

# Architecture & Design Scotland

Ailtearachd is Dealbhadh na h-Alba

## 2020 Annual Review

KEEP  
WELL  
BE  
HAPPY



# Welcome

**Ann Allen**

A&DS Chair

At the start of 2020 we were looking forward to our usual busy programme of workshops, engagements and events, all while preparing our corporate strategy for the coming decade. We were planning the contribution to the Venice architecture Biennale, and closer to home, the launch of our findings from a pilot programme on Place Planning for Decarbonisation. We all know what happened next...

In this Annual Review you can see that despite the challenges of lockdown, and the closure of our offices, A&DS has continued to deliver high quality and important work. In fact, I believe that this year has shown how crucial our work is. Many will have found how the design of their built environment helped bring people together – from the doorsteps where people clapped for carers, through the almost car-free streets to the open spaces and city parks that allowed us to stretch our legs.

I hope and believe this experience will start to help people think differently about how their local area makes them feel. What makes them feel positive? What impacts badly on their mental health and wellbeing? Most importantly – how can they have a say in their local areas and an opportunity to influence how it looks and feels?

As we finalised our strategy – due to be launched in early 2021 – we continued to engage with our partners to learn how we could continue to support our places. The response we have had confirms our commitment to the Place Principle and all the benefits this will bring to people on the ground.

None of this would have been possible without the dedication and commitment of our staff and board throughout an extraordinarily challenging year. Childcare, home-schooling, caring responsibilities as well as the general uncertainty and worry that we have all felt have tested us like never before. However, I have been inspired to witness how our staff and the wider A&DS family have met these challenges head on and helped each other. How they've learned new skills, and adapted others. How they've reached out to our partners and found a way to keep supporting them. Above all, how they've supported each other and kept the organisation moving forward.

I look forward to 2021 with confidence knowing that we have a fantastic team to rely on and important work to do so thanks to everyone who has contributed this year and here's to continued success next year.

# Contents

- 4 2020 in review
- 5 Designing for a changing climate: creating carbon conscious places
- 7 Engaging with communities during lockdown
- 8 Supporting the learning estate in the “new normal”
- 9 Going online to showcase Scotland’s student architects
- 10 Supporting health infrastructure with design advice
- 11 Creating sustainable tourism infrastructure
- 12 Green recovery – a cross-agency approach to building back better
- 13 Place skills for housing – supporting whole place approach in housing
- 14 Dispatches from The Happenstance
- 15 2020 in numbers
- 16 You said
- 17 Lockdown 2020 - Our People

# 2020 in review

Despite the obvious challenges thrown up by 2020, Architecture and Design Scotland continued to support the development of sustainable places across the country. Like many others we shifted from working face to face, delivering workshops and travelling to places across the country, to a new, digital reality.

In this annual review we have highlighted some of the projects we delivered, and how we adapted our ongoing work to the new reality. There is more information about our work and resources to support you available [here](#).

# Designing for a changing climate: creating carbon conscious places

One of the most important drivers for change of our time is undoubtedly the climate emergency. It impacts almost every aspect of our lives. We are already experiencing this through increased rainfall events, warmer seasons and rising sea levels. This is both a challenge and opportunity to rethink how our places are planned, delivered, adapted and used. If we do this well and at pace, we help to futureproof our villages, towns, cities and regions from the more extreme and costly impacts of climate change. In turn, we can help to support places to be healthier, happier, just and thriving.

How could we help places reach net zero carbon by 2045? For the past year we have been running a pilot project to learn by doing. Working with four local authorities we helped them progress their spatial plans with a focus on decarbonisation. From this learning we proposed eight principles for Carbon Conscious Places.

As we collated our learning, we started 2020 with plans for a series of events, including the formal launch of our findings. As with so many other organisations we had to learn quickly and move online. In many ways this enabled more people to participate in the events – we reached beyond our traditional audiences and were able to extend the size of the events. The report also received national media coverage and has been accessed over 1,000 times from our website.



Illustration by Richard Carman

# Designing for a changing climate: creating carbon conscious places

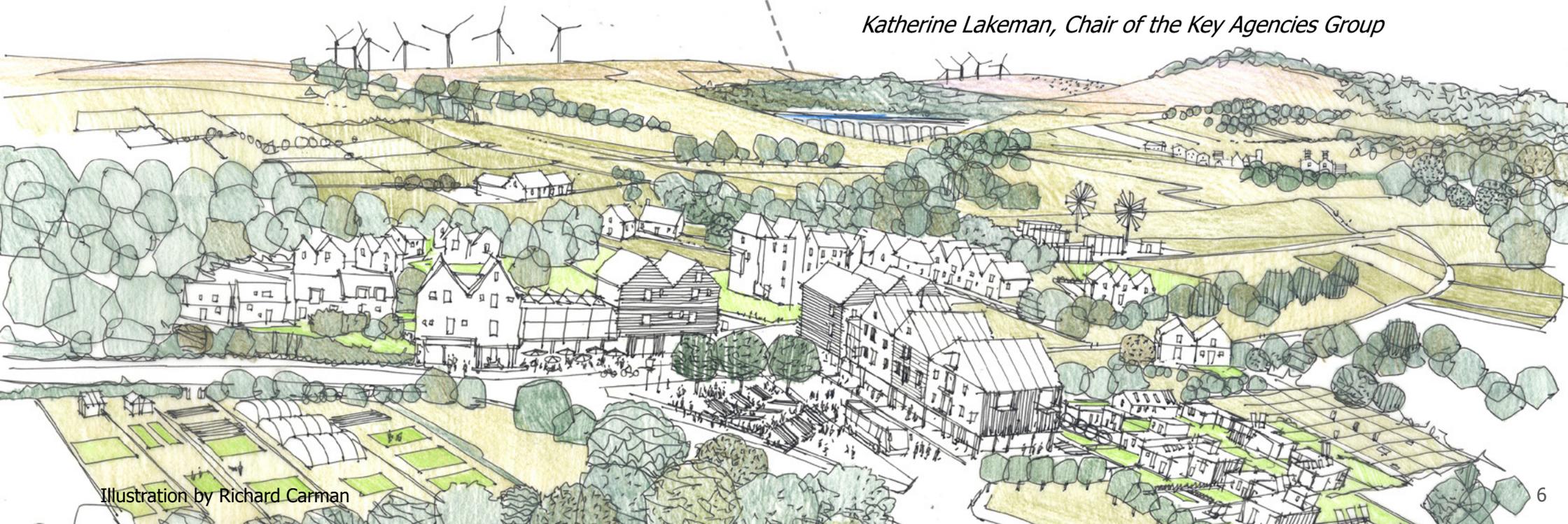
While the work undertaken was part of a pilot project, the learning is incorporated into the wider work of A&DS ensuring that we collaborate to tackle the climate emergency.

And perhaps most importantly; we are already hearing from organisations that are putting the principles into action.

Read the reports and explore our resources [here](#).

*"We are positioning ourselves as a team of Agencies to support a more collaborative approach to engagement with the planning system in line with the Place Principle. There is an increased urgency to work in this way if we are to successfully shape our places in a way that supports a fair, green recovery and address the climate emergency. The eight principles presented in Carbon Conscious Places are proving really useful in helping to frame our conversations with planning authorities and other stakeholders to start understanding how our future places, at a range of scales, can evolve to successfully meet these challenges."*

*Katherine Lakeman, Chair of the Key Agencies Group*



# Engaging with communities during lockdown

*Architecture and Design Scotland knows from experience how much better buildings and places are when the people who use them are actively involved in shaping them. But how do you do this during a pandemic?*

As lockdown came into effect, Local Authorities were doing remarkable work to address the challenges brought by Covid-19. To enable physical distancing we saw new infrastructure, pop-up walking and cycling routes. We also found many councils continuing with their original plans to engage with communities and stakeholders to develop city and town plans and strategies.

To share examples of good practice A&DS invited practitioners – including local authorities, consultants, Scottish Government and academics – to exchange ideas on the methods they had used to engage with communities during the challenging conditions of Covid-19. At the session, held online in July, practitioners shared their experience of public engagement and planning consultation during lockdown. The session finished with a Q&A and discussion to allow for further exchange of ideas. We have heard from the participants that they continue to use digital methods of engagement to progress their projects. The presentations are available [here](#).



# Supporting the learning estate in the “new normal”

A key part of our work in the learning estate involves engaging directly with learners and teachers to help improve places for learning and teaching. 2020 has been a challenging year for all and understandably our direct work in schools was affected. When we couldn't meet face to face, our team needed to look at different ways and opportunities to continue our work with the learning estate.

Our focus has been on understanding the levels of complexity that are involved in teaching and learning during this time. From exploring the barriers and opportunities in blended learning, designs for social and educational distancing and the pressure points on circulation and social areas, our team has been involved in various online seminars.

We have also looked for opportunities to expand our methodology across other educational settings. One development has been to work, with student teachers at the University of Edinburgh so that they can embed spatial thinking into their learning environments. The year ended with a commission of a design proposal for a new outdoor learning environment in Aberdeenshire. We have also developed a greater range of engagements through digital channels.

While the nature of our learning spaces changed in 2020, our engagement and offer of support has continued, and our services will be there to continue to support learners and educators in an everchanging environment as we move in 2021.



Illustrations by Silje Eirin Aure

# Going online to showcase Scotland's student architects

*Architecture and Design Scotland collaborates with the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland to present annual awards to students of architecture in Scotland. 2020 was a very difficult year for students with no access to studios or the traditional end of year shows.*

After consulting with the schools of architecture we decided to go ahead with our annual awards – this year the awards process was fully digital. We received a record breaking 96 submissions for the awards. The judges, led by the new President of the RIAS Christina Gaiger and joined by guest judge Jude Barber, reflected the strong themes around climate and social sustainability.

The shortlist announcement was made as part of the Andy MacMillan Memorial lecture – given by Jude Barber and the results were presented as part of the RIAS Digital Convention. We had record breaking numbers of attendees at both. Examples of the winning students' work are exhibited here.

*"Having a body like RIAS and A&DS give such thoughtful comments has made me feel that my values as a designer are not only recognised but encouraged. Whilst interviewing for my Part 1 placement I spoke about the award and I'm sure it helped me to secure a position, especially considering the difficulties we're facing finding jobs due to Covid-19."*

*Lily Whitehouse, winner of the A&DS Award for Best 3rd Year Student.*



# Supporting health infrastructure with design advice

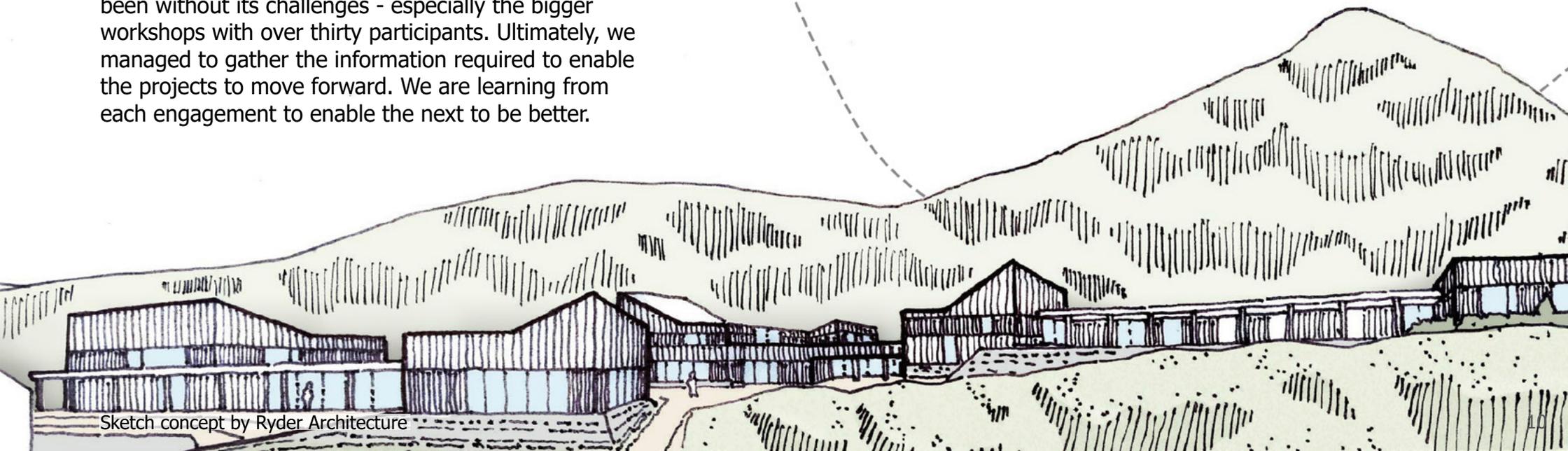
Despite the obvious challenges faced by NHS Scotland this year, our work in Design Advice Health has been as busy as ever, especially supporting a range of infrastructure projects which were progressed to boost the post-covid recovery.

2020 marked ten years since the introduction of the NHS Scotland Design Assessment Process (NDAP). This process – which we support in conjunction with Health Facilities Scotland – helps Health Boards describe a clear path between the Business Objectives for a project and the necessary qualities of the building development to deliver on these.

The move to digital engagements only has not been without its challenges - especially the bigger workshops with over thirty participants. Ultimately, we managed to gather the information required to enable the projects to move forward. We are learning from each engagement to enable the next to be better.

The year has also marked a shift in the nature of projects; from the Caithness Service Redesign projects and Glasgow South Ambulance Station which are looking to work very differently with their local communities, to the Barra and Vatersay Community Campus which will see the integration of health, social care, learning and community services and facilities on Barra and Vatersay on a single combined campus in Castlebay.

We look forward to continuing our work across the health estate of Scotland in 2021 and hopefully even being able to see people in person!



# Creating sustainable tourism infrastructure

*We all love to enjoy the natural and historic heritage of Scotland. However, over the past few years we've heard of pressures for tourists and locals alike – particularly at the most popular destinations and routes such as Skye and the North Coast 500.*

Working with Visit Scotland and other partners, A&DS has helped address these challenges through the [Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund](#). Now in its third year it has evolved from a reaction to the worst pressures of increased tourism to one more focused on resilient, sustainable solutions which consider a place-making approach and a more coherent offer to tourists.

Covid-19 has brought all this into more heightened focus as a 'staycationers' sought to escape to freedom over the summer. Interestingly the pressures of the pandemic and the pressing need for climate ready low carbon solutions have brought together thoughts of community control of local assets and circular economies. This year we can see that more modern responses to access, energy and waste are starting to become more common. In addition, as well as the welcome revitalisation of Victorian 'honeypots' such as the Trossachs, alternative locations and tourist offers are being encouraged, embracing the opportunities afforded by diverse landscapes, places and communities.



# Green recovery – a cross-agency approach to building back better

Working together is about sharing insights, shifting mindsets and adding value. While lockdown slowed down many major developments, A&DS continued to collaborate working together across disciplines with our partners.

Through the Key Agencies Group (KAG), we developed a cross-agency offer of support aimed at supporting planning authorities and public sector developers to work with others on complex and large-scale projects.

In June 2020, KAG published its offer to support a green recovery through a strategic joined up approach. The offer was made to local authorities to support early-stage assistance on spatial strategies, development briefs and masterplans.

Since then, A&DS has worked with the KAG Placemaking Sub-Group on projects across Scotland, from Kirkwall to Leven. Over 12 councils applied to the Green Recovery Offer. This approach – focused on the Place Principle – recognises the role each agency plays in delivering place objectives and the value that can be added by working as a team.

In 2021 these projects are being taken forward as pilots in working to build back better. The success of this in the coming year will be seen in through partnership work across Scotland to deliver a green recovery.



# Place skills for housing – supporting whole place approach in housing

At the end of 2020 A&DS launched the first Module of its online Skills Project. The first module focuses on taking a whole place approach to locating for place quality in housing.

Aimed at professionals in local authorities, our Skills Project seeks to inspire practitioners to work with others involved to use approaches that shape place quality in housing led development. Building on our knowledge and experience of supporting others, the resources outline how place-based and collaborative approaches can help improve the place quality of housing led development in local areas.

The Skills resources support local application of the Place Principle and draw on many of our other resources; case studies, work presented at our Local Authority Urban Design Forums and developments we provided advice on.

Providing these skills modules online will allow us to reach authorities across Scotland, and throughout 2021 we will add further modules on briefing and influencing for place quality and develop further online support to help apply the learning.

Explore the Skills Project [here](#).



# Dispatches from The Happenstance

*Published in 2020, the story of The Happenstance unfolds through twelve dispatches – the reasons, inspirations, people, places, connections and the legacy.*

The publications explore the themes and learning from the 2018 Scotland + Venice project The Happenstance. Each dispatch has a guest writer – from an architecture student to an international journalist – discussing and illustrating a particular theme. Through the rich resources gathered in the dispatches the readers can immerse themselves in the project which was loved locally and lauded internationally.

Explore the dispatches [here](#).

*"The two words, happen and stance, together celebrate good fortune and coincidence and the positive things that are produced through new connections. This is a perfect model that describes WAVEparticle's methodology of 'getting lucky', which has opened up the potential for all sorts of dynamic new relationships between Scotland and Venice"*

*Peter McCaughey, WAVEparticle*



# 2020 in numbers

50

## Best Use of Timber

Exhibition: 4 projects exhibited, with around 50 people attending the official launch at The Lighthouse.



16

We sent out 16 **newsletters** highlighting our work and events, with around **2,000 recipients**.



2k

2,118 **new followers** across all social media channels.

1k

Over 1,000 **new followers on Twitter** since the start of 2020.

4k

4,000 **visits to the Materials Library** at The Lighthouse in the first three months of the year. Over 16,000 online visits, four student workshops, and two e-CPDs delivered.



135

135 people attended the **Public Sector Client Forum** on Climate, Health and Place.

7

We responded to 7 **consultations** including on the **Infrastructure Investment Plan**, National Planning Framework 4 and on Vacant and Derelict Land.



22

22 **Publications on benefits of collaborative design** ranging from housing, Place Standard and green roofs, through to event reports and 12 dispatches from The Happenstance – our contribution to the 2018 Biennale di Venezia.



8

We supported work in 8 **local authorities** to renew the centres of existing communities, or significantly expand settlements, supporting the creation of new **business, public and leisure facilities** and over **10,000 homes**.



455

455 people signed up to attend our digital launch of Designing for a Changing Climate: **Carbon Conscious Places Report**.



120k

120,000 **visits to the A&DS website** in 2020.

52

52 professionals representing 22 different **local authorities** and **public bodies** attended our **Local Authority Urban Design Forum** to discuss market-led housing.



20

20 **built environment professionals** attended our event on **design review**.

10

We supported the design of 10 **bridges** – mostly **footbridges** – and **55 kilometres of footpaths** and cycleways.



# You said

## Public Sector Client Forum

"It's a great experience to participate in this. Love the format, debate and content. My head is buzzing with ideas. Thank you! You all did it! Really worked, loved it! Really meaningful."

- Claire Renton, Head of Area Operations for South of Scotland Enterprise

## Consultation

The support of A&DS has been critical in tailoring the consultation on a place-focused basis, and when much of the initial plan was halted due to the pandemic, their officers continued to pro-actively engage with us in remodelling the consultation arrangements [...] that has allowed us to continue to make progress during the pandemic and has not resulted in any groups or individuals being disenfranchised in the process. The Council is grateful for this continued support, confident that it will result in an inclusive consultation process and valuable outcomes that guide our next steps for this important site."

- Clackmannanshire Council

## Public Sector Client Forum

"Well done everyone. Very useful presentations on website and the discussion has been thought provoking. Thank you all for sharing your time and expertise. I look forward to picking up on a few of these threads! Tricky to be the brains behind new technology and ways of working. It was a good event and well curated."

- Cathy Johnston, Senior Manager, Glasgow City Council

## Materials Library

On our visit in March there was a fun materials quiz which used The Lighthouse building. One group used the display area as you enter the A&DS floor, and another group used the materials and all the information in the main library. It is a great resource, and the pupils enjoyed the hands-on activities. The online resource is good for further research and follow up work.

- The Greengineers, Corpus Christi Primary school

## Workshop

"I've enjoyed the A&DS sessions (other than juggling my self-isolating baby!) and they have been very well organised and worked well on Teams!"

- Participant in an online advice session, Glasgow Urban Design Framework Workshops

## Carbon Conscious Places

"I am extremely impressed by A&DS leading the way nationally in regard to addressing the global climate emergency, driving forward a whole place approach with the ambitious Carbon Conscious Places initiative."

- Roseanna Cunningham, Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform

## Workshop

"A&DS went to great lengths to ensure that our workshop went smoothly and were extremely helpful in ensuring this was the case. The current Covid-19 restrictions meant that our workshop was held online which presented some technical issues but with perseverance and great effort, the workshop went smoothly and everyone in attendance was able to participate effectively where necessary."

- Participant in design advice workshop

# Lockdown 2020

## Our People

This year demanded more from our team than perhaps any other so I want to thank our staff and board members for their dedication to the cause in 2020. To highlight this, the stories we have gathered here illustrate how we have changed the way we work to support our partners and how everyone's relationship with place has changed along the way. This experience has demonstrated yet again how important places are to the quality of people's lives and how important it is that they are well designed. It has also shown how we can make use of digital platforms to engage more widely and with more people in our work. I look forward to seeing the benefits of this in 2021 and to sharing more stories of about our amazing and inspiring work.

Jim MacDonald, Chief Executive

# Lockdown 2020

## Our People

Alex

### How often have we heard the term 'people never change'?

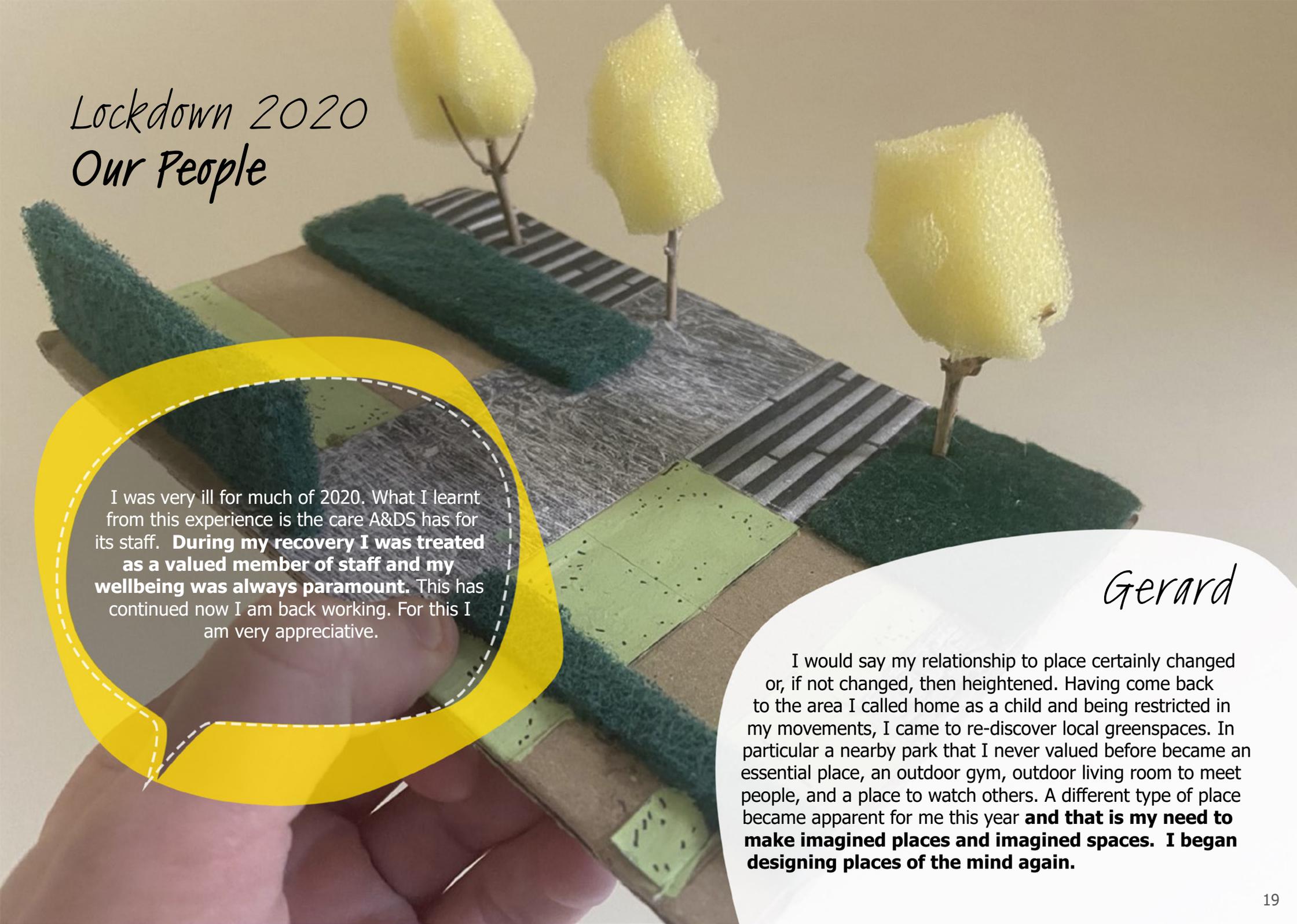
In March 2020, we all learned a very interesting lesson during a global health pandemic. We can change. In a matter of a couple of weeks most of the UK's office-based workforce turned into a nation of home workers. Bicycles sold out of almost every major cycle shop, and the NHS app 'Couch to 5k' was downloaded almost a million times.

It shows that people can change. Our next step is to change our use of materials in construction to low carbon materials.



I am lucky to have immediate access to forest paths, hills and country parks. However, despite living here for six years, I haven't explored outside my 'normal' running or walking routes. **In the first three months of lockdown, I would go off the beaten path. I discovered a new woodland only 1 km from my house, which provides excellent trail running opportunities.** I also started exploring a multitude of inter-connecting pathways to create new routes each time I went out. I learned to map my neighbourhood in a new way. Of course, this all came to an end with my new challenge – living with a broken foot: Hey-ho – it's 2020 after all...

# Lockdown 2020 Our People



I was very ill for much of 2020. What I learnt from this experience is the care A&DS has for its staff. **During my recovery I was treated as a valued member of staff and my wellbeing was always paramount.** This has continued now I am back working. For this I am very appreciative.

Gerard

I would say my relationship to place certainly changed or, if not changed, then heightened. Having come back to the area I called home as a child and being restricted in my movements, I came to re-discover local greenspaces. In particular a nearby park that I never valued before became an essential place, an outdoor gym, outdoor living room to meet people, and a place to watch others. A different type of place became apparent for me this year **and that is my need to make imagined places and imagined spaces. I began designing places of the mind again.**

# Lockdown 2020

## Our People

Angela

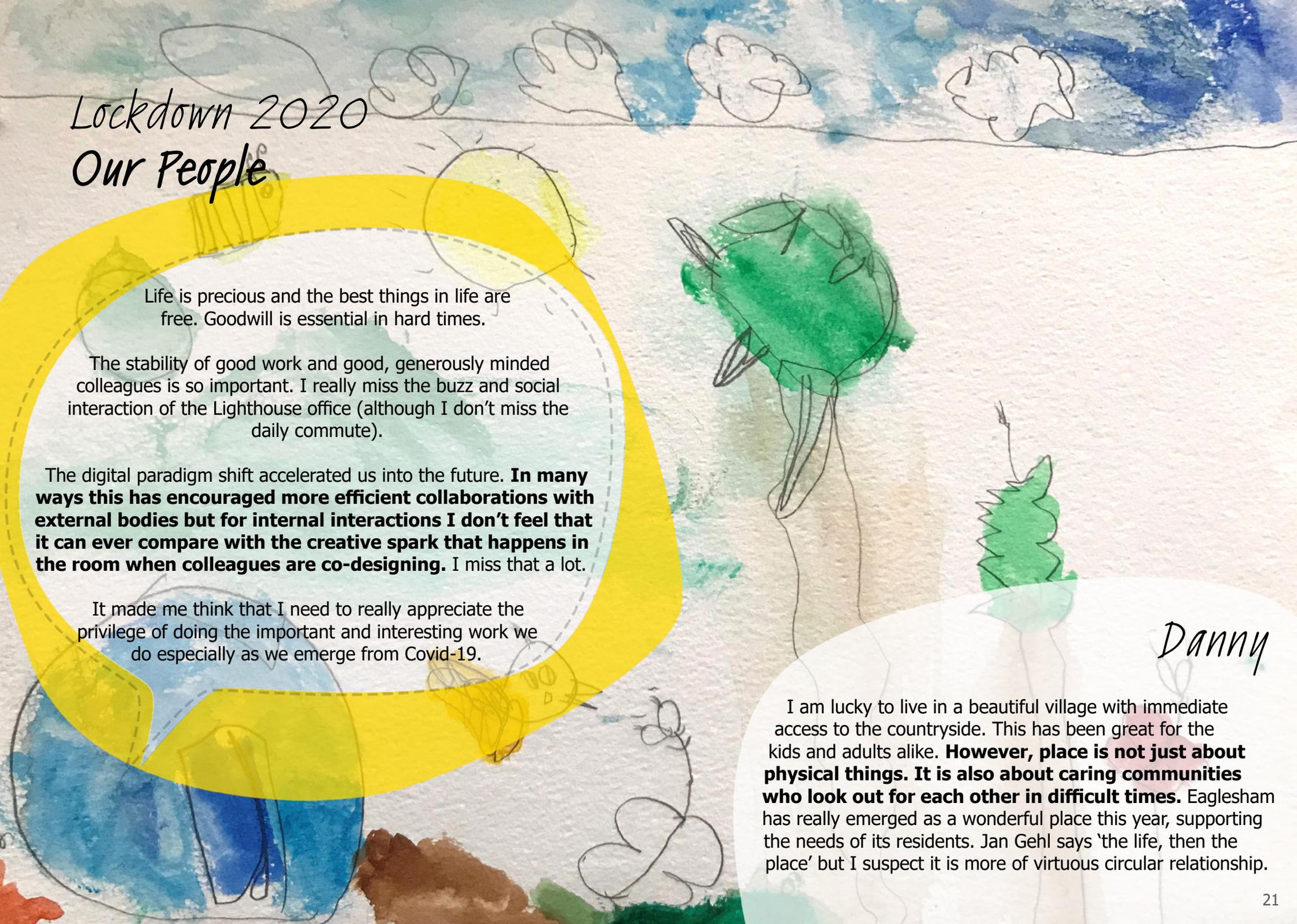
Living in central Edinburgh with a busy work life and three-year-old, I paid little attention to my garden before lockdown, using it only to sit out on the rare sunny day. However, it became a great joy to plant flowers, shrubs and watch them grow and attract wildlife over the months at home. The local park and nearby beach also became much more important as part of our daily walks, and I realise just how lucky I am to have this on my doorstep.



Laura

"Cat watching in the back court"

While for the kids the streets and parks out the front got strange, cautious, apprehensive and eerily quiet, the back court was a haven. It was just the same as it always was. When the sun shone it was even better than it used to be. We made friend with people from other closes and **once the kids no longer needed to socially distance, they made friends from other schools and climbed the fences to play on trampolines in other gardens.**



# Lockdown 2020

## Our People

Life is precious and the best things in life are free. Goodwill is essential in hard times.

The stability of good work and good, generously minded colleagues is so important. I really miss the buzz and social interaction of the Lighthouse office (although I don't miss the daily commute).

The digital paradigm shift accelerated us into the future. **In many ways this has encouraged more efficient collaborations with external bodies but for internal interactions I don't feel that it can ever compare with the creative spark that happens in the room when colleagues are co-designing.** I miss that a lot.

It made me think that I need to really appreciate the privilege of doing the important and interesting work we do especially as we emerge from Covid-19.

Danny

I am lucky to live in a beautiful village with immediate access to the countryside. This has been great for the kids and adults alike. **However, place is not just about physical things. It is also about caring communities who look out for each other in difficult times.** Eaglesham has really emerged as a wonderful place this year, supporting the needs of its residents. Jan Gehl says 'the life, then the place' but I suspect it is more of virtuous circular relationship.

# Lockdown 2020

## Our People

Emelie

Being in the middle of developing a 10-year strategy for A&DS when lockdown hit underlined the need to seize opportunities in the moment without losing sight of what we're ultimately working towards. We were able to give our thinking the ultimate stress test (what happens when disaster hits) and find that a clear vision of what we want to achieve anchors us in a positive future even when the present is mind-bogglingly uncertain.

For me "place" is all the meanings we fill the spaces we inhabit with. **Since lockdown, the spaces I use are much fewer but much richer – in memories, in relationships and daily experiences.** To create good spaces, architecture and places, we need to be keenly aware of what it means to be present there day to day and throughout the year. For me 2020 afforded me the opportunity to really be present in my places.

Karen

The impact of lockdown forced me and my family to re-evaluate our choice to live in a city centre. Our small tenement flat became our entire world, 24/7. We became trapped. The negative aspects of city centre living, which we previously tolerated because they were outweighed by the positive, became increasingly hard to ignore.

**We have relocated to a village that is within a 60-minute walk of a city centre. We continue to work remotely but will have access to public transport when the time comes to use it safely again.** We have an expansive view, access to vast amounts of green space, goods and services within walking distance and the freedom to enjoy local routes without constant conflict from cars, exposure to poor air quality and anti-social behaviour. We have found ourselves being able to relax in a manner we haven't consciously done in months.

# Lockdown 2020

## Our People

Lynne

The main lesson I took away from 2020 is to reassess what really matters and appreciate the important things in life.

The importance of kindness. Not only your family, friends and colleagues, but to neighbours and everyone you meet in life. Appreciating the importance of a smile (by using your eyes when using a face mask) and **taking the time of speak to people to say thank you or just ask how they are. Having a real understanding of just how important your health is**, just as my granny told me 45 years ago.

At work, I so appreciated the willingness to find solutions and the many hours put in behind the scenes to enable all colleagues to be able to work from home. Working as a team to support each other, check we were ok and say thank you were key to looking after each other.

Spending time with immediate family and finding innovative ways to exercise locally. Having fun on countless dog walks and appreciating just how lucky we are to live near a stunning coastline, and also, the spectacular views from Arthur's Seat over our historic city.

**I enjoyed seeing a different side to Edinburgh through cycling and walking which gives time to take in the views and see the amazing place it is** with buildings and architecture to tell the story of its history from the days of the Plague to modern days.



# Lockdown 2020

## Our People

In 2020 we had to learn new skills quickly. While at times the endless video calls were exhausting, we settled into new routines and new ways of doing things. **In some ways our teamwork was better than ever – we pulled off several online events, learning quickly and supporting each other through it.** We reached further than we had before, I found it inspiring to see how we were able to be so nimble and respond so quickly despite the obvious challenges.

Anja

I love where I live, but I also love travelling - rambling around new places and just seeing how other people live. During the initial lockdown I walked, jogged and then walked some more around the streets of my immediate neighbourhood. I reminded myself how lucky I was to live in a place with access to green spaces and interesting buildings. **I ventured down closes and lanes, discovered new buildings and saw the places around where I live in a new light.**

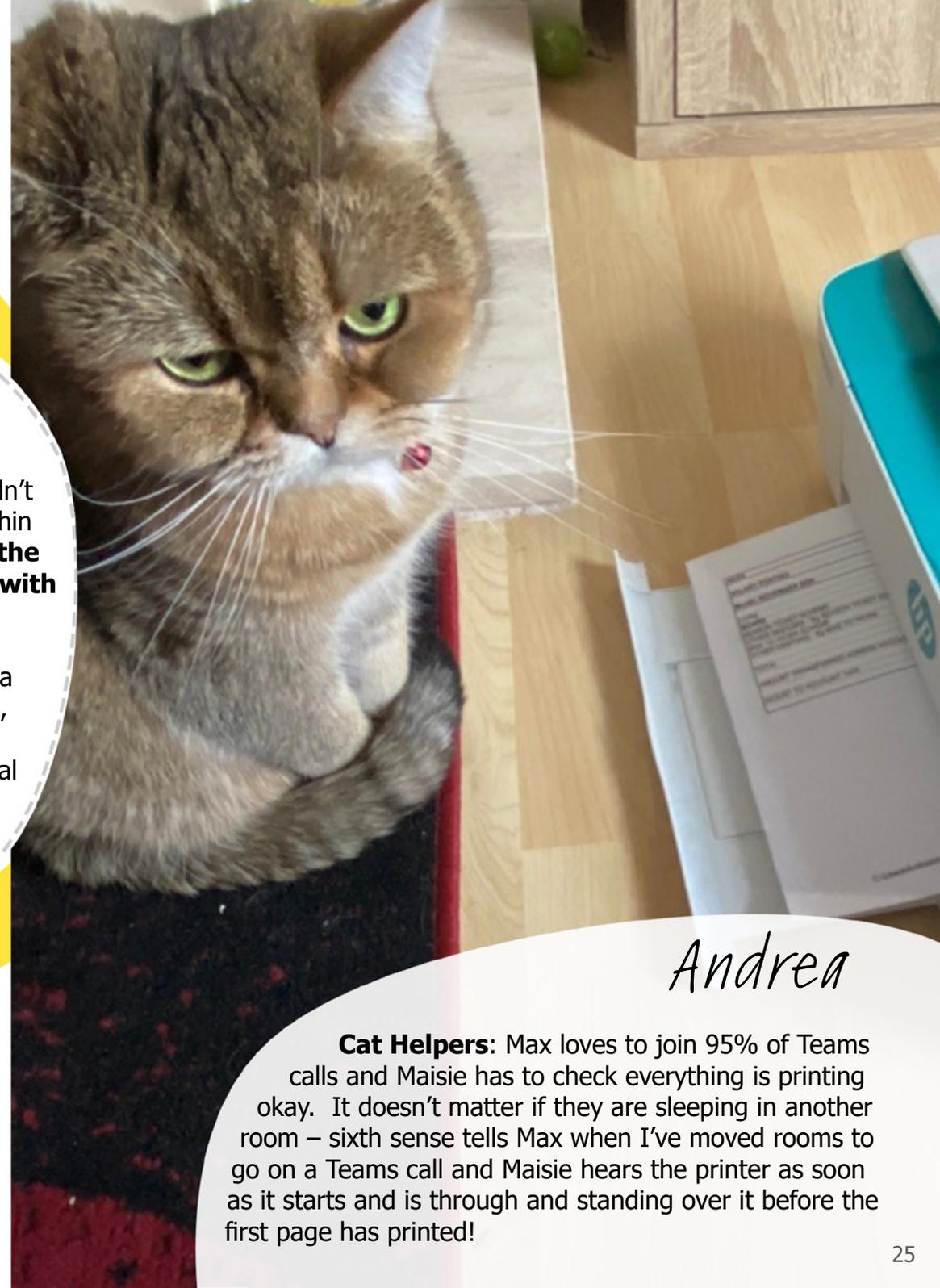
# Lockdown 2020

## Our People

Hannah

In the face of a crisis, we can be amazingly adaptable, flexible, collaborative and compassionate in ways we wouldn't have known possible – across our work, home lives and within our communities. **I hope we can take forward some of the more positive aspects of changes in behaviours to deal with other big challenges of our time.**

There is a new appreciation of the hyper local. We explored a lot more of the immediate vicinity around the neighbourhood, **speaking with neighbours more and generally feeling more connected to where we live.** The ways in which local businesses stepped in to help the community was great.



Andrea

**Cat Helpers:** Max loves to join 95% of Teams calls and Maisie has to check everything is printing okay. It doesn't matter if they are sleeping in another room – sixth sense tells Max when I've moved rooms to go on a Teams call and Maisie hears the printer as soon as it starts and is through and standing over it before the first page has printed!

# Lockdown 2020

## Our People

**Where there's a will there's a way.** We've had to adjust to communicating, working together and delivering our projects in completely new ways. It was a bit strange, but we've adapted pretty well to this virtual world. We've collaborated as a whole organisation in ways that I don't think we'd managed to do quite so well pre-lockdown, and despite it all we've delivered a fair chunk of good work - from events and workshops to reports and animated videos. There's no beating face-to-face working environments, but for me this time has shown what's possible virtually – and the potential to build on a those new skills and tools once we're all 'back in the room'.

Steve

**I realised how lucky I am to live in a fantastic wee town, with a great community.** Dunbar has a cracking rugged coastline, with beautiful views out to the iconic Bass Rock and Belhaven Bay. There's a council owned golf course along the cliff top path between where I live and the beach. I don't play golf, and I'd always been a bit envious of those that did – who were able to enjoy the benefit of that open space with those amazing views. For those first couple of months of lockdown we were all able to share and get a taste of that space and amenity. I'm sad that we've had to give it back.

# Lockdown 2020

## Our People

Heather Cl

Collaboration has been a key part of my secondment at A&DS, so working together under lockdown was challenging. My big lesson was in transferring events online for the Designing for a Changing Climate project, making it easier to engage with a whole host of people. Our relationship with place has changed, **working remotely you can host a meeting in Shetland and another meeting in the Borders on the same day without thinking about the logistics of it all.** We have all missed that first hand experience of visiting places and meeting people in our role and we're looking forward to hopefully getting to places in 2021.

Kate

Our family life of course became focussed almost completely on our home and our immediate neighbourhood this year. **I felt so grateful for local greenspaces that enabled us to keep active, for local shops that kept us supplied and for our home which became our school, office and social space all in one.**



# Lockdown 2020

## Our People

### Maureen

On one hand I was saddened that I couldn't meet family members who lived away from my own area, whilst on the other hand it made me appreciate any time that was spent with those closer to home.

**Working from home really changed my work/home life balance. It gave me more time to do more of the things I enjoy,** mainly catching up on the knitting and cross stitch projects that had been on a back burner for some time. With all this extra time I felt the time was right to add a new addition to the family: a border collie pup called Sam who has grown very quickly in the short time that we've had him.

As part of a military family, I was used to moving every two years. Having lived in one place for 24 years was unheard of. **I thought I knew my town having made time to explore when I first moved to the area but I was pleasantly surprised to find some real hidden treasures** on our daily walks.



# Lockdown 2020

## Our People

Morag

I swore at the beginning of Covid that I would come out of this healthier than when we went in. I started running more and connected to people all over the world for live yoga practice. This, and taking the dog for walks, meant **I allowed myself time to look around me, listen more and appreciate the seasons, nature and the sky more and the joy of looking in windows and other people's spaces (online as well)**. So, my place and my relationship with it has gotten fuller, bigger, more interesting.

I'm healthier and nosier!

But jeeze – I wouldn't mind going out for a drink...

The main lesson I took away from 2020 is connecting with, and getting to know, colleagues more. The world and the work didn't stop – or even slow down – we have achieved much regardless of the situation. It made me realise **there are different ways to look at and deal with how to get things done – with a sprinkling of banter and sense of humour...**

# Lockdown 2020

## Our People

**During lockdown, I realised that my home gets no afternoon sun. So, my daily walks became timed to meet a need for sun and warmth.**

This aspect is so often overlooked in new housing design. It was a delight, therefore, to assess a project in Perth that has absolutely nailed this. This new mid-rental neighbourhood has been designed to meet the needs of tenants as they age and attract younger families and accommodate carers to create an inclusive and resilient community. The original homes were all orientated on a south west grid and the new, energy efficient homes are orientated similarly and have sheltered outdoor spaces and green spaces to encourage sociability. I hope this scheme will encourage other developments to think about this aspect; I know it is top of my list next time I move.

Sue E

This year, I was fortunate to judge three different Award programmes: the Scottish Homes Awards 2020, the Landscape Institute Awards 2020 and the Glasgow Institute of Architects 2020 Design Awards. I've been a judge lots of times – it's great to discover the best of what a profession has to offer. There is a sense of anticipation as you start to look at the entries. This year, it was not going to be possible to visit the schemes. Well-written responses, that clearly answered questions, supported by relevant photographs, became even more important to understand and evaluate the entries.

# Lockdown 2020

## Our People

Heather Ch

**This year's been a lesson in privilege and priorities.** Amongst all the change, we've had the constancy of work. When so many others have feared for their jobs and had to manage on less, we've had flexible conditions and steady income. **A reminder that though we're all in the same storm, we're in very different boats. And a call to those who can, to help.** Our priorities crystallised through the clear asks of those managing crises on the ground, to learn from the rapid research and development of 2020 and to focus even more on the vulnerabilities it brought to the fore.

In 2020 I moved place. Untethered by the daily walk to the office, frequent travel around the country and unable to enjoy the social side of the city, **I settled into a rural life. A sheepswool insulated, local larch, breatheasy life.** The urban realm – the key mediating feature and marker of my former days – melted away as other people's homes came directly into mine. Only the changing colours outside my window marked time passing as it slipped by too slow, and all too fast.

# Lockdown 2020

## Our People

As a designer and social science qualitative researcher I have been engaging with families across Edinburgh throughout 2020, initially going into their homes but then engaging with them online as lockdown kicked in.

It is a huge privilege to go into someone's home to interview them at length, photograph their belongings and observe them in situ doing their daily practices. My key focus is how families decide clothing is no longer needed and where it goes. As a circular economy design specialist I want to understand what's actually happening in society. This is important to help us design regenerative clothing systems of the future that will mean more clothing reuse, repurposing and recycling in our local communities instead of the majority of our valuable resources leaving our communities. **I just want to say a huge thank you to all citizens who engage in participation and research that hopefully informs how we not only make our communities work for us but with us.**



Lynn

This year has taught me that I am a runner and can run for up to 30 minutes and also acquire runners injuries. I have reconnected with my inner designer and used basic exercises in drawing and design principles for stress relief which has been brilliant fun and a lot of marks, circles and squares have been drawn.

# Lockdown 2020

## Our People

Kirsty

Resilience, resourcefulness and reflection all stand out for me in a year that has seen one of our biggest shifts in our relationships with place. From supporting others in their local neighborhoods to global online meetings, quizzes, and conferences we have found new ways of showing the strength that can come from collective communities. We have found new ways to share learning to wider audiences, meet new people and at times the quieter voices we don't always hear having an opportunity to be heard.

Reflection, whether personal or professional, allows time in an endless cycle of uncertainty and opportunity to pause. My own reflection, **I don't want to go back to the old, I want the new norm to be more resilient and resourceful and most of all inclusive.** This is our reset, let's take that opportunity and use place to drive the change.

Eirini

2020 was the year I could not visit family and friends in my home country due to travel restrictions. My perception of what is within reach and what is far away changed abruptly. But it was also the year **I was able to fully explore outdoor Edinburgh – not just during the warm(ish) and sunny days but experiencing how the city changes through autumn and winter, in rain, wind and a bit of snow.**

The main lessons I took from 2020 is that you don't need to be in the same room to be in the same "place", to communicate effectively or to provide support; that we need local services and self-sufficient neighbourhoods more than we used to think; that in challenging times a supportive and stable work environment does make a big difference.

# Lockdown 2020

## Our People

Tim

**When visiting anywhere else is heavily restricted, the little things matter; every inch of your neighbourhood grows in importance.** In 2020, meeting spots and scenic routes became local landmarks as my partner and I tried our hand at being novice architectural critics and local historians on our daily walks and jogs.



Inside, we found new hobbies, replacing all those dinners in nice restaurants we took for granted with increasingly elaborate excursions into cookery and baking. Even though we worked from home for most of the year, A&DS made sure I felt supported. Staff kept in touch and ran a medley of virtual bingo, pub quizzes and catch ups.

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7 - Engaging with Communities during Lockdown – Image by Neil Young, St Paul's Youth Forum

8 - Supporting the Learning Estate in the "new normal" – Illustrations by Silje Eirin Aure

9 - Going online to showcase Scotland's student architects – Deconstruction – Reconstruction: A loop of resources as a creator of new architectural value – A&DS Sustainable Design Award – Guro Vold

10 - Supporting health infrastructure with design advice: Illustration of View from South-East of Barra & Vatersay Community Campus – Public consultation sketch concept by Ryder Architecture

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