

There are seven differences in these two photos of the Spanish city of Zaragoza. Can you spot them? Answers below.



Answers: 1. The zebra crossing has disappeared. 2. The window in the top left hand corner of the photo has disappeared. 3. A second pram has appeared. 4. The colours in the bottom of the fountain (bottom left hand corner of the picture) have rotated. 5. A bin has appeared across the street from the existing bin. 6. The window in on the right hand side of the picture has lost its Juliet balcony railing. 7. The Vespa on the left of the photo is now parked on the street.

Editor **Rob Cowan**
Design Editor **Shriya Parameswaran**

Your contributions to *The Transformer* are welcome.
Contact us through the Summer School Office,
email us at info@udss.org.uk or
text us on 079 140 55268

From yesterday's feedback forms

'I need time to recover from an ice-cream headache... The walk today froze my brain.'

Poster competition

The three winners of the poster competition have been announced: Morphology, District and Density.

'Morphology responded rigorously to the brief,' says summer school director Noha Nasser. 'District and Density made very effective use of captions and illustrations.'

The Transformer is sponsored by **Alan Baxter & Associates.**



Thought for the Day
'Problems with cities have got worse since the profession of town planner/urban designer was invented.'

THE transformer

Passion for places

Newsletter of the CABE Urban Design Summer School 2008, NewcastleGateshead



Day One: getting to know the place and each other

Priya Jagtap from EDAW won the summer school's icebreaker session, finding out in an astonishingly short time who among the participants fitted in to one of 12 categories: a councillor; someone who has completed the Great North Run; someone who has prepared a masterplan; and so on.

What was the secret of Priya's networking ability? 'You need a good voice to scream, and to move around a lot,' she told *The Transformer*. Those skills are no doubt useful in her work at EDAW, where she is an urban designer.

Until eight months ago Priya was working in India as an architect. She is currently working on the East Hull masterplan, and on public finance initiative projects in Leeds and Manchester. 'The summer school is a chance for me to broaden my skills in urban design and streetscaping,' she says.

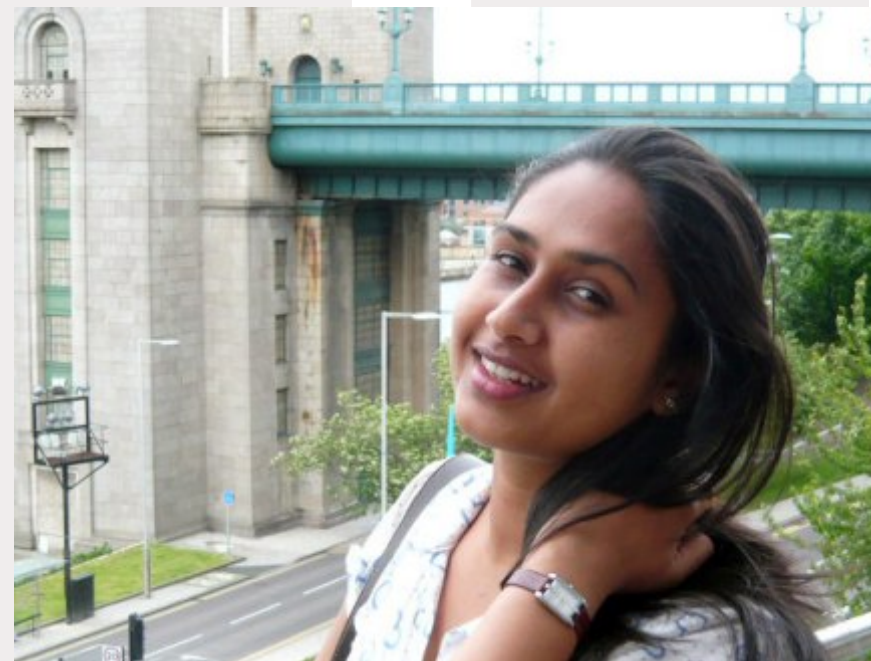
In his introduction to the summer school, project manager David Tittle recalled last year's successful summer school in Birmingham. 'Some of the architect delegates said that they felt they had been picked on. This year we will be sure not to pick on anyone,' he promised.



Scott Adams leads Sally Malone, Nidhi Bhargara, Melissa Clark, Richard Jones, Mary Doyle and Mike Brown on the site visit (above). Photo by Julia Smachylo.

Icebreaker winner Priya Jagtap (below): 'screaming and moving around' was the secret to successful networking. Photo by Rob Cowan.

In the first plenary session David pointed out what a 'mixed bunch' the participants were. He asked some of the participants to identify themselves: four Australians, one Slovenian and a Large contingent of housebuilders.



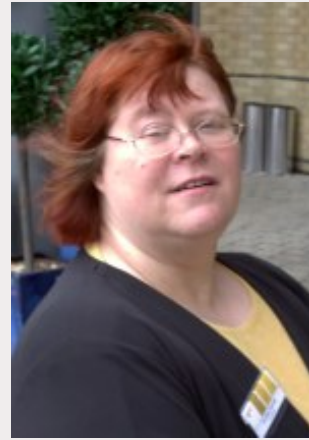
David welcomed them all. As for the housebuilders: 'we've allocated you the smallest rooms,' he quipped. His determination not to pick on anyone had been snuffed out like a candle in the ferocious NewcastleGateshead wind.

Incidentally, what do you call people who attend a summer school? 'Delegates' has inappropriate connotations of trade union card votes. 'Attendees' sounds horribly impersonal. 'Learners' sounds dull and worthy (and no one could accuse you of that). 'Summer schoolers' has a hearty ring to it, and a little heartiness can go a long way. 'Participants'? Well, participating is what we are all here for, though it is not very descriptive. If you can think of a better term, please let *The Transformer* know.

Summer school director Noha Nasser explained the protocol for the site visits. 'If questioned, be polite and explain that it is an academic study.' As everyone knows that academia has absolutely no effect on the real world, anyone living near the sites would be reassured that the site visits would not be a prelude to the demolition of their homes. But that's probably not what Noha (of Birmingham City University) meant.

Living Places

The descriptions of five places and their names have been mixed up. Can you put the correct places to the descriptions? Living Streets will be awarding very modest prizes to the first three summer School participants who tell the correct answers to Cynthia Games, north east coordinator of Living Streets North (who is part of the summer school support team).



Cynthia Games

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 1. Where music reigns wisely over the river | A. Plas Roald Dahl, Cardiff |
| 2. A secret entrance to Torchwood? | B. Mary Kelly's Close, Edinburgh |
| 3. A plague site quickly hidden from view | C. Piazza del Campo, Siena |
| 4. A reforming tealord's vantage point | D. St Mary's Square, Gateshead |
| 5. Where dragons race giraffes on horseback | E. Grey's Monument, Newcastle |



Piazza del Campo, Siena

site layouts and house types. Both want to move into urban design. Martin has two boys and, yes, they too are identical twins.

'It's easy to tell us apart,' Martin reassures *The Transformer*. 'I wear contact lenses and Darren wears glasses. We are in different groups at the summer school, so I don't think you'll see us together much.'

Two of a kind

Two summer school participants, Martin and Darren Lindley, are identical twins. Both work for the Sheffield office of the housebuilder and developer Henry Boot. Both are architectural technicians, working on

Table Talk

'Vauban is an impressive project, but it's hard to see how it could translate to the UK. We are very tied to our cars, and overcoming that depends on having much better public transport. I'd be happy to give up my car, but I need to get around.'

Sarah Palmer commenting on Carsten Sperling's presentation. Sarah, who works in social housing in Wigan, is completing a master's degree in city culture and regeneration at the University of Liverpool.

'It looks like rusty metal. It's faceless. If it's meant to be welcoming it should have a face.'

'It is rusty metal. It's lovely.'

'When someone put an Alan Shearer shirt on it, that's when it was accepted.'

'It's like the Tyne Bridge. When I see it, I know I'm home.'

'I know someone who lives down south and whose parents live in Gateshead. She says that when she sees the Angel she thinks it's looking after her parents.'

Dinner-time talk about the Angel of the North on the Network table.

The Angel of the North, celebrating its 10th birthday. Photo by Paul Barker.



Where are the heroes of urban design?

Architects have their heroes: the great architects whose works provide seductive and memorable images. Planners used to have heroes: visionaries like Ebenezer Howard, and pioneers like Patrick Geddes. Who was the past famous planner? Probably Colin Buchanan of *Traffic in Towns* fame, who would have celebrated his 100th birthday last year.

What about urban designers? Who are their heroes?

A couple of years ago the Urban Design Group asked its members: which person, living or dead, do you most admire for their impact on thinking or action on the built environment?

In second place came the American urban designer Kevin Lynch (1918-84), whose methods of analysing and graphically notating urban form are the most commonly used by urban designers today. But the winner – by a mile – was the writer and urban activist Jane Jacobs, who died in 2006 at the age of 89.

'When we deal with cities we are dealing with life at its most complex and intense,' Jane Jacobs wrote. It was her sense of the richness and excitement of the life of cities that made her probably the twentieth century's most influential commentator on urban affairs.

Born Jane Butzner in Scranton, Pennsylvania, in 1916, she became a secretary in New York after deciding not to go to university. Soon she was writing articles inspired by her close observation of the life of the great city.

William H. White, himself a brilliant observer of such matters, commissioned the articles that led to her first and most famous book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*.

Utopian ideas

Written in 1958-60 and published in 1961, *The Death and Life* attacked contemporary planning practice and passionately advocated traditional, mixed-use neighborhoods. Jacobs castigated the planners and architects whom she saw as being in thrall to utopian ideas, who were more concerned with what development looked like than with how they worked, or who were reshaping cities in the interests of the car – or all three.

Her criticism of the garden city pioneer Ebenezer Howard was typical. 'Howard set spinning powerful and city-destroying ideas,' she wrote. 'He conceived that the way to deal with the city's functions was to sort and sift out of the whole certain simple uses, and to arrange each of these in relative self-containment.' She argued that Howard conceived of good planning as a series of static acts.'

In each case the plan must anticipate all that is needed and be protected, after it is built, against any but the most minor subsequent changes. He conceived of planning also as essentially paternalistic, if not authoritarian.'

From 1952 to 1968 Jacobs was associate editor of *Architectural Forum*. She was a member of the New York Community Planning Board, campaigning effectively to save Greenwich Village and other neighborhoods, particularly from the expressway-building ambitions of Robert Moses.

In 1968 she, her architect husband and two sons moved to Toronto after the boys declared that they would rather go to prison than accept the draft to Vietnam. She was soon a notable public figure in that city, successfully opposing its expressway plans. She became a Canadian citizen in 1974.



Jane Jacobs (drawing by Rob Cowan)

Jane Jacobs pioneered approaches to citizen participation in planning that have since been widely adopted, and her prescriptions in *The Death and Life*, based on her careful observations, have become orthodoxies of urban design. She further developed her thinking about cities and economies in a series of remarkable books such as *Cities and the Wealth of Nations* (1989) and *Systems of Survival* (1992).

Who do the participants at this CABA Urban Design Summer School most admire? Think about who (living or dead) you would name. We'll be pouncing on a few unsuspecting people and printing their responses in *The Transformer*.