



‘What progress with the Edge Commission Report “Collaboration for Change”?’

It’s been six months since the Edge launched Collaboration for Change¹, the report on the future of professionalism written by Paul Morrell. Paul had distilled the evidence submitted by 9 of the Built Environment Professions and identified a need for them to start collaborating to have greater effect in and on Government and the wider community. The Edge is keen to find out just what is happening as we know plenty is, beyond what we are involved in ourselves. We were, for instance, delighted when the BIM2050 Group took up the C4C challenge right from the beginning and great champions are emerging like Ben Derbyshire on RIBA Council. The CIOB had just published an impressive review entitled *‘Understanding the value of Professionals and Professional Bodies’*². The CIC Review has begun.

We are impressed with the regular work being undertaken on some of the 6 collaborative projects Paul proposed - ethics, dissemination of research, education, the performance gap, industry reform and climate change. Collaborating is difficult but without it the impact of our Professions is much less than it could be, as Paul witnessed on many occasions during his time as Government Chief Construction Advisor (2009-12). Following a roundtable discussion, Paul Morrell is currently writing a review of the professions for the Feb issue of Management Today to mark its 50th anniversary.

We have scheduled some of the work being undertaken in each collaborative area (the can-do interpretation is the Edge’s); this is followed by a programme of meetings held, planned or being planned around the UK.

Ethics: On ethics there has been good progress with RICS playing a key role in the UN Global Compact, with RIBA and CIOB joining them; others are keen. The recent 3rd RICS CPD Foundation Harris Debate on ‘Ethics and the public interest’³ was inspiring but the question is how to get ethics discussed internationally, routinely, ‘on the shop floor’ and on an inter-disciplinary basis - in every city in the world. The ICE has released the brilliantly simple SayNo Toolkit⁴ to help us all.

Research: Ten of our institutions agreed in principle ten months ago to collaborate on highlighting new inter-disciplinary knowledge and feeding it into their journals to speed up the process and to make sure that excellent research does not fall through the cracks between the disciplines, as much presently does. After much business planning by CIBSE and Paddy Conaghan of Edge, we eagerly re-assembled at the Building Centre on 2nd Dec and identified the need for market research; Edge were told ‘to get on with it’ with wide-ranging support and CIOB even offering a magazine base.

Education: The number of courses with dual qualification is increasing (at last) and the RICS has opened the door for non-cognate entry. It may be early days on breaking down these old silos but the cost to students of education has to fall if numbers are to keep up, leading to more creative ways to study and qualify. CIC is keen to support these initiatives. Edge are planning to hold a debate on cross-disciplinary education in the New Year.

Performance Gap: CIBSE and RIBA have expressed interest on working on the performance gap between how we and our models say our buildings will perform and what actually happens. The ICE is interested in this area too. The Verso report for DECC on the Australian Nabers is eagerly awaited. Paul Morrell challenged the Edge to engage all the institutions in an agreed change programme and, to this end, he will reconvene the Edge Commission at Ecobuild on 9th March.

Industry Reform: for those of us old enough to have been part of the Implementation of the Latham (1994) and Egan (1998) Reports the challenge for the Professions is how can they together provide a better deal for our customers, our clients and the users, as it isn't working very well for any of us right now!

Climate Change: Following the last-chance Paris UN COP (21st Conference of the Parties) agreement it is time to consider how the Professional Institutions can contribute to the wider public debate about climate change. Buildings are 37% of the problem in UK; we have the knowledge and some of the understanding but perhaps we need to find a way of working with bodies like UK Green Building Council to be and to be seen together to be an essential part of the answer.

Programme of C4C Programme Events in Core Cities and Devolved Capitals and other places

There are some cities where the events have been based in Universities and some where they have been industry/practice-based or ideally in both on the same day. Where possible it is good to involve senior officers and members from the City/Government. The programme is developing momentum with a number of events in the New Year. Edge members will support these events and speak where appropriate, with Paul Morrell speaking at some of the bigger events.

(Summary of C4C and related events held and planned in date order with Edge speakers: PC = Paddy Conaghan, SF = Simon Foxell, PM = Paul Morrell, RN = Robin Nicholson, JW = Jane Wernick)

2015

- 15 Mar – CIC Council - RN
- 13 May – CIBSE Board away-day – SF/RN
- 18 May – launch of Report at Arup, London – PM with Tony Burton, Lord Deben and Sue Illman
- 28 May – CIC Annual Conference – PM
- 7 Aug – Heriot-Watt seminar to feed into CHOBE conference in Bath 3-4 Sept – Alex MacLaren
- 9 Oct – Urban Design Group Conference – PM
- 26 Oct – Cambridge Forum for Construction Industry at Clare College – PM
- 6 Nov – Standing Conf. of Heads of Schools of Architecture (SCHOSA) Conference in Cardiff – RN
- 11 Nov – 3rd Annual RICS CPD Foundation Debate chaired by Lord Bichard
- 24 Nov – Welsh School of Architecture seminar – SF/RN
- 24 Nov – Arup Cardiff C4C – PM
- 2 Dec – Edge reconvenes Research Dissemination Group at Building Centre – PC/SF/RN
- 7 Dec – IDBE workshop in Cambridge – SF/RN/JW
- 10 Dec – Rumford Club Debate (Building Services engineering) – RN/PC

Planned

- 26 Jan – University of West of England at Arup Bristol - RN
- 17/18 Feb – Heriot-Watt and University of Edinburgh – SF/RN
- 22 Feb – CIC North East with 2 Universities in Newcastle - SF/RN
- 24 Feb – Reading University – PM/SF/RN
- 25 Feb – Regeneration Skills Collective Wales (RSAW, ICE, RICS, RTPI Cymru, LI Wales, CIOH Cymru) at Arup Cardiff SF/RN
- 9 Mar – Ecobuild – ‘Closing the performance gap – a plan for action’ – PM to chair Edge Commission
- 18 May – ‘C4C: one year on’ at the Building Centre

To be planned in alphabetical order

Bath – University (Profs Alex Wright Arch. and Tim Ibell Engineering) + Buro Happold (Mike Cook)

Belfast – Queens University (Profs Ruth Morrow and Alan Jones)

Birmingham – Birmingham City University (Profs Kevin Singh and David Boyd) + Birmingham CC

Brighton University and Sussex University – Helen Walker

Chelmsford: Andrew Claiborne (architect who started as a joiner) keen to organise a multi-disciplinary event at Anglia Ruskin Campus in Chelmsford

Manchester – City Region and University: Jim Chapman coordinating; Stephen Gleave keen to help

Nottingham – CIC East Midlands with Nottingham Uni, Nottingham Trent and Loughborough Unis – CICESM chair Maria Willis coordinating

Sheffield University – Prof Fionn Stevenson coordinating

And then there could be an international network – the Edge suggest this could be on an individual ad-hoc basis. Ian Pritchard, formerly of RIBA, is now Sec General of the Architects Council of Europe and is keen to engage but are there similar networks for the other disciplines? Stephen Hill is in regular contact with Dr Ursula Hartenberger, RICS Global Head of Sustainability based in Brussels
Other contacts: Judit Kimpian chairs the ACE work group on Environment and Sustainable Architecture.

RN has sent/given copies of C4C to the Ministry of Cities in Brazil and Universities in Quebec, Naples and in Hong Kong. Richard Lorch is circulating C4C in China and South Africa. Please let robin.nicholson@cullinanstudio.com know when and where you send the link to other countries.

Robin Nicholson 18 Dec 2012

- (1) The report is available on http://www.edgedebate.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/150415_collaborationforchange_book.pdf
- (2) CIOB report is available on <http://www.ciob.org/sites/default/files/CIOB%20research%20-%20Professions%20Report.pdf>
- (3) RICS debate is available on <https://cpdfoundation.com/harris-debate>
- (4) ICE SayNo toolkit is available on <http://ice.saynotoolkit.net>