

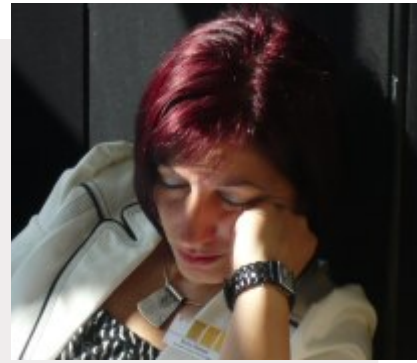
## Spot the difference

Who had time at the summer school to spot the differences in the daily issues of *The Transformer*? But now you are back in the office with time on your hands. There are seven differences in these two photos. Can you spot them? Answers below. (Thanks to Scott Adams for the spot the differences.)



Answers: 1. The shadows of the railings have disappeared. 2. The bridge's mast and cables are repeated to the right. 3. Wally has popped into view on the left hand side of the pavement. 4. The cable cars have been repainted in CABE orange. 5. One of the cable cars has fallen into the water. 6. Two flag poles have been erected on top of the central bridge mast. 7. The building has been extended further into the water.

Editor Rob Cowan  
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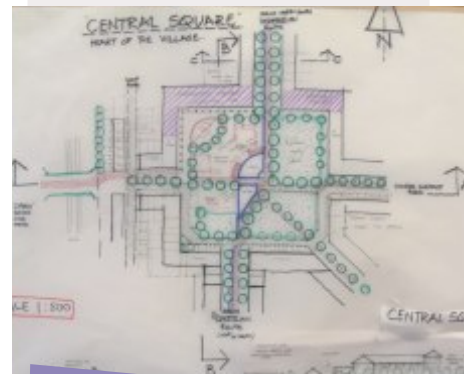
With the last participant having left at the end of an exhausting summer school, director Noha Nasser reflects on the experience.

### Join the alumni network

The urban design summer school doesn't just begin and end each June. The summer school website helps you keep on learning with regularly evolving resources and links. Alumni will be kept up to date with news and new learning opportunities through our email newsletter. Go to [www.udss.org.uk](http://www.udss.org.uk) and click on Alumni network.

**'I have different eyes now and I want to share this experience with others.'**

Annette Robinson, Birmingham



In third place in the Big Project: the design for a central square in Path's masterplan

The Transformer is sponsored by Alan Baxter & Associates.



# THE transformer

Passion for places

Newsletter of the CABE Urban Design Summer School 2008, NewcastleGateshead



## Prizewinners at the 2008 summer school

The urban design summer school team identified the Person Most Likely to Engage. He was Shale Ahmed of the Bangladeshi Youth Forum, who was awarded a copy of the Building Futures Game. Shale is seen here with summer school director Noha Nasser and CABE's head of skills, Carlton Roberts-James. 'I've been on a train for the first time in my life coming to the summer school and now I've won a prize,' he told *The Transformer*. 'I'm overwhelmed. I can't wait to get back to my community to tell them all about my experience.'



Noha Nasser, Shale Ahmed and Carlton Roberts-James: 'overwhelmed'.

The Strictly Urban Design finalists (Active Edge, Character, Community, Permeability, Path, and Network) presented their projects well in the very limited time available. How did the judges rate their Strictly Urban Design projects?

Community and Network both scored a respectable 23, Permeability sneaked an additional point with 24, Path did really well at 28, and Active Edge came in at 29. The winner was Character with a magnificent score of 33. So congratulations to the runners up in the Big Project: Active Edge (Alan Pollock, Robert Peel, Jonathan Baker, David Carruthers, Liz Hobman and Amjid Hussain); and to the winners of the Big Project, showing true Character: Catherine Dewar, Daniel Durrant, Richard Jones, Yvonne Sampoh, Sally Malone and Peter Wallace.

### Tricky questions

The Best Poster competition was won by three teams: *Morphology* (Scott Vincent, Tiago Oliveira, Matej Niksic, Magumi Ho, Niall Murphy, Sara McHale, Fiona McGrath and Linda Carroli) *Density* (Rob Merson, Andrew Somers, Jon Toy, Peter Hayes, Sohida Banu, Laura Dysart, Peter Hall and Rachel Leggett) *District* (Tom Cahill, Steve Goodwin, William Green, Tom Rumble, Daniel Jeffs, Martin Lindley and Steve Lingley).

Kuan Loh won a bottle of champagne for the tricky quiz questions posed by Louise Thomson of the Urban Renaissance Institute.

Emma Zukowski won the Oath Competition.

Priya Jagtap, winner of the icemaker quiz, received a copy of *Manual for Streets*.



Part of Character's winning masterplan

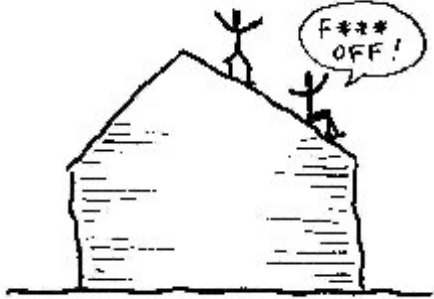


In second place: Active Edge

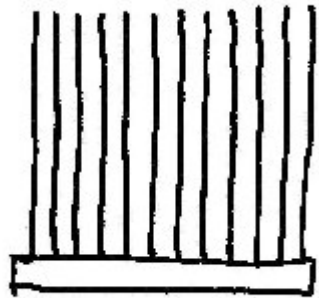
## Confession

We asked summer school participants to confess anything they needed to get off their chests. This was our favourite.

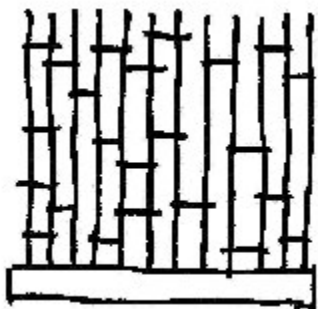
When I worked for a housing department I was responsible for small-scale improvement and security works. Users of a community centre were being plagued by children who were able to climb easily on to the roof of the building, where they amused themselves by smoking and shouting obscenities at passers-by.



Residents demanded that something must be done. Instead of going to the architects department I decided to use our team surveyor to come up with a solution. We decided that a very high metal fence would be just the thing to keep the kids out.



When the surveyor drew up the plans, we both decided it looked a bit prison-like. So to make it more attractive we added some cross-struts.



The children were delighted, the residents less so.

## Have I changed job or had a nervous breakdown (or caused one)?

At the end of the summer school we asked you to write a postcard to yourself, saying what you wanted to be reminded of in six months time that you hoped to achieve or do differently. Your own postcard will be sent to you after six months (in a plain envelope). Here are some of your messages.

- I must organise at least one 'hot tips and tricks' event per year – fast, furious, stimulating and very informative.
- Use plain English in consultations. Make sure to engage all residents and stakeholders in the community, people and places. Listen and give consideration to the whole area, not just the part needing permission.
- How are officers and members using the new design guide? Has sustainability training been given to officers? Has CABE been asked to provide more localised workshops and training? Have I changed job or had a nervous breakdown (or caused one)?
- Question each application on its design merits. Has it gone as far as it should do? Have I tried to make a difference?
- Be a champion for urban renewal. Make sure to do an introduction for young people to urban design in September.
- Continue to use what you have learned at summer school to improve the design of urban projects to make them a happier, safer and more attractive environment for my constituents.
- Get involved in more pre-application discussions and try to get a landscape strategy submitted with each application.
- Make sure to challenge standard requirements (highways and safety). Back up your ideas with examples and robust case studies!
- Gain control (or at least try to!) of the masterplan process.
- Go to Bremenhaven.
- Conduct research based on understanding perspectives, keep drawing!

- Learn to draw and sketch! Be more understanding of the sheer difficulty of urban design work, and continue to learn more about the inter-relationship of building construction and urbanism.
- Don't rush into things and start drawing, but spend more time looking at the broader scale and work holistically.
- Use the quality of public space as the most important consideration informing the design of my buildings. Keep drawing, and 'listen' to the site.
- Ensure a full team is available at the earliest point in a project and work together in collaboration.
- Places are already there. Have new eyes for urban public space. Think about children in the city, space for kids to kick a football.
- Create links with clients, form good relationships and be included in the design stage. Be enthusiastic about accessibility and good design. I want to work with design teams to help create good, accessible schemes. Don't be brought in to complete access audits after buildings are complete.
- Push against the technology-driven mindset, strengthen the social aspect of sustainability and question design.



- Carry out liveability assessments and work closely with architects, masterplanners and landscape architects.
- I'm having a lovely time in Newcastle-Gateshead but I want to go home cos I'm knackered and my foot is broken. I guess what I'd like to know is: is the obvious getting any more obvious?
- You need to continue to develop urban design skills through additional training. Work closer with development control colleagues on design issues, particularly major applications. Push the need for urban design to be taken on board by the council at all levels.
- Check out Building for Life and see how it is being used by others in policy. Explore case law to assist better street design, focused on people not car capacity. Conduct consultation early and engage early no matter how small the scheme.
- Be more people-focused when designing projects for the public realm. Think more about the bigger area when masterplanning. Be more ambitious about design. Build capacity through cross-departmental working and skills dissemination.
- Be defiant when design is being questioned by commercial pressure. Integrate the community more when designing my next layout. You are an architect, not a developer.
- Keep drawing, sketching and being creative. Think about context and wider area before the site itself. Learn more and think about how to incorporate design into regional policy and planning.
- Success is going from one failure to another without losing your enthusiasm.
- Ensure design is considered from the beginning of the process, for example in area action plans. Agree principles with all parties to come back to. Attempt to set up design review panel to give weight to design-based decisions.
- When assessing a site, look outside in, rather than inside out. Look at the links with the site and the outside World.



## Working on the Big Project

- Be four months into our gearing up design programme! From today, I have two months to plan secure funding and cabinet approval.
- Keep pushing the limits and keep the passion!
- Make a 'good design' portfolio to use on a regular basis.
- Have more confidence and challenge other professionals with regard to design, community, public and private space. Think outside of the box.
- Visit places well known for their exemplary design.
- Just checking that you have managed to increase amount of time dedicated to increasing awareness of urban design through seminars and to enthuse other officers about the value of good urban design.
- Network and share ideas. Invite solutions from others, and get yourself and design promoted.
- I will not lose heart!
- Convince at least one client not to go down the zonal use highway-dominated house developing approach. Fingers crossed!

