will also have

accustomed themselves to the environment.

- Adopt a holistic approach: social value should be assessed alongside other criteria such as the building's energy performance.
- Make sure any unintended negative consequences of attempts to provide social value are noted.

Evaluation methods

- Qualitative in-person feedback is generally more useful than quantitative data.
- Questionnaires can be useful in gauging feedback from large numbers of people but may raise issues without providing the reasons why.
- Find engaging methods of response: 'smiley face' or 'sad face' icons work well with children, prompting more detailed discussion.
- In-person evaluation is also useful from an objectivity point of view: people's own expressed experiences may not be correct.
- Evaluation in situ can also reveal use of spaces by end users in positive ways that were not anticipated or designed for.

Key Takeaways

- Social value isn't simple, but measuring it does not have to be difficult.
- Social value forms a key part of government policy.
- Design quality is about achieving positive outcomes, including social value.

The slides for this presentation are unavailable for sharing.

SOCIAL VALUE PECHAKUCHA

Matthew Springett and Fiona MacDonald,
Matt+Fiona

February Philips, Fifth Studio

Jateen Lad, Jateen Lad Architect

Daniel Dyer, MawsonKerr

Nicola Bacon, Social Life



MATTHEW SPRINGETT AND FIONA MACDONALD, MATT+FIONA: MADE IN OAKFIELD

An architect-educator team working with young people, Matt+Fiona co-designed and built an external classroom and social space with pupils excluded from mainstream schools due to behavioural problems.

Strategies for delivering social value

- Architectural design and building processes can teach problem-solving and hands-on creativity in ways that improve the development and wellbeing of young people.
- The pupils were involved in developing the brief via model-making workshops, presentations and architectural critiques.
- The processes and techniques were tailored to the skill-level of students (aged 13–16).

Evidence of social value

- The act of working collectively with a shared goal created a safe space that allowed young people to open up about wider issues in their lives.
- The students were from a ‘physical restraint’ school, yet the project had a highly positive impact on their behaviour; no confrontations occurred during the project.
- Co-production created a sense of ownership and pride; pupils continue to adapt the den to their needs.

[Matthew Springett and Fiona MacDonald, Matt+Fiona](#)

FEBRUARY PHILIPS, 5TH STUDIO: WOLFSON FLATS – HUMANISING THE POST-WAR HOUSING PARADIGM

5th Studio were commissioned to refurbish Churchill College Cambridge's Wolfson Building, a Brutalist apartment complex providing family accommodation for graduate students. The College had considered demolishing the by-then unloved and unfashionable structure.

Strategies for delivering social value

- Consider the three pillars of sustainability (economic, social and environmental). Physical upgrades and energy performance improvements went along with improving residents' living experience.
- There was an aspiration to humanise the fabric, while attempting to preserve its 1960s character.
- Construction work was divided into smaller contracts

so work could be carried out by local contractors, injecting money in the local economy.

- Simple interventions can make a significant difference. The insertion of a large window in the family living rooms now allows direct views of the outdoor playground, greatly improving family interactivity and use of outdoor spaces.

February Phillips, 5th Studio

JATEEN LAD: SHARANAM CENTRE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT, PONDICHERRY, INDIA

Jateen Lad was commissioned to build a new headquarter for the Sharanam development centre in a poor and underdeveloped region of southern India that had also been hit by the 2004 tsunami. The local residents suffered from poverty, unemployment, lack of education and health problems.

Strategies for delivering social value

- Leading role of the architect, including cost and construction management and pitching the vision to potential funders
- No use of contractors: local workmen were directly employed, generating a sense of empowerment and providing skills training.
- Partnership with the Manchester School of Architecture during construction, providing graduates with hands-on experience and traditional site skills.

Outcomes and conclusions

- The building boosted access to Sharanam's development programmes, providing education and training as well as improving health

outcomes, including a notable reduction in alcoholism locally.

- 55% of construction costs were directly invested in the local community
- Local workers trained on the project have since been able to find work or start their own contracting businesses
- Extensive new gardens have healed the site, generating a sense of wellbeing and tranquility.
- The project demonstrates that architecture has a role to play in communities left behind. It is possible to make beautiful buildings and facilitate social change in the process.

- Architects can deliver better outcomes and higher social value when taking on more responsibility. While Lad's services accrued higher relative professional fees the project resulted

in superior outcomes at half the typical local construction costs.

[Jateen Lad, Jateen Lad Architect](#)

DANIEL DYER, MAWSONKERR: THE STAR AND SHADOW CINEMA, NEWCASTLE

MawsonKerr oversaw the re-homing of a cinema and arts complex for the community-benefit organisation a local artists collective which actively participated in the design and construction process.

Strategies for delivering social value

- Newcastle City Council helped finance the project, while a call to 'Come build your cinema' was put out to invite volunteers and donations of materials and resources.
- There was no main contractor; a core group of volunteers was supplemented by local architecture students seeking to get practical experience on site.
- Resources and building materials were contributed by stakeholders, such as artists who would be renting studio space, and local businesses.
- In a community project dependant on volunteers, a dedicated core of individuals with an extra level of commitment is necessary.

[Daniel Dyer, MawsonKerr](#)





NICOLA BACON, SOCIAL LIFE: MEASURING THE SOCIAL VALUE OF CHANGES TO THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Social Life carried out a benchmark social sustainability assessment on the impact of the South Acton Estate regeneration on its residents.

Measuring social value

- In measuring social value, the focus should be upon 'lived experience'. What ultimately makes places work are the social relations between people.
- Thriving communities are created via a process of learning, and reacting to, what people need from the places where they live and work.
- Within social sustainability, environmental and financial factors are as significant as interactivity between people.
- Social sustainability requires residents to have a voice, influence and space to grow; but also good amenities and infrastructure; and social and cultural opportunities.

Research and evaluation: South Acton Estate

- The residents' perceptions of regeneration were researched and compared across the older estate, newly built homes, and the streets immediately neighbouring the estate.
- Residents in the new build housing reported higher levels of wellbeing and satisfaction; however, they also reported lower figures for social interaction with their neighbours.
- Being involved in a consultation process was found to help increase residents' sense of agency.
- Evaluation should be conducted after a settling in period to properly assess how residents view the older buildings in relation to newer ones.

[Nicola Bacon, Social Life](#)

RETAINING DESIGN QUALITY THROUGH DELIVERY

Gavin Heaphy, Construction Director, University of Cambridge



As Construction Director, Gavin Heaphy is responsible for all elements of design, procurement and delivery of the North West Cambridge Development of more than 3000 homes, mixed use facilities and recreational spaces.

Traditional versus design & build procurement

- Traditional procurement requires exceptional understanding of the delivery process from the designers. It requires a large commitment of time and resources by the designers.
- Clients seek to reduce risk, and design and build is seen as an attractive proposition to minimize risk and establish certainty.
- If a traditional procurement route is taken a more hands-on design team is needed that knows how to design for construction.

How can architects avoid pitfalls in design and specification?

- The key is to anticipate what's coming next. Look ahead and work back from where you want to be to head off problems.
- Stay as flexible as possible for as long as possible. This allows the client to examine different options.
- Better briefing = better design. Getting the brief right is crucial: to do so, spend more time on the briefing stage and considering desired outcomes.

- Learn how the build process works. There is no substitute for the experience and knowledge of what it takes to deliver a design.
- Simplicity in design tends to minimise the likelihood of constructors cutting corners. Developing designs that aren't deliverable has huge repercussions.

What do clients want more of from architects in the delivery stage?

- Architects should remain engaged throughout the process, and help resolve any issues in construction.
- They should help clients champion design quality, especially when dealing with specialist sub-contractors.

Key Takeaways

- The client's needs should always be foremost; the client is not necessarily always the person paying for the building.
- Be open to learning from your mistakes: explain why and how they informed the development.
- Be team-oriented and project-oriented; demonstrate a willingness to compromise when necessary. The human interactions between members of the project team are the fundamental basis of any project, large or small.
- Design to build: buildings should be designed pragmatically, with an understanding of how they will be built.
- Architects should be more programme-conscious. Delivery on time has a huge financial impact much greater than just the cost of workers on site: it prevents potential loss of income and increased cost of borrowing.

[Gavin Heaphy, University of Cambridge](#)

Who are an architect's clients and what do they require?

- There are ultimately three clients: the client; community; and the environment.
- Architecture is always a very local concern, yet it can address global issues through local interventions.
- There can be no public good without social benefit and environmental sustainability, but there can be no construction without economic feasibility – without the paying client.

Delivering high-quality design to budget

- Work on the budget in forensic fashion – always considering the price per square metre – from the very first day of a project. This is key to making a project work.
- Produce construction details as early as the concept stage, to understand cost implications and test feasibility.

Case studies: 'giving back' schools to the community

- C+S Architects have transformed several school

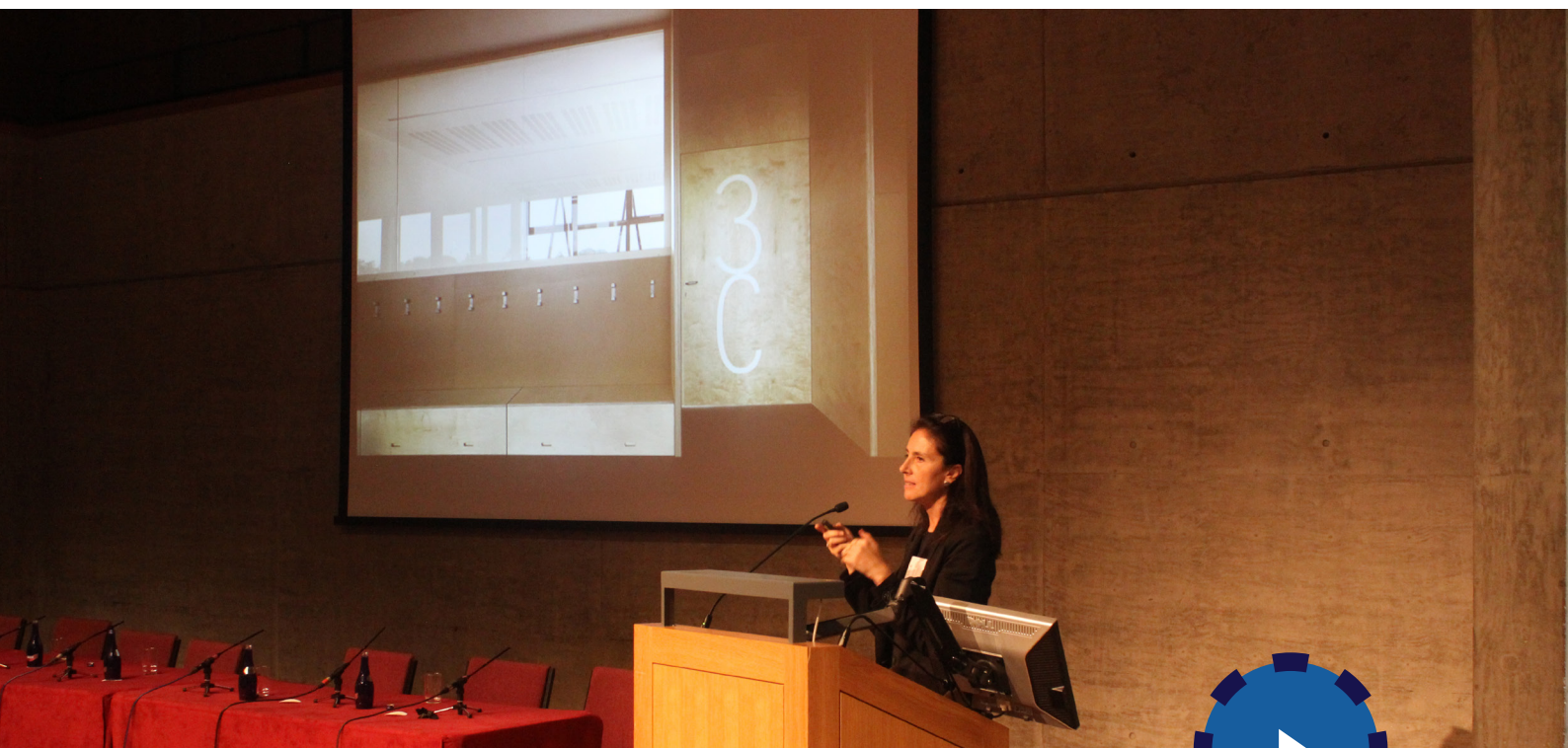
buildings in ways that 'give them back' to the community and extend their usage to after-school hours.

- Ponzano Primary School in Venice was transformed into a 'society building', in which the gymnasium and many classrooms are accessible outside school hours.
- Collective spaces are important to its design: everything is worked out around a courtyard.
- In one instance, C+S Architects convinced the local authority to move the communal library inside the local primary school, turning it into a community hub after hours.

Key Takeaway

- There can be no construction and no public good without economic feasibility, environmental sustainability or social benefit.

[Maria Segantini, C+S Architects](#)



BUILDING A REPUTATION FOR DESIGN
AND DELIVERY

Maria Segantini, Director, C+S Architects

HOW CAN ARCHITECTS CONTRIBUTE TO A MORE PRODUCTIVE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR?

Jaimie Johnston, Director and Head of Global Systems, Bryden Wood



The UK Infrastructure Projects Authority predicts a £600bn spend in the UK over the next decade. To meet the UK's predicted infrastructure requirements and fill the housing gap, the UK's construction industry needs to become much more productive than it currently is. The gap between construction and manufacturing needs to be closed.

The problems facing the construction industry

- The traditional procurement model is broken, with teams of specialists working together reluctantly and unproductively. The architect's role itself has been diminished and increasingly taken on by other specialists.
- Skills shortages, ageing work force, low margins, adversarial pricing models, low innovation are among the many problems of the construction industry.
- Data from McKinsey suggests that parts of the construction industry could be 5–10 times more productive by moving to offsite manufacturing for construction.
- This would require a complete overhaul of regulations, contracts, design, procurement, the supply chain, skills and the use of technology.

The 'integrated platform' and procurement

- The 'integrated platform' is a model for construction in which buildings have their own architectural character, yet are assembled from a standard set of components.
- For clients such as GlaxoSmithKline or the UK government, risk is not an option and certainty is a must. They are therefore entering actively into the building and procurement process using integrated platform models.
- They have digital libraries for designers, and they are able to procure all over the world consistently and precisely.

Types of construction

- 'Traditional' construction may use some standardisation (e.g. room-types) but essentially requires a bespoke process to deliver bespoke solutions each time.

- 'Volumetric' manufacturing uses standardised components and processes but they are not sufficiently adaptable or customisable.
- 'Manufactured' offers the optimum solution, using standardised processes and components which can be mass customised.
- Only governments have a consistently large enough spending power to achieve fully 'manufactured' status. The UK should be heavily investing in components.

Future outlook

- The next generation of designers already know how to work with Virtual Reality and complex software.
- Complex algorithms will mean increasingly capable and powerful machine learning is integrated into design.
- The growth of the Internet of Things will see our buildings becoming increasingly more self-adaptive.
- There is a risk that manufacturing technologies will make buildings look the same.

What are the opportunities for architects in the future?

- New architectural movements have always been predicated on new technology. Architects are best placed to answer questions such as 'what might these buildings look like?' and 'what is the new aesthetic?'
- Architects should be focusing on 'design for manufacture and assembly': working out how to employ new manufacturing technologies to make better buildings.
- New technologies can facilitate architects to demonstrate their added value and they should attempt to re-engineer fees. accordingly.

Key Takeaways

- Construction and manufacturing are converging in the construction industry, although the end results won't resemble either
- The future will be much more digital, rather than less. BIM is just the beginning.
- Ideas and outcomes are the most important factor, and an area in which architects are well placed to contribute.

Jaimie Johnston, Bryden Wood

