

CROSS PARTY GROUP ON ARCHITECTURE & THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

MINUTES OF MEETING

Meeting: "A Manifesto for the Built Environment"

Held at Scottish Parliament on Tuesday 6th October 2015 at 5.45pm

Our Ref: EM R10-A Manifesto for the Built Environment Mtg Agenda 2015-10-06

PRESENT

Cunliffe, Jocelyn	Gray Marshall Associates
Dawson, Eric	PAS (Planning Aid Scotland)
Dingwall, Christopher	Scotland's Garden and Landscape Heritage
Edgar, Hew	RICS
Fabiani, Linda MSP	Scottish Parliament
Flynn, Anne-Marie	Deputy Irish Consul
Forbes, Kelly	ICE Scotland
Gordon, Jodie	Bellenden
Halliday, Sandy	GAIA Research
Hogenes, Barry	HWU Group University of Edinburgh
Hughes, Rebecca	Landscape Institute
Jowkar, Mina	HWU Group University of Edinburgh
Khan, Lubna	HWU Group University of Edinburgh
Leitch, Andrew	Creative Scotland
Leitch, Euan	BEFS
McAllister, David	PAS (Planning Aid Scotland)
McKee, Ian	RICS
McLaren, Craig	RTPI (Scotland)
Miller, Nikola	RTPI (Scotland)
Milne, Andy	SURF
Mullan, Eugene	RIAS
Murray, Kirsty	PAS (Planning Aid Scotland)
Pagan, Bill	BEFS
Pelan, John	Scottish Civic Trust
Phillips, Morag	Space Solutions Ltd
Riddoch, Peter	Peter Riddoch Architect
Roaf, Prof Sue	HWU Group University of Edinburgh
Somervell, David	University of Edinburgh
Summers, Andy	Oliver Chapman Architects
Turnbull, Mark	Landscape Institute
Turner, Robin	RCAHMS
Walls, John	
Mackenzie MSP, Mike	Scottish Parliament
Smith MSP, Drew	Scottish Parliament
MacDonald, Jim	A&DS Scotland

APOLOGIES

Baxter, Neil

RIAS

Lawson, John	City of Edinburgh Council
Maxwell, Ingal	COTAC
Packard, Ann	
Robertson, Debbie	Glasgow City Council
Urquhart MSP, Jean	Scottish Parliament
Rodwell, Dennis	
Acheson, Graham	Smith Scott Mullan Associates
Baker, Keith	Glasgow Caledonia University
Bieberbach, Petra	Planning Aid Scotland
Hare, Bruce	Duddingston House Properties
Mirsoleimanu, Ladan	HWU Group University of Edinburgh
Rankine, Derek	SURF
Simpson, Dr James	Simpson & Brown Architects
Tolson, Steven	RICS

1.0 WELCOME

Linda Fabiani MSP welcomed all present to the meeting.

2.0 INTRODUCTION TO THE MEETING THEME – Linda Fabiani

Linda introduced the theme of the meeting by stating that the 2016 Scottish Parliament election is due to be held on Thursday 5 May 2016 to elect 129 members to the Scottish Parliament. It will be the fifth general election since the devolved parliament was established in 1999.

30 weeks, 1 day and 12 hours until polling commences!

Linda began by posing several questions for consideration by the attendees

- Does the Built Environment feature in the conversation on the doorsteps?
- Is the built environment included in party manifestos? and
- Does inclusion of the built environment in party manifestos change votes?

Linda then gave a brief explanation of the meeting structure which would take the form of a series of Pecha Kucha presentations from a variety of organisations on what they wish to see in party manifestos with concern to the built environment.

3.0 PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Built Environment Forum Scotland (BEFS) – Euan Leitch

BEFS would like to see all parties acknowledge their manifesto 'Our Place in Time'. This is Scotland's first ever Historic Environment Strategy. 'Our Place in Time' is a high level framework which sets out a 10 year vision for the historic environment. This would need support and investment from the elected party to drive forward and so it is vital that the built environment is recognised. BEFS' manifesto focuses on three Cs:

- **Community** - communities should take a major role in decision-making, involving communities in decisions is vital for the built environment.

- **Care** - maintenance of the built environment is a huge challenge with causes such as lack of financial support and policies supporting new builds over existing. There is potential to make use of the devolved tax regime however BEFS are seeking advice on this.
- **Capacity** - local authorities are contracting and will continue to contract over the next two years. This puts added pressure on Historic Environment Scotland. More resources are required to manage and drive change and to care for our built environment.

3.2 Landscape Institute – Rebecca Hughes

“First life, then spaces, then buildings- the other way round never works”

There is a longstanding struggle in gaining support for landscape in government. The Landscape Charter which came out of The European Landscape Convention is aimed at encouraging the maintenance, promotion and regeneration of landscape design currently and for the future. There is a long list of signatories to the Charter but the Scottish Government is not one of them. The Landscape Institute recommends the elected party take action on the following:

- Adopt The Landscape Charter and join the existing signatories.
- Resource an impartial adviser on landscape as exists in other countries.
- Reconvene The Landscape Forum or create a similar body.
- With the target for 100% Renewable Energy in Scotland by 2020 there is a need to create a national spatial strategy which adequately uses the land.
- The Land Reform Bill needs to not only incorporate landscape management but have this take centre stage.
- BioSecurity needs to be addressed eminently. Dutch Elm still can't be planted and now the same thing is happening with Ash. There should be a central expertise for plant health whose responsibility it is to monitor plant health for future and current land management.

In general there needs to be more recognition and attention to landscape design. Action needs to be taken to ensure landscape design is included in built environment policy and guidance.

3.3 PAS (Planning Aid Scotland) – David McAllister

PAS are working on creating and delivering engagement projects to fit with Scotland's evolving political and social context. These projects aim to support the public sector, encourage co-production, innovation, and participation in planning. There is a need to support fairer conversations about place and on the quality of our places in the wider sense. In this work PAS have three key E's:

- **Empower** - to play the game you need to know the rules. Communities need to have access to information and expertise in order to know how to be heard. The new government need to support this for effective and active community participation.
- **Enhance** - we should be encouraging the involvement of local community groups in

decision-making such as community councils and amenity groups. We should be going further to include a range of representation in communities such as the involvement of young people. There should be sense of partnership between local government and communities.

- **Educate** - include planning on school curriculum's to teach children from an early age on their rights and responsibilities in place-making and in their communities. Give them the tools they need to have a voice.

3.4 RICS – Ian McKee

RICS aim to provide a balanced, apolitical perspective on built environment issues to local government. Their key concern at present is that of building maintenance. Scotland is in the midst of a housing shortage: demand is too high and supply is too low. Government schemes such as 'Help To Buy' and lower land taxation rates are all aimed at first time buyers. There is little to no funding to support homeowners wishing to extend, improve or repair their home.

A well maintained housing stock provides homes now and for the future. Much more needs to be done in this area. A shift in culture is needed to save our buildings.

Poor maintenance is a national problem and therefore requires a national solution. RICS are looking to implement changes to the existing Home Report to include a survey which is taken by a relevant professional on the building. This survey would highlight any priority works and the existing condition of the building. The new survey would empower homeowners to take action for their property and provide information for a central and national report on the condition of Scotland's buildings.

3.5 RTPI – Craig McLaren

The Scottish Government need to recognise that planning can be a preventative spend. RTPI have seven key areas on the built environment in which the new government should concentrate:

- Provide quality homes for all who need one. The new government should be more active in this role.
- Support communities to shape the place in which they live. The new government needs to support planning and advisory services such as PAS.
- Support and protect our town and city centres through the use of regeneration schemes and similar.
- Invest in infrastructure. The new government needs to prioritise resources to support this.
- Create great places for people. The new government could appoint a cabinet secretary for places and/or a national champion for quality place-making to secure this ethos in government.
- Set out a clear and integrated framework for energy such as a National Energy Strategy.

- Ensure the planning authorities have the resources they need. The new government needs to invest in planning to provide the tools and resources necessary.

3.6 Scottish Civic Trust – John Pelan

The Scottish Civic Trust is currently consulting with other civic trusts on place-making and place enhancement. The SCT raised five areas of importance which require the new government's support:

- A more efficient planning process. Review the procedures to enable fewer objections and overcome obstacles. Community involvement as early on as possible.
- Make use of knowledge, skills and expertise available in local areas. Recognise this by engaging 'Heritage Champions', for example, who can assist in applications.
- More funding and support should be given to communities who take on the management of heritage projects.
- Include the built environment in national education to encourage the understanding and engagement of young people.
- Local Authorities need to be resourced and trained to handle planning applications in their areas. The SCT are receiving significant contact from concerned community members in relation to developments in conservation areas.

3.7 SURF – Andy Milne

SURF is a network for cross-sector working in regeneration projects- bring all the parties together. SURF discussed their three manifesto themes:

- Addressing Poverty and Inequality
- Improving Individual and Community Wellbeing
- Supporting Successful Places

We need bold and practical policies for the built environment and to attain the necessary government support:

- The Scottish Government should rebrand and realign community the community planning system.
- The Scottish Government should identify 15 places in which to deliver and invest in major, long term regeneration with a focus on transferable learning.
- The Scottish Government should enhance and support community led regeneration.
- The Scottish Government should replace the Hub procurement model with one that supports local regeneration aims.

4.0 DISCUSSION ON THE TOPIC

There was significant discussion on the subject involving a number of people from various professional backgrounds. The following are the key points which arose amongst attendees:

Key points

- The importance of successful places in the broadest sense and a call for a Cabinet Secretary for Places.
- Supporting the active involvement of communities in shaping their places by empowering and educating people- with a particular emphasis on inspiring young people.
- Put in place appropriate mechanisms for the delivery of high quality housing, including taking an active role in initiating, implementing and funding development.
- Full support and adequate funding for the implementation of the Historic Environment Strategy.
- Signing and implementation of the Landscape Charter.
- Policies which establish and deliver national infrastructure requirements such as Energy Strategy and Green Infrastructure
- Legislation to encourage the maintenance and protection of our existing housing stock.
- Support for local communities working in the built environment reflecting the importance of these enterprises and the volunteer work undertaken.
- Review of the Community Planning legislation with an emphasis on the links between spatial and community planning.
- Commitment to support for long term regeneration.
- A well-resourced planning system is necessary to accomplish shared goals.
- Establish principle where long term built environment policies with cross party support are consistently applied across different governments.

5.0 CLOSE OF MEETING

Linda thanked all of the speakers and everyone for their involvement and attendance.