



There are seven differences between these two photos of the Market in Bruges. Can you spot them? Answers below.

How the EU killed Forum Vauban

The Transformer interviews Sunday keynote speaker Carsten Sperling



What is the secret of sustainable urban development?

Public participation at the neighbourhood level is essential. A great deal of my experience has been working with the Freiburg-Vauban

Sustainable Urban District, in which public participation gave substantial impacts to the project.

Tell us about the Freiburg-Vauban Sustainable Urban District. Together with City of Freiburg and other partners, the non-government agency Forum Vauban created the project Sustainable Model District Vauban to create a community in a cooperative, participatory way, meeting ecological, social, economical and cultural objectives.

What is the place like?

Streets blend into other open areas, such as playgrounds, public gardens and widened sidewalks along the main boulevard, surrounded by preserved old trees. They become areas for social interaction, as the cars which are allowed to travel to and from the residences, while travelling at very slow speeds, must be parked in multi-storey car parks at the periphery of the residential areas.

Forum Vauban eventually went bankrupt. What happened?

It was killed by the EU. It was not the project Sustainable Urban District Vauban that went bankrupt. Forum Vauban as a local NGO was not able to return money for a programme to promote solar energy and energy-saving household appliances in Vauban that the EU asked to be paid back, even though the money had been spent in the project. The budget had been agreed with the EU commission and this special project had been successfully completed, but the EU bureaucrats changed their minds at a late stage. Forum Vauban could not afford to challenge the

decision in the courts, so it was wound up just before its 10th anniversary.

How does that make you feel?

It still makes me very angry. But when I look at the results of the project and at the beautiful initiatives of Vauban activists - the neighborhood centre, the farmer's market, the car-free association, the solar projects and so on - I must admit that there is no light



The Transformer is sponsored by Alan Baxter & Associates.



Alan Baxter & Associates was founded in 1974 as an engineering practice. Its range of work is now broad and covers urban design, master planning, sustainability, conservation, and civil and structural engineering.

ABA's core values and approach guide all projects from large to small. They can look at projects in a variety of ways, sometimes concentrated on single areas but often taking the holistic approach possible given the unique combination of expertise within the practice.

Understanding the nature of the location allows clear thinking on the most appropriate solutions. They then establish a strong dialogue process with clients and professional partners to ensure solutions that are robust, intelligently thought through and highly creative.

THE transformer

Passion for places

Newsletter of the CABE Urban Design Summer School 2008, NewcastleGateshead



This year's CABE urban design summer school is the biggest ever

The biggest-ever CABE Urban Design Summer School opens today in NewcastleGateshead. With just over 130 participants, the event balances the organising consortium's occasional fantasy of getting 10,000 urban design enthusiasts in the same place at the same time with CABE's determination to make the summer school a reasonably intimate learning experience.

Network Rail's contribution has been its attempt to create an even more intimate experience by preventing half the participants from getting to NewcastleGateshead on time. But it will take more than a bit of engineering to disrupt the event.

As The Transformer went to press, participants told us how they intended to beat the engineering. 'We'll share a car'; 'I'll fly, and offset the carbon by giving up eating Kenyan runner beans'; 'I'll set off a week early and travel by bullock cart'; and 'I'll walk' (impressive, until you learn that she lives in Newcastle).

That's why I'm here

What makes you so determined? We do not have to guess. We have the answers you gave when you registered for the summer school.

What is your motivation for attending the summer school, we asked? Some of you had an immediate need. 'To get a more depth understanding of urban

design as I am writing the design sections of our area action plan,' wrote one participant. For another: 'Following loss of the council's design adviser and the desire of Planning Services to achieve a high standard of design through development management, masterplans, development briefs and policy guidance, I have been nominated to assist other planning and regeneration officers in the council on design matters. I need to improve my skills.'

Another participant works for what is about to become a unitary authority. 'Our roles could change dramatically and I want to be as

Knowledge to bring a more holistic approach to work programmes, to confidently challenge old-school engineering approaches with confident clear designs and vision for all schemes I work on.' Another participant has 'a reasonable level of experience although no formal training in urban design' and would like 'to be in a position where I can be more influential within my organisation in relation to design issues.'

Others are working in the private sector. 'As a client I want to understand what sort of design will work well on a particular site and why. I want to improve on my ability to brief architects, and to



Well equipped as possible to meet the new challenge.'

Others are looking more generally to change how they work. 'I want to expand my current

Critique and recognise poor Design. I would also like to learn about consulting and engaging with the public regarding design Proposals.'

Answers: 1. The top spire of the third building from left has gone. 2. On the third building from the left, the blinds in two of the windows on the first floor have been raised. 3. On the fifth building from the left, the Stella Artois text between the third and fourth storeys has gone. 4. The crenellation has gone from the building on the right hand side of the image. 5. The woman's boots in the foreground, to the left of the lamp post, have changed colour. 6. The red umbrella in the cafe area in front of the first building to the left has gone. 7. The green awnings to the right of the photograph are now drawn.

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

Another wants 'to understand more on how we can make a stronger contribution to the areas of land we develop.'

Professionals want to broaden their experience. 'As an architect I know a lot about buildings and less about urban design. I hope that attending the summer school will develop my understanding of urban issues and help with my eco-towns work.' Another is 'keen to broaden my expertise in terms of urban design. Although I have a number of years of expertise involved in housing design, it is becoming increasingly important to consider how housing relates to other sectors and statutory bodies, particularly in relation to town and city centre regeneration.'

The summer school is seen as a chance to keep up to date. 'We are about to embark on a master planning process for area regeneration. I want to ensure I am familiar with current urban design practice and processes. In former roles I considered myself an urban design expert, but have been in a managerial role for past 10 years and need to refresh and update

my skills for the work ahead of me.' Another participant wants 'to maintain the currency of my urban design knowledge. I have recently taken on responsibility for the regional design review panel. I am also interested in a career in urban design in the long term.'

The summer school should be a refreshing chance to work with a different bunch of people for a while. 'I want to immerse myself in the creative process and to meet and learn from others. Rediscover forgotten skills! To become better able to communicate with urban designers in their language.' And, with luck, to challenge them when that language is technical obfuscation and sustainable.

Who comes to the CABA urban design summer school? If the participants have one thing in common, it is a desire to transform themselves in some way. (Yes, that is why this newsletter is *The Transformer*). Few people these days start off in a comfortable professional niche somewhere in the built environment field and stay there for the rest of their working lives.



Last year's CABA Urban Design Summer School in Birmingham.

We know something of the 130 summer school participants' professional backgrounds. Twenty Four of them are planners; 20 architects; 10 landscape architects; eight housing professionals; seven urban designers; three transport engineers; two surveyors; and two teachers. Thirty-seven of them work for local authorities; 18 for house builders; 10 for multi-disciplinary practices; eight for architects' practices; seven for engineering consultancies; and six for regeneration agencies.

Seven urban designers? Yes, but in the widest sense of the term, all 130 participants are urban designers: people committed to transforming places, and to transforming themselves at the same time.

The Toolshop

The summer school's Toolshop (Monday, 23 June at 6pm) is an exhibition-style reception of showcases, short demonstrations, presentations and promotional stands. Experience the big view of the urban design market place; pick up new knowledge and skills; get to know new products and toolkits; and enjoy an opportunity to network with leading organisations in the sector.

The exhibitors

Atkins

Atkins delivers sustainable solutions for all facets of the built environment throughout the world. 'From major international, national and metropolitan schemes and strategies, to neighbourhood renewal and environmental improvement in small towns, we have an established reputation as innovators.'

Building for life

Building for Life is the national standard for well-designed homes and

Neighbourhoods. Initially conceived as a post-construction awards scheme, Building for Life is now used throughout the development process, from design inception to planning application assessments to post-occupancy quality audits.

CityCAD

CityCAD is a new city modelling technology that allows true, integrated, holistic analysis of urban masterplans in the early design stages. If you change the design, information such as floor areas, costs, densities and numbers of units are updated automatically. With our help you can use CityCAD to create an integrated city model of your masterplan.

Northern Architecture

Northern Architecture presents a series of three-minute films of award-winning design schemes in the North East and Cumbria. You will also hear how to use various different media to engage various groups of mainly non-professional people in discussions about design quality.

Spaceshaper

Spaceshaper is a CABA Space toolkit to measure the quality of a public space.

The Value Handbook

The Value Handbook shows how public sector organisations can get the most from buildings and spaces. It demonstrates how understanding the different types of value created by the built environment is the key to realising its full potential.

Or get interactive at one of the Toolshop workshops

The Building Futures Game

The Building Futures Game is a participation tool for creating and exploring different possible futures for an area. A form of scenario planning, it helps groups play out a range of possible futures with participants (policy-makers, service-providers and community members).

Capacitycheck

Urban Design Skills will introduce the Capacitycheck tool for appraising urban design skills. This is a great sneak preview for a useful tool which Officially launches in July, and a chance to sign up for the pilot programme.

Designing by example

Have you ever thought of using a tissue? Forget high-tech IT design programs and get back to cutting and sticking. Try a hands-on technique that allows you to test the capacity of a development site, and judge design quality and development feasibility.

Engaged or pretty vacant?

How do we make the community engagement process as effective and transparent as possible? What are the key stages and key skills that we need to bear in mind when we prepare and practise community consultation?

Principles of sustainable urban design

Sustainable development has suffered from an image problem. It remains poorly understood, and the source of much debate and disagreement. This session looks at the history of ideas from which sustainability has evolved and how to create sustainable development.

Layout valuation tools

The Space Syntax team present their GIS-based computer toolkit that uses Ordnance Survey data to calculate urban layout value indicators in four areas: the value of personal security; the value of property security; the value of urban centres; and the value of residential property.

Manual for Streets

The recent government guidance Manual for Streets puts people first, identifying streets as major elements of placemaking and emphasising their role in creating successful neighbourhoods. The workshop will outline the broad principles, followed by a practical design workshop.

Sharing spaces: what makes the difference?

This session will show the possibility of integrated engineering and streetscape design within the context of current practice and legislation. Test ideas and engage with the practical aspects of delivering innovative projects.

Steve Mayes

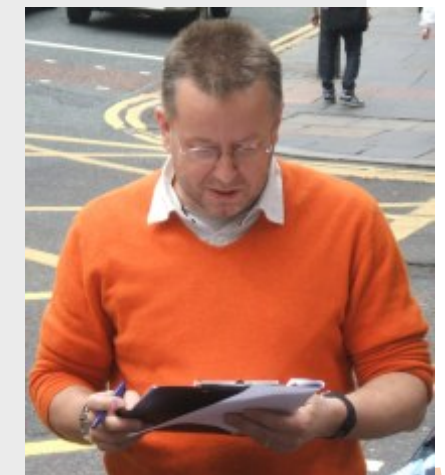
An exhibition of Steve Mayes' recent commission to photograph the architecture of the North East.

Meet the team

The CABA Urban Design Summer School is organised by a team from Birmingham Institute of Architecture and Design (BIAD) at Birmingham City University; R99; steppDESIGN; Urban Design Skills; and the Gaia Group. Noha Nasser of BIAD is the summer school director and David Tittle is the project manager. The support from CABA staff is led by Royston Robinson.



Noha Nasser looking relaxed before the reality of directing the summer school sank in.



Project manager David Tittle, the man with the clipboard. Just do what he says: it's for your own good.