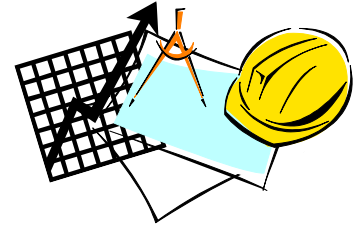


SCALA NEWS



THE NEWSLETTER FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY CONSTRUCTION PROFESSIONALS

ADDING VALUE EDITION

'ADDING VALUE' KEY TO SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

The challenge facing all SCALAnews readers delivering services in Local Authorities is simple- do the right things and do them well, while at the same time delivering continuous improvement. Thus is delivered the Utopian Dream - Best Value. It's nothing like nirvana getting there, of course. The direction is simple - the route is not!

The assertion that services shall continue to get better and better for ever more is the latest and most appealingly idealistic aspiration of numerous legislative declarations of recent years. Some have been swept aside as new Whitehall brooms flick this way and that, but the momentum and general direction of change is relentless. Deliver better and more responsive services where, when and in the manner that they are needed.

The underlying theme now is clear - everything we do must be seen to add value to the way your local authority provides its services to the community - otherwise why do it? A bald but compelling question which only partly meets the aspirations of Best Value. **SCALA 2001** on November 8th. & 9th. takes this theme a stage further by examining how 'ADDING VALUE to local authority services through architecture & property services' can and has been achieved. Informed speakers will share their experiences covering a range of relevant topics typical of the articles elsewhere in SCALAnews. I recommend you book the date in your diary now.

The momentum is pepping-up. Today's debates spiced with Single Capital Pots and M⁴I would have

been gibberish a few years back. The challenges become more epic. AMP's require central data management to operate alongside local empowerment in a Gordian knot that requires each council to have its own Alexander the Great - although the DTLR refers to a Corporate Property Officer! The recent election has created new ministries and responsibility for all aspects of 'construction'



*Richard Winter
SCALA Vice President*

with which SCALA is interested which are now famously split between at least three of them. It is heartening that our desire to ensure that our buildings and services add value in local authority services is supported by the DCMS who has already spoken strongly in favour of improving quality. We look to Baroness Blackstone to provide a rousing keynote opening to **SCALA 2001** while and Sir Stuart Lipton can be relied upon to reinforce the Secretary of State's sentiments and to speak of how the close working relationship between his Commission

for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and SCALA works in the interests of Adding Value for local authorities.

SCALA works closely with other partner organisations such as CIPFA and Hays Montrose, as well as the LGA who helped SCALA collect valuable information on the delivery of local authority construction and property services. Come to **SCALA 2001** to hear the very latest from them and others on how you can add value to the services you provide to your stakeholders. Can you afford not to?●

Details of this major event are within & on the website at www.scala.org.uk. Book now- Ed.



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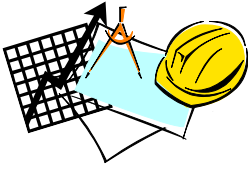


~Your guide to SCALANEWS~



SCALAEVENT

This or a similar logo signifies feature articles on topical events such as 'ADDING VALUE...' at SCALA 2001 to be held in Bucks. on 8-10 November



SCALAFEATURE

A series of articles on the theme of 'Adding Value' from Ted Cattle, Chairman of the LGTF, and Larry Stokes of Zurich Municipal



SCALADIARY

A reference list of dates for future SCALA meetings and events including those for the regions and associated organisations



SCALAFORUM FEATURES

A selection of features on the work of the new Design and Practice Forums which bring readers up to date on current topics & issues of interest



CIPFA SCALALIATION

The 'homepage' for the CIPFA Best Value & Quality Forum on the valuable work carried out under the "Best Action, Best Value" strategic partnership



- P1 *'Adding Value key to service improvement'*- Lead article
- P3 CIPFA SCALA *BV&QF Homepage*- David Bentley
- P4/5 CIPFA SCALA *BV&QF 23 Series- 'Moving on up'*
- P6 Hays Montrose homepage- *Partnering best practice in recruitment*
- P7/10 *'SCALA Design Debate'*- Chairman's Report including article on changing role of LEA's in responses to changes for school funding
- P10 *'SCALALetters'*- *'Classroom of the Future project'*-Peter Woodford
- P11/12 *"The school we'd like"*- Professor Tim Brighouse
- P12/13 SCALA 2001 *'Adding Value...'*- details of the event on 8-10 Nov.
- P14/15 *'SCALA Practice Progress'*- Chairman's report
- P16 SCALA AGM agenda- to be held in Bucks. on 8 November
- P16 *'SCALADIARY'* including the CIPFA BV&QF & AMP Workshop dates
- P17/19 *'CABEpage'*- Social Housing article & Rethinking Constr. seminars
- P19 Inside UK Enterprise- Autumn visits
- P20/21 *'Adding Value through procurement'*-Ted Cattle, LGTF Chairman
- P21/23 *'Avoiding school arson by design'*- Larry Stokes of Zurich Municipal
- P23 *'E-comment- Have your say'*- Roosje Barr
- P23 *'Tribute to Jill Bluestone'*- Peter Brown and Bernard Wyld
- P24 SCALA 2001 *'Adding Value...'*- further details on the Study Day

New feature:
See the
Hays Montrose
homepage
on page 6

Closing date for copy for the next issue is Monday 29 October

Next edition on Survey Results. Articles & letters please-Ed



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David Bentley

**CIPFA
Best Value &
Quality Forum
Adviser on
Construction
& Property
Services**

CIPFA SCALA BV&QF homepage

PRIVATE INVESTIGATIONS?

It is almost a year now since we saw the first Best Value inspections. Since their inception over 200 services have seen their performance assessed and published on the Best Value Inspection Website. Already we have seen a number of reports in relation to construction and property with varying recommendations as a result. It is fair to say that some authorities are more 'content' with these results than others!

There are a number of recommendations however, that appear time and time again, including within reports related to construction and property. One such area concerns exploring the market for the particular service including consultation with alternative providers. This is not just about competition, indeed one such recommendation stated that the particular authority should, "Undertake training for contractors, in relation to Best Value and cultural awareness".

Interestingly enough, I delivered a 'Best Value and Procurement - Learning by Doing' training day for the Construction Best Practice Programme recently. To kick off, I asked all the delegates what they thought Best Value was. It was interesting to note that a clear majority thought it was simply about quality/price evaluation of construction tenders, a view, which hopefully by the end of the day had been dispelled. I then went on to ask how many contractors/consultants had actually been consulted by an authority as part of the Best Value process. Of the 20 or so private sector attendees only one had, although the remainder all carried out a lot of work for the local authority market.

From my experience most councils as part of the service review process are talking to other local authorities, comparing performance and some improving as a result. But it seems that there is more of a reluctance to engage the private sector. So why aren't we talking? There seems to be a

number of reasons, ranging from fear to simply not knowing how to go about it.

There is some extremely good practice in the private sector that we in Local Government can learn from, and vice versa. Neither sector has the monopoly on innovation. CCT seemed to push the two sides apart and it has only been recently that certain local authorities have started stepping out to see what is on offer. It is clear that both sides have further to go and I would recommend Local Authorities at least consider the following issues.

1. Do we communicate what Best Value means within our authorities, to organisations outside, particularly those we are likely to contract with?
2. Do we consult such organisations to see how we can improve contracting/tendering arrangements?
3. Do we compare our performance with the private sector, and more importantly do we learn as a result and improve what we do?
4. Do we incorporate the opportunity for innovation or added value within our contracting arrangements?

I feel that there is so much more we can do and I explored some of these issues at our joint Partnering Seminar in Birmingham. In the meantime if you want further information about consulting/engaging/contracting with the private sector please contact me.

It's good to talk!●

How do I find out more?

To find out more about the CIPFA BV & Quality Forum please contact:

David Bentley
Tel: 01543 262030
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or
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or
Bernard Wyld
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STOP PRESS:

Subject of the 24th. Series in June (see SCALAdiary) will be- 'THE BIG ISSUE(S)' looking at the onslaught of information coming out from central government



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CIPFA SCALA BV&QF 23 series:

MOVING ON UP-

the essential guide to service improvement planning

Action planning and the need for 'robust' or 'SMART' action plans comes up time and again. Read about where local authorities are going wrong and what the inspectors really expect.

Presented by David Bentley, Alan Tyler and Bernard Wyld

The previous series of workshops featured two speakers on the subject of Best Value inspections, one a practitioner whose service had been inspected and the other an inspector from the Best Value Inspectorate. Both provided delegates with important information on the aims and objectives of the process and practical tips on preparing for and assisting the inspectors. A number of key issues were identified, particularly in the scope and strategic aspects of service reviews, and these were discussed during the valuable discussion sessions which are a feature of the workshops. However, a number of important issues could not be dealt with in detail, owing to time restrictions. Delegates were particularly concerned with the frequency of comments in inspection reports such as those following:

- ◆ 'We consider the action plan proposals do not go far enough'
- ◆ 'The action plan lacks specific and measurable outcomes'
- ◆ 'The service plan does not have a co-ordinated and comprehensive improvement plan'
- ◆ 'The action plan is not sufficiently developed to act as a vehicle for change'

To answer these comments delegates need 'robust' or 'SMART' action plans which meet best value aims and objectives, while avoiding the mistakes of others. The 23rd series aimed to supply the answers by providing an essential guide to service improvement planning and removing the question mark from the title of 'Moving on up?'

The best value service review will have identified the improvements required and the timescale to achieve this. The point was strongly made that this should not be a 'wish' list and the inspectors want to see positive action at an early stage. In other

words 'kill the snakes' as early on in the process as possible. Currently, only about half the services inspected were considered likely to improve so this is an area well worth working on.

What is the purpose of the service improvement plan (SIP)? Most importantly, to deliver change but the extent of this was subject to considerable debate. The inspectors had emphasised the need for step change, but this raises the questions of to what degree and over what period of time? In the previous series an inspector's definition was that *"Step change means addressing issues that will lead to improvements in performance and satisfaction. Not necessarily a change in the means of providing a service"*. The danger to a service is that no matter how well it is performing, or likely to perform in the future, members and inspectors will view a radical change, such as outsourcing, as the way of achieving this. There are many other options, with partnering a popular choice at present, and it is vitally important for a service to avoid being a hostage to fortune by being both proactive and objective in its service improvement plan whose purpose is:

- ◆ to deliver step improvements
- ◆ to deliver "ambitious and urgent" change where required
- ◆ to maintain the identification and delivery of further improvements

The structure of early SIP's was outlined to delegates. These normally comprised a description of the action, an explanation of the target to be achieved and the timetable for this, the outcomes and a list of the dependents. This latter list identified others who were critical to the success of the plan, such as contractors, external consultants, clients and stakeholders; particularly when the service is part of a cross cutting review. Other key characteristics are:



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- ◆ link to corporate objectives
- ◆ key risks to implementation identified
- ◆ responsibility attributed to individuals responsible for key aspects of the SIP
- ◆ resources addressed at a service and corporate level

(Cont.)

Inspectors will expect SIP's to be targeted over the short, medium and long terms with the latter planning for the next service review in five years time. It will need to be outcome focussed and not the 'wish' list mentioned earlier in the write up. An audit trail is essential and the aims and objectives should be realistic to avoid making a rod for your own back at a later review. All this work shouldn't exist in a vacuum and it is important to identify the monitoring and reporting system used. In summary the key components for an effective SIP are:

- ◆ outcome focussed
- ◆ audit trail of evidence
- ◆ realistic in resources, timetable and identification of key individuals
- ◆ establish clear monitoring and delivery against timetable, anticipated results and impact on service users
- ◆ report the implementation of the SIP and it's effect on the BVPP and service plans

In order for an SIP to succeed at the corporate level the requirements are for:

- ◆ senior management and political support- are the members engaged in best value and is there a member allocated to your service?
- ◆ a supportive local authority culture- many delegates lack corporate support & guidance which means their review is limited and carried out in isolation attracting inspector criticism
- ◆ ICT to facilitate/support improvement
- ◆ resource issues linked to budget process
- ◆ effective performance management framework- meaningful and comparative benchmarking with a wide range of authorities inc. the private sector

To show how simple and effective an SIP

could be delegates were asked to identify the key issues to be covered and the activities associated with each one. Many variations were produced at the various workshops but a simplified version produced by the delegates to cover the cross cutting issue of a safer city centre is produced below:

OUTCOME: Safer city centre

ACTION: Increase CCTV coverage, better street lighting, involve police and community organisations, safer by design initiative

BY: community safety officer, street lighting engineer, architects/surveyors and police/community liaison officers

RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS:

Corporate- strategic liaison and support
Service- skills, training, IT, funding, staff, time

START/FINISH: May be piecemeal, started already or subject to milestones

MEASUREMENT INDICATORS: Perception, fear of crime, unsightliness etc.

TARGETS: 10% crime reduction, reduced insurance claims/premiums, league table position

CORPORATE/DEPARTMENTAL

OBJECTIVES: A safer city, healthy living, viable city centre, agenda 21 issues etc.

DEPENDENTS: Service delivery and contractors, police, community involvement

RISK: Pushing crime elsewhere, lack of support by a dependent, legislative changes

PRIORITIES: Highest risk localities, car parks, areas of potential investment, public transport

WHERE IT COMES FROM: Establish the link between the actions taken and the stakeholders through consultation eg. the effect on their fear of crime

REVISIT: Check what has been achieved and any changes necessary

In conclusion the message following the exercise was to keep the SIP as simple as possible, focus on the main issues and ensure the support and participation at corporate and service level of everyone involved, from members to stakeholders and staff. Finally, make sure you put into action as soon as possible all the good intentions expressed in the plan, which should keep everyone happy, including the inspectors●



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Hays Montrose &



A partnership to promote best practice in temporary recruitment ser-



*Richard Gelder,
National Business
Manager for the
Public Sector at
Hays Montrose,
looks forward
to the beginning
of a new
partnership
with SCALA*

In my role as the national business manager for the public sector, I have learnt that innovation is the one of the main "tools of the job". As an organisation, Hays Montrose effectively has two customers - our clients and our temporary staff. If I can introduce practical new ideas and concepts that will have some real benefit to both these groups, I really feel that I doing something worthwhile for all my customers.

That's why I'm particularly pleased with the partnership agreement between SCALA and Hays Montrose. It's a strategic arrangement, which has been formed to offer real practical support to SCALA members, and therefore in turn, temporary staff working for SCALA members.

The partnership between SCALA and Hays Montrose has been based on realistic lines, to "serve construction and architecture in local authorities" and aims to provide expertise and advice, whilst promoting best practice in temporary recruitment issues. This leads me to an obvious question - why now?

In general terms, the answer to this question is work related. We are currently (for the time being at least!) in the middle of a very busy period for construction, property and its related disciplines. Architecture is no different, and its no exaggeration to suggest that most architectural disciplines are currently subject to skills shortages. When you also consider that the public sector is experiencing its own "boom" in workloads and couple this with the not inconsiderable challenge of best value, it makes for a very busy work schedule for local authority architectural team leaders and department heads.

One of the knock on effects of all this, has been the increasing reliance on agency staff within architectural departments to cope with current workloads - and based on the feedback I receive from my local au-

thority clients, an increasing amount of their time to manage the process of using temporary staff.

So what's the partnership going to offer to local authority architecture? Well, to begin with, Hays Montrose and SCALA are starting with a best practice campaign, which will be launched with the first national survey about local authority architecture and it's use of temporary labour in this issue of SCALA news. In essence, this is the opportunity to explore the real issues, priorities and challenges surrounding the use of temporary staff.

By using the survey's findings, and holding regional workshops with SCALA members, we are looking to deliver recommendations of best practice in the form of management information. Whilst I don't want to preempt the findings, I am certain that there will be a series of practical recommendations, that if followed, will make tangible improvements in how local authority architects procurement, manage and retain temporary staff, creating benefits to all parties including the temporary professional and the recruitment agency.

To me its clear that the primary role of an architect is to design, that is why I am convinced that this type of practical partnership has particular relevance now - any initiative that allows professionals to spend more time doing their core duties has to be worth while.

I expect our partnership with SCALA to be innovative and constructive. I am equally certain that with the current changes to employment regulations, uncertainty about economic conditions and the consistent improvements demanded under best value, there is a whole agenda of future issues for Hays Montrose and SCALA to work in partnership together on●

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SCALADESIGN DEBATE

FEEDBACK FROM SCALA DESIGN FORUM MEETING HELD ON 13 JULY

The following were the main topics of the discussion

Mukund Patel

Chairman of the Design Forum

STUDY DAY 2002

Study Day 2001 made a profit of £4000. It was felt that the Study 2001 was a great success and it would be good to have a similar event in 2002 as well. A number of themes for the day were discussed including -

- ◆ different ways on procuring buildings, including Partnering, PFI :
- ◆ Champions design, with involvement of CABE and LAs Design Champions
- ◆ Managing the design process.

The Forum would like SCALA members' views or ideas for the next Study Day. Comments or new ideas to Bernard Wyld or Mukund Patel please.

MAINTENANCE REPORT

One hundred and eight copies (108) of the report have been sold and SCALA made a profit on the report.

There was a discussion on the format of the next report. It was felt that it would be best to focus on AMPs data. It was agreed that there should be a pilot questionnaire for the Forum members to try out, and see how difficult it would be to get their data in new format.

BETTER LA BUILDINGS

The draft of this document circulated by CABE was different from what everyone had expected. The draft focussed on benefits of LAs appointing Design Champions. Forum members felt that while SCALA should support the Design Champions Document, we would also like to see the original document on Better LA Buildings published as well.

It was explained that CABE did have enough resources to do two documents but that CABE will consider our views and re-

port back at the next meeting.

DfES UPDATE

Schools Building & Design Unit has recently issued its new Publications List 2001. The list is available free from DfES by e-mailing Nicola.Williamson@dfes.gsi.gov.uk.

DfES is planning a joint conference with CABE on 22nd October at the Greenwich Millennium School on Design Quality in PFI Schemes. LEAs who have approved PFI schemes or are planning to bid for a PFI scheme will find the conference useful.

Following the meeting, there was a technical presentation on Acoustics Design by Richard Daniels of SBDU and Adrian James, an acoustic consultant, key points of the presentation were:

DfES is working on a new Bulletin on 'Acoustics in Schools'. The draft of the new Building Bulletin 93, is available on the website.

The new bulletin will reflect the requirements of both the School Premises Regulations and Part E of the Building Regulations. Advice in BB87 will be incorporated in BB93, which is to be a compliance document for the Building Regulations.

In future, background noise levels, sound insulation of walls and floors, façade insulation, impact noise transmission and reverberation times will be cross referenced to Part E.

Noise control- Studies now show that pupils' performance can be affected by external noise (Aircraft, Traffic etc), depending on time frequency and level. There were also difficulties in insulating low frequency noises which can mask out intelligible speech.

The new publication use "A" weighed equivalent noise levels.

Noise control should be considered at an early stage of the design and should include zoning noisier areas away from quieter ones. Methods of control include:

- Screening
- Methods of construction
- Landscaping (where appropriate)

- Design Forum interests:*
- Design excellence*
- Sustainability*
- Maintenance Survey*
- Inclusion*
- BSI*
- Flexibility*
- Study Day*
- Skills database*
- New construction techniques*
- External partners etc.*



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(Cont.)

Room Acoustic Basically the criteria for measuring and designing for reverberation and absorption of sound.

In the design of rooms particularly halls, drama and music rooms, account needs to be taken of the size, shape and construction of the room and the position of the speaker and listener. They will affect sound systems as well as speech and music. Computer modelling has become sufficiently accurate to be used instead of models. BB93 will provide guidance on these issues and help to sort out classroom acoustics and design.

MUKUND PATEL
Chairman, SCALA Design Forum

SYNOPSIS AND TALK ON THE 'CHANGING ROLE OF LEA'S IN RESPONSE TO CHANGES IN FUNDING FOR SCHOOLS'- Presented by Mukund Patel to the CBSS AGM on 4 July 2001

Many Local Authority property departments have a long and distinguished track record of designing excellent buildings for their clients and of managing large and varied portfolio of buildings. You could argue that as many have been so successful there is no need to change and in any case there has been considerable change in the last 10 years and what is needed now is a period of consideration.

While there is some merit in that argument, it is also true the pace of change, if anything, is increasing, and new policies, initiatives and technological developments are coming forward fast. Against this background LAs property departments need to respond to those changes in a positive and innovative way. In Corporate Sector, there are many examples of companies who failed to change in response to changing operating conditions and paid a heavy price for it in terms of lost market share and reduced profits. For public sector, the outcome might be different and but equally unpliantable, unless we take appropriate action now.

Before we can change the way we work, we

need to understand why we need to change. What are the forces of change? There are four main drives for change, which will have the most effect on property departments.

- Increased Capital funding.
- Devolved Funding.
- Rethinking Construction/Best Value.
- Emphasis on Better Design.

CAPITAL FUNDING FOR SCHOOLS

Capital funding for most sectors has increased over the last four years and is set to increase further sharply over the next few years. For schools alone, government has already announced capital allocation of £8.5 billion over 3 year period 2001/2 to 2003/2004. The chart opposite and below shows the schools capital expenditure from 1996/97 (when it £600m per year) to 2003/04 (when it will be £3.5 billion). With the governments eyes, for the second term family fixed on delivery, the key question for LAs is can they handle the increased workload effectively and deliver new buildings. Last few years have been downsizing in many LAs. Has this left them with adequate in-house capacity to manage the work. Also allied to this is the question of whether the building industry in area has the capacity to handle the work. We already know that skill shortages are emerging in certain regions, particularly on M&E side.

PPP/PFI PROJECTS

A major share of capital funding is coming through PPP/PFI route. Over the next 3 years £2.05 billion or about 25% of funding is only available through the PPP/PFI route, and this proportion is likely to rise in future. PPP/PFI schools project area success story. Over 43 contracts have been signed and over 450 schools are benefiting from these projects. But what is surprising is that only about half the LAs have so far bid for a PFI project.

The key questions for LAs is what is stopping so many of them from developing PFI proposals? PFI represents a new way of procuring buildings and the process is of-





(Cont.)

ten difficult but with so much of funding coming through PFI credits, can LAs afford to ignore PFI?

DEVOLVED FUNDING TO SCHOOLS

Delegation of some capital funding to all schools represents a major development in the way the schools and LEAs work together. The amount delegated to schools in 2001/02 is £290m. This rises to £600 million in 2003/04. This means that most schools can, if they choose, undertake small capital works. This development poses a number of challenges for LAs. The main one being to ensure that schools understand their rights and responsibilities. If LAs develop 'buy back' or Building Maintenance Indemnity Schemes, they need to ensure that there is a clear understanding amongst schools of what the participation in scheme means. LAs also of course need to treat the schools who do not participate in the scheme fairly and help them to undertake the building works they want. Devolved formula capital means that the relationship between schools and LAs is changing fundamentally. LAs need to treat schools much as they would deal with any other clients.

RETHINKING CONSTRUCTION

Government believes that there is a need of radical improvement in construction industry, involving new approach to delivery of construction projects. Egan report on "Rethinking Construction" has set the following key improvement targets:

- ◆ 10% reduction in capital costs & completion
- ◆ 20% reduction in defects and accidents
- ◆ 10% increase in productivity and profit-

ability

- ◆ 20% increase in predictability in project performance

Local Government Task Force has been established to encourage innovative working practices and share good ideas amongst LAs. Local Authorities are major clients of construction industry. They urgently need to develop new ways of procuring construction projects. Doing so will increase their chances of delivering huge increase in workload on schools, transport and other areas.

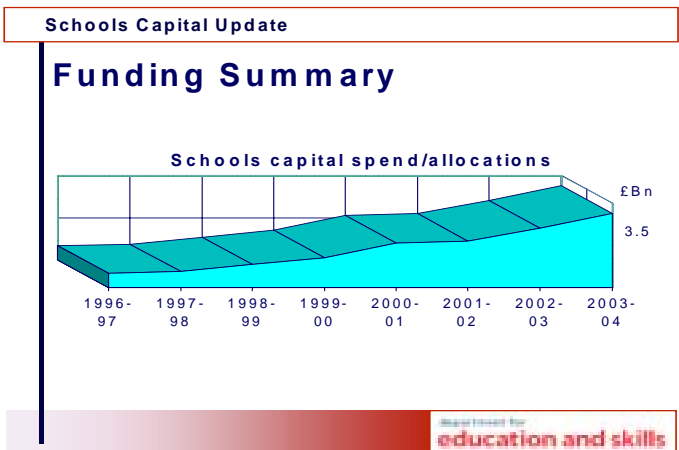
BETTER DESIGN

Whilst there are many excellent, well designed LA buildings, there are also many dull, uninteresting and uniform buildings around. Government is keen to improve the design quality of buildings. The Prime Minister in his report on "Better Public Buildings" has said - "Good design should not be confined to high profile buildings in big cities: all users of public services, wherever they are should be able to benefit from better design".

The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment has been set up to encourage good design and local authorities are being asked to appoint Design Champions. LAs have a real opportunity now, with increased capital spending, to build high quality buildings and transform our built environment.

This is a formidable list of changes that LAs need to respond to. If LA property departments are to deliver hugely increased workload and meet challenging "Rethinking Construction" targets and design excellent buildings, they will seriously need to look at the way they operate. What options they follow will largely depend on their starting position, size of the property department and its expertise. There are a number of options open to LAs on the way forward.

- ◆ Expand in-house teams - a difficult option in the present climate. Also to run down teams when work load reduces.
- ◆ Use external consultants - effective way to deal with peaks and troughs.
- ◆ Lots of management efforts needed.



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- ◆ Outsource routine work – saves management input if dealing with only one or two firms. Allows in-house staff to focus on key tasks of liaising with clients, developing briefs, etc.
- ◆ Outsource all work- lack of in-house expertise means cannot be “intelligent client”. Lack of continuity.

What working practices any LA adopts will depend largely on its circumstances, but everyone needs to recognise that challenges that we face also represent opportunities. For the first time in almost a generation there is reasonable money avail-

able for capital works and government is also seeking to procure well designed buildings. We now have a real opportunity to show our skills and creativity.

In **conclusion**, we can say that all LAs will clearly need to focus on three key areas:

Delivery - this is top Government priority. LAs will need to deliver a hugely expanded building programme.

Client Focus - LAs will need to clearly understand needs of all their clients inc. schools.

Innovation - Develop joined up building solutions, design exciting spaces and develop new procurement partnerships●

(Cont.)



SCALA LETTERS

From:
Peter Woodford
DipArch
Principal
Architect & SCALA
member (formerly
Chief Architect)
E-mail:
Pwoodford@
cornwall.gov.uk

Classroom of the future project

I read with interest Mukund's article in SCALAnews Summer Edition 2001, and the additional piece by Chris Bissell on the above.

Just to let you know that the Property Client team within Planning, Transportation and Estates, Cornwall CC held a limited competition for ideas and a bid for Lead Consultancy for the project at Camborne School and Community College. Two local private architectural practices were invited along with the in house multi-disciplinary team from the Business Unit of the Design and Maintenance Consultancy of

Cornwall CC.

Following the submission of a bid document and formal presentation, the winners were recently announced as the in-house team from CCC, led by Maurice Vella as Project Architect and Malcolm Cook (QS) as Team Co-ordinator!!

A full motion 3D graphical 'fly-by' produced by the design team is thought to have helped clinch the winning bid, and has been taken away by the representative from the National Space and Science centre at Leicester, in order to assist with additional fund-raising on the project, as it was so impressive!

The judges of the competition were Chris Stoltz (Inspector for Secondary Schools - Cornwall CC), Ian Kenworthy (Head teacher - Camborne School and Community College), Paul Roche (NSSC Leicester representative) and Malcolm Willcocks (EAZ - Camborne).

Hopefully this is good news for the quality of output from Local Government services!! For my sins, I am also assisting the in-house team on PFI projects. I am currently working with Barry Austin's team for the next round of bidding. I understand that you are coming to Cornwall to discuss the bid on 7th September 2001. I hope to meet you then and perhaps we may be able to sort out a five minute slot for you meet the team and to look at the proposals for the Classroom of the Future Project (now known as Education through Space Centre) at Camborne●

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CONSTRUCTION NEWS
No. 194 2000

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The school we'd like

In his talk at the SCALA Study Day in May Professor Brighouse mentioned the competition run by the Guardian newspaper, which invited school pupils to describe what sort of school they would like.

Over 15,000 children of all ages submitted entries. The Guardian published the winning entries and the key emerging issues in its 5 June edition. The entries make fascinating reading and two examples presented by Professor Brighouse at the Study day follow the common points raised below:

- ◆ **A beautiful school** with glass dome roofs to let in the light, uncluttered classrooms and brightly coloured walls
- ◆ **A safe school** with swipe cards for the school gate, anti-bully alarms, first aid classes, and someone to talk to about our problems
- ◆ **A listening school** with children on the governing body, class representatives and the chance to vote for teachers
- ◆ **A flexible school** without rigid timetables or exams, without compulsory homework, without a one-size-fits-all curriculum, so we can follow our own interests and spend more time on what we enjoy
- ◆ **A relevant school** where we learn through experience, experiments and exploration, with trips to historic sites and teachers who have practical experience of what they teach
- ◆ **A respectful school** where we are not treated as empty vessels to be filled with information, where teachers treat us as individuals, where children and adults can talk freely to each other, and our opinion matters
- ◆ **A school without walls** so we can go outside to learn, with animals to look after and wild gardens to explore
- ◆ **A school for everybody** with boys and girls from all backgrounds and abilities, with no grading, so we don't compete against each other, but just do our best
- ◆ **At the school we'd like to have** enough equipment, classroom drinking water and clean toilets, informal uniforms, storage and a swimming pool

First example:

My ideal school could never exist. There is no reality in idealism. I dream of happiness and learning united. I dream of no interruptions. If I went to my ideal school I wouldn't wake up every morning and dread the next day, the next week, the next year, and the rest of my life. In my perfect school we would only have the teachers who knew and understood what they were talking about, they would all be passionate about their subjects and help us to unleash our passions. In my perfect school there would still be rules, but they would guide us, not confine us. Teachers and children would mesh harmoniously. There would be no grading, praise only for working hard not for your mental capability. I wouldn't have to try to compete with my friends and they wouldn't all want to do better than each other. We would not be concerned about whether we did the best in the class, but only about whether everyone was happy with what he or she was doing and how he or she was progressing. There would still be punishments, but these punishments would matter to the student. They would have to miss their favourite lessons for a week and have to take double lessons of their worst subjects instead.

We wouldn't be confined within walls of stone; we would go outside and experience the weather. We would travel and experience other pleasures. We would gain an understanding of the way of the world. Exams would be abolished, people would work together and alone, they would use other people's knowledge to enrich themselves and others would do the same with them. In my perfect school there would be no bullies, there would be no insecurities. We would discuss our opinions in every lesson and everyone would listen and respect each other. Teachers and pupils would be equals, no privileges or disadvantages; everyone would be in the same boat. In my school the only things they would ban would be unhappiness and pain, no room for lying, revenge and deceit.

But to have my perfect school you need a perfect world, and if the world were perfect there would be no room for dreaming.

Prof. Tim Brighouse

**Chief Education Officer
Birmingham City Council**

"This is what we'd like. It is not an impossible dream" from 'The Children's Manifesto'



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Second example:

(Cont.)

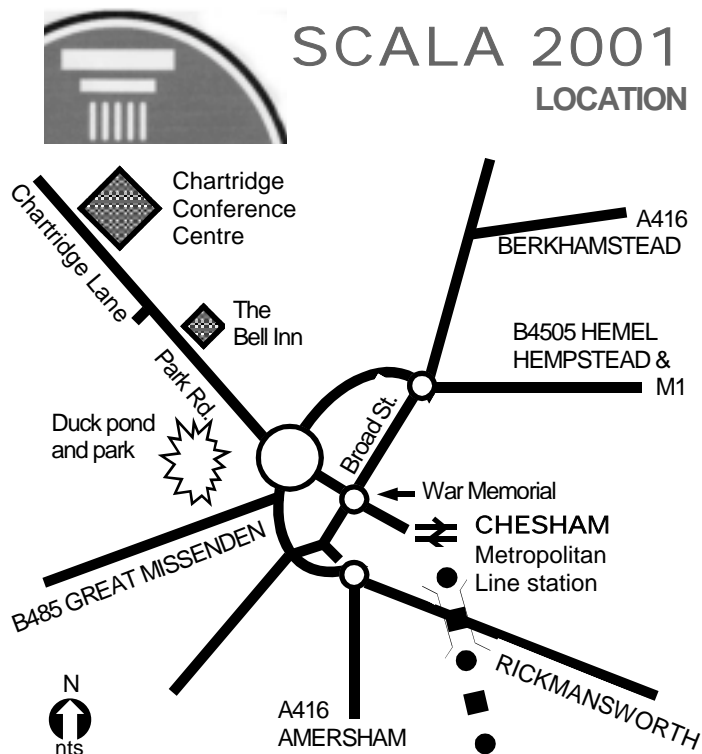
The school will be a huge old house full of spacious rooms decorated in vibrant colours. Just because it is a learning institution doesn't mean there have to be small grey classrooms in rows containing scratched grey desks in lines. No gum will festoon the undersides of tables because there will be bins; and pupils won't be afraid to use them because rules like 'detention if caught with gum' would be recognised as counterproductive. People will see that chewing does not actually hinder learning.

There will be a huge library open to all pupils at any time. There will be bean bags and sofas to sit on and read comfortably. These won't be vandalised because once pupils are treated as intelligent human beings they will behave so.

I must admit to my share of graffiti on the science lab gas taps as sixty students have gathered (and have spent half an hour being herded) around a desk to watch water boil. If the teacher had simply recognised that we were people with brains she would

*have realised that we all knew what water looks like while boiling. She could have said "When water boils ... " and got on with the lesson, instead of driving me to the frustration it takes to write "Get me out of this f***ing dump" in pencil, not even caring about the possibility of her wrath if caught. (Fortunately my comment went unnoticed amongst all the other clumsily worded cries for salvation that decorated the physics lab.)*

My ideal school will produce real people who respect and accommodate others instead of having prejudices. No one will have unfair power over them and so they will never abuse their power over others as so many adults do today. They will have been treated fairly and celebrated as individuals; not discriminated against just because they are powerless and a generation younger than the people in charge. Because they will have been encouraged instead of being restrained, they will develop into creative, assertive people who will work together with their individual talents to rebuild the earth. ●



By Rail: The nearest tube is Chesham (5 mins. by taxi) and rail station Amersham (15 mins. by taxi). Taxi: 01494 792010 Train info. tel: 08457 484950 or www.railtrack.co.uk/travel.

By Car:

From the M40 leave at junction 2 taking A355 to Amersham and continue to Chesham on A416. At Chesham follow signs to Berkhamstead and look out for a park and duck pond on your left. At the next roundabout turn left signposted to Chartridge— if you pass Sainsbury's on your right you have gone too far. The Conference Centre is 3 miles on the right, past the Golf Club on the left and the Bell Pub on the right.

From the A41 take exit to Chesham A416. When you reach Chesham down a steep hill you will see a Total garage on the right. At the next roundabout bear right passing Sainsbury's on the left. At the next roundabout turn right for Chartridge then as M40 directions.

From M25 clockwise exit at Junction 20 for A41 and follow directions from A41 above.

From the M1 leave at Junction 8 and follow A414 to Hemel Hempstead. At the 2 way roundabout follow Aylesbury A41 signs then as above

From M25 clockwise exit at Junction 18 and follow signs to A404 Amersham. Turn right past a BP station. At end of Woodside Road turn right at mini roundabout to A416 Chesham and when there follow M40 directions.



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SCALA 2001

SPEAKERS & TOPICS

Rt Hon Baroness Blackstone is Minister of State in the DCMS whose responsibilities include the arts, crafts, museums and galleries, libraries, architecture and the historic environment. Educated at Ware Grammar School and the LSE she became a Life Peer in 1987. Previously Minister of State at the DfEE she was made a Privy Councillor in New Year 2001. Her special interests include the arts, education, social policy and foreign affairs. DCMS is largely responsible (with DTLR) for supporting CABE, and the Minister will provide a Whitehall perspective on design and related issues.

Sir Stuart Lipton is the founding Chairman of CABE which was set up as the design champion for the UK Government. He is well known as a leading property developer with a proven track record of commitment to design quality as Chairman of Stanhope plc and is also an Honorary Member of the RIBA. Sir Stuart is perfectly placed to expand on themes introduced in the Keynote Address as well as the not uncontroversial idea for council design champions. He will brief delegates on the forthcoming publication 'Better Design in Local Authorities'.

Andy Beard is Head of Education, Planning & Premises for Sheffield City Council after 10 yrs. as City Architect. He has worked on many regeneration projects in Sheffield, including the Millennium funded 'Heart of the City' project, and in 1999 travelled to Japan and the USA as a Churchill Fellow studying regeneration and urban design. He has been involved in developing the CABE publication on 'Better Design in Local Authorities' and will be expanding both on his views on this proposal and later on the feedback from the recent SCALA survey of authorities.

Prof. David Gann has a BSc in Building Construction & Management, an MSc in Science, Technology & Industrialisation and a DPhil in Science & Technology Studies. He was previously a director of a construction firm and two consultancy companies and has worked as a council housing surveyor. He has been a government academic adviser working extensively with the DTLR and also the Construction Taskforce, as well as a Board member of the Housing Forum and advises on innovation strategy. The Egan agenda highlighted the importance of measurement and mapping in improving construction quality and he will talk about his work with the CIC on developing Design Quality Indicators as an assessment tool.

Noel Foley is Strategic Procurement Manager in Hackney's Housing Department working on partnering and procurement policies and practices. A member of the DTLR Local Government Taskforce, the Housing Forum and the LGA Construction Forum and an urban designer involved in social housing regeneration. Committed to tenant participation in the design, construction and management of local authority stock. Noel chairs the Housing Forum Working Group on Whole Life Costing (WLF) and will give feedback from a recent survey and also from contractors and PFI projects. He will reveal the way forward drawing on a recent conference and 'Signpost' report as well as discussing a wide range of WLF issues.

Richard Gelder is Director of Public Sector Procurement at Hays Montrose who will give feedback on the recent joint recruitment survey and progress on the partnership with SCALA in procuring better temporary recruitment for local authorities. **David Bentley** will conclude these short presentations by briefing delegates on the wide ranging and challenging issues being confronted by construction & property services and how through his work as Lead Advisor the joint CIPFA workshops with SCALA add value to these services.

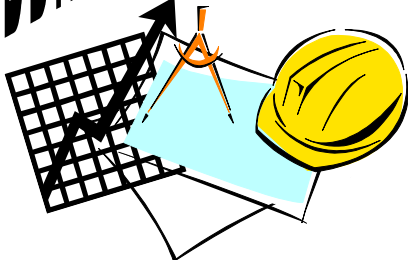
The Buckinghamshire Experience is presented by **John Weakley**, Architectural Liaison Manager, who will give an overview with **John Collins**, Principal Architect responsible for the specification and contract with Babbie. **John Stewart**, Director of Managed Professional Services for Babbie will explore with them the issues confronting those responsible for delivering professional construction related services in local authorities including meeting the best value requirements of the Inspectorate.

Mike Britch has been Managing Director of Norfolk Property Services since 1993, a multi-disciplinary property organisation with an annual turnover in excess of £8.0M. Prior to this he worked as a project manager in the private sector, finally being responsible, as Regional Manager, for an annual turnover of £50M of construction work. He has particular expertise in project management and network planning. Mike will outline the different route taken to many local authorities in the South in setting up an 'in-house' commercial operation now working with 1,000 separate internal clients and over 250 staff. It has expanded into partnership working with the DfES, Essex and other councils as well as the private sector.

Tim Parker is the Strategic Architect for Gloucestershire CC having been the Principal Architect for Worcester City Council until 1997. He has wide ranging experience and currently works closely with service providers, identifying and advising on their property needs within a corporate framework. He is a member of SCALA Council and the Practice Forum and also has experience of being a client and service recipient as Chairman of Governors of a large high school. Tim's presentation comes from a 'hands on' experience of the challenges and lessons of stakeholder based service provision and the changing structures necessary to meet their needs.

James Greaves is a Director of Michael Hopkins & Partners having been with the practice since 1987. He will be talking about the added value given to buildings through their aim of designing innovative, cost effective and beautiful buildings that enable clients to make the most of their site, programme and budget. This has resulted in numerous design awards, the RIBA's Gold Medal in 1995, and a knighthood for Michael Hopkins. His previous projects include the Victoria & Albert Museum, Phase 2 of the Schlumberger Cambridge Research Centre, Queen's Building, Cambridge, and the William Younger Centre in Birmingham.

ADDING VALUE
to local authority services
through architecture & property services



FOR A BOOKING FORM AND PROGRAMME FOR SCALA 2001 PLEASE REFER TO THE BACK PAGE



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SCALAPRACTICE PROGRESS

SCALA PRACTICE FORUM REPORT

SCALA Practice Forum met on 13 July and although attendance was down on the last meeting due to holidays and other commitments a full discussion took place on the following topics:-

Brian King-Fisher

Chairman of the Practice Forum

Practice Forum interests:

*Legal & insurance matters
Best Value
AMP's
Egan issues
EU issues
Benchmarking
Contract documents
Human rights & equal opp's
Procurement & commissioning
Business mngt.
ICT, CDM etc.*

LGA/JCT CONTRACTS PANEL

Two meetings held since last Forum 10 May and 12 June some of the issues covered included:-

- ◆ Consultants have been selected to draft a new contract for Major Clients on Major Projects
- ◆ Comments made on a Repairs and Maintenance Form of Contract for small works up to £1000 for 1 to 2 day duration
- ◆ Survey to be undertaken of LA's to assess extent of PFI and Partnering arrangements
- ◆ Practice Note on 'Deciding on the appropriate form of JCT Main Contract' was published in May
- ◆ Practice Note 'Extension of time and liquidated damages' being redrafted
- ◆ Post Occupancy Evaluation - HM Treasury have issued procurement guidance for the Higher Education Funding Council to develop a post occupancy evaluation process and possibly include in Contract documents. JCT to consider if it should be included within standard forms or part of Client requirements.

The main debate for the June meeting was on the future of the LGA Panel in light of the LGA's priorities. There was full agreement of the panel that it should continue and needs to be seen as the LGA client voice on JCT Board. It was also agreed that a proposal for FPB to provide secretariat be investigated further to reduce support required from LGA and seek wider representation on the panel. Links with LGA at a senior level need to be reinforced. It was also agreed that the Panel

should be advising on a wider range of issues which should include all types of procurement and all types of contracts.

CIC DESIGN INDICATORS

Still awaiting outcome of research study.

LGA CONSTRUCTION FORUM

Meeting held on 12 June covered following issues:-

- ◆ DETR Quality Mark Scheme formally launched 5 July 2001 in Birmingham
- ◆ Construction Clients Charter final version of toolkit has been completed and application form available.
- ◆ Update on LGA Task Force which has now issued to LA's the Working Groups Report 'Integrating Rethinking Construction with BV' and 'Partnership Approaches to Procurement' and also 'Rethinking Construction Toolkit - HAVE YOU RECEIVED A COPY?'
- ◆ Chair for LGA Forum for next meeting to be Noel Foley.

CONSTRUCTIONLINE MEETING

6 JUNE

This was the first meeting which was very well attended from LA's, DETR, Housing Associations to consider why Constructionline is not being used in all Authorities and how it can be improved.

After introduction to Constructionline the problems being expressed by LA's was identified. A survey has also taken place. All the information to be collected for next meeting 26 July. Please continue to let me know of any problems you have with Constructionline and also if its works well for you.

PARTNERSHIP PROPOSALS WITH HAYS MONTROSE

The key principles of the proposal for a SCALA and Hays Montrose Partnership were fully discussed and recommended to SCALA Council for approval, See the Hays Montrose homepage on p6 for more info.



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RISK MANAGEMENT - HOW IT IS DEALT WITH IN LA'S

I raised this issue to seek information on how risk management is dealt with. At Nottingham City we have a Corporate Risk Group and financial regulations require each Dept to have its own RM Group to consider risk issues, good practice and identify problems with solutions. The issues first arose from a desire to reduce Insurance costs by reducing claims but now includes stress to staff, loneworking, needle stick injuries, trips on pavements, slips in markets etc. Should also consider flood risk, IT shutdowns, fire damage, major disasters, financial risk of decisions etc. How is it dealt with in your Authority - information to me please.

(Cont.)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT TASK FORCE

Have now sent out Newsletter 1 June 2001 with a paper on 'Procuring through Partnership'. Have you received a copy?

CONTRACT ISSUES

A number of articles have identified possible problems with PFI contracts as Brussels consider the negotiated procedure to be in breach of EC legislation. This is being challenged.

DELIVERING BETTER SERVICES FOR CITIZENS 'A REVIEW OF LG PROCUREMENT IN ENGLAND'

DTLR/LGA Report by Sir Ian Byatt together with a Research paper has now been sent to LA's for comment by 24 August. Please send me your comments so I can submit a SCALA response.

A SINGLE VOICE - A MORE EFFECTIVE VOICE: A DISCUSSION PAPER ON THE LGA'S NEXT FIVE YEARS

A paper has been sent out to LA's for consultation on how the LGA can improve its effectiveness. Response was required by 31 July. If you made response or have comments please send a copy to me so I can report back to the Forum.

EMPLOYERS FORUM ON DISABILITIES

The Employers Forum on Disability is the

UK's national employers' organisation focused on Disability. As a member of the forum benefits include:

- ◆ Briefing Papers, and Fact Sheets, which provide practical advice and guidance on issues such as 'Managing Sickness Absence.'
- ◆ Legal Updates and Industrial Tribunal Case summaries.
- ◆ Access to advice and support via the telephone information service and website.
- ◆ Networking events and seminars to share best practice with other members, employers.
- ◆ Become part of the consultation process, which forms part of the working with the Government on the implementation of Part 3 of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Briefing Papers so far issued include: -

- ◆ Briefing Guide 0 - a brief overview of the DDA.
- ◆ Briefing Guide 1 - adjustments in employment.
- ◆ Briefing Guide 2 - employment adjustments for people with visual impairments.
- ◆ Briefing Guide 3 - employment adjustments for people with hearing impairments.
- ◆ Briefing Guide 4 - employment adjustments for people with progressive or fluctuating conditions.
- ◆ Briefing Guide 5 - employment adjustments for people with mental health problems.
- ◆ Briefing Guide 6 - employment adjustments for people with dyslexia.
- ◆ Briefing Guide 7 - h & s and the DDA.
- ◆ Briefing Guide 8 - disability management and the medical adviser.
- ◆ Briefing Guide 9 - employment adjustments for people with upper limb disorders and repetitive strain injuries.
- ◆ Briefing Guide 10 - employment adjustments for people with diabetes.

Further details can be obtained from the Employers' Forum on Disability at the address on the left●

Brian King-Fisher

CHAIR, PRACTICE FORUM

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SCALAAGM to be held on 8 November 2001

Notice of meeting to be held at 16.30hrs. in the County Museum, Church Street, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire

Proposed agenda:

- 1.0 Apologies
- 2.0 Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting
- 3.0 Report of the President
- 4.0 Report of the Secretary and Elections to Council 2001
- 5.0 Report & Financial Statement for year ending 31 March 2001
- 6.0 Investiture of President for 2001/2002
- 7.0 Presidential aims & objectives for 2001/2002
- 8.0 Investiture of the Vice-President for 2001/2002
- 9.0 Reports from Forum Chairmen
- 10.0 Reports from the Regional Co-ordinator and Convenors
- 11.0 Proposals to review membership categories and introduce a Public Architecture Focus Group
- 11.0 Any other matters notified to the President
- 12.0 Close of meeting

The AGM will be followed by a reception at the Museum starting at 18.30hrs. with tea, coffee and biscuits available from 18.00hrs. Following these events a meal has been arranged at the Chartridge Conference Centre where **SCALA 2001** is taking place. Location plans will be on the events section of the website from early October.



SCALADIRY

SEPTEMBER

- 28 Southern Construction Forum meeting at Southampton to include a presentation by Hays Montrose (contact John Bean Tel: 023 8083 2404)
- 28 Eastern Region meeting in Peterborough to include a presentation by CABE (contact Nigel Badcock Tel: 01284 763

OCTOBER

- 5 SCALA Design Forum meeting at DfEE, Conference Room 1, Caxton House
SCALA Policy Committee
SCALA Practice Forum
SCALA Council all at IPF Ltd. 27 Queen Anne's Gate, London.
- 12 Northern Region meeting (contact Martin Shortreed Tel: 01670 534112)
- 16-18 SOLACE conference 'Fast forward the e-odyssey' in Ipswich (info. Tel: 01926 614420)

NOVEMBER

- 8-10 SCALA AGM & SCALA 2001 entitled 'ADDING VALUE to local authority services through architecture & property services' at Aylesbury. See the centre & back pages for details of this major event including top quality speakers & presidential dinner

AMP network dates and venues: October 15 Warwick, 16 Kensington, 18 Crawley, 22/23 Queen Anne's Gate (QAG) London, 29 Nottingham, 30 Bury, 31 Durham and November 5 Exeter (for information contact Alan Tyler Tel/fax: 01438 718954)

CIPFA/SCALA 24th. Series of BV&QF workshops on Construction & Property Services: 'THE BIG ISSUE(S)' comes to you on-
September 18 Peterborough, 19 Durham, 21 Lichfield, 24 Preston, 25 Built Wells, 26 Taunton, 26 & 27 Scotland and October 2 London

For information on the CIPFA/SCALA Best Value & Quality Forum workshops for Construction & Property Services please see the CIPFA homepage on page 3.

SCALA 2001 entitled 'ADDING VALUE to local authority services through architecture and property services' takes place on 8 & 9 November in Aylesbury when the important debate started in this edition will continue- Book the date in your diary now.



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Murray
Grove
housing

S O C I A L H O U S I N G D E S I G N A N D Q U A L I T Y O F L I F E

It has been said that architecture is the only art form that affects every person every minute of every day. One of the reasons for this is that architecture expresses it-

self no more significantly than in the quality of our housing. The quality of the residential environment, both inside and outside the home, has a profound effect upon the level of satisfaction derived from life as a whole. A list of key terms quickly highlights the link between housing design quality and social issues - public health, noise, dampness, privacy, security, daylight and so on.

Design has the dual ability either to polarise or integrate communities. We only need a brief reminder of the social housing landscapes of the 1960s to recognise the dangers of allowing architectural whim to supplant the needs and desires of people with few choices in life. By contrast, in places such as the Netherlands there has been a real attempt over a long period of time to mix all forms of tenure within single communities, and indeed single buildings. Development at Slachthuisplein in The Hague shows that it is sometimes impossible to tell the difference between social and private housing. A new equality in design

standards plays a central role in delivering this mix.

We are at a key time in the future of affordable housing provision. While the South East's market overheats, pricing out key workers, abandonment characterises major parts of our northern metropolitan social housing stock. These two crises both demand a new approach to tenure and design. In the South East affordable housing needs to become a seamless part of the private building boom. The 'them' and 'us' mentality must now be broken for ever with housing defined by levels of affordability, rather than the strict divide of 'social' and 'private'. This can only be achieved if quality of design is reflected throughout new housing stock.

Outside the hot-bed atmosphere of the south east, the key must be to avoid the mistakes of the past. In East Manchester, West Newcastle and elsewhere social housing stands empty, stigmatised beyond any sensible occupation. If we replace this housing with poorly designed social housing, pepperpotted around these towns and cities, then there is every chance that we will go through a process of degradation and abandonment all over again. The watchwords have to be quality and critical mass. Again, there will have to be greater integration of public and private, countering the "them over there in the housing estate" blight of the past.

The riposte from Registered Social Landlords will be one of resource constraint, that the grants available from the Housing Corporation do not allow for the required investment in design quality. And yet CABA is convinced that good design should not cost any more over the lifetime of a building. At the same time, future public funding for housing is increasingly going to be

(Cont.)

linked to delivering the Rethinking Construction agenda with the drive for efficiency which that initiative represents. CABE and The Housing Forum work together. As far as we are concerned, quality of product and efficiency of process are two sides of the same coin.

CABE is concerned that there is a degree of complacency in the social housing sector when it comes to design quality. Without the commercial drivers of customer choice and satisfaction, design thinking is too often restricted to a tick-box mentality. While the Housing Corporation has introduced and refined Design Quality Indicators, these are based very much on a process of self-certification, and there are few pressures on individual RSLs to raise the game.

As a result, we have some trail-blazers in terms of design quality - Peabody and Ujima being too very different RSLs making their mark. Both have been shortlisted this year by the Royal Institution of British Architects for their prestigious Client of the Year award, seeing off many private house-builders in the process. But behind the pace-setters there is a long tail characterised by mediocrity, where design considerations come very far down the agenda. In September the Government is launching detailed design guidance for new housing, as a companion to Planning Policy Guidance Note 3. The guide, *Better Places to Live*, is not a ridge template of styles, but a guide to improving design, centring on housing layouts, to ensure more sustainable development. RSLs should be under no illusions that design standards applied through the planning system are toughening up all the time, with the Secretary of State increasingly supporting local planning authorities' rejections of poor design on appeal.

At the heart of RSL needs in this area is training, both for Board members and relevant staff, so that there is a greater appreciation of what constitutes good design. To this end, CABE, with the Housing Corporation and English Partnerships, are holding a series of regional seminars describing the latest thinking on best practice in ur-

ban design. These events are open to all RSLs. Details are available from our website - www.cabe.org.uk.

So where does CABE fit into all this? We are termed the government's design champion in the built environment, but what does this mean on the ground? Our enabling work offers advice to clients who aspire to quality but would welcome technical assistance on matters such as brief development, selection of architects and choice of procurement route. The panel aims to enable schemes where good design can help counter social exclusion. For example, we are currently working with London & Quadrant Housing Association, to deliver new forms of housing to meet the needs of key workers and ex-homeless people in London. CABE also provides a free review service, on the design of selected development projects in England. It is particularly interested in strategic projects in their early stages - 'strategic' includes schemes with a significant impact on a local environment or that set standards for future development. We would like to see more affordable housing schemes coming through this process.

We are also committed to working closely with the Housing Corporation over the next few years. This will include action research through demonstration projects to show how good design can deliver whole life value, and the provision of information packs providing ideas and advice on how to improve the design capacity of an RSL - large or small.

Design quality matters. This is not just CABE's view. We have been supported in recent months by the Prime Minister's adoption of the Better Public Buildings campaign and the Chief Secretary's public statement that design quality is absolutely integral to Best Value. Increasingly, in future, RSLs that wish to maintain a publicly funded development programme will have to show a stronger commitment to develop housing that is functional, durable and attractive. There will be no room for complacency●



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Serving Construction and Architecture in Local Authorities



(Cont.)

LOCAL GOV. DESIGN SURVEY 2001

CABE has recently undertaken a survey of local planning authorities to inform its thinking about how design quality can best be promoted. It covers staff qualifications, inc. architects, and asks about advisory panels, architects depts., design champions and guidance provided. For further info. See your planning officer or contact Dan Thomson at CABE ●

INSIDE UK ENTERPRISE AUTUMN VISITS

Inside UK Enterprise (IUK) provides the opportunity to learn and share best practice with those companies committed to continuous improvement through the 2 way exchange of knowledge and experiences.

WHAT CAN I LEARN? Topics include customer focus, supply chain development, people issues, business excellence, continuous improvement, processes, leadership and information management and technology. Other specialist areas include e-commerce, flexible manufacturing techniques and the importance of visions and values.

HOW DO I LEARN? By taking just one day out of the office you could be provided with an idea or invaluable development tool to help your business to grow. Not only are experiences shared but most importantly so are the stages of development in a "warts and all" approach to the problems that were faced and hence overcome.

HOW CAN IT BENEFIT ME? Witness best practice in action. Identify where you are going wrong within your organisation and more importantly what you can do to improve the situation. Network with people like yourself who are interested in similar business issues.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST? £95+VAT. And, to help you on your way we have identified a variety of IUK visits in your area during the coming months.

WHAT DO I DO NEXT? These opportunities are limited so don't miss out. Call the IUK team today on 01730 235015 quoting reference: E001/COV/0701 to book your visit or click on to www.iuke.co.uk to view the visits on offer nationwide ●

CABE AND RETHINKING CONSTRUCTION RUNS JOINT SEMINARS FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES

During October and November Rethinking Construction, with CABE, will be running a series of regional events for public sector construction clients. The series, "Rethinking the construction client: the national debate", will look at the performance savings which can be made from applying the principle of Rethinking Construction.

Rethinking Construction demonstration projects have showed a dramatic improvement in performance, including capital costs reduced by 10%, construction times reduced by 10%, defects reduced by 20%. At the same time CABE, with public sector partners, is demonstrating how design quality delivers whole life savings and improved public services.

The events have six subject specific workshops tailor made to the needs of public sector clients, looking at issues such as best value, design quality, health and safety, improving construction efficiency and repairs and maintenance. The events are aimed at chief executives, finance directors, procurement directors, architects, facilities managers and suppliers and contractors to the public sector.

Places cost £176 each, For further information contact Laura Shann at Rethinking Construction, Tel: 020 7837 5702 laura.shann@rethinkingconstruction.org ●

Rethinking the construction client: the national debate, timetable of events:

Location	Date
Brighton	9 th October 2001
Cardiff	11 th October 2001
London	16 th October 2001
Cambridge	18 th October 2001
Glasgow	23 rd October 2001
Derby	25 th October 2001
Bolton	31 st October 2001
Birmingham	6 th November 2001
Bristol	8 th November 2001
Leeds	14 th November 2001
Durham	20 th November 2001
Belfast	22 nd November 2001

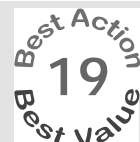


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Serving Construction and Architecture in Local Authorities



Local Government Task Force

RETHINKING
CONSTRUCTION

ADDING VALUE THROUGH PROCUREMENT



Ted Cantle

Chairman of the LGTF

A new procurement guide by the Local Government Task Force showing local authorities how to apply 'Rethinking Construction' principles, could lead to construction cost reductions of up to 10%. LGTF Chairman Ted Cantle explains why it is time they should sit up & take notice.

Public contracts represent some 40% of the construction industry's business yet a third of construction time and money is wasted in the construction process. Bearing in mind that the local government public sector spends more than £5 billion a year on construction and maintenance, a mere 1% improvement would mean savings of millions of pounds to the public purse.

Improving efficiency in the construction process starts with a more enlightened procurement policy that recognises that the lowest tender does not necessarily lead to the most cost-efficient solution over the life of a building. To address this, Government replaced Compulsory Competitive Tendering two years ago with a value based procurement philosophy, Best Value - a central plank of the Modernising Government agenda in local government.

Best Value encourages local authorities to take account of whole-life costs, rather than cheapest initial costs and to deliver services by the most effective, economic and efficient means available. The Local Government Task Force (LGTF) which champions Rethinking Construction at local government level, has become a key ally in the Government's aim to encourage England's 380 local authorities to embrace Best Value.

Rethinking Construction principles of partnership, respect for people and an emphasis on quality vs lowest cost, dovetail with those of Best Value. Importantly, as part of the Best Value reviews, the Audit Commission will be looking to local authorities to implement the Egan principles in their procurement processes.

But it is not just Central Government that has cottoned on to the savings to be had in improving procurement procedures. Rethinking Construction principles also support local authority objectives such as regeneration, improving skills of local people

and designing better buildings. Spurred on by Best Value, local authorities are increasingly adopting Rethinking Construction practices, evidenced by the increase in Movement for Innovation (M4I) Demonstration Projects put forward by local authorities over the last six months. There are now 124 demonstration projects submitted by local authorities, which are monitored and evaluated by the Housing Forum and the Movement for Innovation.

To help local authorities change their procurement practices, the LGTF has recently published a first ever practical guide to implementing Rethinking Construction for in local government, sign-posting the way to better value for money for local authorities. It was backed, at its launch in May, by the then Local Government and Construction Minister, Beverley Hughes and Local Government Association Chairman, Sir Jeremy Beecham, who recommended that local authorities use the LGTF Toolkit to reduce waste and implement best practice.

The 'Rethinking Construction Implementation Toolkit' is a how-to guide to construction procurement with practical tips, checklists and useful contacts aimed specifically at local authorities. It equips local authorities with a valuable and practical guide to abandoning outdated and wasteful procurement practices in favour of 'smart' procurement as recommended by Sir John Egan in his Rethinking Construction report.

Key to both Best Value and Rethinking Construction is a renewed emphasis on reducing waste and obtaining better value in all areas of the construction process. In his Rethinking Construction report, Sir John Egan challenged the construction industry, its supply chain and customers, to meet certain targets:

- ◆ 10% annual reductions in capital costs involved in construction
- ◆ 10% gains in productivity
- ◆ 10% reduction in construction time
- ◆ 20% improvements in project predictability, the number of defects and the number of accidents on a project.

It is now time for local authorities to take up the challenge!



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For more information on the Toolkit, visit the LGTF website at: www.lgtf.org.uk or the Construction Best Practice Programme's website on: www.cbpp.org.uk

For more information on the Local Government Task Force, call: 020 7837 8286 or email: team@lgtf.org.uk●

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The LGTF is supporting 'Rethinking the Construction Client: The National Debate 2001', a series of twelve conferences starting in Brighton in October aimed at encouraging public sector organisations to

deliver best value. The National Debate is a regionally driven initiative to meet regional needs and will be urging organisations and bodies involved in public sector procurement and construction to: adopt Rethinking Construction principles; focus on quality and whole life costs in procurement; integrate the supply chain; design better quality buildings and benchmark performance. For further information, contact Jeremy Sale of Rethinking Construction on 020 7837 5702 or visit www.rethinkingconstruction.org or see p19- Ed.

Avoiding school arson by design



Your schooldays are the best days of your lives - or so the theory goes. Unfortunately, a growing number of pupils and former pupils are using arson to provide their own unique riposte to this theory.

Arson is at record levels. Last year school fires cost schools £65 million - more than in any previous year. This year we estimate that the total cost of school fires will reach £87 million. 2001 has also seen a number of particularly large school fires. One fire in Scotland earlier this year caused an estimated £10 million worth of damage. Another in Yorkshire topped £7 million. Two more fires in Scotland, where arson is suspected caused over £3 million in damage. There has also been a worrying new trend of suspected arson attacks in primary schools across the country - with virtually whole schools destroyed in the North East, North West, London and Scotland.



The result of a school arson attack

All the evidence suggests that this problem is likely to persist. However, architects and building contractors can play a part in reducing the future scale of the problem, particularly at a time when there is an unprecedented level of investment in school building. Government funding and the emergence of the Private Finance Initiative as a force in the public sector have created the largest school building programme for decades, offering a marvellous opportunity to reduce the risk of future arson attacks.

School arson is usually an opportunistic crime. Research shows that 96% of all cautions for arson are issued to children between the ages of 10 and 19. Young people trespass on school property because it is generally easy to access, they know the area and they see school sites as good places to play away from prying adult eyes. Once on site, criminal damage, and in many cases arson, is the unfortunate consequence.

Despite the unplanned nature of the crime, and the often half hearted methods used to start the fire, the damage is frequently extensive - and the way in which schools are designed and protected is a factor in this. Larger fires have tended to occur in schools of Consortia type construction, built in the 1950s and 1960s. Although designs and construction standards have improved greatly since then, current arson attacks can still provide lessons for future school designs.

Zurich Municipal, the largest provider of risk management advice and insurance to schools across the UK has produced a new guide 'The design and protection of new school buildings and sites'. This guidance is intended to assist in the design detail of new school buildings, refurbishments of existing buildings or school building extensions - and particularly to ensure that measures to improve safety and security are considered at an early stage.

The guide provides a wealth of practical advice, drawing on official guidance and our own experience of school arson. It has been prepared by Jack Ashworth, a loss control consultant with many years experience of visiting and providing advice to schools.



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(Cont.)

Obviously the ideal situation is to deter the arsonist in the first place. Here, attention will be focused on target hardening. For instance the inclusion of recessed doorways, larger courtyards or other potential hiding places is discouraged as they can make a school building more vulnerable to the casual vandal or arsonist. For similar reasons, consideration should be given to limiting ground contouring and dense vegetation when landscaping a school site.

At a simpler level, the location of bins and waste storage areas can have a significant impact on the likelihood of damage to school buildings. Bins are frequently the initial source of an arson attack. Where bins are situated away from the fabric of the building, and fixed instead to secure fence posts or other solid objects, a fire in a bin will be prevented from spreading to the school building. For the main waste store the same thinking applies. Wherever possible, waste stores should be either located in a secure area within the building, or in a secure compound at least eight metres from the building. An open waste store directly adjacent to the school building, by contrast, can lead to an accidental or deliberate waste fire leading to severe damage to the school itself.

Roof access should also be limited, through features such as overhanging roof eaves. If this feature is built in, it is important to ensure that the benefit is not outweighed by other costs. Overhangs should be designed so that they do not provide an attractive, sheltered area for intruders to hide. More importantly still, adequate fire barriers need to be built in to divide the overhang from the rest of the roofspace, ensuring that an externally set fire cannot spread to the rest of the building.

Fire frequently spreads incredibly quickly through schools. At a basic level, issues such as the compartmentation of the roof space and the use of fire doors need to be carefully considered. While in many cases these are areas where improvements have been made, it is important to remember that official building regulations contain guidance on minimum standards only. It

may well be desirable to include smaller or more fire resistant compartments to confine fires to the area of origin. It is also worth remembering to check fire breaks in ceiling and roof voids at the final stage of construction, as they have a nasty habit of being breached by service installation contractors.

Arson is unlikely to go away but where it does occur it is possible to include measures to minimise the damage. The new guide contains forceful advice on the issue of fire detection and sprinkler systems. Sprinklers can be installed far more cost effectively at the design stage of a building than as a 'bolt-on' extra. The cost of a sprinkler system is about 1.8% of the cost of a new building, but this cost can be recouped in as little as seven years from savings on insurance premiums alone and if they prevent a major fire, the cost saving will be delivered in even less time.

Despite this, sprinklers have been the subject of a number of myths that have limited the number of schools that have installed them. These relate to misconceptions about the way in which sprinklers operate. For instance a belief that once triggered they will water damage an entire school, whereas in fact they only affect the area in the direct vicinity of a fire, and dispense only one tenth of the volume of water discharged by a firefighter's hose in a minute. It is also not understood that the chances of a sprinkler going off accidentally are 16 million to one.

Fire detectors are also an underused weapon in the fight against arson. The guide warns that a reliance on, for eg. CCTV cameras can at best capture pictures of the perpetrators after the event. The only way of limiting damage is to have a system capable of automatically detecting a fire and alerting the relevant authorities or staff members immediately so action can be taken before it is too late. Building such systems in at the design stage can protect the school far more efficiently and cost effectively in the long term.

These are just some of the recommendations included in 'The design and protection

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of new school buildings and sites', which also contains advice on relevant building and British Safety standards, as well as covering issues such as site security in the context of the personal safety of staff and students.

Striking the balance between educating children in buildings akin to a high security prison, and designing schools that are accidents waiting to happen is an ongoing challenge to all in the sector. The trend in vandalism and arson is inexorably upwards.

However, this guide provides practical advice on striking that balance. Zurich Municipal will be circulating it to all SCALA members once production is completed during September. It will then be made available on our website at www.zurichmunicipal.com

If you want further information, please e-mail: info@zurichmunicipal.com●

Larry Stokes, Zurich Municipal Underwriting Manager and Chair of the Arson Prevention Bureau's Schools Working Group



Roosje Barr asks what you think about the proposal to set up a Public Architecture Focus Group?

E-COMMENT- HAVE YOUR SAY!

SCALA produces publications, sometimes with partners, or contributes to other organisation's publications. It is also consulted on a range of proposals and documents from a variety of sources.

Arrangements for compiling SCALA's comments are currently ad hoc through Forum or Council members. This is not necessarily representative of the views of SCALA members and we want to make the process more inclusive (using a suitable buzz word).

Several suggestions have already been made, the aim being to ensure a quick and considered response from a range of members, perhaps on a rota basis using e-mail. Regional convenors could form the core to which could be added 12 or so others, plus the chair of the relevant forum to co-ordinate, consult and achieve a majority view. Group members would be expected to respond within 24-48 hrs. for a finite period of say 6-12 months.

Your views are welcomed so please have your say and respond to me by e-mail at:

Roosje.Barr@hartlepool.gov.uk

Tribute to Jill Bluestone

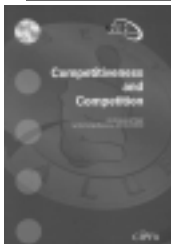


Many of you will have read of the tragic death of Jill Bluestone and two of her children, murdered by her husband who then committed suicide. Jill had over fourteen years experience in the public sector, of which eight were spent dealing with CCT and Best Value. Many of you will have met Jill in her role as CIPFA Lead Advisor for C&PS between 1996 & 1998 and she also spoke at our Study Day in Daventry in May 1998. For most of that time Jill worked with Peter Brown and myself and we have sent the following tribute to be included in a compilation being collected by CIPFA;

'We were fortunate to work with Jill for two years when she was Lead Advisor for Construction & Property Services. Two things struck us immediately, her bubbly, vivacious and outgoing personality together with her professionalism and grasp of the subject. She dealt with everyone in the same welcoming way, dealing with people as individuals and doing her utmost to help and find a solution or offer advice. Her skills were in such demand that she moved on to a more challenging position at Basildon leaving a vacuum that was hard to fill. We can only imagine the pain and grief of her family following the recent tragedy.

*Jill, we miss you,
In loving memory,
Peter Brown and Bernard Wyld ●*

**Book
review**



Competitiveness & Competition: This new guide by the CJC asks:

- What is competitiveness?
- How much does it contribute to Best Value?
- Is competition the best way to test it?
- Is competition the best way to remedy Uncompetitiveness?

Price £65-00p. To order visit the website at www.cipfa.org.uk/publications & click on 'Competitiveness Joint Committee' or tel/fax: 020 7543 5602/5607



SCALA 2001

BOOKING FORM

Please complete a separate form for each delegate:

- Day delegate fee @ £140
- SCALA members booking before 12 Oct. @ £120
- Additional delegates from same office @ £95
- Retired SCALA members @ £75
- B&B Thurs 8 Nov @ £50 Double/twin @ £80
- Dinner + Reception 8 Nov @ £15 2 @ £30
- B&B Friday 6 Oct @ £50 2 @ £80
- SCALA Dinner on Fri 9 Nov @ £35 2 @ £70
- Tour of Bucks schools & Missenden Abbey @ £8

Please indicate any special dietary requirements:

Please **DO NOT INCLUDE PAYMENT** with your booking as you will be invoiced separately. All prices are subject to VAT at the standard rate.

Name:
Title:
Dept:
Auth:
Address:

Post code: Tel:
 Fax:

Email:

Please note that bookings cancelled up to 29 Oct will be subject to a cancellation charge of £60 and that no refund can be given after that date.

Please return your completed booking form to:

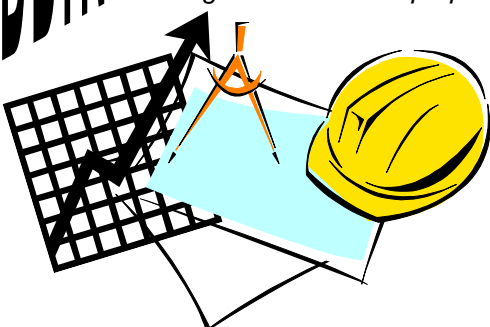


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or book on-line on our website: www.scala.org.uk

ADDING VALUE

to local authority services
through architecture & property services



SCALA 2001

PROGRAMME

THURSDAY 8 NOVEMBER:

- 16.30 **AGM** at County Museum, Church Rd, Aylesbury
- 18.30 **Civic Reception** at County Museum followed by dinner at the Chartridge Conference Centre

FRIDAY 9 NOVEMBER:

- 9.15 **Registration, tea/coffee and viewing of exhibitors stands**
- 9.45 **Welcome & introduction**
Roozje Barr, SCALA President
- 9.50 **Keynote Address** by Rt Hon Baroness Blackstone, Minister of State at the DCMS
- 10.20 **Adding Value through design:**
Sir Stuart Lipton, Chairman of CABE
- 10.40 **Design champions in local authorities:**
Andy Beard
- 10.55 **Tea/coffee and viewing of stands**
- 11.15 **Adding Value through design quality indicators:** Professor David Gann
- 11.45 **Adding Value through whole life costing:** Noel Foley
- 12.15 **Providing value added services:**
Andy Beard, Richard Gelder & David Bentley
- 12.40 **Question and answer session**
- 12.40 **Exhibitor introduction**
- 12.55 **Lunch and viewing of stands**
- 13.00 **ADDING VALUE: CONTRASTING APPROACHES**
- 14.00 **The Buckinghamshire experience:**
John Weakley, John Collins & John Stewart
- 14.30 **The Norfolk experience:** Mike Britch
- 15.00 **The Gloucestershire experience:** Tim Parker
- 15.25 **Tea/coffee and viewing of stands**
- 15.45 **The private architect's experience:**
James Greaves of Michael Hopkins & Partners
- 16.15 **Question and answer session**
- 16.30 **Summing up by the Chair & conclusion**
- 20.00 **Presidential Dinner & talk** by Steve Clow, HantsCC

SATURDAY 10 NOVEMBER

- 9.00 **Tour of Bucks schools & Missenden Abbey**

8 to 10 November 2001
Chartridge Conference Centre, Chartridge Lane,
Chesham, Buckinghamshire HP5 2TU

FOR SPEAKER, TOPIC AND LOCATION DETAILS
PLEASE REFER TO CENTRE PAGES

An event organised by SCALA & promoted in partnership with the :

CIPFA Best Value & Quality Forum

This is a Continuing Professional Development event