

NHSSCOTLAND DESIGN CHAMPIONS' NETWORK

NETWORK EVENT No.1 : 5th March 2007

SUMMARY REPORT



Introduction

Gareth Hoskins introduced the programme for the day and the new Policy on Architecture, (electronic copies of which had been forwarded to Champions in advance of the event, and a copy of which can be downloaded from <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/02/19145552/0>). Particular mention was given to the high profile of role of health building and design champions in this policy, and the consequential awareness that the whole of the Scottish Executive is watching this network and what it can achieve.

The Champions were thanked for their feedback from the Launch event, the outcome of which is that Network events will be held 3 times a year and there is a clear steer on the types of subject champions would wish to have covered. The strategy is to start at the most strategic level, looking at the position of health in the wider community, then focussing in looking first at masterplanning then on into individual building projects.

The New Planning Act

Tim Barraclough Head of Planning Policy and Casework, Scottish Executive Planning Division

Biography - Tim Barraclough has worked in government since 1993, at the UK Department of the Environment, the European Commission and, from 1999, the Scottish Executive. He has been responsible for the Executive's stewardship of the water industry in Scotland, in particular managing the merger of the three water authorities into Scottish Water. In 2004 he became Head of the Division responsible for developing policy on the way the planning system works and which deals with planning cases referred to Scottish Ministers. He led the team which steered the 2006 Planning Act through Parliament.

Tim's presentation concentrated on the following issues:

- The general purpose of the act and the culture change it seeks to engender
- The implementation programme
- What it will mean to Health Boards in terms of:
 - strategic planning – healthy communities – health prevention
 - working with LA planning authorities
 - health boards' development applications – including the introduction of Process Agreements

A copy of Tim's presentation can be found on the Design Champions' website at www.pcpd.scot.nhs.uk .

Interaction with the Planning System

Alistair Hendry Planner, Lecturer, Enabler and consultant to A+DS

Biography - An A+DS enabler, Alistair is a lecturer in planning and urban regeneration at Glasgow Caledonian University and a planning consultant working in urban design and design policy. He has extensive experience of shaping major Scottish urban initiatives, having managed strategy and plan preparation / implementation across Glasgow when he worked for that City's Council. He's also worked as a consultant to A+DS's Design Review Department.

Alistair's presentation concentrated on the following issues:

- National Design Policy (a brief summary)
- How Local Authorities plan
- Practical Engagement with the Planning Process
 - Inputting into the Local Plan process
 - strategic engagement and joint working
 - Your Planning applications – getting the most out the process

A copy of Alistair's presentation can be found on the Design Champions' website at www.pcpd.scot.nhs.uk.

Building Visit

There was then a visit to Partick Community Health building, the central image on the front of the SEHD Policy on Design Quality. Although the coach driver got a little lost it was generally considered a worthwhile visit, particularly as both the client body and architect were very frank about both the successes and lessons of the building. An article about the building was included in the magazine sent to Champions at the end of April.

Progress Reports on Development of Design Action Plans

Thanks are due to Helen Byrne of NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and Terry Mackie of NHS Grampian for agreeing to stand up and talk about their approach to the development of Design Action Plans, and their progress thus far.

Helen described the process that NHS GG&C has set out, with a steering group established from a range of interests across the board, and an inclusive means of establishing the boards' vision at a workshop to include board members, staff and the public.

Terry talked about the processes he's going through, and the idea that the champions will set up a design based 'project approval mechanism' whereby if the champions don't approve a project it doesn't get built!

Discussion on this subject continued in the workshop session (See below) where a broad consensus developed for a small group to develop the format of plans to ensure coherence between different Boards.

Workshops

Interaction with the Planning System

This workshop generated heated debate in some groups who indicated frustration regarding the peripheral manner in which Health Boards are viewed by some Planning Departments when developing Local Plans, and the apparent randomness of development control decisions. However, as one might expect, other boards reported positive, constructive working relationships.

In response to suggestions at the workshop, and with the aim of allowing comments to inform the development of the new planning system, Champions were asked to comment further on the current opportunities for interaction with the planning process; the quality of that interaction and health board's capacity to fully engage in the healthy, sustainable development agenda. Feedback on this has been limited, and while some areas of good practice have been identified, there is insufficient information on the areas where problems are being experienced to provide any constructive feedback to the Scottish Executive Planning Department to assist their deliberations on the secondary legislation which will determine the mode of delivery of the new planning system. Should any Champions wish to further this issue, please contact Heather Chapple.

Design Action Plans

It was agreed that the guidance issued before Christmas would be developed further by a small group of Champions into a template that could be adopted by boards. A+DS and representatives of NHS GG&C and NHS Grampian plan to meet in May to work on this and the results will be circulated prior to the next Design Champions' Event. It is then anticipated that each NHSScotland Health Board will have a Plan in place by the November meeting of the network.

Raising Aspiration

A range of images of built project examples were presented to encourage discussion of the key aim of the network, that of creating well designed, humane healthcare environments, and to illicit views as to how the different attendees might consider current aspirations may be raised. Discussion varied greatly across the three sessions, from what people might consider to be good or bad design, to the extent to which Boards perceive themselves as able to influence design quality through the current procurement processes.

As would be expected, views on good and bad examples of 'design quality' varied greatly. It was felt that either the presentation of selected case studies at future events, or further visits to example buildings would be of great value in helping raise aspirations and to illustrate (and experience) the issues and benefits being discussed in relation to design. It was felt that these examples could also draw from building types outside the healthcare sector, both to illustrate different qualities of designed environment and approaches and attitudes to the value of design within other sectors.

A key message was the effect that the process of briefing, development and procurement had on the quality of the final buildings and environments and the perception that ambitions were often hampered by processes that struggled to support qualitative aspirations. It was felt that the network should focus on fundamental practicalities such as briefing (in terms of vision and operation), the setting of budgets and programmes to support aspirations, and methods of maintaining the vision through procurement.

Feedback

The number of feedback sheets returned was small, limiting the opportunity for the programme of events to respond to the Champions' needs, but the following themes and suggestions have emerged.

It is clear that the different professional backgrounds and day jobs represented by champions mean that they have very different expectations and requirements of the network. Whilst the network cannot be designed to support the particular needs of every role, and must concentrate on developing the skills needed for the role of Design Champion, it is recognised that training days need to allow for different focuses in champions' interests, some of whom will be more strategic whilst others are more delivery focussed.

With this in mind, there has been a suggestion that the network be used to allow interested champions to look at the practicalities of project delivery and join forces/resources in developing strategies for this. We intend to set aside a session at the next meeting to discuss this idea and set an agenda for ongoing work for those champions interested in this: conscious of the focus of the network on design quality and the desire not to duplicate the work or role of Health Facilities Scotland. This session will run in parallel to a more strategically focussed workshop to better cater for differing interests.

Further, we have a suggestion to put to Champions for your consideration, consultation with colleagues and feedback at the next network event. The proposal is that one event each year should comprise a visit to a building or group of buildings, potentially outwith Scotland, to examine the achievements of the building and talk to the people involved in the delivery about the processes they employed and the lessons they learnt. The implications in terms of Champions' time and T&S costs, is clearly greater, and we are also conscious of the issue of other perceptions around such visits. **We would therefore welcome Champions' thoughts on this at the next network meeting (or in writing in advance if you cannot attend the meeting).**