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The Skylight International bespoke rooflight is a centrepiece to this project, it brings in natural light deep into the plan, and provides an interesting interplay of angles and sunlight. The homeowners are delighted with the finished look.

Amanda Campbell
Architect
A-Cubed Design Ltd

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From the President of the RIAS
Robin Webster OBE PRIAS

The planned new governance structure of the Incorporation has taken up a lot of time and although it is pretty dry stuff, it is very important. I am hopeful that with the help of a number of committed members we are now getting close to the point at which we will have an agreed structure. The Council (which will have a relatively large membership representing the chapters and all types of members) will focus on the strategy of the Incorporation, debating architectural issues that are important to the profession, and instructing the Board to deliver this strategy along with the staff. The Board will have a maximum of twelve trustees, who will be selected according to their relevant expertise, and it will be responsible for the governance of the Incorporation and for delivering Council’s strategy. There is much to clarify, and we are still refining this, but we expect to be able to put a firm proposal to members at the AGM.

The legal review of past difficulties that Council commissioned has been underway since January, it has taken longer than expected, but as I write this we hope to receive it within the next few days. There will then be a Special Council Meeting to discuss it and decide how to proceed: again we expect to be able to report to members about this at the AGM.

Meanwhile the Incorporation’s various committees have been active, and we have voiced our concern regarding who should inspect construction work other than the designer. Several meetings have been held regarding procurement for public buildings, recommending the Northern Irish practice of scoring tenders highest that are closest to the average price, rather than always going for the lowest.

I attended the opening of this year’s Architecture Fringe at Glasgow’s Lighthouse: here is encouraging evidence of huge energy and commitment to architectural ideas mainly coming from the younger generation, with no fewer than one hundred separate events all over Scotland. The Incorporation cannot take much credit for this (although The GIA and many of our members have helped) but it gives me hope, and I believe that everyone will want to support it as it continues to grow and develop.

Robin Webster OBE PRIAS
President, RIAS
"...we as architects have the ability to contribute something extra to a project for our client which may not have initially been envisaged as being important to the wellbeing of the end users..."

Gerry Grams is an architect and urbanist working in private practice. He was the City of Glasgow’s first City Design Advisor, helping establish the Glasgow Urban Design Panel and delivering the 20th Commonwealth Games in Glasgow. In guest-editing this issue he has drawn on his wide experiences of collaboration in both public and private sectors, as well as his interest in working with artists.

Issues of wellbeing or ‘wellness’ have become commonplace, especially in the media, and much like ‘sustainability’ everyone thinks they know what it means, but do they really understand the complexity it plays in the challenges that face us in our everyday lives?

This edition’s theme is one which obviously affects us all and for me, as a man of a certain age, it’s definitely a daily consideration. It’s not only in reference to our personal physical and mental states, but the environment that surrounds us – the planet, our cities and neighbourhoods, our living and working conditions.

As guest editor I invited contributions covering a wide range of topics which begin to touch on a lot of these issues, and I’m pleased that the resultant articles illustrate to me how, as I suspected, everything is connected. They also illustrate, quite directly in some cases how we as architects, designers and artists have a vital responsibility in improving our surroundings, nurturing relationships with clients and communities and playing a vital role in improving the lives of all members of society.

Not all architects get to work on projects which have a direct health agenda, however as some of these articles prove, we as architects have the ability to contribute something extra to a project for our client which may not have initially been envisaged as being important to the wellbeing of the end user. I’m encouraged that clients have also been involved in providing their own perspectives on the processes of our profession.

In the Thistle Foundation’s aspirational project, a real understanding relationship is evident and the importance in having a combined ‘faith in your vision’. The newly opened Community Care Centre project in the Gorbals in Glasgow designed by jmarchitects also shows a real in-depth knowledge of the place and an impressive approach to collaboration between the designers, funders and clients which will undoubtedly reap many benefits for the health of that community for years to come.

They also illustrate the changing attitudes of how society regards what it means to be healthy in matters of work and play. The Victorians combined swimming pools with reading rooms as a means to escape from daily life. 2M Architecture sympathetic restoration and the reinvention of recreational spaces for contemporary tastes illustrates this.

The importance of inclusion and equality in the 21st century workplace is described in Threeways Architecture’s award-winning offices. In creating an environment which allows social and cultural activity to contribute to personal and professional growth as well as support and belonging, they reinvent architectural working practice.

On a metropolitan scale, Professor Brian Evans offers medical point that environments that bring people together are a critical factor in the support of wellness in the population. And whilst drainage infrastructure doesn’t sound like the most romantic topic to talk about, Hawkin| Brown public spaces on the River Thames not only begin to provide meaningful ‘blue’ spaces in which to interact, but also provide opportunities to ‘tell tales of the river...a model for the River Clyde perhaps?’

What comes across as being paramount is the necessity for us to engage with all of our environmental ‘life’ and by bringing together people to support the common good we can create tools which allow us to ‘...make sense of the world...’ through inclusive design and social interaction. Let’s demystify the idea that architects don’t care about how they build, but are in fact social and environmental activists with key skill sets to take our cities and communities to another level.

Let’s also make sure that our academic institutions engage more with good practice to help take the stresses out of learning, and that our national and local governments harness our creativity to support healthy communities and design liveable places for the next generation.

Engage and enjoy!*

Professor Gerry Grams B.Arch. Dip.Arch. FRIAS

* From the Guest Editor, Gerry Grams

RIAS Quarterly Issue 38 Summer 2019
Latham

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Find out more….
I was on a train recently and found myself reading an arduous article about Niksen and the health benefits of doing nothing. I gave up after the first two paragraphs and stared out of the train window, pleased with the irony of actually doing nothing instead of reading about doing nothing. So if you give up reading this after the second paragraph I hope that you’ve chosen to do something equally as ‘niksen-esque’, it’s good for you.

We recently had an inspirational and informative CPD presentation on Sustainable Construction, presented by Sandy Halliday (GAIA Research) and Chris Stewart (Collective Architecture). Chris focused on the policy side of Sustainable Construction while Sandy presented practical case studies and examples of various scales and types, from a Japanese microbrewery to a Swiss housing complex for the homeless. The presentation was timely, given the recent climate emergency announcements by various governments, and the UN advising that humanity is hurtling towards extinction if we do not ACT NOW.

There are documented stress issues related to worrying about climate change (and our impending extinction). Our policymakers must lead the way to encourage and enable professionals and the public to turn that stress into action. The RIAS can play a vital part in that policy making, if we can get beyond the current navel-gazing, which is unfortunately not ‘niksen-esque’.

The Sustainable Construction CPD took place at the Maggie’s Centre in Aberdeen. If you are an architect living in Scotland and don’t know what a Maggie’s Centre is then you may have been living under a large rock with no WiFi. Across Scotland we have some wonderful Maggie’s Centres designed by world-renowned and nationally-acclaimed architects. What the centres are, architecturally, is very much related to what they do. They are unique buildings providing help for anyone affected by cancer. They provide a variety of spaces; inspirational, informal and intimate, where you can talk to and get support from a range of professionals. The centres are staffed by cancer support specialists, benefits advisors, nutritionists, therapists and psychologists, all providing support in whichever way best suits the visitor. The staff and users that we’ve spoken to are all proud of their building and have all experienced how the architecture can positively impact their health and Wellbeing.

ASA members have been taking part in and supporting the Maggie’s Culture Crawl in Aberdeen, which sees buildings open their doors and provide ‘cultural’ entertainment of all sorts. The event is described as a cross between Doors Open Day and the Edinburgh Festival. This year will be my first year taking part, and I can’t wait to feel the effect an event like this can have on my health and Wellbeing. We thanked them on the evening, but we’d like to thank Chris and Sandy once again for their presentations, and their complimentary words about the ASA. We’d also like to thank the Maggie’s Centre Aberdeen for the use of their buildings and facilities, and we would encourage you to look into your local Centre (they’re very welcoming) and get involved with some of their events.

Richard Slater RIAS RIBA
President, ASA

“What the centres are, architecturally, is very much related to what they do. They are unique buildings providing help for anyone affected by cancer.”

Maggie’s Culture Crawl
www.maggiescentres.org/culturecrawl/find-event/culture-crawl-aberdeen

“What the centres are, architecturally, is very much related to what they do. They are unique buildings providing help for anyone affected by cancer.”

Maggie’s Centre, Aberdeen
© Richard Slater RIAS RIBA

“What the centres are, architecturally, is very much related to what they do. They are unique buildings providing help for anyone affected by cancer.”

Maggie’s Centre, Aberdeen
© Richard Slater RIAS RIBA
Alice Turpie of Nicoll Russell Studios talks about health and wellbeing in the workplace and becoming a cycle friendly employer.

This is a different story from, I note, previous very impressive long-distance trips. However, here at Nicoll Russell Studios, it is more a gradual accumulation of distance over time... but it does all add up.

In 2016, things actually began as a run log, starting up a bit of motivation and competition within the office. We quickly added a cycling category to the contest. We didn’t manage to keep this up for very many months to begin with – bad weather/laziness? But, following another half-hearted attempt the following year, things really took off in 2018.

With running and cycling still being the main events we have added many more categories to widen the appeal and to encourage more people. We have flat cycling, hilly cycling, running, walking and swimming, all measured in kilometres. We also have gym time, football, yoga and even sometimes gardening, all measured in minutes for want of a better idea.

Prizes are given at the end of each month. All very exciting, could be as much as a Freddo for example, or perhaps a wee pack of nuts when in a healthier mood. Perhaps a wee pack of nuts when in a healthier mood. It is surprising how much a small prize for achievement brightens up a person’s day as they sit there working at a computer.

While this started out as a health drive, being part of the Studio’s environmental group, I then in addition, saw a positive link to improving our carbon footprint. As architects, we have an obvious environmental responsibility towards the buildings we design but that also extends our own housekeeping, our own workplace.

I have tried the odd site visit by bike, works quite well. Messenger bag, ok. A side high-vis jacket does just as well on the bike. Helmets… less easy perhaps. However, I think the main advantage is in the commuting. While we have one cyclist who travels in from Carnoustie, it is the multiple short commutes which add up. I found out recently that one of my colleagues, Jane, having changed from driving to walking in almost every day over the last year, and winning a number of prizes on the way, has decided to give up her car altogether which is certainly better for the environment.

My own cycle commute is very short. It does not add many kilometres to the totalizer; however I find it makes a big difference to how I feel in the day. That bit of very fresh air blasting up the River Tay is always welcome. So, it seems that the cycling is good for mental wellbeing as well as physical health.

I have found that the trick to actually getting out the door and avoiding the lazy car option is to have everything ready to hand, making cycling the easiest and quickest option. And – a cycle commuters handy hint – the architect’s uniform of black jeans is pretty good for hiding chain oil!

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Dundee is a small city and we have ready access to the scenic coastal path up to Carnoustie and Arbroath. We can also use the tracks up at Templeton Woods where Director Willie Watt, a qualified mountain bike coach, was able to organise training sessions for the staff – very enjoyable and we all survived unscathed!

We were pretty happy this year to present our low key approach to Cycling Scotland and as a result, attain a Cycle Friendly Employer status but while that is directed at the office itself, we have found that our strategy is also reaching staff families too, for example a school child cycling in with her mother and leaving her bike stored safely here near the school or other family members joining in the mountain bike training.

Looking to the future, we plan to improve our facilities, aiming to install proper bike racks and, we hope, a shower. Looking to the future, we plan to improve our facilities, aiming to install proper bike racks and, we hope, a shower. We also easily use the tracks up at Templeton Woods where Director Willie Watt, a qualified mountain bike coach, was able to organise training sessions for the staff – very enjoyable and we all survived unscathed!

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Looking to the future, we plan to improve our facilities, aiming to install proper bike racks and, we hope, a shower. Both of these we think, making it easier for people to cycle and run in and out of work, therefore creating a healthier more motivated staff and a tangible team ethic.

If you are interested in becoming a Cycle Friendly Employer more information can be found via the Cycle Scotland website (www.cyclescotland.com).
Sustainability at the Core of the RIAS

In April this year the Climate Change Committee released a report outlining the requirement for urgent action to tackle climate change, stating that we need to phase out greenhouse gas emissions and be effectively carbon neutral by 2050 to limit global temperature rises within the limits agreed at the Paris Climate Change Summit.

Following this report, the school climate strikes and Extinction Rebellion protests the Scottish Government has declared a climate emergency and set 2045 as the target for reducing carbon emissions to net zero.

It is imperative that the RIAS and wider architectural profession respond to this with action. The RIAS was once the leader in sustainability. It needs to be at the forefront of change once more, assisting and leading Scottish Government to recognise the opportunities that a low carbon economy presents and the potential to improve the health and wellbeing of the country.

I believe that a key part of the ongoing reforms of both the EAA and RIAS is to embed sustainability into the core of both organisations. As architects we are in a powerful position to drive the change to zero carbon society. The EAA has formed a sustainability group to work in partnership with the other chapters and RIAS to develop and push this agenda.

The RIAS should take the lead in lobbying government to ensure that procurement recognises the importance of sustainable design. Infrastructure and how we live will need to adapt, developments plans will require greater integration, to deliver social, economic and environmental sustainability.

As part of a wider sustainability we need to consider health and wellbeing when designing buildings, improving internal environments by reducing use of VOC’s and improving connections between internal and external environments. The recent research has identified approaches and design considerations. It highlights the benefits to building occupants, such as connections to daylight and nature improving patient recovery times and reducing absenteeism.

However, we need to upskill the profession to meet this challenge, expanding access to learning and expanding interest in the RIAS Sustainability Accreditation. Business as usual is not an option and we need to evolve and adapt to the demands of a low carbon society. We need to speak up and make our voices heard.

Chapter Update

I was elected as the new EAA President at the AGM in April. All of us at the EAA Council would like to express our thanks to Julie Wilson for the excellent job she has done over the last two years, re-invigorating the EAA along with leading reform of the EAA and pushing the RIAS to change and become more inclusive. I hope to continue these reforms both within the EAA and RIAS.

I am joined by Alice Henderson as Senior Vice President and Nicholas Taggart as Junior Vice President. The EAA also welcomed seven new members of Council, Alastair Cook, Alex Liddell, Christina Gaiger, Gary Cunningham, Kieran Gaffney, Michael Good and Ruth McLennan.

The restructuring of the EAA charity status was approved at the recent AGM and at RIAS Council allowing us to convert to a SCIO and modernise the constitution. The next steps involve the re-writing of the constitution for review and approval of the Chapter membership and RIAS later in the year.

Ben Rainger RIAS RIBA
President, EAA

“The RIAS was once the leader in sustainability. It needs to be at the forefront of change once more…”

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The Glasgow Institute of Architects 151th Annual General Meeting took place 24.04.19 at the Civic House in Glasgow, host of many ArchiFringe events last year. We celebrated the 150th anniversary of the creation of the Institute in style, with a bunting party at YVGC and a civic reception in Glasgow City Chambers.

This year the GIA has again delivered an incredible amount of work and I am very proud to have such a dedicated, reliable, hardworking and passionate team. The newly formed Conservation committee headed by Scott Abercrombie and Fiona Sinclair pulled together the Institute’s 150 year’s timeline book and they are now collaborating on an exhibition of tenement drawings with John Burns, Tenement: An Architectural History Exhibition.

This year we took a chance by changing the venue for our Design Awards ceremony to Ranald. The crowd was delighted with the insightful talk given by head judge Biba Dow about her work and in particular the Garden Museum. In fact, the GIA Supreme Design Award winner this year, Stallan-Brand, for Broomlands School Primary, Paul Stallan’s Dow about her work and in particular the Garden Museum.

The sustainability committee is a great success, Chris Stewart, as convenor, and his team are now exporting our winner of the GIA Conservation Award in 2018. This year in the newly restored Mackintosh at the Willow, an environment for the education of children.

The Practice committee assembled a great CPD series and now we have been asked to work with him. We were delighted to welcome Darren Williamson as our Honorary Treasurer going forward. We also had to say goodbye to Jim Webster as convenor, Andrew Hadden, who has been a key part of the Glasgow Urban Design Panel seeks to support built environment professionals in creating the very best design solutions for the city and its people.

The steering group is investigating a two-tier structure, where there is a small executive trustee board that is elected by the larger advisory council. Many other similar organisations have a two tier system, such as the Landscape Institute. The main benefits is that reduces liability to just those on the Executive Board (EB). The EB would be made up of people with specific required fiduciary skills, bowing up council to focus on delivering the many projects and events we do as well as being in charge of the election of all of the trustees/members of the EB.

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Under our current constitutional arrangement, only RIAS Chartered Members and Fellows are eligible to vote on GIA Council. This has resulted in a situation where regular contributors to the GIA have been left in a position where they are unable to have a say on Council business. The GIA Council voted with quorum that all GIA Council members who are in any of the RIAS listed members categories should be eligible to vote on all matters brought forward to the GIA Council. We will seek legal advice and liaise with the RIAS Council to request a review of the relevant by-laws in pursuance of the voting rights of individuals on Chapter matters to see how to redraft the relevant paragraph of our own constitution (clause 6) and other relevant clauses. Our Honorary Treasurer Greg McCallum presented the yearly accounts for the final time before his retirement. Greg has been a fundamental part in all our activities and will be missed terribly by all of us who had the pleasure to work with him. We were delighted to welcome Darren Williamson as our Honorary Treasurer going forward. We
I am just back from the most interesting holiday of my life, and it is something I should have done a long time ago (and do more often)! My holidays for years were spent in a tent on remote Scottish Islands, so a cruise on the Nile was definitely different and mind-blowing. But that’s another story, and about me, not the Chapter!

We have been attempting to ensure the Highlands and Islands have a legacy from the Festival of Architecture. A late developer for the Festival of Architecture was “Building Our Islands”, a project which has been briefly reported previously.

The project was born in the Western Isles and developed by Western Isles Architecture Group, in conjunction with An Lanntair.

The ideas were very ambitious and aimed at the young as an educational tool to stimulate interest in the built environment and sustainability.

The ideas were on several levels and in various strands:

A. 1. Demonstrate: how to create energy; how to store energy; how to create light from energy; how to use light
   2. Teach: how to build lanterns; how to light lanterns

B. Create an educational leaflet on Awareness of Built Environment to be delivered, in both Gaelic and English, to all schools in the Western Isles.

This guide, unlike other environmental awareness leaflets, was to be aimed at the island and rural environment and was for all ages.

C. 1. A challenge to the community through social media to identify their favourite buildings.
   2. Once the top three buildings had been identified, create a simple image for the façade.
   3. Circulate façade images back to the community, with a request that they be coloured in, drawn on, or simply used as a backdrop for a painting.
   4. Collect the images created and digitise them.

The final strand of this was to bring the lanterns and graphics together with events by having a lantern parade to the chosen buildings and then projecting the created images onto the façade. The event could be supported by music, poetry or other activities.

Building our Islands included the creation of an Architectural trail through the Western Isles and a small legacy of permanently lighting two buildings.

You may wonder why I am telling you this but the good news is we have been working with Veronica at the RIAS and the Scottish Civic Trust to adapt the above project as the key project for the Civic Trust’s 30th anniversary of the start of Doors Open Day and we have just learned that the project has been successful in gaining £50,000 in funding from the Western Isles and Argyll and Bute Leader Project.

Renamed ‘Stone, Sea & Sky – The Architecture of Scotland’s Islands’, this reinvigorated iteration will be rolled out in the Islands and in as many places as possible to celebrate 30 years of Doors Open Day.

This is also a plea for help and guidance! Information packages will be made available but if you are able to help in any way please contact me at iaa.president2018@gmail.com initially.

This is not the only thing happening, we are now looking forward to, and beginning to put together, our November CPD event. We already have some speakers lined up, looking at different industry perspectives and how technology can be applied to the Building Industry – how it can be used to enhance BIM and open innovation.

We will also have a teaching session on how to maximise the use of technology to aid communications, through video conferencing, etc., not only for discussions, but for meetings, conferences and graphic communication.

This is aimed at breaking down geographic barriers and giving us true geographic equality, enabling us to participate fully with the RIAS (and with each other), whether located in Shetland, Orkney, Lewis, Uist or even on St Kilda!

There will be more to come on this.

Stuart Bagshaw FRIAS RIBA
President, IAA (Highlands and Islands Chapter)
For the last two years, our Chapter has organised lectures highlighting the risks associated with stress and the importance of a well-balanced lifestyle.

Our lecture held on 23 April was given by Business Psychologist Alan Bradshaw who described how to control stress. It is sometimes tempting to believe that good quality work and earning a decent wage imply working long hours and piling overtime – often to the detriment of family life and of the architect’s health.

It does not need to be like that.

I was privileged to work for two top architects, one in Copenhagen and the other in London. They were winning award after award for the quality of their work. I still remember the buzz, the fun and the enthusiasm that existed in these offices. At the time I believed that this was due to the quality of the work that we were doing but there was another factor: we had a good balance between work and leisure.

Both practices discouraged overtime. The reason was that we would not produce good work if we were tired. Lack of sleep would not make us happy. We would struggle, lose our concentration, yawn, slow down, and become grumpy. Therefore, in these successful practices, there was a deal: we arrived fit for work and we did not work overtime.

Both practices encouraged their architects to develop interests outside the office. This provided an opportunity to shine in other complementary activities like sports, arts, languages, family time. As a young architect, I was taught to leave my projects in the office and that included mentally switching off from work when I left the office at the end of the day.

Flexibility was also granted for the few who lived far away and could save time by arriving earlier than the official opening hours. Additional time off was possible if an architect had an exceptional opportunity to spend a few days/weeks away to excel in their non-architectural interests.

Finally, both offices favoured team building. In Copenhagen, we all had lunch together and that meant everybody: the boss, the students, the architects, the secretary and the accountant. All 20 of us, sitting at one long table, eating our open sandwiches made at home or bought in the shop near the office. The conversation was always lively, and we would get to know each other very well. It was like a big family.

In London we had day out parties; notably a day of cricket and a superb Christmas day out which included a visit to one of the office projects. We also socialised after work.

With hindsight, I am convinced that the quality of the work produced in these offices and the enthusiasm of the team were linked to the excellent lifestyle that was promoted.

A team of happy and well rested architects produced the best conditions to work fast, deliver good ideas and avoid mistakes.

This of course was happening in the late 1970s, early 1980s. Today architects have shorter deadlines and more paperwork to fill in.

But we need to occasionally sit down, reflect on how we work and check that it delivers a lifestyle that fits our needs.

Liliane McGeoch FRIAS
President, SSA

“As a young architect, I was taught to leave my projects in the office and that included mentally switching off from work when I left the office at the end of the day.”
The journey to view the nineteen shortlisted projects, which, within a hectic but rewarding three-day period, took my fellow judges and myself through the intriguing Scottish Borders, the self-confident central belt, and the glorious landscapes of the highlands and islands, was for all of us a reaffirmation of the fundamental importance of the ability of architecture at its best to positively influence the lives of individuals and communities.

Apart from observing the skill of the architects in the art of place-making and experiencing the pure delight of being in such wonderful spaces, we were all reminded of and impressed by the breadth of the field of architectural practice and with what is being made in Scotland – not just the architecture that is being produced but what the architecture is producing; new models of education, innovation and invention leading to enhanced social exchange and collaboration in the work place, exciting housing to reflect new patterns of living, and dynamic models for the production of architecture itself.

Underlying all of these achievements is a clear sense of human endeavour, passion, commitment and personal investment. It was evident to all members of the judging panel that a common feature of the success of the excellent buildings we visited was the critical role played by visionary clients in enabling and unleashing the creativity of talented architects to produce this group of remarkable buildings.

Modern procurement methods would benefit from a realisation of the importance of such relationships.

The judging panel for this year was Prof. John Cole CBE Hon FRIAS (Chair), Joanna van Heyningen OBE RIBA, van Heyningen and Havard Architects (representing the Royal Institute of British Architects), Catriona Hill RIAS from CH Architecture and Peter McCaughey, WFM/particle.

Stuart McKeil of Saint-Gobain and Jim Stevenson, representative of Scottish Forestry/Wood For Good, joined the tour to judge the Emerging Architect and Timber Awards respectively.

Steven Robb, Deputy Head of Casework, Heritage Directorate at Historic Environment Scotland (Conservation and Climate Change Award representative) was also involved in the shortlisting and the Scottish Government, once again, supported Scotland’s Client of the Year Award.
The decision of the architects to locate this black timbered house within a dipping rocky depression close to the water’s edge has enabled it to engage less directly with the nearby road, have a reduced profile in the landscape and develop a stronger connection with the sea. The fully glazed end wall of the main living space frames a spectacular view across the water to rugged hills on the other side of the inlet, while reflected light provides an ever-changing pattern across the white interior.

There is a persuasive integrity to the rigorous use of pure rectangular forms, the strictly limited palette of colour and materials, and the consistent purity of minimalist detailing throughout, which enriched by the inclusion of the art and artefacts of the owners, have succeeded in creating a calm, inviting and exceptional home.

The Briongos Mackinnon house has been designed to the very specific and individualistic brief provided by the clients who enjoy microlight flying and own the airfield on which the house sits. The cheerfully idiosyncratic built form and choice of external cladding material sit entirely comfortably with the neighbouring semi-industrial hangar buildings. Whilst the layout is extremely well organised, it is also enormously creative and highly customised to reflect both the specific requirements and indeed the personalities of the client. The layout, proportions and quality of internal spaces deliver excellent levels of comfort and practicality. This is a light, airy and joyful building which, as well as a family home, provides highly effective and attractive separate workspaces for both its owners. All in all a house of surprise and delight.
Broomlands Primary School, Kelso

Stallan-Brand Architecture + Design Ltd

The visitor to this building is engaged from the moment of arrival at the site by the powerful imagery of the cantilevered projecting pointed roofs and the cobalt stone gabion external walls which extend from the exterior landscape to form the external wall to the school building. These distinctive roofs, in addition to providing a memorable architectural introduction, form canopies to facilitate outdoor learning activities. The internal layout of the school provides a flexible variety of pleasant semi-enclosed and fully open-plan teaching spaces at ground and first floor levels, both of which have direct access to external play areas and the mature landscaped grounds. This is achieved at first floor level by integrated external walkways which allow the building to connect seamlessly to the luxuriant outside spaces.

Collective on Calton Hill, Edinburgh

Collective Architecture

The project on Calton Hill is the result of a strong and highly successful collaboration between the two client bodies and the design team. A shared vision from the outset of the project has driven the design from inception to completion producing a number of bold, contemporary interventions which successfully achieve a unifying functional coherence with the sensitively restored historic buildings on this site of national significance. The projecting glazed corner of the new Outlook restaurant building, cantilevered over the site’s original boundary wall brings a bold and vibrant addition to the site’s historic skyline, visually marking to those in the city below a key step in the evolution of this important site.

* Malcolm Fraser Architects initially won the invited competition for the project in 2014, secured planning permission and progressed detailed design. The project moved to Collective Architecture during 2015 and the practice saw it through to completion in 2018.
The Macallan Distillery and Visitor Experience, Craigellachie

Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners

"The rolling roofscape of this building echoes the form of the surrounding hills and serves to successfully conceal an exceptionally well resolved and ingenious fusion of architecture, whiskey technology and impactful interior settings displaying the heritage of the Macallan brand. A processional landscaped walkway symbolically and physically connects the 18th century laird’s house at the heart of the estate with the new visitor centre. The internal journey continues under a warmly lit majestic double curvature timber gridshell roof. The combination of atmospheric lighting with the architectural form and the intriguing arrangement of stills and exhibits creates a sense of drama throughout this hugely impressive building. Views through the extensive fully glazed section of the main elevation framed between the floor and the curving eaves provide a constant link between the new building and the enchanting scenery of the Spey river, the source of water that brought the distillery to the site."
The Raining’s Stairs Development, Inverness

Trail Architects

This social housing development is an inspired but pragmatic and affordable resolution of a difficult, extremely steep and almost inaccessible site located in the centre of Inverness. Its implementation has transformed and revitalised what was an all but abandoned no-go area of the city. The pleasant and now frequently used external public stairway and pedestrian route both links the streets at the top and bottom of this site and gives access to a series of external landings serving the three tiers of housing which provide 16 much needed flats and a small commercial unit. Though a very compact development, the architect’s innovative layout has intentionally enabled the main living area of each flat to benefit from attractive southerly views over the city, further adding to the evident desirability of these cleverly-planned affordable homes.

Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service – The Jack Copland Centre, Edinburgh

Reiach and Hall Architects

This is a highly resolved and elegantly controlled solution to a demanding technical brief. A central predominantly white street, which bisects the building into administrative and laboratory zones, bathes in the changing light from a series of oculi in the roof three levels above. The experience of the street is further enriched by warm splashes of colour from the integrated piece of art that runs the full length of the street. The extensive use of fully glazed walls openly reveals what more normally would be hidden laboratory-based activities, transforming the more typical based activities, transforming the more typical

Client
Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service

Structural Engineer
McLeod & Aitken

M&E Engineer
CDM2 UK

Employer’s Agent
Torrance Partnership

Employer’s Clerk of Works
Helica

Main Contractor
William Gray Construction

Gross Area
1,170 m²

Contract Value
£30.0m

Top
© Trail Architects

Left, above
© Malcolm Cochrane

Right, above
© Reiach and Hall Architects

Left
© Ewan Weatherspoon

Right
© Andrew Lee
Tollcross Housing Association Offices, Glasgow

Elder and Cannon Architects

This new headquarters for Tollcross Housing Association is both externally and internally a rigorously ordered and beautifully detailed solution for this significant site which sits on a corner at the end of a tenement block. The open plan office spaces are arranged as a series of rising, interconnecting volumes linked by a central sculptural staircase. The result is an elegant and refined building which allows three separate administrative departments to co-habit in a way which encourages cross-disciplinary engagement and dialogue but without sacrificing acoustic performance. It was evident that a shared vision and close working relationship between client and architect were key to the success of this excellent building.

V&A Dundee

Kengo Kuma & Associates with PIM:studio Architects and James F Stephen Architects

On approach the building engenders an exciting sense of anticipation as the complex geometry seamlessly reveals the intriguing interior opening out into the voluminous main entrance hall, intended by client and architects to act as a ‘living room for the city’. The first floor contains a consummately detailed restaurant area with dramatic views over HMS Discovery docked alongside.

Scotland’s first dedicated design museum is itself an example of the highest level of architectural ingenuity. This building simultaneously stimulates, engages and intrigues visitors. Its unique geometric forms, sitting between the city and the river, draw on a relationship to the water and form an unspoken connection to the historical HMS Discovery docked alongside.

The first floor contains a consummately detailed restaurant area with dramatic views over HMS Discovery.

The primary areas of this floor provide high quality flexible exhibition spaces housing inspiring examples of both the rich heritage of design creativity in Scotland and the work of contemporary Scottish designers, in the supportive setting of this equally inspiring building.
Special Category Awards

The RIAS has again teamed up with Scottish Forestry/Wood for Good, Historic Environment Scotland, The Scottish Government and Saint-Gobain for our four prestigious sub-category awards.

Scottish Forestry/Wood For Good
Best Use of Timber Award

Saint-Gobain
Emerging Architect Award

Historic Environment Scotland
Conservation and Climate Change Award

Scottish Government
Scotland’s Client of the Year Award

RIAS Andrew Doolan
Best Building in Scotland Award 2019

The winners of this year’s RIAS Awards form the longlist for the RIAS Andrew Doolan Best Building in Scotland Award which is supported by the Doolan Family and the Scottish Government.

The Doolan Award is judged separately from the RIAS Awards and this year the Doolan jury will select their shortlist (announced later in the summer) and carry out visits in late September. Our jury this year will be led by Sadie Morgan of dRMM architects. The Doolan Award will be presented by the Scottish Government and the Doolan family at the RIAS Convention Dinner on 4th October in Edinburgh. Put the date in your diaries!

RIBA National Awards

The RIBA National Awards in Scotland will be announced on 27th June 2019.
Physical inactivity is the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality. Estimates put the cost of obesity to Scotland in 2030 at up to £3 billion. 20% of people walk for 20 minutes, less than once a year, or never. However, when streets are designed for walkers and not cars, people are 25% more likely to walk to work. The environment that surrounds us has substantial influence over our health, wellbeing and quality of life. Poverty and deprivation are key drivers of poor health in any society. Premature mortality in Glasgow has been shown to be 30% higher than in the identically deprived UK cities of Liverpool and Manchester. Former Chief Medical Officer for Scotland, Professor Sir Harry Burns said 'The biology is very clear: chaotic, difficult circumstances lead to an increased risk of physical ill health. So let’s not spend a fortune trying to find drugs to fix that; let’s change the chaotic and difficult circumstances.'

So, are we having the right conversations with the right people at the right time to change this situation? Scotland’s Architecture policy, Creating Places, called for a Place Standard to act as ‘a hallmark of well-designed places’. The Place Standard has since been designed as a qualitative measure of direct experience of a place – to promote improvement, empowerment and the creation of a healthier built environment. It was developed by the Scottish Government, NHS Health Scotland, Architecture and Design Scotland, and Glasgow City Council. It translates complex public health and place making theory into a simple to use product.

The Royal Town Planning Institute award winning tool supports people of all ages, organisations and businesses to work together and identify both the assets of a place and priorities for improvement. This can be within cities, towns and rural neighbourhoods that are well-established, undergoing change, or still being planned. The Place Standard provides prompts for discussion and a way to consider the elements of a place in a structured way. The tool looks at 14 themes, all of which impact on our health and wellbeing, addressing both physical and social dimensions of place. Some of the areas covered include Moving Around, Traffic and Parking, Natural Space, Play and Recreation as well as Feeling Safe, Influence and Sense of Control and Work and Local Economy.

The Place Standard tool has already been applied across all 32 Local Authority areas in Scotland and Place has been identified as one of the six public health priorities for Scotland. The tool is being used across Europe with versions in four languages including Dutch and Danish.

“The Place Standard tool was a new experience for our design team and was very easy for us and the community to understand quickly. This made the public consultation a more meaningful experience for everyone.”

Iain Malcolmson, Architect

“The Place Standard has proved to be a useful tool with regard to tracking design development, and aids with the brief development at the outset of a project.”

Jonathan Wisely, Scotia Homes

“The process helped to shape and develop a realistic and deliverable community action plan – a series of short, medium and long-term actions.”

Jude Barber, Collective Architecture

You can find out more about the Place Standard on the A&DS website on www.ads.org.uk or on placestandard.scot.

Architecture and Design Scotland

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It was coincidental that, at the time of writing, jmarchitects – and the commitment of NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, Glasgow City Council and the Health and Social Care Partnership, who provide funding for a community connector. In this case the community connector is based in the offices of New Gorbals Housing Association. New Gorbals Housing Association are also the community anchor body for the Gorbals and co-ordinate the Gorbals regeneration group. NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (NHS GGC) and Glasgow City Health and Social Care partnership (HSCP) and Glasgow City Council share seats with New Gorbals Housing Association in a range of other community-based organisations that operate in the Gorbals and Laurieston areas such as the community planning partnership. This strong working relationship made the collaboration and joint stewardship of the site acquisition and the important continued involvement of New Gorbals Housing Association in the design development of the building, all the more fruitful. The project was overseen by Hul West Scotland, based in Glasgow, as a private sector development company who work in partnership with the public sector in the West of Scotland delivering facilities which provide services to the local communities such as schools, health centres, leisure centres and offices. Hub West Scotland have successfully delivered all four of the major care centres that have been built in Glasgow over the past three years namely, Eastwood, Maryhill, Gorbals and the soon to open Woodside facility.

The Gorbals neighbourhood is arguably one of Glasgow’s well-known neighbourhoods, over time, it has seen wholesale urban regeneration with the demolition of original tenements, and their replacement with numerous high-rise buildings during the post-war era. During the 1990’s through to the present day, a re-urbanization has taken place, spearheaded largely by New Gorbals Housing Association. Under their leadership they have managed and delivered the transformation of this neighbourhood into one of Glasgow’s most distinctive, architecturally successful residential areas.

The community health care building is prominently located adjacent to one of the main arterial routes to the city centre from Glasgow’s south-east, and is highly visible to passing traffic. It forms part of an ensemble of buildings forming the new urban block. Our approach has therefore been to design ‘a building in the round’: there is no single front or back, or an egalitarian design approach where each elevation is designed to acknowledge its particular location on the site: the main road, Cumberland Street, a residential street, and a new public space on the eastern boundary linking the Gorbals area to Laurieston, where the entrance to the building is located. The design acknowledges the important civic and public nature of building, as well as its role as part of this new cluster of buildings, whilst also recognising the high quality of buildings designed in the immediate context.

The appointment of Ian White Associates as landscape architects for all three buildings was critical to ensuring a coherent resolution of the public realm and soft landscaping that binds all three buildings together: the creation of a new public space which links the buildings will be the first of its kind in the area and is planned as a public gathering space as well as an important new route, which will eventually link the Gorbals to Laurieston. The appointment also characterises the collaborative process between all these architectural practices – Pitspiepark, Elder and Cannon and jmarchitects – and the commitment of NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, New Gorbals Housing Association and HSCP to work closely together to ensure that this grouping of buildings would jointly demonstrate the strength of a collaborative, inter-organisational approach to delivering a genuinely unique community-based programme of services on the same site.

Material choices were heavily influenced by the surrounding recently completed buildings in the area, to create a recognizable materiality: a coherent material language of brick and precast to form a new character area within the city. The building elevations are characterised by three primary materials – a rusticated multi-grey house brick, white precast concrete and Scottish larch cladding.

The building materialised as a deterministically, rigorously composed architectural object in which the regularity and repetitive use of punched window openings within the main building material – brick – is seen as imbuing the building with a visual strength. This is realised in places through the careful composition of precast concrete string courses and columns, such as over the entrance area and on the gable facades to signify key rooms in the building and frame important views out to the city centre and toward Alexander ‘Greek’ Thomson’s Caledonia Road Church. New completed and open, the building has a kind of familiarity, feeling like part of a developing aesthetic story slowly taking over the remaining development sites in the Gorbals and Laurieston.

The building plan is intentionally simple, making wayfinding clear and visually interesting: the plan is arranged around 2 large courtyard spaces which draw light into the heart of the building whilst also assisting in supporting the natural ventilation strategy. Our design approach was to use light as a “building material”, and to manipulate the building plan so that every space would have “a lightness” and strong sense of visual connection to the outside. As such, the weather conditions so too does the dramatic impact of different kinds of light in animating the building and the surrounding public realm. It will be carefully landscaped to encourage birds, bugs and bees to inhabit them and to provide visual relief for building users whilst providing differing functional requirements to staff and visitors. Planting beds of differing shape, size and alignment provide filtering views between opposite consulting rooms and visual interest from above. Privacy for patients is essential and is addressed through siting of taller plants and layering of planting to screen views. Visual and visual stimuli is provided through fragrant plants, wind chimes, bird feeders and colourful seating.

The ground floor is given over to a number of specialist services: specialist childrens services, children and adolescent mental health services, physiotherapy, podiatry, and alcohol and drug addiction services which have their own discreet entrance and consultation/meeting rooms. Importantly the ground floor also contains a number of bookable meeting and activity spaces, targeted at encouraging the local community and community support groups to get more
involved in using the building for more than just health care, and outreach working hours. The first floor plan contains four independent GP practices, community dental care, private dental care services, and social work interview rooms and meeting areas for children and families. GPs and visiting support staff district nurses etc. have their own independent entrance into the building. Two fully enclosed bridge links at first and second floor levels means that GPs and other clinical and administrative staff can circulate the building without having to cross the more open public circulation areas, in the plan. The second floor of the building is given over to an open-plan agile working space with a large staff café, refectory area and a sizeable, accessible roof top terrace area. Staff welfare and staff wellbeing in the workplace is another key component of the new model of care.

It is often said “You never get a second chance to make a good impression.” It is therefore important that public buildings are designed to create maximum impact for visitors, in this case patients and staff, particularly given that the building has been conceived to help enhance the patient experience by providing a more relaxed, less institutional environment than more traditional health buildings. Given the change of emphasis to preventative care rather than treatment, this shift in the approach to patient care also aims to reduce the number of people using acute health facilities, instead using local facilities embedded into the heart of their community where a much wider range of physical and mental health and welfare services are on offer under a single roof. As such, the building entrance is defined by a sheltered precast concrete colonnade, creating a sense of civic presence and providing shelter as one enters the building. To create a sense of continuity between outside and inside, precast concrete is also used inside the building around and as part of the principle stair. This is the main circulation device in the building, passing both courtyard spaces as it ascends through the building. Site lines in the building are clear, with long open vistas across the plan enabling patients and visitors to easily orientate and navigate the building in an effortless way.

Art in building projects can often be a kind of bolt-on: an afterthought that relies on a post-rationalisation of the completed design or building. In this project, art as architecture was paramount and was the reason why WSP/Erpicrle were an embedded member of the design team from project inception. Their work is predicated on community engagement and consultation; for them understanding the place “Gorbals” and understanding that community enough to have their blessing with the final installation of the art was essential. Wall works came in the form of recessed light boxes hosting artefacts and stories from people living in the area, arranged over three levels of the building and located adjacent to the main stairway, a vertical visual story and an aid in assisting in wayfinding. It is now hard to imagine the building without these critical interventions, just like the building feels familiar in its setting so too does the art, in its setting inside the building. In a way, the new building becomes a celebration of local vernacular and of the wealth of images and stories that the Gorbals and Laurieston diaspora hold.

The consultation process for the project was extensive and regular. The period in which NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde were in negotiation with New Gorbals Housing Association to acquire the site meant that as the design evolved stage by stage the committee of the housing association were given comprehensive design updates, in this part of the consultation process the views, opinions and advice from the housing association committee were heard and acknowledged in the evolving design. In parallel, the HPC/NHS GGC pre-planned a number of open day/evening consultations in the local church in which the design was presented, questions taken, and opinions canvassed. In the background, detailed consultations were also taking place with the numerous building user groups, GPs, and social work administration staff. This was an exhaustive process which enabled us to micro plan the building to the satisfaction of each individual building user – and to reconcile the onerous functional requirements of this kind of building whilst also achieving a design predicated in an overarching desire to create an internal environment that would support wellbeing, a series of interior spaces aimed at creating a relaxed ambiance and an uplifting experience.
Threesixty Architecture are clear on their values and culture and at the core of this is the health, wellbeing and happiness of their staff. They have recently moved into a new studio in Glasgow’s award-winning Garment Factory refurbishment. The delivered design for their home is a clear reflection of a unique culture. There is an obvious level of thought and care on creating an environment that not only supports how they work but is rich in their story.

Having outgrown their previous home of 13 years, Threesixty became aware of the Garment Factory and particularly the top floor with its serrated roofscape of north lights. This was a true studio space and bright atelier with great views over the city. At 8,500sqft, the space was significantly larger than required but this has led to some wonderful opportunities to really explore how to reflect and support the practice culture whilst keeping the cost to an impressive £35/sqft.

The staff have been engaged throughout the design with workshops, design competitions and reviews. The resulting brief was principally to create an environment in which to work more efficiently and more creatively but not lose the day to day sociability and communication that had been nurtured in the previously cramped conditions. Beyond this, as an active bunch of cyclists and runners, the new studio had to support and promote physical activity (the staff now benefit from cycle storage spaces, a drying room and shower rooms). Managing this design process with 40 or so designers all wanting to contribute was, of course, a challenge but invaluable in creating a rich, unique space that all feel ownership of.

Threesixty had inherited a stunning industrial space with exposed cast iron structure, brickwork and huge windows with stunning long views. The design response is respectful to this heritage, celebrating not competing with these features. Care has been taken to break down the large floorplate to a human scale and to create a sequence of uniquely memorable spaces with dark tones, textured walls and variation in floor height without losing the flow of the space.

Transparency and visibility is a key aspiration and visitors are taken on a journey through the heart of the studio offering visibility of the team. A timber spine walkway ("The Catwalk") is lined with planters of tall grasses that give a level of visual and acoustic screening to the desking whilst maintaining that all important transparency and connection. In its original use, this was the “cutting floor” of the factory and benefitted from the best light through the huge rooflights over the main studio desking and the large industrial windows to the church yard to the east. These opening rooflights not only negate the need for air conditioning but, more poetically, the airiness, the light and the greenery make it feel almost outdoors.

The areas around the low windows are kept free for high desking for breakout working or impromptu discussion. The previous level of communication born out of proximity has been maintained, but with the simple inclusion of bespoke intermediate meeting and storage units, project teams work back to back and meet in the middle to sketch and chat – a simple yet stunningly effective addition.
The windows sills are high along the west facade and this zone houses functions that can take advantage of the extra wall space, the first of which is the Model Workshop. This space, nestled between the two Crit Pods, has a separate section for a CNC machine with the main space left for more hands-on crafting. It is a space that encourages staff to grow in confidence and capability in new creative skills.

Beyond the highly transparent boardroom, the Catwalk terminates in the “Main Stage”. This is the heart of the studio, an open plan studio. The space responds to the staff brief for a productive working within this environment. The unique character realms throughout the studio also provide a welcome change of pace and I appreciate the opportunity to step away from the screen and sketch or read in a contemplative space that has been created to acknowledge the practice’s passion for music and long running staff assembled Friday playlist.

Either side of the Library are more intimate retreat spaces – the Whisky Room and the Jungle Room. The Whisky Room reflects the practice’s involvement in the whisky industry and is a dark, warm, “mindful” room to concentrate in or to have a one to one private chat. The “Jungle Room” is festooned with plants and offers a further retreat and balance from the open plan studio. The space responds to the staff brief for a more relaxed and multi-functional contemplative space that transforms from a meeting space to host other activities such as our weekly yoga classes.

From the outset each member of staff was engaged in the design process of the studio. From being involved in this initial design process we hold a sense of collective pride over the studio and it has strengthened my bond with the practice. One true benefit I have experienced is the open placement of break out spaces, model making workshops and design review bays creating a platform for everyone to have a voice about the design output of the studio. Even if I am not directly involved in a project, these communal spaces make it feel easier, particularly for younger members of staff, to be engaged in the design process and the studio has further fostered a culture of collaboration and creativity. We now have design review bays which create a platform for a studio wide conversation about architecture and bring back a true ‘Atelier’ approach to design. I think we all feel happier, calmer and more productive working within this environment. The mass of greenery and textured timber / brick have created a calming environment largely based around the Hygge principles “a warm atmosphere and enjoying the good things in life with good people.” The space really does create a sense of contentment and Wellbeing and I’m sure it is contributing to everyone’s personal and professional growth. The unique character realms throughout the studio also provide a welcome change of pace and I appreciate the opportunity to step away from the screen and sketch or read in a contemplative space.

The space can be separated from the main desk area by bespoke rotating and interlocking screens to provide full height projection. With electric roof blinds, projector, club sound system and lighting rig, the main stage space transforms from a brightly lit café area to a lecture space or a dancefloor. This new studio demonstrates the practice’s ambition and creativity and has already paid dividends in attracting new clients. It has also allowed them to communicate and bond more effectively between studios and to host multiple events. But, more importantly, by taking time to listen and care about their staff’s welfare, personal growth and happiness, Threesixty Architecture have shown their staff that they are valued.

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The Thistle Centre and 3DReid:
In conversation

Founded in 1944, in Craigmillar, Edinburgh, Thistle is an independent charity providing support for people living with long-term health conditions such as MS, arthritis, depression, chronic fatigue or post-traumatic stress disorder.

Located at the heart of a pioneering philanthropic development, providing purpose-built housing for servicemen returning from war with disabilities, Thistle today opens its doors to everyone, veteran or civilian and regardless of physical or mental health condition.

Following success in an invited design competition, in 2013, 3DReid’s initial engagement with Thistle commenced with the design and delivery of their Centre of Wellbeing. A new home for the charity and those they support which accommodates a series of complementary facilities, including a gym, consultation and training rooms in addition to office accommodation. With that project completed in 2016, the working relationship has continued, as Thistle looks forward to fulfilling increased demand for support by people living with long-term conditions.

Submitted for planning in March, the new Garden Rooms project would replace an existing 1950s building which has begun to deteriorate and is nearing the end of its useful life. The Garden Rooms would comprise a multi-purpose activity space, communal kitchen, craft workshop and a dedicated studio for yoga and tai chi in addition to a special meditation and mindfulness space, set within a newly landscaped community garden.

[Chris Dobson, Associate Director, 3DReid]
Working through the Centre of Wellbeing and, more recently, the Garden Room projects has really felt to me like we have gone on an enjoyable journey together.

[Thistle] Agreed!

[CD] Particularly with respect to the Centre of Wellbeing, did the final outcome of this meet any form of defined vision that you might have had in mind, at the start of the process?

[Diana Noel-Paton, Thistle Chief Executive]
“We were looking to create an aspirational community hub for the area and a welcoming space for all those we support. Our 1950s clinic building desperately needed replacing and we were looking for a design that would both create space for offices and activities whilst achieving a welcoming, non-institutional environment. It also needed to be affordable and economic to run.

A major challenge was balancing the wide-ranging requirements of the people who use the building. This meant accommodating physical mobility and wayfinding needs as well as requirements relating to physical or mental health conditions.

Our vision was for a new building which would be practical, user-friendly, beautiful and reflect our ethos.”

[CD] Currently, within the architecture profession, ‘wellbeing’ is a term that is becoming increasingly prevalent across a whole range of sectors, as awareness continues to grow as to the importance that our working and living environments have on our individual and collective health.

As the Centre of Wellbeing approaches its third birthday, have you noticed any tangible benefits that the project has had on those who visit and work within the building?

[Tilly Sheridan, Thistle Facilities Manager]
“Our office space provides a wonderful light and airy environment and is configured to maximise team-work and collaboration. We often meet with people we support in the first-floor office accommodation and the informal meeting spaces give us a relaxed environment for conversation and removes any perceived barriers between ‘staff’ and ‘people we support’. For the past three years, we’ve enjoyed the benefits of having an ‘open door’ building which is accessible and inclusive, welcoming and not institutional. We’ve had an uplift of up to 72% more users since moving into our new Centre. Incorporating a bright and cheerful double-height ‘Hub’ space and location of an inviting reception area with colourful soft furnishings, has made a real difference as people are more likely to drop-in and stay for a chat or use our facilities.”

Founded in 1944, in Craigmillar, Edinburgh, Thistle is an independent charity providing support for people living with long-term health conditions such as MS, arthritis, depression, chronic fatigue or post-traumatic stress disorder.

Above left
Aerial view, existing
Above right
Aerial view, proposed
Left
Ground and first floor plans as proposed
All images © 3DReid
It’s often commented that architecture is an odd profession, in that almost every building produced represents a prototype. Being, as they are, generally unique responses to client briefs and their contexts. In this sense, it’s a continual and iterative learning process, from one project to the next, with all the attendant positives and negatives that such an approach brings.

When we were awarded the commission for the Centre of Wellbeing, it was the first project of its kind that we had worked on and so didn’t have the benefit of such past experience to draw from. However, the guidance and vision that came from Thistle offered us a really clear basis upon which to progress. Was this informed by any other such buildings that you had encountered and if so, what were they?

“Thistle looked at a wide range of other buildings and facilities as the research phase for the new building. It was so important for us to ensure our building reflected our belief that the community and people we support should have beauty in their surroundings and it was much more than about meeting a clinical need. We wanted to create a space that everyone – staff, volunteers and people we support – could feel proud of and enjoy. It’s about taking a holistic approach to what a person needs and wants and how a lovely environment can inspire people and help lead to a sense of wellbeing.”

So often, at the end of a project, the building is handed over to the client and the architect’s role comes to a relatively abrupt end, after years of being completely immersed in the work. I remember experiencing such a bittersweet feeling when the Centre of Wellbeing completed and so it’s been a real pleasure to be able to return so often and see it active, used and lived in.

To be able to continue our relationship through the Garden Rooms project has therefore been a delight. With the development of that very much driven by wider community consultation, has the direction of the resulting brief and design surprised you in any way?

Certainly, from the perspective of the designers, it’s hard to see how we could have reached the form of the current proposals were it not for the input and feedback that we received from the many people and stakeholders who we engaged with.

The existing Garden Suite is so loved by its existing users, we have to make sure that they have an input to the design plans for any new building. The community consultation process brought together existing and potential future users of the space in a friendly and accessible format. The process also encouraged people to adopt ‘blue skies’ thinking. Dynamic and exciting pre-planning presentations were engaging and resulted in much lively discussion and a design which people love.”

The various consultation sessions were certainly really rewarding to be a part of. With the project now submitted to planning, I really hope that those involved feel a sense of ownership and authorship of the scheme, as we look forward to the next steps.

Finally, what would be your top piece of advice to any other similar organisations to Thistle who may be considering procuring a new building?

“Have faith in your vision, work with people in an architectural practice who appreciate that vision, understand your values, engage fully with your stakeholders and you can bring all of this to life in a building which people love.”

Chris Dobson RIAS RIBA

3DReid

Opposite page

Front elevation

All images © 3DReid
Rivers, such as the Fleet, Westbourne and Effra, which Wren’s Venetian vision for canals and London’s other tunnels that buried all sewage underground – along with the combined sewer system.

Joseph Bazalgette responded with a pioneering design for a disruption of parliament, was the specific problem to which emanating from the Thames during hot weather, and the context that ‘bad air’ was the problem. Undeniably it was problematic; two months of overpowering smells would become lost. Clues to the lost rivers remain in the topography – mads that wind like water – and the names: think Kilburn, Westbourne Grove. With sewage carried out of central London, the cholera outbreaks dissipated, and many lives were saved. Bazalgette’s scheme proved to be a masterful solution to a misunderstood problem.

Part of Bazalgette’s ingenuity was to futureproof capacity for a population of four million, double that of the day. However, with a current population that is more than double that again, and growing, the system is bursting at the seams. Raw sewage once again enters the Thames on a regular basis through overflow outfalls. Tideway is the project more than three years ago was to carry out urban analysis with a holistic eye to understand the unique context of each site individually and their collective character. It was important to capture the momentum of the project at city-scale, in the spirit of Bazalgette, while building on existing character and stories. The study led us to identify the Thames as central London’s largest open space, comprising an area greater than Regents Park, and arguably the most distinctive open space in London when viewed from an aerial perspective: blue public space to which the public has a right with potential to inspire and space to breathe.

The history of London’s sewers is inextricably tied to the forming of the Metropolitan Board of Works (MBW) in 1855, charged with providing infrastructure for the public good. Along with sewers, the city-wide governing body built new bridges and streets, and provided parks and open spaces. The study led us to identify the Thames as central London’s largest open space, comprising an area greater than Regents Park, and arguably the most distinctive open space in London when viewed from an aerial perspective: blue public space to which the public has a right with potential to inspire and space to breathe.

In the mid-19th century, miasma theory held that cholera was contracted through breathing in contaminated air. In 1854, John Snow mapped outbreaks in Soho that led him to propose people were becoming ill by drinking water from a public pump. The removal of the pump handle and subsequent end of the outbreak would support Snow’s counter theory (later supported by research that showed the well stood next to a cesspit). It would however be more than a decade after his own death before this became widely accepted.

Therefore, the Great Stink of 1858, which proved to be the catalyst for modernising London’s sewers, occurred within the context that ‘bad air’ was the problem. Undeniably it was problematic: two months of overpowering smells emanating from the Thames during hot weather, and the disruption of parliament, was the specific problem to which Joseph Bazalgette responded with a pioneering design for a combined sewer system.

The project introduced a sophisticated network of tunnels that buried all sewage underground – along with Wren’s Venetian vision for canals and London’s other rivers, such as the Fleet, Westbourne and Effra, which would become lost. Clues to the lost rivers remain in the topography – mads that wind like water – and the names: think Kilburn, Westbourne Grove.

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Although the Victorian Embankments must be celebrated for such a grand civic gesture, they have cemented a distanced relationship between the public and the river. This distance supports two perceptions of the Thames. First, that it is an obstacle to be got around, rather than engaged with, quite a different relationship altogether compared to examples such as Paris and the Seine. Secondly, that it is a dangerous place, to be feared. This is with good reason; tidal movements make it unpredictable to those unfamiliar and create ferocious currents, which perhaps sets it apart from European comparisons. In fact, after a rise in popularity of wild swimming, a new by-law passed in 2012 prohibits wild swimming, a new by-law passed in 2012 prohibits
swimming in the Thames between Putney and Crossness without prior permission from the Port of London Authority. The Tideway project offers an opportunity to shift such perceptions while managing risks appropriately. We’re working hard to make sure the project continues the legacy of major infrastructure works as a positive challenge to meet operational needs and improve the quality of civic, public space. At Chelsea Embankment, an organic design with intertidal planting and floodable walkway Plays to the restorative and green character of the local area, which is home to the Royal Hospital and Battersea Park. By contrast, at Albert Embankment, sitting in front of the emblematic Vauxhall Cross building, two distinct public spaces take inspiration from the urban beach setting and lost river Effra respectively.

Adjacent to Blackfriars Bridge is the largest of Tideway’s new public spaces, at over 4,500 m2. Here, a new view of St Paul’s Cathedral will be created. The narrative of the river Fleet threads through all aspects of the design, telling the tale of a river that originates on Hampstead Heath as a trickle of water glowing orange with iron, and thunders under the City before joining the Thames bensoth Blackfriars Bridge.

As part of Tideway’s ambitious public art commission that positions the Thames as London’s cultural spine, Hawkins\Brown has been collaborating with the artist Nathan Coley to embed five large sculptures into the new landscape at Blackfriars. A healthy critical debate between artist, architect and engineer throughout the design process has interrogated what it will feel like to be in every part of the new land, where to frame views and where to create shelter. This has informed a considered approach to the design elements that curate new perspectives. Each Black Stage invites curiosity and interaction differently, responding to both a near context that is new and an existing context as the backdrop.

Achieving simple public space that is full of character and accessible to all involves complex conversations and negotiations with multiple stakeholders, but this communication marks the art of creating places that make a positive impact on everyday lives. 150 years after the construction of London’s Embankments and formation of the MBW, a precursor to London County Council, we are facing equally weighty challenges for the health and wellbeing of our cities. The Greek meaning of the word miasma, pollution, holds new meaning today with respect to air quality and noise. Air quality rightly finds itself moving up the agenda of public debate. The evidence base on the health impacts of noise is growing and the imperative to address it will become a priority in the coming years. To filter out the noise and hear only the sound of lapping water in the middle of an urban metropolis would be undeniably a restorative experience.

Ingrained within the policy of the Greater London Authority and Transport for London, the Healthy Streets Approach sets out a methodology for designing our built environment in a way that creates a healthier city, in which all people are included and can live well, where inequalities are reduced. Ten Healthy Streets indicators – including places to stop and rest, things to see and do, and people feel relaxed – comprehensively set out the ingredients for what makes appealing, healthy, inclusive places.

Mayor Sadiq Khan has set a target to achieve 80% of London’s trips being made on foot, bicycle or public transport by 2041, reducing daily car journeys by three million. This requires a step-change in the performance of our public realm to encourage more active lives. Whether it’s creating a space to bring the local community together, or a new world stage to represent the city, healthy public space needs to reflect the breadth of its communities. With Tideway, we have the opportunity to weave cultural value into the enjoyment of the riverside, inviting people out of their homes and workplace to experience something that’s got their interests at heart.

Esme Fieldhouse
Hawkins\Brown

“At Chelsea Embankment, an organic design with intertidal planting and floodable walkway plays to the restorative and green character of the local area, which is home to the Royal Hospital and Battersea Park.”

“By contrast, at Albert Embankment, sitting in front of the emblematic Vauxhall Cross building, two distinct public spaces take inspiration from the urban beach setting and lost river Effra respectively.”

Above and left Tideway, Chelsea – low tide / high tide © Hawkins\Brown
Opposite page Albert Embankment © Hawkins\Brown
Q. How did you get involved in the project?
A. Tideway had a requirement to deal with the urban realm of all the sites and Hawkins Brown are the architects of eight of the central London sites. There was an invited competition I said at the interview that I would give my love of Paris was reconfirmed! I’m not under any illusions – there are a lot of water, two people – is that what you were aiming for?
A. Two things I said to the design team at Hawkins Brown – Fable Park in New York – a tiny, deeply romantic park and coffee shop. The Richard Sennett piece about the people, the state, the city, the public, the blood and everything that falls in between. it originally was there. London’s not famous for the ‘fameur’ or the daydreaming – it’s very busy, particularly the City. It has a real capitalist work ethic and I thought it would be nice to illuminate something that avoided the space being ‘corporate’.

Q. If you don’t think of London as romantic – Paris and New York have illicits like the opening scene of Woody Allen’s ‘Manhattan’ – the bridge, the skyline, the water, two people – is that what you were aiming for?
A. My love of Paris was reconfirmed! I’m not under any illusions – there are a lot of given. There is Historic England in terms of the existing embankment wall, the planning restrictions in terms of it being on the side of a busy waterway, there are lots of civil engineering requirements below the site, so we couldn’t change the shape, we couldn’t change the topography. I felt all we could do was to add obstruction and shapes to block certain views and create new views within the landscape. it’s very exposed. On the south side of the river there is massive residential and commercial development and whilst we are building up to eight metres in height, it’s tiny in comparison.

Q. What did you bring back from that trip that was particular to this project?
A. When we went down – we went on a tour of Bazalgette sewer network at Blackfriars, literally through a manhole cover. Stuningly beautiful brickwork, purely functional but immensely beautiful and still retaining a massive sense of engineering complexity – it’s not broken, it just doesn’t have the capacity.

Q. How did you work your way into that materiality?
A. We went down – we went on a tour of Bazalgette sewer network at Blackfriars, literally through a manhole cover. Stuningly beautiful brickwork, purely functional but immensely beautiful and still retaining a massive sense of engineering complexity – it’s not broken, it just doesn’t have the capacity.

Q. Was that part of the idea, bringing that beauty of material above ground?
A. Yes, in two ways – firstly the general public might not see the visual connection, the narrative that came from the images of that time. But it was also about the power of engineering, the taking a position of scale and monumentality down to the scale, the city, the public, the blood and everything that falls in between. it’s very exposed. On the south side of the river there is massive residential and commercial development and whilst we are building up to eight metres in height, it’s tiny in comparison.

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Q. How do you take something that is about scale and monumentality down to something that becomes very personal or intimate?
A. There are moments to stop and touch and feel the materiality. There are these objects which I’m hoping will be both loved and hated – you don’t really know what they are, what are they doing here?

One of them feels like it’s ready for a brass band to play on like the Victorian idea of the bandstand, another feel like it’s a very deliberate seating area that you sit with your back to it facing the river and you’re comfortable and enclosed and protected. Another one is an eight-metre-high ‘water wall’ which adds some white noise to the site and has a degree of poetry to it. There is another which is a bit of a skateboard park so there is a subtle language going on between the family.

Q. Presumably the architects didn’t give you a brief – so what were you reacting to?
A. Hawkins Brown have planning requirements, so many trees, regulations on public access, step free access and change of levels across the site, by-laws etc. and their main driving force is to make good public spaces and to solve all those problems in a creative and dynamic way. I didn’t think that was my job – my job was to create an interruption between all that, not to solve problems. It’s much more interesting to create difficulties. I want the space to be dynamic and in moments comfortable and beautiful but muscular and out of the ordinary. it’s very exposed. On the south side of the river there is massive residential and commercial development and whilst we are building up to eight metres in height, it’s tiny in comparison.

Q. The idea of public art, art in public spaces can be difficult – there are so many bad examples, so was the idea of it to develop its own narrative so that people reacting to it, is in a sense its success?
A. Some people would argue that it’s a risky strategy, but I’m not interested in being safe and by that, I mean sanitised and polite, but I don’t seek it to be controversial either – I don’t think it’s controversial. I think it’s dynamic and that what we are coming up with is interesting propositions, but of course there is always a risk of giving the public something that they didn’t know they could have. If it only gives them what they expect then that’s when the public realm can be soul-less and all they want to do is run through it to get home, so we are trying to do the best we can with all the things we inherited, make something which seems to have a degree of authorship from somewhere else – and that’s quite tough to do.
Designing tech for health:

Developing a mixed reality playkit to help children who need an MRI scan

The main aim of this project (funded by InnovateUK) is to bring about a step-change in children’s preparation for an MRI scan. Children are often given a general anaesthetic (GA) prior to undertaking an MRI scan because it is perceived that they will be unable to keep still for prolonged periods within a confined space and be exposed to loud noises. Preparing children for what to expect, such as is done by hospital Play Specialists for inpatients at children’s hospitals, can help children go through the scan without a GA. In a similar vein our playkit aims to use a range of different play types to help children prepare. By enabling more children to complete an MRI scan without a GA, our product will have substantial financial benefit to the NHS and will obviate the medical risks of GAs to a greater number of children.

To manage their imaging procedure, children need clear information, encouragement, and confidence building using distraction techniques and constructive play. Current provision tends to focus upon physical play, augmented and virtual reality, thus linking to research that has shown that play is the best way for children to make sense of the world and their experiences. Our approach is also innovative in the constitution of the project team. To date, current market products have been largely medically defined. Switching the collaboration so that the lead business is an expert in gaming, which specialises in digital experiences for children, will enable us to create a product that has play experience at its heart, while also integrating essential clinical information. In this way the product will maximise opportunities to engage children in vital preparation needed to undergo MRI without a GA.

So where are we in this process? Well, we have just completed our first round of design workshops with schoolchildren in Sheffield and Glasgow. The children were split into two age groups, 4-5 years of age and 8-10 years of age. In these workshops, all the children took part in two specific activities over a period of about one and a half hours. In the first activity, they were asked to draw the kinds of physical and digital things they like to play with. The idea behind this activity is that it would provide us with insights into the children’s play activities and this would help us understand the kinds of play that are popular with children of their age. For the second activity, the younger children were provided with a teddy bear and a model MRI scanner. They were asked to work with friends and use cardboard, tape, coloured papers and pens to find a way to help teddy get used to the MRI scanner. For the older age group, they were asked to come up with design ideas for a playkit.

The results from these workshops were very enlightening. The children produced some very interesting design ideas as can be seen in Figure 1 below where a group four-year-old children decided to make the roof of the MRI scanner openable so that it was possible to check if the patient (bunny) was OK inside. In general, the younger age group appeared to be focussed on emotional support and comfort whereas the older group seemed more interested in distraction from the actual MRI scan procedure. The next steps for the project will be to take the design ideas put forward by the schoolchildren and develop an initial prototype for user testing with our ex-designers. Watch this space!

Dr Dyana Yamada-Rice
Dublin Limited
Professor Steve Love
Glasgow School of Art
Health ... 

a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing

We now know, or to be more precise, we now have the evidence, that quality of place supports quality of life. This comes as no surprise to urbanists, urban designers, architects and landscape architects who have always known this to be true. The title of this piece is from the constitution of the World Health Organisation that continues “the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition.” Fairly unequivocal and universally supported... where politics permit.

That we have the evidence is due, particularly here in Scotland, to the work of Professor Sir Harry Burns who, in 2016, “having a miserable childhood leads to a Scotland where we live in vibrant, healthy and safe places and communities.” The latest public health strategy for Glasgow finds the phrase “a Scotland where we live in vibrant, healthy and safe places and communities.”

He went on: “having a miserable childhood leads to increased risk of failure at school, mental health problems, offending behaviour, worklessness and other social ills. This can be directly linked to the disintegration of urban societies... in the most deprived parts of society people are told where to go and what to do. They are not in control of their lives. This does not promote wellbeing.”

And most significantly: “Planning and designing environments that bring people together are a critical factor of what should be happening to support wellness. Society needs to do more in design spaces that allow people to come together and socialise... but... rarely do briefs for infrastructure require the creation of an environment that supports wellbeing.”


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It is cold comfort that in his report on poverty in the UK, Philip Alston, UN Special Rapporteur commended the Scottish Government for putting place policies as a devolved administration designed to mitigate the detrimental effects of UK Government policies on poverty and health caused by austerity. It is cold comfort that in his report on poverty in the UK, Philip Alston, UN Special Rapporteur commended the Scottish Government for putting place policies as a devolved administration designed to mitigate the detrimental effects of UK Government policies on poverty and health caused by austerity. It is cold comfort that in his report on poverty in the UK, Philip Alston, UN Special Rapporteur commended the Scottish Government for putting place policies as a devolved administration designed to mitigate the detrimental effects of UK Government policies on poverty and health caused by austerity.

The Place Standard is an excellent tool for community engagement. It is widely recognised and is applied.. it helps reveal what needs to be done with places to help make them healthier; but it does not, nor was it intended to, explain how that will be brought about. That requires good design. But guidance is now at hand in publications including Healthy Streets (Transport for London 2017) and Town Centre Living: A Caring Place (Architecture and Design Scotland 2019) and early next year, Healthy Placemaking by Fred London will be published by the RIBA.

All these documents stress the importance of inclusive design, for the whole community and for the social interaction that is now widely recognised as important. In the design community we must apply this advice in practice, train our students and to appeal to politicians and clients in public and private sectors to ensure that all hotels for new work embraces the principles. As designers, we have the ability to implement the policy and advice to create meaningful and delightful places and spaces. This cannot be taken for granted, however. Access to green space is seen as an essential part of the drive for mental and physical wellness. All new nurseries and facilities for children must now provide space for children to enjoy the outdoors. Let this not be achieved through a facilities management mentality space but through design for joyful spaces for our children to explore.

So, the evidence is clear, the advice is here and the tools are in place. As a society and as communities we need to get on with it but, as ever, getting on with it means the application of good design thinking in the hands of good designers. It was ever thus. It was ever thus. It was ever thus. It was ever thus. It was ever thus.

Dr Brian Mark Evans
City Urbanist for Glasgow and Professor of Urbanism & Landscape at Glasgow School of Art
The Western Baths Club is a nationally significant surviving swimming pool and leisure club. The Club is considered to be the second oldest private members’ club in the world with an indoor swimming pool. The oldest is the neighbouring Arlington Baths off Woodlands Road making Glasgow in the late 1900’s the great Victorian swimming city. The building was designed between 1873-4 by leading based Architects Clarke and Bell, in the “Victorian Moorish style” which was fashionable at the time, integrating decorative motives from the far reaches of the Empire into a modern neo Gothic Victorian building. The Western Baths Co Ltd was incorporated in 1876 and building opened in 1878, it was a neo Gothic Victorian building. The Western Baths Club is a nationally significant surviving leisure in a listed building.

**Designing for ‘wellness’: Leisure in a listed building**

The Western Baths Club has undergone many transformations and phases of repair and development. The Western Baths Club became the first private swimming pool in Britain to install a bespoke filtration plant in 1913. Many of the original spaces in the building such as the main arched entrance lobby with its formal imperial stair, the senior changing room, plunge pool and the pool hall with its flying trapeze and travelling rings, are still used today in the manner they were originally designed. Records state that suggest Sir James Guthrie – painter and one of Glasgow Boys, and baths member was, under the invitation of architect James Salmon, also a member, invited to collaborate to carry out a refurbishment decorative scheme, in a natural Arts and Crafts style from 1896 to March 1917. This informed our approach on paint removal to decorative timber finishes which would have likely been a simple wash finish.

In 1907, Honeyman, Keppie and Mackintosh Architects possibly involving contributions from a young Charles Rennie Mackintosh, carried out alterations, improvements and modernisations to the South East wing – creating a therapeutic section of private baths. This therapeutic section was closed in 1927 the space being stripped, re fitted and adapted once again. During 1996 to March 1997. This informed our approach on paint removal to decorative timber finishes which would have likely been a simple wash finish.

In more recent times the Committee have carefully planned a series of upgrades to the building including renewing roof lights, creating modern sauna and steam facilities. A full replacement of Walter MacFarlane’s cast iron diving dale, the reinstatement of the Irigladum dome and introduction of more modern high performing glazed roof lanterns was undertaken in 2012. Today the Club provides a wide range of health related functions and it has adapted to meet the changing trends and demands of its users. ZM Architecture have undertaken several projects within the context of a 5 year Conservation strategy to improve the facilities. Work includes the social space and bar area in the old Bathmasters quarters in the basement, poolside and shower facilities for families, the conversion and refurbishment of the former Reading room to a suite for Yoga, Pilates and other classes, and the reworking of the active Gym spaces and changing facilities to an Annexe of the building the 1990 W Mann extension. Peter Richardson

ZM Architecture 1994 lead to the addition of the sports Hall wing designed externally in the style of the Salom Cinema, but internally it was a functional building with basic, robust modern finishes, such as exposed steel and painted concrete block. This facility added a range of spaces to The Western Baths Club to attract an ever expanding and diverse membership base.

Today the Club provides a wide range of health related functions and it has adapted to meet the changing trends and demands of its users. ZM Architecture have undertaken several projects within the context of a 5 year Conservation strategy to improve the facilities. Work includes the social space and bar area in the old Bathmasters quarters in the basement, poolside and shower facilities for families, the conversion and refurbishment of the former Reading room to a suite for Yoga, Pilates and other classes, and the reworking of the active Gym spaces and changing facilities to an Annexe of the building the 1990 W Mann extension.

Peter Richardson

ZM Architecture
Lowering road speed: Good for safety, sustainability and active travel

Bruce Whyte from the Glasgow Centre for Population Health (GCPH) explains why there is strong evidence and public health backing for the Safer Streets Bill, a member’s bill currently being considered by the Scottish Parliament which proposes a national 20mph limit on restricted roads.

To give some context, the GCPH was set up to better understand Scotland’s and Glasgow’s unenviable health record and to provide supportive evidence for policies, actions and legislation that might improve health. Our interest in this Bill is underpinned by more than 10 years of research into active and sustainable travel and our understanding of a complex policy context. Current Scottish Government policy seeks to increase levels of active travel (principally walking and cycling, although scooting and skate-boarding also count), improve health, decrease air pollution, enhance the viability and attractiveness of our urban environment, cut carbon emissions and reduce inequality and its impacts. These interdependent aims are reflected in Scotland’s National Performance Framework, which are aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Whether this Bill is passed or not – and at the time of writing this looks less likely with the Scottish Parliament’s Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee refusing to back the Bill and the Scottish Government not currently supportive – reducing mad speeds within our towns and cities would complement many of the aforementioned aims.

The principle argument for 20mph limits is that they would reduce average speed and thus would make our roads much safer. We have estimated that introducing this limit in urban settings across Scotland could reduce the number of people injured on our roads by 500-750 per year and associated cost savings to the public purse would be expensive, but long-term casualty reductions year-on-year (with associated cost savings) would more than balance out initial signage costs. It is also claimed that emissions are higher at 20mph, but there is no clear evidence to back this up and some evidence shows that having a 20mph limit can smooth traffic flow, which is likely to reduce emissions. Finally, some may be concerned that slower speeds will mean longer journeys, but evidence has shown that any increase in journey time in areas with 20mph limits is extremely small.

Bruce Whyte
Glasgow Centre for Population Health (GCPH)
Meditation, fitness trackers and veganism – all trends whose recent growth in popularity over the last few years has shown that wellbeing is rising firmly on the agenda. Sadly, this consumer consciousness has yet to translate into the broader construction sector. This is despite the fact that, in the urbanised world, people are spending around 90% of their time indoors, either in buildings or vehicles.

Consumers by and large are uneducated about the options available – particularly about the benefits of specific materials and the impact different designs can have. Traditionally, apart from some of the more heavily involved clients, architects have the opportunity to spread their wings when it comes to building design and specification of materials. Many architects are very much leading the way and designing innovative functional buildings which prioritise the wellbeing of their occupants. But should and could the profession be doing more? It might be hard to convince clients on a tight budget to commit a higher initial outlay for a better performing building but by encouraging clients to make incremental steps architects have the power to create a wellbeing revolution in UK buildings.

Steps are being made to advocate for the improved wellbeing in buildings from other players in the construction industry. Materials manufacturer Saint-Gobain has developed their own standard around wellbeing in buildings called ‘Multi Comfort’. Multi Comfort actually builds on Passivhaus levels of thermal performance and includes acoustic and visual comfort standards, as well as indoor air quality and is all about placing the comfort of the occupants at the forefront of a build. Multi Comfort requires a fabric first approach, using the best solutions possible to deliver comfortable and sustainable buildings.

Our perception of comfort is affected by the following factors; visual (view, luminosity), acoustic (noise, vibrations), thermal (temperature, humidity) and indoor air quality (fresh air supply, pollutants, odours). The correct balance of these factors gives us indoor environments that we are happy to use, where we function more efficiently and feel well. Understanding these comfort factors is crucial to designing energy-efficient buildings which contribute positively to the wellbeing of occupants.

Business Development Director for Saint-Gobain UK and Ireland, Stuart McKill said, "Designing for comfort and specifying the correct materials can really transform the wellbeing of occupants whilst adding to building performance. "We’re always innovating at Saint-Gobain – one in five of the products we sell today didn’t even exist four years ago! The end occupants can benefit from all these innovations and advancements in technology if – across the industry – we try to advocate smarter fabric first buildings to both clients and partners."

The reason we built in the first place was to shelter ourselves from the outside environment and increase our comfort. It follows that we should utilise the wave of increased wellbeing awareness among consumers and technological advances to create the most comfortable and sustainable buildings we can. Vive la revolution!“

Katie Mackinnon
Saint-Gobain

Above
Bartholomew Barn at The King’s School in Worcester – UK’s first Multi Comfort building.
© Saint-Gobain UK and Ireland

Join the wellbeing revolution

British Gypsum’s plasterboard with Activair technology is one of the products that has been engineered to deliver superior comfort. The innovative Activair technology traps formaldehyde – a common volatile organic compound from buildings – improving air quality.

Katie Mackinnon
Saint-Gobain

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RIBA Quarterly 38 Summer 2019
It’s 2015, I’m in my second ever semester of architecture school, and I am struggling with a double dose of clinical depression and anxiety. I’m reading yet another article on the general poor state of architecture students’ mental health, and in the comments section I notice a sneering fellow suggest that if these students ‘can’t handle’ the course then they should ‘do something else.’ He’s talking to me.

This man is not an outlier, unfortunately: I know now that there is, seemingly, a fundamental and widespread misunderstanding of the relationship between health and architecture. There’s an assumption that a degree in architecture is a catalyst for depression or anxiety – that perfectly functional, healthy and happy young adults go in and, like a malfunctioning sausage factory, a swathe of zombie-eyed, sallow-skinned husks come out at the other side, clutching either a degree or a transfer request to another course.

What I’d like to propose is that, in fact, architecture is exactly the sort of profession that attracts the slightly messed-up, creative kids that grow up to become the statistics (the ones which we sigh – or perhaps, sneer – at in our archizines) and that the problem is not that our neurodivergent students are not resilient enough, but that they do not receive enough support for their alternative needs, and that the culture surrounding the study of architecture is a toxic, unhealthy, and hostile one, particularly for mentally ill students. Perhaps I wouldn’t have struggled so much if I wasn’t being told by (some) tutors to stay in late and skip shifts at my part-time job in order to cram in more studio time, like all the other students. Perhaps I wouldn’t have cried so much if course notes, reading list texts and briefs were written in a language I understood, rather than overly complex and borderline exclusionary academic English, which was difficult to parse within the short timeframes given to do so. Perhaps I wouldn’t have panicked to the same extent if I wasn’t having to simultaneously worry, as a student from a more modest background than the vast majority of my peers, about how I could afford to fund my studies – mandatory, expensive field trips, model-making materials, printing costs, and all.

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Over the past five years, the architecture society at Strathclyde has been through peaks, lows, and changes in its structure. However, following a full year of silence, and in a time in need of a strong student voice, Architecture at 131 (A131) was resurrected this academic year with the launch of its new lecture series, Spotlight Sessions. Our journey has been very inspiring, rewarding and, most importantly, a fruitful exercise in bonding, communication and discussion amongst our committee, our new members, and our department.

A131 was established in 2012 as a student-led society within StrathUnion. Its rather unconventional name holds an allusion that defines the identity of many Strathclyders – 131 Rottenrow, the address of the Strathclyde Architecture Building. The building was designed by Frank Fielden and Associates and completed in 1967. Despite the department’s move to the James Weir Building, it continues to be an intention among the student cohort to recognize 131 Rottenrow’s legacy through the name of the student society, in our attempt to respect the past and aspire for the future.

Conversations of A131’s resurrection were very much inspired by the need for a student-led space for conversations, discussions and, most importantly, the pitching of fruitful ideas to invigorate our minds and foster our interest in architecture beyond academics. An important starting point was a weekend of conversations between all Scottish architecture societies in mid-November. Following an exchange of ideas, tips and problem-solving strategies, a group of us noticed that most architecture students share very similar concerns regarding both education and practice. One way of building upon that is through the creation of extraprofessional activities that catalyse a more interdisciplinary and social approach towards architecture. A definite decision was made to re-establish A131, rethink its structure and functions, and create a new, stimulating program for the second semester.

The first few meetings were open to all students to share ideas, and a few weeks later we had gathered a big committee, made up of three main teams – Education, Social and Graphics. A131’s main contribution to the new semester was the launch of a new lecture series, titled Spotlight Sessions, which exposed students to various voices with very different approaches to architecture.

*A131’s main contribution to the new semester was the launch of a new lecture series, titled Spotlight Sessions, which exposed students to various voices with very different approaches to architecture.*
The artisan baker’s house in Edinburgh – New Town celebrates conflict between site geometries through volumes of brick and timber-in-zinc envelope. Brick is used for its utilitarian durability in areas such as the bakery and kitchen, while timber provides a sense of warmth for the café and family room. Bedrooms include a mixture of both: to give a sense of stability as well as cosiness. The intersection of the two forms features a chimney, neighbouring brick tower reference (figures 1 and 2).

A delivery pathway separates the site from considerably tall buildings surrounding it. To access light, the house progresses upwards in the South direction. Spaces are oriented according to daily rhythms, with café terrace and master bedroom exposed to morning light, and afternoon light reaching living and dining areas. Externally, glazing exposes a poetic fire oven, while a surprising corner window invites passers-by to witness the baker in action. Another window turns to frame a sea view with minimal obstruction.

in the master bedroom. Upon entering it, one passes through a dramatic hallway with rooflights, accessed through a tight timber staircase marking the transition to a private zone (figures 3, 4, 5 and 6).

It is the awkward junction, however, that determines the interior’s character. A row of bookshelves separates the family room from the dining room and kitchen. Narrowing down, at the end it contains a reading corner with a sea view. One can retreat into there, sitting within a timber shell on neither the inside nor the outside of the home (figure 7).

Special thanks:
Tutors Rachael Scott and Jamie Henry, Course Organiser Dr Fiona McLachlan.

Maria Wolonciej
Edinburgh School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture; Year 1 project awarded Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners Scholarship.

© Maria Wolonciej, Amelia Brown (background façades), Karolina Krajčíková and Harry Whitmore with others, ESALA

Material follows function

![Diagram showing material division following function and site geometries.][1]

![Figure 1 and 2 Material division following function and site geometries. Concept diagrams: 1:250 axonometric and sketch.][2]


![Figure 5. Sitting approach for light and public service.][4]

![Figure 6. A dramatic hallway with rooflights, B. Turning window: sea view frame with minimal obstruction, C. Exposed poetic fire oven, D. Surprising corner window for passers-by to witness the baker in action. Section and front façade, 1:200.][5]

![Figure 7. Sea views: master bedroom, reading corner at the intersection of the two volumes, kitchen.][6]

![Figure 8. Rewording Sullivan’s ‘Form (ever) follows function’][7]
On the 1st March the Aberdeen Society of Architects’ Annual Awards Dinner took place in the visually delightful Elphinstone Hall in Old Aberdeen, an historic gem of a venue in our small corner of Scotland.

The yearly event allows for a rare evening of a little glitz and glam, a dusting off of the kill, high heels and bow tie but, more importantly, the opportunity for Aberdeen’s community of architects to come together and maintain their strong connection with one another while simultaneously making new ones – in a period of time where discussions of separation is all that seems to be in the headlines across the nation.

The line-up was stellar. The, now former, President of the ASA, David Chouman opened the evening with a warm introduction. He spoke about the importance of events like that night in highlighting not only good architecture, but, more importantly, the opportunity for Aberdeen’s professionals. Making various nods throughout the evening to very current themes of the architecture sphere, David introduced the first speaker was RIAS President, Robin Webster.

Robin in invaluable to students at the Scott Sutherland School. with the student mentoring programs that are proving relationship between education and practice in Aberdeen towards. He began by outlining the importance of a growing key targets the society and the RIAS have been working made a splendid job of hosting the evening covering several to very current themes of the architecture sphere, David professionals. Making various nods throughout the evening like that night in highlighting not only good architecture,

The acclaimed guest speaker for the evening, Rab Bennetts OBE FRIAS (Bennetts Associates), was next to take the stage. His talk was exceptional. Telling tales of some hilarious last-ditch design pitches that involved wearing buildings as hats to convince clients to invest in their idea along with some almost unbelievable moments from his career that the crowd – being predominantly architects – could become.

The expected surprise guest speaker of the evening, Prof. Gokay Deveci of the Scott Sutherland School and Diarmid MacLachlan (the then Dundee Institute of Architects President). The shortlist of projects was of a very high standard across all the listed categories and as a Master of Architecture Student in my final year, I was genuinely excited by the works of the practices presented in front of me.

The top regeneration prize went to Lee Boyd’s Queen’s Cross Church. Glen Strachan & Deidre Boyle’s Inverlochy, Fiddes Architects’ Glencommon and Michael Gilmour Associates Kilbowie House. The top regeneration prize went to Lee Boyd’s Queen’s Cross Church. Glen Strachan & Deidre Boyle’s Inverlochy, Fiddes Architects’ Glencommon and Michael Gilmour Associates Kilbowie House. After dinner was the much-anticipated awards and prize giving. Presenting the awards to the winners, were sustainable design expert Prof. Gokay Deveci of the Scott Sutherland School and Diarmid MacLachlan (the then Dundee Institute of Architects President). The shortlist of projects was of a very high standard across all the listed categories and as a Master of Architecture Student in my final year, I was genuinely excited by the works of the practices presented in front of me.

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Building Biology: Criteria and Architectural Design
by Nurgül Ece
Birkhäuser Verlag; £54.50

The term Building Biology comes from the German, Baubiologie. Its objective is simple and intuitive: to create healthy buildings which don’t harm the environment nor the people who use them. You could say this is “deep green” architecture, and while there are already a few German language books on Baubiologie, this is the first to be translated into English.

Building Biology: Criteria and Architectural Design is a survey of 21 recent examples from across Europe, including a flagship project in Rosenheim for the Institute of Building Biology + Sustainability (IBN). Most are drawn from Austria, Switzerland and Germany, where the Baubiologie concept developed, but there are a few from further afield including a building in Devon for the Royal Horticultural Society.

Baubiologie combines aspects of eco-friendly design, sustainability, localism, Passivhaus principles and low-energy design into a “holistic” architecture, although the 25 Principles of Building Biology listed here provide a checklist rather than a manifesto. Using natural, breathable materials to create a highly-insulated, airtight envelope seems obvious, but the things to avoid are just as important: all types of pollution, most plastics and many glues and varnishes.

Beyond that, the book considers how a healthy environment means controlling humidity, toxic chemicals and the electromeg of magnetic fields and radio transmissions we’re surrounded by; easier said than done, in a world of high voltage powerlines, electric cars and trains, mobile phones, Bluetooth and Wifi, but Building Biology suggests strategies to cut down on harmful radiation.

Given how many generations it will take to replace our existing building stock, it’s helpful that the Building Biology approach can be applied to refurbishment projects as well as newbuilds. One of those gave rise to my favourite quote from the book, where the “worn-down wooden stairs were refinished, flipped and used again, ‘just like in Roman times’”.

You generally know what you’ll get with a Birkhäuser book, usually what the Germans call a fachbücher; this is no exception. It’s a well-structured, systematic review of what the 25 Principles of Baubiologie mean in practice, and how they were applied to each of the buildings. The specification choices are analysed in detail, and arguably that makes Baubiologie much more useful to designers than a BREEAM-style score.

What Baubiologie isn’t is a style. Many of the buildings are timber-clad or built using massive timber construction, but they range from Swiss ideologues who built and furnished a house entirely using a single material (lightly-treated softwood), to the polite rationalism of German infill developments clad using a mixture of clay block, lime render, terracotta, glazing and timber cladding.

Healthy buildings are important, given that so many of us suffer from allergies and asthma, so applying the principles of Building Biology may help us to live better. Similarly, if you’ve listened to David Attenborough on the TV news then wondered how architecture relates to the environmental issues he raises, this book is an excellent starting point.

Mark Chalmers RIAS

“Using natural, breathable materials to create a highly-insulated, airtight envelope seems obvious, but the things to avoid are just as important..."
The prospect of a commission for the architectural reimagining and restoration of an entire village is a fantastic opportunity and one that was gifted to renowned architect Giancarlo de Carlo when he was tasked with the redevelopment of the secluded Ligurian Hamlet of Colletta di Castelbianco. This book paints a picture of the rebirth of Colletta’s vibrant architecture, history and culture through a series of short essays in Italian and English by residents, visitors, architects and local officials.

Colletta di Castelbianco
Edited by Ole Wiig
29 Euros (to purchase a copy please email Ciara.Bettella@rias.org.uk)

The village dates to the 13th century and grew to serve its community of subsistence farmers. The buildings are described to have developed organically, in an ad hoc manner, as clusters of cells and terraces designed to provide areas for drying crops and housing livestock. By the mid-20th century the village was dying, it no longer served its agricultural purpose and its isolated location saw people move away to the cities. By the 1970s the village had only five permanent residents and had slowly declined into a derelict but largely untouched state.

This was a rare and unique opportunity for de Carlo who was commissioned in the early 1990s after the entire village was acquired by private developers in a search for a ‘hidden beauty’ – an alternative to ubiquitous tourism led developments in Italy. This redevelopment was driven by the addition, at the developers’ expense, of a new fibre optic internet connection to the village. This would allow it to overcome its geographic isolation and through a global infrastructure attract ‘telecommuters’ who could work remotely in an idyllic rural landscape. This is not an unusual concept now but Colletta di Castelbianco was one of the early adopters.

The book describes de Carlo’s quiet but passionate restoration of the village. This wasn’t seen as an opportunity for a piece of ‘personality’ architecture but an honest reimagining; working detail by detail to faithfully restore the village. De Carlo chose to weave the existing building fabric together, reorganising the cells and terraces across multiple buildings to form new arrangements suitable for modern living. This is well illustrated through sketches, diagrams and photographs of the beautiful, haphazard topography of the medieval rooftops, delicately orchestrated to take advantage of light and aspect. The terraces and flat roofs are bound together by staircases that connect the buildings and the stone volumes are punctuated by their distinctive lime plaster window surrounds against a picturesque backdrop of the Ligurian Alps.

Norwegian architect Ole Wiig, the editor of the book, met Italian Giancarlo de Carlo at an RIAS event in Edinburgh 30 years ago. Introduced to Colletta di Castelbianco, Wiig bought a house and over time took over the reins as ‘village architect’. He is now responsible for the upkeep and preservation of Colletta. This is an obvious labour of love and Wiig has helped to develop guidelines dictating the colours of doors and window frames, the specifics of planting and even the colour of the deck chairs (beige, if you’re wondering).

The book presents itself as a collection of essays but a more cohesive and lengthier narrative could have been of more benefit as there is a fair amount of repetition, with each contributor using the space to set the same scene. The descriptions of the history, culture, language and even recreation in the area makes the book read like a travel brochure (albeit an effective one) but a more in-depth insight would have been welcome. Ultimately, the writing does not focus sufficiently on what is a fascinating architectural project – only briefly described, and most eloquently, by Ole himself. 

“Irish Jew” Kieran Guffey RIAS RIBA
Design for Health: Sustainable Approaches to Therapeutic Architecture
Edited by Terri Peters | Wiley; £24.99

Cataloguing the correlation between architecture and practicing as a physician is a popular trope and this recent publication identifies a clutch of key characteristics. Design for Health: Sustainable Approaches to Therapeutic Architecture is not a book per se but a volume of the bi-monthly magazine Architectural Design (AD No.87-02), guest-edited by Terri Peters. The format facilitates faster production in order to meet the publisher’s promise to be “… consistently at the forefront of cultural thought and design.” Certainly, scanning the back catalogue (The Business of Research, Digital Architecture, Machine Landscapes, etc.) hints at the expansive scope of its remit.

Hospital design, of course, is a very specialised field and the editor readily acknowledges that “…the architectural quality is often questionable.” Admittedly hospital typology is rather mercurial and major projects often appear content to align themselves with the shopping mall, tower block and/or factory – but do any of these approaches prioritize patient wellbeing? Are all architects involved in healthcare projects hopelessly in thrall to functionalist diktats and technological innovation? Is there a more enlightened response? Terri Peters has gathered together a diverse range of practitioners, researchers and academics to speculate on such matters and posit a number of more sustainable strategies. Featured architects include Morphosis, Penoyre & Prasad, Arup and Reiach and Hall. The latter are singled-out in Charles Jencks’ essay on Maggie’s Architecture: the Deep Affinities between Architecture and Health. He praises their building at Monklands General Hospital for its “understated contradictions” and subtle paring back of elements to evoke Mies’ aspiration to achieve “almost nothing.”

The cover is given over to CF Møller’s beguiling Hospice Djursland at Rønde (near Aarhus), where patients have a direct connection to nature with extensive glazing and beds which can be wheeled out on to a capacious terrace overlooking wild flowers and grasslands with patio umbrellas provided to offer shade as required. Denmark appears to be in the vanguard of healthcare design and certainly Herzog + de Meuron’s 660-bed New North Zealand Hospital has generated considerable excitement. Sited within a forest, it comprises a thin sinuous ribbon of accommodation forming a four-leaf clover shape enclosing a lush garden – it is due to open next year and will further enhance the practice’s formidable reputation.

The notion of the techno-utopian super hospital may endure (witness Glasgow’s Queen Elizabeth University Hospital) but architecture should be more than a mere container. Work by practices such as CF Møller privileges the patients’ perspective, lifts the spirit and inculcates a sense of wellness. This timely publication offers a fascinating smorgasbord of architectural determinism and clearly demonstrates how society might benefit from such holistic ‘healing’ architecture. The lack of a proper index is a failing and the contents page is graphically too clever-clever to navigate easily. Nonetheless, it’s encouraging to see the potential of a paradigmatic shift in healthcare design with projects becoming more proactive (promoting prevention and wellbeing) rather than being primarily reactive (focussed on treatment).

Mark Cousins RIAS

“Work by practices such as CF Møller privileges the patients’ perspective, lifts the spirit and inculcates a sense of wellness.”
Building Standards Update

Members will be aware that the RIAS participated in the work of the Review Panel on Building Standards (Compliance and Enforcement) in Scotland, chaired by Professor Cole in 2017/2018. The Panel’s remit was to review the building standards system, including in relation to compliance and enforcement and make any recommendations for improvement. The RIAS was represented on the panel by members of the Practice Committee.

In December 2018, the Ministerial Working Group on Building and Fire Safety agreed the establishment of a Futures Programme Board to take forward the recommendations made by the Review Panels. The RIAS have been invited to join the programme board.

The Board’s remit is to strategically advise and direct a board programme aimed at improving performance, expertise, resilience and sustainability of the Scottish building standards’ framework and services across Scotland.

The first meeting was held on 14 May.

The RIAS is keen to assist with the development of a more robust compliance system for Scotland and will participate in the Futures Programme Board in the spirit of helpfulness to try to secure this common objective. We are aware of the complexities of current verification systems and difficulties and believe that RIAS members can help to resolve some of this by taking on the short/medium term task of providing the inspection services needed to comply with construction quality as a condition of granting warrants. A paper prepared by the RIAS Practice Committee outlining the RIAS position has been submitted to the Futures Board to inform discussions.

We are all anxious to ensure that as an industry we act sensibly and proportionately to try to ensure that significant failures are avoided in future, to the extent that processes and procedures can help achieve this objective: RIAS members (together with our associated design team colleagues) are well placed, with professional qualifications, experience and knowledge to help provide the expertise required to ensure that what is designed, specified and approved is actually realised through the warrant approval and construction processes.

“...the architectural profession must decide whether its essential raison d’être is still the physical realisation in situ of high-quality, safe, functional, sustainable and life-enriching buildings, or whether it is to be increasingly restricted to creating primarily conceptual design solutions on computers in offices. Architecture only happens on site and it is difficult to deny that this is where architects must be, safe-guarding the accurate translation of their designs into safe, high-quality buildings that will meet the needs and enhance the lives of this and future generations.”

For more information, read RIAS Practice Note F109 Inspection Duties of An Architect.

Strengthening High-Rise Fire Safety Consultation

The Scottish Government has launched a public consultation focusing on the safety of people living in high-rise flats across Scotland.

Views are sought on how to simplify the guidance available to everyone who lives in high-rise flats or is responsible for fire safety in high-rise flats.

The consultation also seeks views on proposals for a public information campaign to raise awareness of the dangers of leaving rubbish or unwanted items in common areas within high-rises.


For further information and to access the Scottish Government website (link in sidebar), Conservation Update

On 3 May 2019 Historic Environment Scotland (HES), in conjunction with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and the RIAS, held the first in a series of CPD events at the Engine Shed in Stirling. The series will cover a range of topics relating to conservation, with the first event, Conservation ETH, focusing on philosophy and ethics, identification of common decay mechanisms and building defects and understanding the listing process. Dorothy Hopkins, Technical Outreach and Education Manager with HES said: ‘We are thrilled with the positive response to this first in a series of CPD events with RIAS and RICS. There is clearly a genuine interest to learn more about conservation and we look forward to reviewing feedback and creating more events to meet the needs of building professionals.

Our next event on 8 August will focus on selecting stone for repairs, digital documentation of buildings, and how to improve energy efficiency in traditional buildings. We hope to welcome many RIAS members to this event.’

The RIAS is grateful to HES for hosting these events and providing their expertise to assist those interested in conservation. Please keep an eye on your bulletins for notification of future events!

In addition to this series the RIAS autumn conservation seminar will be held on 29 October 2019, also at the Engine Shed. Further information will be issued closer to the time, but meanwhile please pencil the date in your diary.

For those of you who are interested in conservation of the built environment, are considering or are working towards applying for RIAS Conservation Accreditation, why not sign up to be added to our ‘conservation – items of interest’ alert. This may evolve in the future to a home notification for repairs, digital documentation of buildings, and how to improve energy efficiency in traditional buildings. We hope to welcome many RIAS members to this event.’

For more information, read RIAS Practice Note F109 Inspection Duties of An Architect.

Strengthening High-Rise Fire Safety Consultation


Conservation Accreditation

www.rias.org.uk/architects/conervation-accreditation

Historic Environment Policy for Scotland

www.baton amigos scottish history support/ planning/policy/historicenvironmentpolicy/for-scottish-houses/

For additional information on this policy, supplementary policies and best practice guidance visit the HES website.
Historic Environment and Climate Change

HES has launched a public consultation seeking views of their draft Climate Change and Environmental Action Plan (CCEAP) 2019-24. This document sets out how HES aim to address the challenges and opportunities presented by climate change to their organisation and to the wider historic environment. It also outlines how they will continue to support the Scottish Government to meet its ambitious carbon reduction targets. The Plan identifies eight strategic themes as core areas of climate change work and research:

- Climate impacts, risk and adaptation
- Energy and carbon management
- Sustainable travel
- Biodiversity
- Behaviour change
- Research, education and training
- Sustainable procurement
- Circular economy


This consultation will close at 12pm on Wednesday 19 June. To take part access the consultation documents on the HES website (link in sidebar).

Procurement Update

Electronic Invoicing in Public Procurement

A Scottish Procurement Policy Note has been advised on the Public Contracts (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2019 which came into force on 18 April 2019. This instrument amends the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015 to ensure public services in Scotland meet the European Union’s requirement to introduce electronic invoicing in public procurement.

Construction Manual Update

Further to the Practice Team’s Procurement Update in the Spring Quarterly, the Scottish Government have issued a Construction Policy Note providing advance publication of Chapters 1 and 2 of the Project Initiation and Business Case Handbook (Handbook 1) of the Construction Manual. Chapter 1 covers The Client and the Project Environment and Chapter 2 covers Governance.

Construction Capability Assessment Pilot

The Scottish Government are conducting a Construction Capability Assessment (CCA) pilot following recommendations made as part of the Review of Scottish Public Sector Procurement in Construction. It was noted that ‘if an organisation is to improve its performance and ensure that it deploys the right skill set, it needs to understand the expertise it has at its disposal, and the baseline from which it must improve.’ The pilot aims to help organisations improve their ability to procure publicly funded construction through development of a system of assessment and reporting.

Further information can be found in the following CPD 2019: Contractor Manual – project initiation and business case handbook and CPD 3/2019: Construction capability assessment – request for participation in pilot process available on the Scottish Government website (link in sidebar).

Unsustainable Pricing

The RIAS was invited to participate in the Scottish Government Construction Industry Leadership Forum’s workshop on Unsustainable Pricing. The workshop took place on the 28 May with input from delegates across the construction industry.

Climate Change and Environmental Action Plan

Consultation

www.edinburghenvironment.scot/historicenvironment/collateral/consultations/public-consultations/

Public Contracts (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2019


Construction Capability Assessment Pilot


“As the uncertainty around the UK’s future relations with Europe continues, the Incorporation will keep in touch with events as they develop, liaising closely with the Scottish Government team.”

General Practice

Brexit Roundtable Discussions

The RIAS welcomed the Government’s offer to support and engage with chartered architects and members of the RIAS in Scotland.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is looking at the regulation of architects in the context of Brexit. A series of roundtable discussions were organised in England, in conjunction with RIBA, to consult architects’ practices about their ‘No Deal’ preparations and to answer any questions which they had. Representatives from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government approached the Incorporation to facilitate discussions with Scottish practices. Selected representations from RIAS architectural practices of varying sizes attended roundtable discussions on 11 April at the RIAS Headquarters. Also invited were representatives from the Scottish Government and the ARB.

Chandru Disanayake, Deputy Director of the Building Safety Programme at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government introduced the topics for discussions which centred around information signposting, ‘No Deal’ specific issues including: mutual recognition of professional qualifications, movement of people including proposed salary floors for architects from overseas, talent/skills pipeline, international standards and Mutual Recognition Agreements (CEN/CENELEC), access to EU procurement platforms (EU funding schemes). Also discussed was the financial resilience of the construction sector.

Participants were given opportunity to ask questions and raise their concerns.

The points raised by the RIAS practitioners reflected the queries received by the Incorporation, namely concerns about:

- Staffing and Registration
  - Continued recognition of qualifications and reciprocity,
  - In the event of a ‘No Deal’ Brexit, approaches to other countries regarding recognition would have to be made by the UK professional bodies and could not be made by the government,
  - Freedom of movement and immigration rules for students and architects wishing to work or study in the UK,
  - Practical support for the practices wishing to carry on employing EU part 1/2/3 students,
  - Retention of existing valued EU staff.

Business Concerns

- Worries about the need for work permits and their application,
- Retention of the ability to employ architects from any country
- Brexit impact on projects leading to postponement and cancellation,
- Brexit impact on construction contracts and uncertainty over cost of supplies (leading to fluctuations provisions being introduced),
- Need for clarification on rules for specifying products,
- What will happen to EU funding and where will the money come from.

As the uncertainty around the UK’s future relations with Europe continues, the Incorporation will keep in touch with events as they develop, liaising closely with the Scottish Government team. If members have further concerns, we would be happy to try and address them with the Chief Architect.

Maryse Richardson
Senior Manager: Practice
Under the standard JCT Design and Build 2016 form of Contract, there are three options: the first two, options A and B, are normally selected for new builds, whereas option C is designed to be used for alterations or extensions to existing structures.

Options A and B are relatively simple procedures and most insurance brokers will be able to arrange this policy for their clients.

The second requirement is often more problematic. In addition to arranging a Contract Works policy, there is also a contractual requirement for the Employer to provide joint names cover to the Contractor under the property policy for damage caused to the existing structure and contents by a specified peril. This is often difficult in the following scenarios:

- if the party undertaking the works (i.e. the Employer) is a tenant in the building;
- the Employer does not wish to expose their property policy by providing joint names cover to include the Contractor for damage caused to the existing structure and contents by a specified peril;
- the Employer’s property insurer refuses to provide joint names to the Contractor under the property policy.

In the situations detailed above, there are typically four options open to the Employer:

- persuade the landlord to add the Contractor to their property policy in joint names for damage caused by specified perils (this may be problematic, as some landlords will not agree to this);
- the landlord may agree to joint names insurance for damage caused by specified perils above a stated level (JCT allows for a C.1 Replacement Schedule, to allow for amendments to the standard contract) or;
- the Employer purchases a Third Party Liability policy in joint names with the Contractor and sub-contractors (with an amended Care, Custody and Control exclusion), with a sufficient limit of indemnity to cover the existing building and contents. Note that the contract will require a C.1 Replacement Schedule or;
- the Contractor (and all sub-contractors) are asked to provide a sufficient level of Third Party Liability insurance (again with an amended Care, Custody and Control exclusion), to cover not only the value of the existing building and contents, but also any damage caused to surrounding properties as well as injuries to third parties. Again, the contract will require a C.1 Replacement Schedule.

If the first two options are not available, then we would almost always recommend that the Employer purchases the Third Party Liability insurance in joint names of the Employer and all Contractors and sub-contractors (option 3 above).

This is often far more cost effective, as all contractors and sub-contractors will need to evidence the requested level of Third Party Liability insurance stated under contract; if this has to be evidenced/purchased by each individual contractor or sub-contractor, the cost will be passed back to the Employer, and that will include an element of overheads and profit.

The other key benefits are that the Employer is in control of the insurance, and they have comfort that the policy is in place for the duration of the project. Note that contractually, under the JCT Design and Build form of contract any damage caused to surrounding properties or any injuries to third parties will still be the responsibility of the Contractor’s Third Party Liability policy, unless the contract is further amended.

In light of the above, we would always recommend that if any of the three scenarios are applicable, then the Employer should contact their insurance adviser for guidance.

Jonathan Cocksedge
Client Executive, Construction Practice, Marsh Ltd

For further information, please contact:
RIAS Insurance Services
30 Queensberry Road
Edinburgh EH12 5BS
Tel: 0131 443 2160
Fax: 0131 443 4280
vivian.allison@marsh.com
celia.bud@marsh.com

RIAS Quarterly Issue 38 Summer 2019
President’s diary

April
24 Met with new Chair of A&DS, Ann Allen / Glasgow
25 Attended and addressed the Sustainable Building Conference / Lighthouse Glasgow
29 Met with Davina Passetti, RIBA VP Membership and Cllr Brodie, RIBA Chief Operating Officer along with the Acting Secretary, Past President & Membership Manager / Edinburgh
30 Attended a meeting to discuss an Oil and Gas Decommissioning Competition along with Consultancy Manager, Jennifer Lee and the Acting Secretary / Glasgow

May
04 Attended Interim Governance Committee / Edinburgh
05 Attended RIAS Strategy Working Group / Edinburgh
07 Attended Contracts Committee / Edinburgh
15 Attended Interim Governance Committee / Edinburgh
23 Took part in judging of the GIA Student Awards / Glasgow
22 Attended and addressed the SEDE Housing Conference / Edinburgh

June
06 Chaired RIAS Council / Edinburgh
07 Attended Architecture Fringe event @ Lighthouse / Glasgow
12 Attended Interim Governance Committee / Edinburgh
14 Attended Scottish Stained Glass Symposium / Edinburgh
20 RIAS Special Council Meeting / Edinburgh
24 Attended RIBA 5 Presidents Meeting with Acting Secretary / Dublin
26 Meeting with Heads of Schools / Edinburgh
26 Attended Procurement Group Edinburgh
27 Attended RIBA Council / London

Honorary Fellows

Peter Kahan

Peter Kahan has been the CEO of APEAS (The Architects Professional Examination Authority in Scotland) since the organisation’s founding in 2003. He was instrumental in the establishment of APEAS as the main RIBA Part 3 Examination conduit for graduate candidates in Scotland wishing to progress to registration; his wealth of experience in Tertiary Education and Quality Assurance was invaluable at that time and continues to be so.

Over the last 14 years Peter has, by his enthusiasm and rigorous administrative skills, ensured that APEAS has developed into an internationally recognised, Part 3 Examination over the last few years to recognise rapid developments in Information Technology and targeted a fully electronic delivery of the exam by 2018.

Peter has developed the delivery of the APEAS Part 3 Examination over the last few years to recognise rapid developments in Information Technology and targeted a fully electronic delivery of the exam by 2018.

He has been an enthusiastic supporter of the profession and the RIBA and liaises regularly with the RIAS Education Committee on matters of professional standards and candidate wellbeing. During his tenure APEAS has consistently been acknowledged as one of the top Part 3 Exam centres in Europe, undoubtedly "Gold Standard".

Peter is awarded the Incorporation’s Honorary Fellowship for services to architectural education and his continued support of the profession.

Celia Sinclair

Celia was Corporate Planner at Britoil Plc., Managing Director at CU Data Limited, Chairman of University Court, Glasgow Caledonian University and Chief Executive of Corinlyn Limited.

Founder and chairperson of The Willow Tea Rooms Trust, Celia has combined her successful career in senior executive management and commercial property development with her passion for the Arts. As a Trustee of The Glasgow Art Club, Celia was responsible for the restoration and refurbishment of its spectacular Mackintosh Gallery.

In 2014, she purchased the original Willow Tea Rooms building at 27 Sauchiehall Street, with a view to creating a magnificent Mackintosh ‘hub’.

‘Mackintosh at the Willow’ includes the restoration of the original tea rooms, including the impressive Salm de Lune; the creation of a visitor centre, education hub and exhibition; and the involvement of trainees in the building of more than 400 pieces of meticulously crafted Mackintosh furniture, decorative glass, wrought iron works and gesso panel.

Allan Lundmark

Allan is currently involved, at board level and as a consultant, in policy development work relating to housing development and place making. As Director of Planning for Homes for Scotland (2005-2014) he was responsible for all aspects of planning policy relating to the release of housing land, the design and layout of housing developments and the promotion of supporting infrastructure.

Prior to joining Homes for Scotland Allan worked in the public sector as a policy adviser dealing with land use planning, economic development, environmental issues and international project management.

Allan is awarded the Incorporation’s Honorary Fellowship for his work on affordable housing and the promotion of the use of architects in the house building sector.
Membership update

The following deaths were reported with regret:
- Stuart Watson
- Arnaud Schwartz
- Hazel Pearson
- Ian Sutherland McCook
- Paul Henry Johnston
- Peter Dunne
- Andrew F Bushell

Transfers to Retired Fellowship:
- Michael Batter RFAS
- Duncan Macintosh Ower RFAS
- Dugald Macintosh RFAS
- Don Carbell RFAS
- Jonathan Hulse RFAS
- Paul Gareth Kenny RFAS
- Jamie Ross Kingsford RFAS
- Tia Tat Lam RFAS
- Joanna Lawton RIAS
- Shona Bhaire MacVicar RIAS
- Kenneth Preston RIAS
- Hannah Stephenson RIAS
- Rebecca Thomas RIAS
- Robert Willis RIAS
- Tai Kit Wong RIAS

RIAS Chapters
- Aberdeen
- Dundee
- Edinburgh
- Glasgow
- Inverness
- Stirling
- Outwith

RIAS Membership Categories
- Associate
- Graduates pre-part III
- Academic

Elections to Chartered Membership:
- D Hugh Anderson RFAS
- Graham Robin Oliver Jones RFAS
- Graeme Mark Kyle RFAS
- Samantha Williamson RFAS

Elections to Chartered Fellowship:
- Nicholas Simon Benwick

Transfers to Retired from architecture and employment:
- Robert James McLaughan

Removals:
- Adrian John Welch
- Douglas Paul
- Nicholas Simon Benwick
- Hannah Taylor

Transfers from Student to Associate Membership:
- Mariam Ahmed
- Caitlin Bowers
- David Brown
- Sophie Buness
- Ian Charles Grant
- Ryan Johnston
- Piers William Neil Kerridge
- Robert James McLaughan
- Craig Sutherland
- Ashleigh Thomson
- Haas Wallace

Transfers to Retired from architecture and employment:
- Patrick John Patience RIAS
- Keith Remnant RIAS
- Paul Frederick Tricki RIAS

Elections to Affiliate Membership:
- Gozlimy Gibbons
- Ken McDonald

Elections to Chartered Fellowship:
- Karen Stevenson

Removals:
- Andrew F Bushell
- Peter Dunne
- Paul Henry Johnston
- Ian Sutherland McCook
- Haaz Pearson
- Arnaud Schwartz
- Stuart Watson

Transfers to Retired from architecture and employment:
- Robert James McLaughan

Elections to Student Membership:
- Andrew Cameron Ferguson
- Natasha Ho
- Nori Ul Ain Malik
- Nicole-Ann Sammon
- Thomas Leslie Whiting

RIAS Council Trustees met on the 5th June 2019 at RIAS HQ in Rutland Square. 27 trustees considered a full agenda including an update on the development of the RIAS 5-year strategy and a new governance structure.

Council approved the quarterly management accounts which report expenditure broadly reflecting the budget. They have approved the Trustees Annual Report and Accounts for 2018 which will be presented to the membership at the AGM, scheduled for the 4th September 2019 (details will follow).

A presentation from Lesley Thompson of Spreng Thompson presented their ‘first pass’ of the graphic identity for the RIAS 5-year strategy, reflecting a fresh and creative approach.

Lesley and her team have been working with the RIAS Strategic Working Group, involving representatives from all six Chapters, to develop a draft that reflects the membership consultation last year. Council approved the ‘sketch book’ proposals that will be presented to the membership for endorsement (via the Chapters) in the next few weeks. A final strategy will be presented to the membership at the AGM.

Council have agreed to hold a Special Council Meeting to consider the report from the Independent Review and will report to the membership at the AGM.

Council took a step further towards establishing a new governance structure.

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A trawl through RIAS archives shows that members have always held dear concerns regarding public health and welfare. Even before we called it ‘procurement’ it seems however, that ‘process’ thwarted best intentions.

1930s

“The face of modern Edinburgh” by Robert Hard
RIAS Quarterly no. 61, July 1939

From an architectural or amenity standpoint I would say that we have three main sets of problems in Edinburgh today: the cleaning up of the Old Town, the modernising of the New Town; and the development of the suburbs.

The demands of improved health and, therefore, of better housing, the growth of some institutions and the decay of others, the increasing interest shown by Royalty in Scotland, the changing needs of transport—all these force us to carry out changes in the Old Town. And, indeed, there is ample room for improvement, for the Old Town as it stands today is a monument to laissez-faire run riot. Let us for instance compare the proximity of Younger’s Brewery to Holywood-house; of the gasometer to Arthur’s Seat, or of the slums to the University. Are these the signs of careful civic development, the actions of a cultured and logical people?

To deal with an area like the Old Town needs very careful planning of improvements, not only in the form of new buildings and streets, but by way of reconditioning old property stillworthy of retention. Such careful planning can only proceed with assurance when Housing Acts and similar Regulations are left unchanged for a reasonable period. Unfortunately changes with assurance when Housing Acts and similar Regulations are being made, one of the most serious within recent years being the removal of reconditioning grants in 1935, it rests finally with us; the architects whose representatives run the city. Can we not unite to ensure a better future for Edinburgh?

1950s

“Hospital building in South-East Scotland” by John Holt
RIAS Prospects no. 7, Autumn 1957

For reasons economic and sociologic the design of the Hospital offers tremendous scope to the enthusiastic architect. there exists throughout the world a desire for hospital architects to share their technical knowledge in the service of humanity, and such organisations as the International Hospital Federation offer facilities to all those connected with hospital design to meet and discuss common problems.

in recent years architects have been fascinated by the objectives of flexibility, speed and low cost, and it is difficult to envisage whether future generations will appreciate the result. In 1955 a rheumatic diseases research clinic was completed at the Northern General Hospital Edinburgh, although a study in low cost building materials such as concrete and stone were selected for their maintenance and aesthetic qualities.

The unit is an outpatient department with consultation and treatment rooms together with adequate laboratories. Speed of erection was achieved by employing, on an extension of rates already agreed, a contractor already engaged on a larger project near the site.

1970s

Increasing demand for independent living in later life brought many 1970s opportunities for architects to explore sheltered housing concepts with new enthusiastic Housing Associations. Popular, but still complex to realise.

In autumn 1984 (Prospect 24) Bob Anderson noted “... wine to the connoisseur is better for the maturing” before relating his own lengthy experiences crystallizing a sheltered housing concept initiated in 1977 “… two detailed planning submissions; two deviations; a building warrant; an amendment and three relaxation directions... before construction began November 1987 – housing finally occupied in February 1989.

In Prospect 24 (1984) Architects GM Kennedy and Partners featured Inchmarlo House, Banchory, as the location of the first Continuing Care Community in Scotland, purpose-built to provide for housing, personal and health needs of elderly people on one site – “… the aim is to provide all services including nursing in the residents’ own homes, though there is a community nursing home.”

In the United States the first ‘community’ was built in California in the 1950s and the first in West Germany was built in the early 1960s. The main reason that very few communities have been built in Britain is that the National Health Service has undertaken the responsibility of caring for the elderly. However, cutbacks in real terms are being made in the health service, and as over half the hospital beds are occupied by the elderly it is clear that they will be affected.

Inchmarlo House is to be refurbished and extended to restore its original appearance which was radically altered in the 1970s. The most important visual aspect... is its landscape and many of its characteristic features are to be retained. It is intended that instead of creating an insular community at Inchmarlo a strong relationship will be established with the town of Banchory.
Obituary

Nigel Robert Wedderburn Gillan RIAS
26 February 1943 to 14 June 2018

Nigel was the son of Archie Gillan, a solicitor, and his wife Jane, a primary school teacher. After being educated at Dundee High School and Harris Academy, he went on to study at the Scott Sutherland School of Architecture, Aberdeen, in 1966, graduating with distinction in 1972. He immediately joined the firm of Lindsay Gray, Civil Engineer and Architects, and was assumed as a partner in 1974, taking over the running of the business on Lindsay Gray's death in 1979. He continued in partnership with Graham Hughes until Hughes retired in 1992. Following this he ran the business alone before amalgamating with Alan Beaton Interior Design in 1996, forming the Lindsay Gray Alan Beaton Partnership.

Nigel had a rich and varied career, with his work being a continual source of enjoyment and stimulation. Many projects gave him a great sense of satisfaction, but none more so than his association with D C Thomson, Dundee, rang from his early work during the expansion of their Kingsway Factory and it's枸杞 his final project of renovating the Courier Building offices in Meadowside, Dundee.

In 2017, aged 69, Nigel retired from architecture. Unfortunately, in March 2018 he became unwell and shortly after was diagnosed with an aggressive cancer of the chest. He passed away peacefully in Roxburgh House, Dundee, on 14 June 2018.

He is sadly missed by all who knew him, leaving wife Hazel, sons Stewart and Brian, daughter-in-law Alison, and grandchildren Isla and John. It is of comforting comfort to his family that so many of his architectural works are visible to them, and others, as they travel around Dundee.

Obituary supplied by the family.

Obituary supplied by the family.

Obituary supplied by Kay Aschaber.
William (Bill) Ritchie Wellwood RIAS
26 August 1923 to 2 February 2019

Born in Edinburgh on 26 August 1923, Bill excelled in art at school, particularly drawing, and left at the age of 14 to become an apprentice draughtsman with Scott Morton, a firm renowned for its high quality woodworking and interior designs. It was during his apprenticeship, Bill decided he wanted to become an architect. WW2 intervened and Bill was called up in 1942. On being demobilised, he returned to Scott Morton and after further study at the School of Architecture (Edinburgh College of Art) and Heri-ot-Watt he gained his qualification, becoming an associate of the RIBA in 1949 and a member of the RIAS in 1952. He was awarded the Andrew Grant Postgraduate Scholarship which allowed him to travel to Scandinavia, Germany and Holland, which influenced him greatly. On his return, Bill joined the South East Regional Hospital Board as a senior architect. He was involved in several major hospital developments in Scotland, perhaps most notably the Radiological Institute (which received the first post-war bronze medal for a building of outstanding merit in Scotland from RIBA in 1956) and the Department of Surgical Neurology at the Western General Hospital, Edinburgh. He went on to become the Senior Principal Officer of Works for Lothian, Fife and the Borders. Bill worked for the National Health Service until he retired in 1986. Although he had many professional achievements, Bill’s life was firmly grounded in his marriage to Florence and in family life with his five children. Bill was a dedicated and much loved husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather. He moved to the Lake District after being widowed in 2002, returning to Edinburgh several years later. Despite advancing age, he was a regular visitor to the city’s art galleries, museums and libraries. He remained independent, energetic and active with a youthful, enquiring mind until a recent deterioration in his health. He passed away peacefully having lived a full and rewarding life. G Obituary supplied by the family.

Obituaries

DOORS OPEN DAYS TURNS 30!

Scottish Civic Trust’s Doors Open Days is Scotland’s largest free event that celebrates cultural heritage and the built environment. It offers free access to over a thousand venues across the country throughout September each year. This September we are celebrating 30 years of Doors Open Days!

RIAS members can participate in the programme by opening their doors and sharing their stories, reaching new audiences and inspiring young professionals. RIAS and Doors Open Days are collaborating to deliver a series of talks, ‘Tenements Today, Tenements Tomorrow’. Could you deliver a talk during September’s Doors Open Days weekend in your region?

To be part of the programme contact Nicola Godsal nicolagodsal@scottishcivictrust.org.uk

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Obituaries

Chartered Architect

Dear President...

Letter to the President from Ian Parsons RIAS RIBA:

“The RIAS (Quarterly) Autumn 2018, page 43, shows a drawing of a design project, titled “Scoring the Malecon”, presumably sited on the Malecon, Havana. The entry is commended as a “Well-presented and graphically pleasing project”.

As the Founder of the Cuba Conservation Trust this drawing fills me with despair. The design is a “Starship Enterprise” deposed from a great height with no indication of context, the drawing does not even show the sea.

The Malecon, modelled on the Malecon in Cadiz, was the last view of Spain seen by many emigrants. The form is of a terrace facing the sea, several miles long with a continuous ground floor colonnade, which provided shade and protection from mid-day sun and subtropical rain. The masonry buildings modified extremes of climate and had great variety within the terrace form. The drawing has no sign of this context, or the need to repair a critical level of decay.

As a graphic design the project may be commendable. If it is intended as a basis for a project of Architecture there is no connection to site, enemy use, views of the sea and design for the climate all appear to have been ignored. I request that the RIAS/AKOS commendation for Urban Design should be reconsidered.

Perhaps we need a debate on the needs of the wonderful historic environment in Cuba, the work of the Office of the City Historian and an appropriate brief and response from Edinburgh University.”

Response from Adrian Hawker, Programme Director: Master of Architecture, ESALA, University of Edinburgh:

“Thank you for asking me to respond to the letter that you received from Ian Parsons regarding the Malecon Sea Room. Whilst he makes some interesting observations regarding the history of the Havana’s great Malecon and acknowledges the restoration work of the city’s Office of the City Historian, the criticisms directed at the student project seem to have missed many of its central concerns. A possible consequence of the limited range of images published in the Quarterly.

The project is situated to the west of the now sadly paved and weather-beaten façades of the Colonial terrace and colonnade to which Ian refers. It reimagines the run down and bloque Parque Antonio Maceo and the unloved carpark in front of the brutalist tower of Hospital Hermanos Ameijeiras, a building conceived as a centre of finance and trade then redirected by the newly formed revolutionary government to become a centre of healthcare of which the majority of its central concerns. A possible consequence of the limited range of images published in the Quarterly.

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The project is all about the sea, its cultural relationship with the city and the harsh reality of the storms that now tragically ravage the city. It provides a breakwater and storm surge tanks to help protect Centro Habana, the 19th century extension west of the Spanish baroque building of Habana Vieja. This is where the majority of the Havana’s citizens live - beyond the gate of most tourists and, unfortunately, the primary works of the Office of the City Historian.

Far from falling from the sky, the Malecon Sea Room is the result of two years of extraordinary research and creative development. It emerged from within, through conversations with the resilient inhabitants of the Malecon itself and a close reading of the layered history and culture of this unique city. It is dense and it is complex and the drawings reflect this. The RIAS and AKOS do not stand alone in recognising the strength of this work in their commendations. They join the Royal Scottish Academy who awarded it the RSA Architecture Prize during the recent New Contemporaries 2019 exhibition and the Cuban led jury of an international architecture competition for Malecon set late last year.”

Further response from Ian Parsons RIAS RIBA:

“Having now seen the location plan of the project the design intent is clearer, however, there remains many serious design questions and I suggest a discussion or debate to consider appropriate responses to the fabric of Havana and similar cities. Energy conservation and extreme climate being one of many factors to consider.”

DOORS OPEN DAYS TURNS 30!

Scottish Civic Trust’s Doors Open Days is Scotland’s largest free event that celebrates cultural heritage and the built environment. It offers free access to over a thousand venues across the country throughout September each year. This September we are celebrating 30 years of Doors Open Days!

RIAS members can participate in the programme by opening their doors and sharing their stories, reaching new audiences and inspiring young professionals. RIAS and Doors Open Days are collaborating to deliver a series of talks, ‘Tenements Today, Tenements Tomorrow’. Could you deliver a talk during September’s Doors Open Days weekend in your region?

To be part of the programme contact Nicola Godsal nicolagodsal@scottishcivictrust.org.uk

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