

REPORT

The Big Meet, 17th July 2014

A cross-built environment sector meeting to discuss the Place Leadership Gap in England & how it might be addressed



Bartlett School of Planning, UCL

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Executive Summary

The Big Meet was held at UCL on the 17th July 2014, to discuss leadership on 'quality of place', and was attended by around 100 delegates from a diverse range of organisations across the built environment sector. The event arose from AHRC funded research at UCL, and early findings from that work the about the current gap in place leadership in England, as well as the Farrell Review which called for a new Place Leadership Council. Discussions drew on a discussion paper by Professor Matthew Carmona which set out two propositions: to bring professionals from across the built environment sector together in a Place Alliance; and to establish a Place Council for England.

Delegates to the Big Meet welcomed the opportunity to have a cross-sectoral conversation about the issues. Some delegates were concerned about whether they could stay connected to grass-roots movements for better places while moving towards leadership, but overall there was a recognition that professional skills and leadership from key organisations was needed to promote place quality. Current place difficulties occasionally drew attention, however in the main the discussions focused on working towards setting up something that can address a wide range of issues longer term.

Big Meet discussions suggested that there was a good consensus on setting up a place alliance, but were more ambivalent about the idea of a place council. In general delegates hoped that there might be a national voice in future and a cross-sectoral alliance focused on place that could raise place issues up the national agenda. The alliance should be responsible for reviewing future place governance needs and whether in time another body might be required. Concerns surrounded how to preserve current smaller scale efforts already underway, and how to ensure inclusion of non-professionals or local communities and particularly of the regions outside of London.

In conclusion, there was great enthusiasm for a Place Alliance. Delegates at the Big Meet showed willingness to form that entity, and to work towards a shared future leadership. They were highly aspirational in that respect looking for ways to offer national leadership and to be bottom-up as well. The current resource shortage in Local Authorities was at the forefront of the group discussions and it was made clear that any leadership should aim to offer them support in raising place quality. Finally the Big Meet was firmly focused on the future and shaping leadership that was in tune with the new era of open communications and broad collaborations.

The Big Meet

Overview

The event was a major success, not only in terms of the scope and experience of the delegates but also in the energy of the meeting. Despite the short lead-in time, organisations sent high level representatives to the Big Meet, and delegates participated in the discussions with enthusiasm. People contributed their knowledge and experience, brought printed materials to share information about their own organisations, and many delegates stayed on at UCL after the Big Meet to participate in a workshop organized by UDL on a new Design Guidance publication. It was even discussed whether the Big Meet was in fact the first meeting of the Place Alliance.

The conclusions of the discussions were that there should be a new Place Alliance and that it should drive forward place quality activities and work towards the establishment of an entity that could establish Place Leadership. Directly following that Big Meet, a workshop on a tentatively named PPG (Planning Policy Guidance) Primer got underway. In addition, some representatives from the Big Meet went on to Whitehall to speak with the Minister for Culture, Communications, and Creative Industries Ed Vaizey MP, who expressed support for the conclusions and call to action of the Big Meet.

Background

Drawing from current AHRC funded research at The Bartlett UCL¹ exploring questions of 'Design Governance', Professor Matthew Carmona published a number of suggestions for how to build upon the 'Place Leadership' recommendations of The Farrell Review. Those tentative ideas were well received by audiences, and therefore Sir Terry Farrell asked Professor Matthew Carmona to lead in taking forward this aspect of his review (appendix A).

To discuss those issues the research team at the Bartlett School of Planning organised a high level 'Big Meet' at UCL of cross-sector organisations with an interest in place design. The intention of the meeting was twofold. First to agree to form a Place Alliance to drive forward this agenda, and second, to agree on a common manifesto or set of principles for what sort of leadership organisation, if any, delegates wished to see at the national level.

From the 26th June 2014, invitations were sent out to key organization with a discussion paper that presents some general principles and some specific ideas on place leadership (appendix B). Given the time of year a few organisations were unable to find a suitable representative, and those organisations noted their desire to be kept informed of progress and expressed enthusiasm for the event (appendix C).

¹ <http://www.bit.ly/EvaluateCABE>

Attendees

In total 106 people and 77 organisations from across the built environment sector attended the event, as follows. The delegate list is appended (appendix C) and the organisations represented is as follows:

Academy of Urbanism	Jon Rowland Urban Design (JRUD)
Alison Brooks Architects	Landscape Institute
Allies & Morrison	Living Streets
Architecture Foundation	Local Government Association
Arts Council	London Borough of Camden
Association of Consultant Architects	London Borough of Croydon
Barry Shaw Associates	London Borough of Lewisham
Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment	London Borough of Waltham Forest
Big Lottery Fund	MADE (Design Network in West Midlands)
Birmingham City Council	Metropolitan Workshop
British Institute of Facilities Management (BIFM)	National Housing Federation (NHF)
Cabe at the Design Council	New London Architecture (NLA)
Cambridgeshire Quality Panel	Notting Hill Housing
Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)	Open City
Cardiff University	OPUN (Design Network in East Midlands)
CASS Cities, London Metropolitan University	Place Services (Essex)
Centre for Accessible Environments (CAE)	Places Matter (Design Network in North West)
Centre for Cities	Planning Officers Society
Chartered Institute of Highways and Transport (CIHT)	Prince's Foundation
Civic Voice	Regional Studies Association
Construction Industry Council (CIC)	RIBA
Core Cities Group	RSA
Create Streets	RTPI
Design Action Devon & Cornwall	Sahai Associates
Design Council	Sustrans
Design South East (Design Network in South East & East)	TCPA
English Heritage (EH)	the Edge
Essex County Council	The Prince's Foundation for Building Community
Farrells	Transport for London (TfL)
Fundamental	Trees and Design Action Group
Future of London	UCL (Bartlett School of Planning)
Glass-House Community Led Design	UDG Regions
Greater London Authority (GLA)	University of South Wales
Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)	Urban Design Group (UDG)
Hertfordshire Building Futures Partnership	Urban Design London (UDL, Design Network in London)
Home Builders Federation (HBF)	Urban Design Skills
Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)	Urban Vision
Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE)	Urbik
Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC)	

Format



The Big Meet was held on the 17th July 2014, from 9a.m. to 1p.m. in a marquee on the front quad of the UCL's Bloomsbury Campus. And consisted of brief presentations, group discussions and plenary discussions. The full agenda is appended (appendix D) and key points set out below.

To open the event there was a brief welcome from the Dean of the Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment, Professor Alan Penn. This was followed by brief presentations on the context for the event from Professor Matthew Carmona, and Sir Terry Farrell (appendix E).

After this there were break out groups and plenary discussions on the two key propositions:

- A Place Alliance
- A Place Leadership Council



Figure 1: The Big Meet gets underway in the UCL quad



Figure 2: Sir Terry Farrell addresses the Big Meet

The discussions were mainly unstructured, round-table-style deliberations and there was also tweeting by many of the delegates via #bigmeet. Some delegates also used twitter for online discussion. The hashtag #bigmeet trended on the day.

To help stimulate discussion, Professor Carmona set the scene for each breakout session with a short presentation (also included in appendix E) and posed questions about the two propositions (see slides below). Suggested areas for discussion provided as questions on the overhead.



A PLACE ALLIANCE

Is this the right proposition?

If not, why not and where next?

If it is, what about:

- Its scope of interest?
- Its organisation and funding?
- Its operation and mode of working?
- Its short and long-term agendas?

PLACE COUNCIL FOR ENGLAND

Is this the right proposition?

If not, what are the alternatives?

If it is, what about:

- Its purpose & approach
- Its tools
- Its authority and governance



Figure 3: Bi g Meet Questions for Sessions 1 & 2

Breakout groups were arranged as ten round tables each with around ten people. Where organisations had more than one delegate, those colleagues sat at different tables. The groups nominated someone from their own group to record the discussions and someone to feed back key points to the whole of the Big Meet at the end of the session.



Figure 4: Discussion groups at the Big Meet



After the discussions there was a plenary feedback session with points from the floor relating both to the Place Alliance and to the Place Council proposition. Finally Professor Matthew Carmona gave a brief wrap up of the day and spoke about the next steps.

The discussions focused Place Alliance discussion then Place Council discussion but some points were made about both during each session, in addition there was general praise for the Farrell Review and its scope, and wide ranging discussion which touched on past experiences of publically funded CABE and other bodies.



Big Meet organisers collected the written notes were and took their own notes on the verbal feedback. Those records were used to compile this report and a summary is given at appendix F. Key points are pulled together in the following sections focusing on the idea of a Place Alliance, the Place Leadership Council, and wider points from the final deliberations.



Figure 5: Big Meet group feedback

Discussions on a Place Alliance

This section summarizes the discussion on the proposition of a Place Alliance. It draws together points which were echoed across the room and highlights where there were differences in opinion. The discussions were rooted in current practicalities of austerity and localism but with a hopeful aspirational sense of longevity for a collaborative movement towards a Place Alliance. Feedback from each table came in the form of in self-scripted notes and verbal feedback to the plenary group and these are appended for reference.

The overall message was a clear “Yes, but...”. The group strongly indicated that “Yes” they supported having a single powerful voice at the national level. The group also said “yes but...” it is important to get its purpose and structure clear and correct from the outset. The Big Meet delegates were strongly in favour of the proposition for a Place Alliance and specified that it should be an inclusive common voice on place for the whole of England, which could speak in a unified, clear and simple way to campaign for place quality.

Delegates agreed that the critical underlying purpose of the alliance would be to bring built environment organisations together around place. The Place Alliance would play a valuable role in England as it could bring the varied built environment professions and issue based organisations together. While institutions currently collaborate they do not do so adequately and tensions, misunderstandings and possibly areas of inefficiency or replication (i.e. replication rather than joint-work) remain between them. In addition while some organisations dealt with single issues, they recognized that place concerns are holistic and cross-cut, with relevance to health, education, and social issues.

The alliance was seen as a vehicle for supporting the built environment professionals. It could deal with professional difficulties, such as overcoming silos and supporting Local Authorities. Delegates also clearly supported the ‘public interest’ element of the proposition. As well as providing support to public bodies, they made many strong statements about the centrality of ‘the people’ within place. Key partners identified were Local Authorities, house builders, developers, and city or city-region authorities. It was repeated time and again that Local Authorities’ were facing a fiscal cliff and that whatever is done must support them.

The Place Alliance would need to articulate its mission very clearly. While it would be important to have a point of common agreement behind the alliance, Big Meet delegates emphasized the potential pitfalls of being too broad or seemingly wishy-washy, and a side-show for constituent members of an alliance. Various solutions were offered that would help internal clarity for an alliance, such as being a place that encourages discussions, getting a couple of key objectives that people signed up to and having a strong evidence-base or concrete good example, which could all help shared understandings to emerge and cohere longer-term.

Communication between a place alliance and the wider world would also need careful thought, especially when it came to the spatial or scalar thinking of key partners. While PLACE acronyms were very useful in the context of the Farrell Review and the Big Meet, it was felt that there would need to be a much simpler articulation for the purposes of an alliance. Partners of all types might have different interpretations or emphases. Place might resonate with Local Authorities given the broad remit in ‘place services’, but the value of urban design would need to be well related to goals of specific services to prevent it being deprioritized (especially given the current pressures of austerity). Similarly, it needed to be recognised that cities would see place as functional regions such as a coherent area of employment and housing with strategic transport links, rather than say a smaller area with locally character.

Discussions highlighted that it was vital to learn from the past. This included remembering experiences of former bodies such as the RFAC, CABE, UDAL, and others. It would also be important in tackling failed thinking about places and place management. This had led to negative outcomes especially inequalities

and housing market failure. At the same time there was an acute awareness of the current circumstances. In particular, 'planning for place' needs to be strengthened (it has been massively weakened through loss of resources) and thinking is characterized as short-termism or 'now-ism'.

A recognition of 'place needs' and good current examples emerged as a strong starting point for the work of an alliance. In a sense this was demonstrated by the agreement on a leadership gap bringing delegates together and the need for Planning Policy Guidance (the subject of a follow-on session). The main 'place needs' however were clearly where place quality had fallen down the political agenda, where thinking was short-term, and where people were living in poor quality places.

As regards the structure and funding of such an alliance there was less clear consensus, and some concerns about the ease of producing a well functioning network. In the main delegates felt there should be a lean and efficient body that is easy to manage and not reliant on government or heavy funding streams. They felt that available resources should be harnessed and made to work better, and gave examples of lightly funded models of campaigning organisations. On the other hand they recognized that coordination should be properly funded.

It was clear that planning levies would not be feasible as a means of funding the alliance in the current climate of austerity. People suggested philanthropy, and contributions from professional membership bodies in the built environment field. Philanthropy would lead to independence (especially from government) and professional membership contributions would cement relationships as well as visibly demonstrating commitments from those bodies to both the place quality agenda and cross-industry coordination.

There were strong points made about the current era of Localism, where government does not position itself as leader but instead seeks out local solutions and fosters grass-roots leadership. Thus it was even more important that the alliance is not top-down but bottom-up and involving end-users. Moreover the alliance could be a leader and prove ideas that trickled-up to government.

Finally, there was a strong consensus in the room that the alliance must be inclusive. This meant proper representation of society in terms of gender and need of those with a disability. It also meant that the alliance must span across all the regions of England.

Discussions on a Place Leadership Council

Three things were clear in the delegates feedback from group discussions of the Place Leadership Council for England proposal. Firstly there is a gap in leadership that is felt across the built environment sector. Secondly there is no overall agreement that a Council is needed in the form proposed. Thirdly any movement towards such a body requires more deliberation and the Place Alliance is the most appropriate place for that. The following is a summary of the discussion and key points made verbally during the Big Meet are appended (appendix F).

There was agreement on the gap in leadership, which had been proposed in the discussion document. From the discussions it emerged that there was a particular gap around 'national thought leadership' and problems with getting sufficient profile or recognition for the value of place quality. There was a good deal of commentary around the difficulties experienced by Local Authorities and the inadequacy of the position they were in as place leaders. As a result delegates saw the need for leadership in champion local planning for place quality, as well as more generally providing supportive leadership to champion all types of providers currently active in promoting place quality. There were many strong statements about the need for the gap to be filled for the long term and wide discussions around the role of government in supporting this.

Not all delegates were convinced that a Place Council was needed, at least not in the proposed form. The proposal put forward at the Big Meet was for a publically funded body and this was seen as the strongest type of body in itself. This position would signal the seriousness with which the sector and the government saw the issue of place. It would establish a secure footing for action and, under the right circumstances (as discussed below), could have longevity. However, this strength carried risks such as: the length of time required for and uncertainty around successful set-up; being seen as too top down; being unable to tackle murky real world issues; and being coveted as a seat of power that other organisations might seek to take over. Some spoke strongly for a Council and others equally strongly against, but all envisioned a leadership entity that would have independence of government in its activities and sensitivity to the wider built environment community.

There was a good amount of discussions at the Big Meet around the topics of 'purpose & approach', 'tools', 'authority & governance' and 'funding' for a possible Place Council for England. However in the time given these were always going to be embryonic and would need to be worked through in more detail. The initial discussions showed how important it would need to be very clear on the details and confirmed that the set up of any such Council would properly be the responsibility of a Place Alliance. At the same time, the relationship between two such bodies would need extremely careful management, not least to protect the future of the Alliance if a powerful sister body emerged. Some delegates questioned whether there was really a need for two separate organisations. Others suggested that there might even be a more appropriate hybrid form of Place entity that fell somewhere between an alliance and a council.

Given the AHRC study of the former CABE² that lay behind the Big Meet and had been presented by Professor Matthew Carmona prior to the discussions, there was a good deal of reflection about the experiences of leadership from a publically funded CABE, i.e. prior to its change into an enterprising charity sitting within the Design Council. There was general agreement that there was no need to establish a new CABE, and that a new type of Place Leadership was needed for the present context in England. The austere economic climate, prominence of light-touch governance, and technological advances all mediated for a new form of Place governance.

² For more details please see the website at www.bit.ly/EvaluateCABE

In response to these reflections on the gap in place leadership, there was enthusiasm for a movement by the built environment professional institutions to continue to operate in new ways as they adapted for the 22nd century. More urgently, delegates agreed that all built environment organisations should collaborate in campaigning on the importance of Place quality with all political parties in light of the upcoming elections.

Delegates agreed that a broad consensus would be needed with buy in from local communities and regions, as well cross-party support. This would only be possible if the body had authority, and that would in turn depend on its ability to be objective, neutral, and democratic. It would be important to have clarity of purpose given the 'holistic complexity' of place that might make it seem vague.

There were mixed views regarding the structure of a Place Council. Various options were discussed including third sector, private and public models. In any case delegates agreed that creating any such entity would be a very weighty task, and that would require investment of time and resources. It could evolve over time and without doubt the proper place for such an evolution would be a Place Alliance. However, given the breadth of representation at and potential alliance that could emerge from the Big Meet it is worth noting for the record the key points made (as listed below and shown in appendix F).

Structure

- A non-government body was seen as most effective as it could be independent of political influence and free to campaign. A small and agile body was suggested with, no ministers on council but rather led by its users.
- A Royal charter was seen as having some positive and some negative aspects. It could give resilience and send out a strong a-political signal. However it could possibly have too much power.
- Alternatives to a new body suggested at the Big Meet were to use the current Design Council charter and reinvigorate it or through institutions, plus the Design Network.
- While the details were unclear in the suggestions on the day it was clear that accountability would be critical and need to be seen to be very strong.

Function

- The most commonly raised potential functions for a Council was to provide a national or 'highest level' collective voice. This could raise the profile of the value of place quality, insist on high quality across the country, and focus attention on key issues by constant lobbying and appearance in various media.
- A council could empower people working in the built environment and lay people, and draw them in. Delegates emphasised it should be supporting providers and be a critical friend but also be very careful not to threaten initiatives or creative grass-roots level solutions.
- There was no argument against the proposition that a Council should encourage others to provide place services. Delegates talked about engaging people in activities rather than directly providing services through a Council. They proposed for instance using new technologies to conduct 'design dialogue' with the wider world rather than relying on previous models of design review.
- Some delegates talked about the role of aligning professions around the places we inhabit and praised the idea from the Farrell Review of having urban rooms.
- One specific task that was repeatedly mentioned was that of thought leadership. Delegates said a Council might inform through authoritative research and publications. Some went on to consider the format and noted that it would need to speak to the 'real world' rather than academia. Others suggested an information and design network as a form of leadership, travelling the country and sharing good practice examples.
- Some thought grants might be useful and could use (e.g.) lottery money. Others thought a grants system would be too complex.
- Some delegates were not in favour of awards from a Council.

Resources

- The issue of money was debated throughout the day. Delegates felt that if there was a good idea money would follow, but there was no agreement on the specific types of funding that might be feasible or desirable.
- It was generally agreed that some funding would be needed. For instance while voluntary time was a possible resource delegates noted that managing volunteers itself required a lot of work.
- The possibility of an endowment was raised many times, sometimes using examples of NESTA, the RA and lottery funding.
- Delegates suggested funding by professional membership subscriptions or contributions from those institutes.
- Public funding was thought to be possible particularly if it could harness a blended economy of diverse interests. The planning levy was seen as a good idea in as much as it would allow an independent Council. However there were queries around the popularity of this idea in Local Authorities and the hard push needed to actually achieve it.
- Government funding was seen as an option for funding a Place Leadership Council. Government funding would also be a means to signal the seriousness of the work, but could entail risks similar to those mentioned about the charter structure over the longer term. It was seen as particularly useful for a pump-priming stage.

Clearly the points raised here would need to be thought through and worked up more to move towards a Place Leadership entity. The group was also convinced that a Place Alliance must be established first and then an agenda for future action on place could be built from that solid core.

Final deliberations

The final feedback from the Big Meet was an open session with comments from the floor. These touched on both propositions (Place Alliance and Place Council) and the current governance context of the UK's built environment. Some points repeated what had been said before about establishing a Place Alliance and giving it the role of getting funding and getting things going for future work. People also continued to query whether or not it was necessary to have two bodies or one umbrella organization. They were concerned about the need to ensure longevity of Leadership.

Other points were made about the need for collaboration and unity across the sector and for people were talking about 'we' as a collective group. Thinking already about areas that should be focused on as well as making sure to cement whatever future entity might emerge in a common vision of the best approach for built environment and urban design governance.



Delegates also made four key points about the role of professionals and especially planners. Firstly there was a discussion about recognizing the importance of lay people but also valuing the skills and what professions could offer communities. Secondly there was a bottleneck around the Local Authorities as they were the point where many things needed to happen but under-resourced. Thirdly there was a point about the new more open culture of the younger generation of urbanists. Fourthly, planning had been marginalised through policy changes and misperceptions where they system ought to be seen as a source of solutions to a range of social issues associated with place.

Places themselves were also discussed, especially the need for better representation and investment in cities and local places. An appreciation of the community or inhabitants' own place experience was said to be vital to the work. There was also emphasis on the importance of public space and streets. Cities were highlighted as part of a new leadership agenda.

During the event there were also discussions on Twitter about the meaning of PLACE, and whether to have a royal Charter. The points made were are echoed in the discussions, and there were also enthusiastic tweets about the Meet itself and what was already seen as a possible consensus on the need for the urban design sector to act together. As noted in the room one tweeter asked "Do we have the Place Alliance in the room?" Online others responded voicing support for grassroots localism and putting power in people's hands, and emphasizing the need to expanding the conversation beyond the professionals and expanding to other stakeholders. Wider discussions and sharing continued around: how cities learn; the need for culture change; and how planning needing to prioritise the existing, rather than the new, and deal with the constant conflicts of everyday life. The language and culture surrounding the discussion was also of interest, with terminologies such as Place-husbandry and place-keeping.

Figure 6: feed #bigmeet

Conclusions: a call to action

In wrapping up the event Professor Mathew Carmona concluded that the Big Meet had shown that there was a general consensus about the need for a Place Alliance and support for moving forwards with that.



He noted the need to flesh out whether it be an alliance, a forum or another type of entity and how it might be bottom-up or top-down. However it was clear there was a role for a Place Alliance and that the Big Meet delegates felt that they could all contribute. He said that the ideas around this would be drawn up in a manifesto by the Bartlett School of Planning team and circulated for comments and further responses.

He noted that the Place Alliance would need to meet and become active. This entity could debate and discuss the issues across a wide range of areas from the strategic level to the very local. It would also address how we as professionals and communities can engage, and connect with students and others, so as to work with the diaspora of built environment organizations.

Overall the Place Alliance would need to give a high-level voice around Place. It could develop a short term view as well as a longer term agenda.

He concluded by stating his own view, "If we do nothing we leave it to whatever government to impose on us their short term vision of place. It's on us as professionals to try to give some leadership to the sector."



Figure 7: Group photo of the Big Meet

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letter from Sir Terry Farrell

Appendix B: Discussion document by Professor Matthew Carmona

Appendix C: Full Delegates List

Appendix D: Agenda

Appendix E: Presentations

Appendix F: Key Points Noted by Discussants

Appendix A: Letter from Sir Terry Farrell

FARRELLS

Matthew Carmona
Professor of Planning & Urban Design
The Bartlett School of Planning
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22 Gordon Street
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16th June 2014

Dear Matthew,

As I said in the Farrell Review of Architecture and the Built Environment; "We need [place] leadership from private and public sectors that is not subject to short-term political cycles and changes of government or driven by short-term profits and share values". I am very pleased that you share the review's agenda to establish stronger place leadership at the national level.

It would be particularly helpful if yourself and UCL could develop this thinking, in the first instance to build a consensus amongst the institutions and agencies involved in the built environment with the aspiration of creating a PLACE Alliance. These parties, which engaged so enthusiastically and with such commitment to the review, would benefit from speaking with one voice on key issues in my view. You might then be well placed to work with these institutions and agencies to develop a manifesto with the aim of creating a leadership body at the national level, as recommended in the review.

I look forward to the initial meeting you are proposing to bring all of these parties together to discuss these issues further.

Yours,



Terry

Sir Terry Farrell CBE
Principal, Farrells

National place leadership: three steps to filling the gap in England

A DISCUSSION PAPER

Introduction

In his personal introduction to *The Farrell Review* Sir Terry argued: "We need [place] leadership from private and public sectors that is not subject to short-term political cycles and changes of government or driven by short-term profits and share values". In making the argument he identifies a gap in place leadership at the national level that needs to be urgently addressed.

Building on the work of *The Farrell Review* and drawing from ongoing AHRC funded research at The Bartlett UCL¹, this discussion paper presents a number of ideas for how the English design leadership gap can be filled in a collaborative, dynamic and fiscally neutral manner. These ideas are not meant to be a blueprint, but instead are designed to stimulate debate in the hope that following cross-sector discussion interested parties can come together around a common set of principles on which to then seek national political backing.

Addressing this issue is vital because it will also represent a first step to tackling many of the other recommendations made by *The Farrell Review*.

High quality design adds value: a political consensus

Successive Governments have placed great value on the quality of the built environment, believing in the importance of high quality design to:

- Intrinsically enhance the appearance and perceived quality of places
- Make places more social and liveable and enhance quality of life
- Support the economic viability of development
- Deliver a range of sustainability benefits
- Make new development more acceptable to communities worried about the impact on their neighbourhoods.

This intuitive sense about the value of design was confirmed by a range of research projects commissioned and published by the Commission for

Architecture & the Built Environment (CABE) during the noughties which demonstrated that good design, particularly when focussed on 'the place' in a holistic sense, leads to a wide range of economic, social and environmental benefits, and does not necessarily cost more to deliver.

From the Quality in Town & Country initiative of the mid 1990s to the pursuit of Urban Renaissance, and from the Sustainable Communities agenda to Localism today, the drive for design and place quality has found a national political consensus. Today the National Planning Policy Framework reminds us: '*Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people*'.

Yet with the demise of public funding to CABE as a casualty of the recent fiscal tightening, there is no organisation in England with the resources and capacity to take forward this vitally important agenda in a manner that offers proactive leadership to the sector. This stands in stark contrast to other parts of the UK and, if the situation continues, could gradually undermine the profound improvements to place quality that we have witnessed over the last 20 years, and about which we should be rightly proud.

Learning from the past but looking to the future

It will not be right to try and reinvent the past. First, we need to take the opportunity to step back and learn the lessons from recent experiences so that we can build on the successes and avoid the mistakes. Second, the context within which the governance of design (or place) happens has moved on. Today, a ready market exists and is delivering many core design governance services, most notably design review, but also some aspects of enabling, certification (e.g. BfL 2012), education, and even the preparation of good practice guidance. In such a context it is no longer necessary to deliver all such services from a single national organisation.

However, in the name of society, the environment and the broad public interest we need a national voice for place design, a meeting point for people and ideas, a coordinating hand, and a truly independent critical friend to government, local government, the

¹ *Evaluating the governance of design in the built environment – the CABE experiment and beyond* is a two year research programme led by Prof. Matthew Carmona and funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC): www.bit.ly/EvaluateCABE

place professions and the development sector at large. This, and design governance efforts across the country, needs to be properly and sustainably resourced.

1 A first important step: let's meet

As *The Farrell Review* demonstrated, huge enthusiasm, initiative and energy exists within the sector to contribute to a national drive for place quality. It is important to capitalise on this in order to establish a united front that can influence politicians of all political stripes at the highest level. Design has slipped down the national political agenda in recent years as short-term pressing needs have had to be addressed. It is only by working together that we can raise its profile once again and demonstrate that the quality of place has profound short and long-term impacts that also deserve to be prioritised.

It is proposed to kick off discussions at a cross-sector 'Big Meet' hosted by UCL with the aim of bringing together organisations from across the sector. This should include the professional institutes, local and national organisations involved in the governance of design, key industry bodies, local government representatives, academia, and organisations representing civil society and the amenity sector. The intention is to be inclusive and constructive and to bring parties together with the explicit intention of agreeing a cross-sector stance on design leadership.

2 Step two: form a Place Alliance

Whilst the Big Meet will be a first important opportunity to bring key players together, if the sector is to take on the mantle of leadership itself, as advocated in *The Farrell Review*, then it will be important to establish a representative body that can meet regularly to discuss the design agenda, seek to influence government, endorse high level policy, coordinate thinking, networks and available resources, and ensure its own constituent organisations are doing their best to further a renewed focus on place quality.

It is therefore proposed to form a Place Alliance from amongst the representative bodies at the Big Meet. An early agenda will be provided by how to enable a sector-wide focus on taking forward key recommendations from *The Farrell Review*, such a body should require very few resources to operate. Its key asset will be found in the commitment and enthusiasm of its constituent organisations, and its key strength will be that it provides a unified voice for the sector on the importance of design.

If it can speak with a single voice, the highly fragmented built environment sector will be hard to ignore. The pursuit of place quality, whether relating to existing places or new one, seems to be in everyone's interest, it is surely an objective around which we can unite.

3 A vital third step: seek to establish an independent Place Council for England

Whilst the Place Alliance will provide an important new forum for cross-sector engagement on the subject of design quality, in order for it to remain an open, inclusive and representative body, it will be important that it does not become engaged in day to day place governance activities. Instead a high priority for the Place Alliance should be to campaign for the early establishment of a Place Council for England (PlaCE)².

This idea builds on the recommendation contained in *The Farrell Review* that a Place Leadership Council should be established to drive a cross-Governmental focus on place, led jointly by Government and industry. In this respect *The Farrell Review* highlights that the key gap left by the demise of a publicly funded CABA is one of leadership.

However, research (already referred to) at The Bartlett, UCL suggests that to retain its independence any future place leadership organisation should avoid becoming an arm of, or agency for, Government. Preferably, also, it should be free from a reliance on annualised Government funding rounds, the inevitable waxing and waning priorities of Ministers and the uncertainties of funding through purely market mechanisms. Instead, in public interest, what is required is a truly independent critical friend to government, local government, the professions and the development sector at large.

Some core principles to agree on

Any changes to the national place governance infrastructure will require governmental support, which also necessitates that both the Place Alliance and PlaCE are established with a clear public interest purpose: 'to promote, support and protect the quality and experience of place in the built environment'.

But whilst the Place Alliance would be primarily a means to meet and debate cross-sector concerns, PlaCE would be strongly action oriented. It should be:

- A recognised leader – working to fill the current leadership gap and provide a clear

² Such an organisation may be an entirely new body or could evolve out of one or more existing organisations in the sector.

'national voice' on design by acting as a new hub for knowledge and innovation, that is proactively engaged with all key parties active in shaping the built environment

- Independent – not of, for, or reliant on funding from Government or any narrow private or industry source
- Collaborative – coordinating and supporting rather than competing against the current diaspora of place organisations; aiming to monitor the field and encourage others to deliver services first before intervening itself
- Challenging – exposing and disrupting poor practice where it exists, and cajoling all development and industry interests, public and private, to take the place agenda seriously
- Fiscally neutral – not a drain on the public purse, but instead core funded through a ring-fenced dedicated fund.

PlaCE, some options for setting it up

To meet these objectives PlaCE might be best established by the Privy Council under a Royal Charter. Organisations such as the BBC, The Bank of England, the British Council and our Universities are set up in this way, an approach that is seen as enshrining greater independence for public interest organisations. The process can also be relatively speedy (a matter of months), although subsequent powers and responsibilities would need to be established under an Act of Parliament that would take longer and could follow later.

It is proposed that members of the Place Alliance would appoint the governing council from its membership, but there should also be representation from relevant government departments, local government, and from neutral parties such as the media, academia, and civil society.

Drawing from UCL's research, a number of existing and new tools might be used to deliver the core purpose of PlaCE:

- Conducting research, advocacy and campaigning around key place-based issues.
- A national centre for excellence and a central point for information, on-going debate and for coordinating expert advice to Government and others.
- Supporting a programme of targeted local design enabling through grant-making to suitably qualified organisations to conduct this service (not to conduct enabling itself).
- On the basis of representations, the power to direct schemes to be design reviewed by competent organisations (although not to conduct design reviews itself).
- Becoming a statutory consultee for design projects of exceptional national significance,

either because of their prominence as projects or because of their role representing a particular set of design concerns. This could be undertaken on an 'open source' basis.

- The power to hold Public Design Inquiries to examine critical design concerns of national importance, in the process holding to account key government departments, industry sectors, local government, and the professions.
- An annual *State of Place* report, constituting a rolling audit of design and place quality in different regions and / or markets
- Commissioning, coordinating or endorsing nationally important competitions, policy, guidance, standards and awards.
- A duty on all tiers of Government to have regard to the formal reports and recommendations of the PlaCE.

And finally, the question of funding

Whilst the Place Alliance could be funded through a small membership charge to its constituent organisations, to operate effectively PlaCE would need a small infrastructure of skilled professionals that would be bolstered with a large network of volunteers.

To fund such an organisation in a manner that retains independence, a surcharge (Place-fee) of 1% might be levied on top of all planning application fees. This could be collected annually from local authorities in England and on current income this would raise around £2-2.5 million (£6 on the average planning application).

Such an income stream would be predictable, free from Government budget pressures, easy to collect, and would rise and fall with inflation and the market (more development activity more income and vice-versa). It could deliver a reliable core income that might be bolstered by the ability to raise further funding from government or industry for specific project-based purposes, although only up to a maximum of 100% of core income. Such a cap would keep the organisation relatively small and nimble and focussed on its core purpose without distraction.

Professor Matthew Carmona
June 2014

The Big Meet Delegate list

Organisation	Delegate
Academy of Urbanism	John Worthington Kevin Murray Steve Bee
Affinity Sutton	Elanor Warwick*
Alison Brooks Architects	Michael Woodford
Allies & Morrison	Helen Hayes Diane Haigh
Architecture Foundation	Robert Mull
Arts Council	Paul Bristow
Association of Consultant Architects	Terry Brown Trevor Sutters* Andrew Catto
Barry Shaw Associates	Barry Shaw
Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment	Alan Penn
Big Lottery Fund	Tony Burton
Birmingham City Council	Patricia Gomez
British Institute of Facilities Management (BIFM)	Gareth Tancred
British Property Foundation (BPF)	Ghislaine Trehearne *
Building Research Establishment	Damien Carr *
Cabe at the Design Council	Clare Devine Pam Alexander *
Cambridgeshire Quality Panel	Robin Nicholson Peter Studdert
Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)	Rosalie Callway
Cardiff University	John Punter
CASS Cities, London Metropolitan University	Jane Clossick Sarah Considine
Centre for Accessible Environments (CAE)	David Bonnett Helen Carter Geraldine McNamara
Centre for Cities	Tom Bolton
Chartered Institute of Highways and Transport (CIHT)	Peter Dickinson Sue Percy
Civic Voice	David Tittle
Construction Industry Council (CIC)	Graham Watts
Core Cities Group	Chris Murray
Create Streets	John Moss
Design Action Devon & Cornwall	Adrian Gale
Design Council	John Mathers
Design South East (Design Network in South East & East)	Chris Lamb
English Heritage (EH)	Charles Wagner Tim Brennan

Organisation	Delegate
Essex County Council	Elizabeth Moon Alison Butler
Farrells	Terry Farrell Max Farrell Laura Berman Charlie Peel Lyndsey Drea
Fundamental	Nick Edwards
Future of London	Lisa Taylor
Greater London Authority (GLA)	Levent Kerimol
Glass-House Community Led Design	Sophia de Sousa
Hertfordshire Building Futures Partnership	Andrew Turner Rachael Donovan
Home Builders Federation (HBF)	Andrew Whitaker
Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)	Kevin McGeough Simon Leask
Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)	Ian Morrison Drew Bennellick
Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE)	Andrew Crudgington
Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC)	David McDonald David Kincaid
Integreat Plus (Design Network in Yorkshire & Humberside)	Elizabeth Motley *
Jon Rowland Urban Design (JRUD)	Jon Rowland
Landscape Institute	Noel Farrer Paul Lincoln
Living Streets	Rachel Lee
Local Government Association	Roger Begy
London Borough of Camden	Sue Vincent
London Borough of Croydon	Tim Naylor
London Borough of Lewisham	Rachel Jones
London Borough of Newham	Chris Gascoigne *
London Borough of Waltham Forest	John Moss
London Parks and Green Spaces Forum	Tony Leach *
MADE (Design Network in West Midlands)	David Tittle
Metropolitan Workshop	Neil Deely
National Housing Federation (NHF)	Rachel Fisher
New London Architecture (NLA)	Peter Murray
Notting Hill Housing	Angela Godrich
Open City	Victoria Thornton
OPUN (Design Network in East Midlands)	Dharmista Patel
Place Services (Essex)	Peter Dawson Ellie Butler
Places Matter (Design Network in North West)	Charlotte Myhrum
Planning Officers Society	Mike Kiely Tim Naylor *
Prince's Foundation	Ben Bolgar
Regional Studies Association	Paul Hildreth
RIBA	Anna Scott-Marshall

Organisation	Delegate
RSA	Jonathan Schifferes
RTPI	Rosslyn Stewart
Sahai Associates	Menaka Sahai
Sustrans	Flo Marshall Bethany Crowe
TCPA	Julia Thrift
the Edge	Simon Foxell
The Prince's Foundation for Building Community	Hank Dittmar
Transport for London (TfL)	Robin Buckle * Esther Kurland
Trees and Design Action Group	Sue James
UCL (Bartlett School of Planning)	Matthew Carmona Claudio DeMagalhaes Wendy Clarke Valentina Giordano Lucy Natarajan
Urban Design Group (UDG)	Katy Neaves Robert Huxford Louise Ingledow
UDG Regions	Colin Munsie
Urban Design London (UDL Design Network in London)	Esther Kurland Sue Vincent Julian Hart
University of Greenwich	Richard Simmons *
University of South Wales	Noel Isherwood
Urban Design Skills	Rob Cowan
Urban Graphics	Bally Meeda *
Urban Vision	Dave Proudlove
Urbik	Lee Mallett

* eventually unable to attend the morning meeting

The Big Meet

Agenda

UCL, Front Quad 17th July 2014

Introduction

9.00-9.05	Welcome	Professor Alan Penn (Dean of the Bartlett)
9.05-9.10	The Big Meet	Professor Matthew Carmona
9.10-9.25	Introduction & update on the Farrell Review	Sir Terry Farrell CBE

Part 1 Towards a Place Alliance

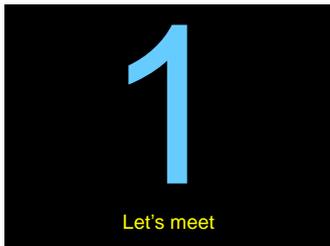
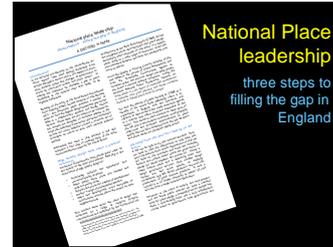
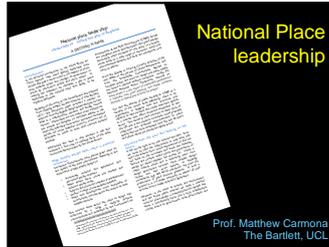
9.25-9.30	Can we collaborate?	Professor Matthew Carmona
9.30-9.50	Discussion groups	All
	i) Do we need a Place Alliance?	
	ii) If not, why not and where next?	
	iii) If we do, what about:	
	• Its scope of interest?	
	• Its organisation and funding?	
	• Its operation and mode of working?	
	• Its short and long-term agendas?	
9.50-10.30	Feedback & discussion	All

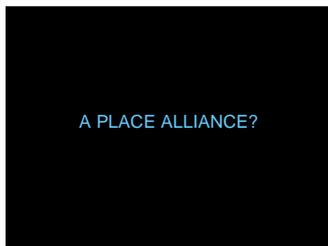
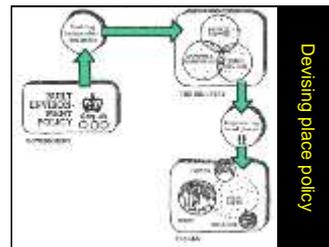
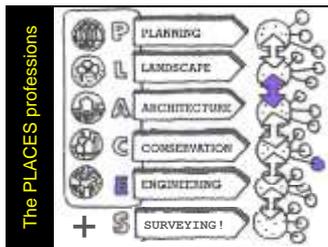
10.30-10.45 Coffee Break

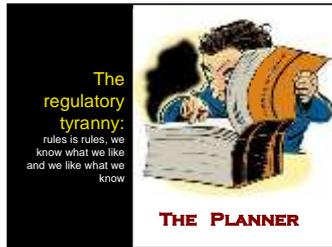
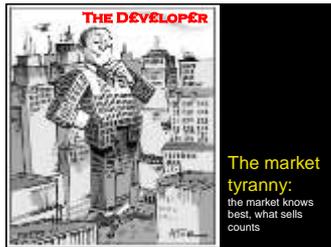
Part 2 National place leadership

10.45-11.00	Filling the leadership gap	Professor Matthew Carmona
11.00-11.30	Discussion groups	All
	i) Do we need a Place Council for England?	
	ii) If not, why not and what are the alternatives?	
	iii) If we do, what about:	
	• Its purpose & approach?	
	• Its tools?	
	• Its authority and governance?	
	• Its funding?	
11.30-12.15	Feedback	All
12.15-12.45	Moving forward (general discussion)	
12.45-1.00	Conclusions and wrap up	

Appendix E: Presentations









Could a Place Alliance do better?



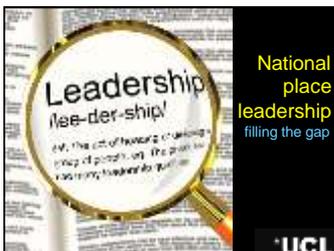
Speaking with a single voice

- It could:**
- Meet regularly to discuss the place / design agenda
 - Facilitate cross-sector understanding
 - Seek to influence government
 - Instigate and / or endorse high level policy
 - Coordinate thinking, networks, best practice, and resources
 - Ensure its own constituent organisations are doing their best to address place quality.



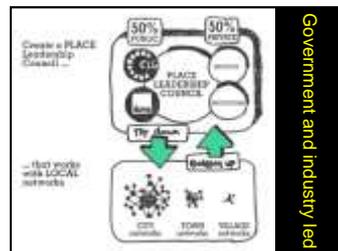
The proposition

- Some critical questions:**
- Is this the right proposition?
 - If not, why not and where next?
 - If it is, what about:
 - Its scope of interest?
 - Its organisation and funding?
 - Its operation and mode of working?
 - Its short and long-term agendas?

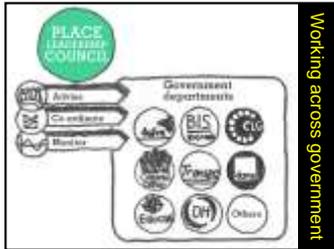


National place leadership filling the gap

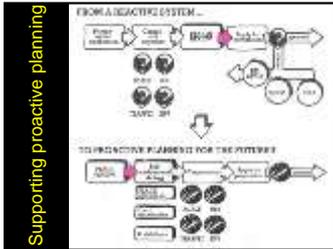
A PLACE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL



Government and industry led



Working across government



Supporting proactive planning

NOT A RETURN TO THE PAST



CABE and New Labour



A Conservative project



The old boys club on St James's Square

"The quality of the built environment is crucial in creating liveable communities. We want to encourage the creation of buildings which are practical, sustainable, affordable and attractive, and also deliver social goals, for instance by 'designing out' crime. We must promote the highest standards of architecture and design. Not only is this a desirable end in itself, but it is an important factor in encouraging communities to support new development"

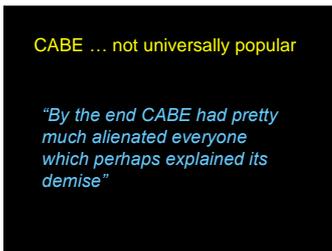
Open Source Planning, Green Paper



And fine words in the NPPF

A constrained role envisaged

~~Design review
Enabling
Education
Campaigning
Research~~



A PLACE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL?



Six critical dimensions

- Purpose
- Approach
- Tools
- Authority
- Governance
- Funding



Conducting research, advocacy and campaigning around key place-based issues, not least the value of design

A national centre for excellence, maintaining an on-line Design Portal of practice guidance, case studies, design review services, etc.; and providing a central point for on-going debate and exchange

Supporting design enabling through grant-making to suitably qualified organisations to conduct this service

The power to direct schemes to be design reviewed on the basis of representations (although explicitly not to conduct design review services itself)

Statutory 'open source' consultees for design projects of exceptional national significance, either because of their prominence as projects or because of their role representing a particular set of design concerns.

The power to hold Public Design Inquiries, and to call key players to hold them to account over design issues, including Government departments, industry leaders, etc.

An annual *State of Place* report, a rolling audit of design and place quality in different regions and/or markets

Commissioning, coordinating or endorsing nationally important competitions, policy, guidance, standards and awards

4. Authority (a Royal Charter and a duty on Government)



5. Governance (multi-actor and dual polar)

- PLACES professions (incorporating surveying)
- Government representatives (the PLACE advisors)
- Local government
- Design Network
- The development industry
- Neutral parties (media, academia, amenity societies, civil society)



1%!

6. Funding (surcharge on planning fees)

100%!

6. Funding (boosted with project funding)

AND WHAT ABOUT THE NAME?



Place Leadership Council ... or



... Place Council for England



... Place Council for England



The proposition



Some critical questions:

- Is this the right proposition?
- If not, what are the alternatives?
- If it is, what about:
 - Its purpose & approach
 - Its tools
 - Its authority and governance
 - Its funding

THE BIG MEET

Thank you



UCL

Appendix F: Key Points Noted by Discussants (verbally & in written notes)

Session 1: Discussions on a Place Alliance, general points

Table 1	<p>New Era, so must learn from more than CABE/RFAC but also from current initiatives</p> <p>Local Authorities lack expertise & are struggling with funding</p> <p>Must influence policy, maybe by examples of 'good' projects & what we want to achieve</p> <p>Crucial to have one voice, can it? if we can it would be very powerful</p>
Table 2	<p>There is an important distinction between the Alliance and Leadership, and between leadership of the place agenda and leadership of places (i.e. public facing & doing leg-work)</p> <p>To influence it should either campaign or get behind closed doors, or both.</p> <p>Must involve developers, they are in it for long-term and are collaborating well.</p> <p>Must capture the involvement of small community organisations.</p> <p>Place works well as a concept – cross-departmental</p> <p>Local Authority funding is a restriction, so focus on what needs to change, & on barriers to it, must be evidence based and link to social, health & Education agenda to make sense.</p>
Table 3	<p>Yes, we agree on the value of place quality, but it will be tricky to set up an organisation</p> <p>There is a need for a common voice - this is more powerful & we should be exploring this</p> <p>Quality is being lost as a battle politically - this needs to be addressed. NPPF clear on design important, but dispersed in government & needs a hook.</p> <p>Consensus will create momentum where design is hard to push for.</p> <p>Must include housing/developers.</p> <p>Cities are also coming up the agenda.</p>
Table 4	<p>Yes right proposition, but should be for industry and 'the people'</p> <p>What is the glue holds it together?</p> <p>Place lost its place in the political agenda - now short-termism, but can champion design of place and as a way to address short termism</p> <p>Need a mission of tackling failed ways of thinking that have led to sectoral and regional inequalities especially in the housing market</p>
Table 5	<p>Maybe the whole proposal is too ambitious, history tells us this will be hard, how can it work?</p> <p>Professional silos are a problem</p> <p>There are already great ideas out there, must be wider than just professionals</p> <p>The national government doesn't get it, but city governments get it and conversations with them are likely to be very productive</p>
Table 6	<p>Good idea but tricky, what is place</p> <p>We should have a series of small simple targets</p> <p>There is a now-ism that is in tension between high level organisations and social media</p> <p>the immediacy of place experience</p> <p>How to manage the cultural change needed</p> <p>Issue of the need for a 25 year plan, we should all agree on fighting towards an urban future</p> <p>Lack of information about what is going on, require a collection of experiences</p>
Table 7	<p>Tone and emphasis are important - we are advocates for rather than an alliance against</p> <p>Focused & purpose should be co-ordination rather than leading</p> <p>Focus on commonality between groups & explore differences to meet expectations</p> <p>Look at successful places rather than sectoral interests, to break into this</p>
Table 8	<p>Learn from the past</p> <p>Focus on outcomes on local issues, and should cover the whole country very well</p> <p>Risk being elitist - need diverse voices</p> <p>Need to hold together with the glue of successful (Urban Design?) projects</p> <p>A forum rather than an alliance (which implies agreement that is very hard to achieve), and encourage discussions</p> <p>Communities are very important in this - the audience is government or people?</p>

Table 9	Can we collaborate? Yes we can! But what does it look like Yes to an alliance especially if it spoke with one voice Must achieve plurality, rather than getting taken over by one organisation down the line Research needed, Advocacy needed, Enabling network needed Need a stable idea of what is PLACE
Table 10	There is a lack of local resources this has massively weakened the planning of 'place' Alliance should be a campaigning body, and be very clear not confusing locally & regionally we need strong leadership Don't dilute the message of others' and have strong leader NPPF not strong enough of design on its own as it is

Session 1: Discussions on a Place Alliance, points on funding

Table 1	Considerable funding is needed for proper coordination
Table 2	What is important is a good idea and funding tends to follow Doubts planning system can generate funds Membership at 1% of revenue? (probably won't work for LAs)
Table 3	N/A
Table 4	Economics is a consideration, work within constraints Don't necessarily need a heavily funded centralised organisation, better to have a 'lean' body
Table 5	N/A
Table 6	Funding through planning is a no-no Funding through delivery TDAG Model very lightly funded, getting money as and when it needs We should be financially independent of government
Table 7	N/A
Table 8	Do we need a physical network there are e.g.s of very low funded models that don't have that Research or activities might be coordinated better and thus collaborations might save money
Table 9	Philanthropy
Table 10	Memberships institutes should contribute to an Alliance to address place, they could get back together that way and would show the world that we're serious

Session 1: Discussions on a Place Alliance, points on structure

Table 1	Not top down or centralised, but empowering & steering Must be inclusive, cover all regions, all scales, and some institutional channels there already Local Authorities are underfunded key local delivery partners
Table 2	The reverse of a membership body, formed by agreement on one or two key objectives and constituents' contributions to achieving that. It must consist of leaders. Can it be government's place advisory body - to central and local placemakers. Could we be a conference - a meeting three times a year. Could it be NICE for places, or like NAO or Ofsted?
Table 3	Sceptical about the need for a new body - how would it work? Government doesn't lead, it's more bottom up. We should generate leadership that feeds into government or have champions within government. Need to have statutory status and teeth and be cross-party
Table 4	Not centralised organisation, not London-centric, example of the Heritage Alliance Need a manifesto to get people to join Not centralised organisation & importantly not London centric Need to articulate the membership - who are they and why do they join
Table 5	Create an umbrella but could be seen as a side-show e.g. if quality is not interpreted the same

	Need extreme clarity of purpose (spell out PLACE much better)
Table 6	No new body - make what we have work better Be a network of issue-based alliances like TDAG (i.e. use those that are already there) Explore the 'fabric of engagement' (i.e. substance of a network e.g. how & the synergies / tensions between professions?)
Table 7	N/A
Table 8	Must be easy to manage and inclusive Communities having more of a role
Table 9	Not top down but bottom up and involving users. Built Environment Users are critical
Table 10	N/A

Session 2: Discussions on a Place Council, general points

Table 1	Managing a network of volunteers hard to manage Place as a term with design on the agenda Cross-party support needed Universities as leadership but doing research
Table 2	Not reinventing the CABA wheel, extending what CABA does into this field , and follow its lead as it changed from critic to supporter Meaning of place different in cities and regions - more about strategic 'functional places' (e.g. coherent economic area/local job market area) and strategic integration of services into e.g. travel to work area. Need to take account of the totality of urban experience, and link to economic climate and others' agendas & ideas of place to get buy in from local communities and regions
Table 3	Need a clean message - place is weak [suffers from the same issue that Landscape Architecture has i.e. its 'holistic complexity' makes it appear vague – strength and weakness] Objective neutral democratic
Table 4	Some think the council is the right proposition but others argued for the Alliance Council - stronger and with government support, but might become a sanitized CABA Alliance - can be set up right away Either way make sure ideas are right - broader ideas are more easily accepted but specific ones get mangled
Table 5	Confusion between the Alliance and the Council – why two separate organisations Risks being too top down (i.e. council)
Table 6	Would need government support, cross-party Built environment (professions) getting their own house in order, this is the basis for campaigning for next appropriate step A late tweet "Is this Big Meet is the Place Alliance happening right now?"
Table 7	Sceptical about this – no CABA-sized hole We've moved beyond government models, and government wants good design
Table 8	Alliance to get place council to work Set up of Council should be sorted out by the Alliance
Table 9	Need clarity about Alliance first then it can make the case for a Council NB UDAL didn't survive the establishment of CABA, so have to understand what it is before setting up Council so they can work together Place is a confusing term for non-professionals and lay people, 99% of population Need a clear political message, what is the big idea
Table 10	Give a try! Good idea but not a new CABA (too unpopular with professions and DR too costly) Difficult political sell, but should seek support but not involvement from gvt Grant giving is a complication Use our knowledge and experience and the authority that derives from that to influence

Session 2: Discussions on a Place Council, points on function

Table 1	Getting it on the government agenda Empowering not threatening Carrying out research for the wider world not just academia
Table 2	From critic to informer A hub of intelligence (non-academic) Drawing people in
Table 3	Provide a national 'highest level' voice Possibly grants through lottery money
Table 4	Not awards. Research, publications, studies – thought criticism Enabler of public engagement Design Review engagement, Design Dialogue (new technologies opening up dialogue too) Maintenance of places (placekeeping) not seeking prize winning 'Banging on about things'
Table 5	Campaigning, bringing in others Initiating as well Bringing together organisations Signposting Directing Raising profile
Table 6	Questions the power to call in DR – DR was not the most powerful thing CABA did Other CABA projects were more worthy of attention Need a collective voice Not considered international links
Table 7	It's about people's emotional response to areas - urban rooms good idea
Table 8	Not 'doing' things through council but it should be a critical friend and support those doing work
Table 9	Being a critical friend Not doing
Table 10	Grant giving too complex Focus on advocacy i.e. purpose is "pushing & shoving" or nudging in the right direction, provoking, influencing. Already exists within the Design Network and the Institutes Voice to speak nationally

Session 2: Discussions on a Place Council, points on structure

Table 1	Flexible organisation to start with, evolving over the years Industry or professions on the board?
Table 2	N/A
Table 3	Chartership idea gives status and define purpose (deliver a singular proposition at the highest level which organisations have to get behind) A voice above the others (other bodies) Resilient to political change, a-political Objectivity is absolutely essential – this must be seen to be true through democratic transparent governance
Table 4	Not a government organisation Continuity and longevity
Table 5	Independence from government important

	Light on its feet CPRE or SAGE models
Table 6	Don't want 'CABE II' An information and design network – going round country & showing what's working well – a form of leadership
Table 7	Need to organise ideas not around disciplines but around the places we inhabit. Urban Rooms from Farrell Review is about people's social connection to their environment. There is a Royal Charter for a charity which is the Design Council, the existing mechanism, just use that or reinvigorate it.
Table 8	Governance should be user-led Should be inclusive, private public, third sector Possibly a foundation
Table 9	N/A
Table 10	Charter good as powerful & independent but possibly too much power and takes too long to get RFAC interesting but should not have government ministers on the council Who will it be accountable to? Model currently there through institutions, plus Design Network. Would have to bring in private sector. Maybe somewhere between an alliance and a council?

Session 2: Discussions on a Place Council, points on funding

Table 1	Needs to be funded by government otherwise could get ignored
Table 2	Think about the way authorities would spend money if it were on the table This is the Achilles heel Research funding could be used better, to create an 'intelligence authority' not institutional authority to draw people in Not institutionally bound Demand-led, needs-led
Table 3	Planning levy neutral but no way to get it through government Professional memberships - could pay £20 Lottery Funding channelled through it to pay for projects Not government funding
Table 4	N/A
Table 5	Not planning levy, very hard to come by and what would Local Authority get from it? Funding by members potentially
Table 6	N/A
Table 7	Don't worry about money - if the idea is good enough the money will follow – so political and public presentation is important
Table 8	Should be through endowments e.g. NESTA, Lottery – could be quite small Some for and some against planning levy
Table 9	N/A
Table 10	Planning levy not feasible Endowment, like RA has, with longevity Maybe government and others (blended economy e.g. healthy living agenda) to pump-prime endowment search

Summary of Final Deliberations

The final deliberations began with reflections on the relationship between the Place Alliance and the Council, and whether it was necessary to have one or two organisations and how they might work together. Those points echoed previous discussions. The delegates then went on to reflect on the conversations they had had and the points that others had made.

The first speaker said that the Big Meet discussions had considered how the built environment field is fragmented, disconnected and broad. But it has to deal with issues of climate change, housing etc., failing to plan for school places – these are the, “nitty, gritty” problems, a real challenge is how to make changes in society and must have that conversation beyond the planning professions, e.g. the 25 year plan - extend beyond place members – we need an organization that can host that discussion.

An Urban Design London delegate argued that while she agreed with the need for conversations about the realities, it would be important to be pragmatic and consider how you get to having those conversations about the broader in society in the first place. She said that the Big Meet was a useful stepping stone in getting there, and noted that it was the first time the delegates, who had so much commonality, had come together for years to discuss this and thanked Matthew. She emphasized that while they needed to address issues now, they should not get overwhelmed with realities and try to achieve too much too soon.

The TCPA delegate linked this issue to misperceptions about the role of planning and the reduction of planning system. Planning system was set up 100 years about people were thinking it as a way to knit together food production, demographics, etc. In last thirty years all parties have seen it as a bureaucratic problem rather than a potential solution, and stripped out the wider aspects from planning. Local Authorities so reduced that the big sense of vision and long term planning has just disappeared. So instead of a new organization campaign for planning she wanted to as a potential solution or visionary answer to these issues.

A delegate from the Centre for Accessible Environments shared his reflections on the history of the set up of the “Access Committee for England” which would become the Commission for Accessible Environments. This was backed by a minister and set up based in London but with groups that worked with local authorities, but in 1995 fell out with government over the new act and as it had no minister at that point it died after only twenty years.

The Create Streets delegate commented that streets as the connectors and spaces between buildings that created places and added long-term value. Argued that they were not planned but simply built, and now the focus in on too much tick-box details, rather than design. The later Local Development Frameworks were a chance to make it work, likewise the Neighbourhood Planning experience might be a better way forward, although there were some constraints around so-called ‘NIMBY-ism’.

There were reflections from the Centre for Cities delegate on how this is changing through devolution to cities and the need to pay attention to this. Devolution to cities a key development and there will be ideas on this in forthcoming party manifestos (i.e. for upcoming national elections). It was highlighted that Cities had a clearer sense of why place quality matters than central authorities. Local Authorities see benefits e.g. more clearly than government, so working with them on this is a real opportunity.

The Prince’s Foundation delegate spoke about the importance of place experience, and the community’s experience of this. He questioned the energy it would take up to yet again reform the planning process, and talked instead about aligning the funnels of government with communities grass-roots experience of place. This was partly related to policies and partly to local authority decisions e.g. about bin collections. In addition he shared a sense of excitement around the impact and further potential of social media and real

time decisions and the way that cities and places are experienced and used. Thus it was a particularly opportune time to have this discussion.

A delegate from CASS Cities highlighted that culture changes was needed, as noted in the Farrell Review. This made it all the more important not to be a closed group but to open up the dialogue to a diversity of voice.

That point was echoed by a delegate from the Academy of Urbanism. He said that is was not just about design and but also about decisions about living, and that we must not be bottom-up not top-down. He said that focus on leadership took away from something that was by definition local. He said he would rather concentrate on an idea of an Alliance, a better appreciation of how good places work, and let that create leadership rather than ideas being put in in advance. He talked about diagram from the Farrell Review (fig. x) and said that what was missing from this picture was the bottleneck around local representation and constraints on local authorities and disinvestment in local government. He also echoed points from the Core Cities representative about the need for better representation and investment in cities and local places. He said this is something we could encourage through the alliance and better leadership would emerge through that.

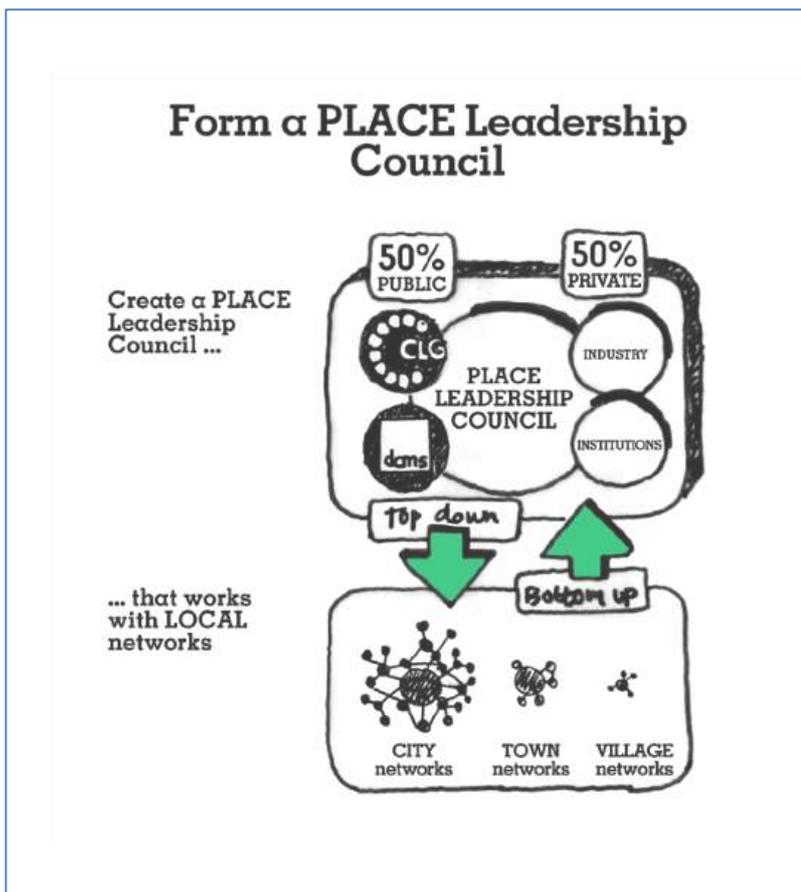


Figure 8: Farrell Review Diagram of bottom-up / top-down, p.148

The delegate from the Local Government Association said that an important issue to remember was the increasing occurrence of spaces being privatized, and thus becoming exclusive and that altered the unique quality and value of spaces. That an alliance should keep that a high priority in whatever we did in the future.

Another representative of the Academy of Urbanism connected a few of the issues that had already been raised. Firstly he said that both the work of the former CABA with focus it brought to design review and difficulties with the Planning Legislation since 1947 that focused on development meant that there was

focus on new things and prospective new things and associated politics. He said this makes us forget about the through the problem of residents and different generations of residents and building things and then forgetting about their long-term. Working with communities highlights that it is about the livability in the long-term. But he was worried about saying we don't want professionals, they are people too and also residents but moreover have deep insight. Secondly, he said that the new generation of upcoming professionals graduating now are different, not working in silos and more engaged, partly because of social media. We should support them and give them more insights, take them to places, but not work just with communities but also politicians, and have dialogue but still need knowledge and expertise from professionals to contribute. He said that the Young Urbanists group was demonstrating how the new generation of practitioners was more open to collaborative dialogue. He called this new model an enlightened collaborative leadership, not a conspiracy against the laity by the professionals, and that it still needed expertise. Overall this meant that we should go with the energy because there is a new wave of people coming through with a different way of relating to their environment.

Finally a comment from the floor was made, thanking Matthew for bringing the group together, with a wide range of interests including place as both very small and city-regional levels which were all important. The speaker said that an alliance would unlock what should then be the Council which is needed as a leadership body and should be funded through an endowment for the long term and worked for step-by-step.