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**THE  
FARRELL  
REVIEW**

*of Architecture  
+ the Built  
Environment*

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**PROGRESS REPORT**  
JANUARY 2015

**#02**

## Introduction by Sir Terry Farrell

When the Farrell Review of Architecture and the Built Environment was published last year, I promised to continue to campaign to ensure our government, our institutions, professionals and the public all play their part in helping to shape better places throughout the UK and beyond.

As I hope this progress report demonstrates, I am keeping this promise. Over the past few months, we have been working hard to ensure that the Review remains high on the agenda of both policy-makers and the industry at large. From the many Urban Rooms that are rapidly multiplying up and down the country to the establishment of the Government's Design Advisory Panel, the Review is making an impact and sparking action.

These, and many other, initiatives are not just being instigated by the Farrell Review Panel and team, but also by our 'Champions' from across industry, local government, academia and beyond. As you will read below, these 'Champions' are now leading the debate and thinking around specific themes and recommendations within the Review and are working hard for positive change.

I am enormously grateful to these individuals for their energy, commitment and optimism. Most importantly, I am grateful to them all for proving that we can work together to create better quality places for people to live, work and play in.

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Sir Terry Farrell CBE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Terry Farrell', written in a cursive style.

# Farrell Review Champions Lead Review Implementation

We are immensely grateful to the many industry leaders, panellists and experts who have agreed to act as 'Champions' for certain themes and recommendations within the Review.

These Champions have made great progress in recent months by writing position papers outlining how industry and Government can take forward particular themes.

## School Education & Teacher Training

- Championed by: Victoria Thornton, Founding Director, Open-City and FAR Panel Member & Charlie Peel, FAR Project Co-ordinator
- This paper proposes the re-launch of the Engaging Places website to disseminate high quality resources, stimulate debate and allow for curriculum innovation by teachers

## The Place Alliance

- Championed by: Professor Matthew Carmona, UCL
- Paper sets out initial ideas about the potential scope of interest and purpose of an industry-wide, industry-led membership body and how it might operate

## Urban Rooms

- Urban Room Blackburn Case Study Championed by: Claire Tymon & Ian Banks, Blackburn is Open
- Blackburn became the first town to follow the FAR recommendation to establish the first urban room

## Virtual Urban Rooms

- Championed by: Simon Mabey, Arup and Richard Conner, Assembly Studios
- Sets out proposal for virtual urban rooms, so that every town, city and region can have a virtual place to visit to debate the past, present and future of that place

## Proactive Planning and Plan First

- Championed by: Finn Williams, Novus and GLA
- Proposes a new national programme to embed talented young Place professionals within local authorities and develop the public sector's capacity for proactive planning

## Place Review

- Championed by: David Tittle, Chair, Design Network
- Proposes a forum to bring together Design Network members, professional bodies, the Design Council and the FAR team to explore how Place Reviews of new and existing buildings and places can be introduced

## The Role of Artists and the Arts

- Championed by: Robert Powell, Director of Beam and FAR Panel Member

Please see below for information about each Champion and a summary of the position papers they have drafted which are being circulated to Ministers and their departments within Government. These position papers will be launched at an event in Parliament in March to celebrate a year since the publication of the review (and will be published on the Farrell Review website).

- This paper explores the potential role of the arts and artists in the planning, design, animation, and management of the public realm and 'place'

## Valuing Design Quality

- Championed by: Alison Brooks, Founding Director, Alison Brooks Architects and FAR Panel Member
- Sets out emerging thinking around how to define 'design quality' and proposes radical reform of the RICS method of measuring value to take account of spatial, material and environmental attributes that consumers value

## London International Festival of Architecture

- Championed by: Patricia Brown, Chair, London Festival of Architecture
- Sets out the current position and planning to take forward the FAR recommendation to develop an International Festival of Architecture in London to be launched in June this year

## Improving the Quality of Local Decision-Making & Design Literacy

- Championed by: Cllr Sue Vincent, Urban Design London and Camden Borough Council
- Sets out a number of proposals to address the general lack of experience and understanding of design principles amongst many local authority decision makers

## Heritage & Future Cities

- Championed by: Hank Dittmar, Special Advisor, The Prince's Foundation and FAR Panel Member
- This paper explores how we can all work together to address the challenge of growing communities whilst protecting the heritage of our towns and cities

## Civic Champions

- Championed by: Lucy Musgrave, Publica and FAR Panel Member
- Explores how individuals and organisations from the public and private sector can 'champion the civic' and how champions of great everyday places can make a difference

## Government Establishes Design Advisory Panel

In December, the Government announced the establishment of a new Design Advisory Panel to help ensure that new homes and neighbourhoods are of high quality and well designed and to set the bar on housing design across the country.

The initiative builds upon the Farrell Review recommendation for a Chief Architectural Advisor within Government to ensure that the built environment professions are better represented, and is the result of ongoing discussions with Planning Minister Brandon Lewis and representatives from No. 10 on the proposal.

We are delighted that Sir Terry Farrell has been invited to sit on this panel and we are particularly pleased to see that it will be representative of a broad range of Place professionals – including landscapers, planners, surveyors and urban designers.



Bicester Garden City ©Farrells

## Urban Rooms Multiply across the Country

Since the launch of the Farrell Review, fifteen 'Urban Rooms' are now being planned throughout the country in response to the Review's recommendation to establish spaces where "people can go to understand and debate the past, present and future of that place."

In October last year, Blackburn became the first town to open an Urban Room with a pop-up space based in the Blackburn is Open shop. Blackburn's Urban Room aims to become a hotbed of debate about the future of planning in the town but also look at how it has changed and the historic buildings in the borough.

The programme of events includes exhibitions, workshops, seminars and films that discussed the past, present and future of Blackburn town centre. In addition, students from Sheffield School of Architecture exhibited their proposals for Blackburn as part of the Live Works project.

The project saw the students work with Blackburn with Darwen Council on '[re]create Blackburn', an ambitious set of visions for how the town centre could develop.

Since then, fifteen further cities and towns have announced the opening of an Urban Room and further such spaces are in the pipeline. Even more exciting are plans to create virtual urban rooms using 3D technology to create virtual models of local areas. Conversations are ongoing with the Future Cities Catapult and others about this.

Urban Rooms that have been, or are in the process of, establishing include:

- Leeds City Workshop
- Manchester Urban Room
- Cardiff Urban Room
- Liverpool City Gallery
- Telford Urban Room
- Edgware Circus Urban Room
- Nottingham Urban Room
- Shad Thames Place Space
- Folkestone Urban Room
- Balfour Tower
- Birmingham Urban
- Sheffield City Room
- Blackburn Urban Room
- Norwich Urban Room
- Sheffield Pop Up Village Room
- Newcastle Urban Room



# Labour Party Pledges Support to Farrell Review

The Labour Party have announced that it supports the thrust of the Farrell Review's recommendations in relation to proactive planning, civic engagement and local authority decision-making. At an event organised by RIBA and hosted by the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Arts in Gateshead to discuss the implications of the Review for the north of England,

the Shadow Minister for Planning, Roberta Blackman-Woods MP, stated that Labour plans to extend and streamline neighbourhood planning, improve community engagement, make proper use of land and its value and bring together thinking on town, country and regenerative planning.

**The Shadow Minister also announced that the Labour Party would adopt the following proposals:**

- Devolving planning powers to local authorities either singly or in combination
- Integrating neighbourhood planning into the process at an earlier stage
- Giving local authorities and their communities greater power to determine the look of their high streets by reversing changes to permitted development rights
- Accepting FAR recommendations on design-literacy for local councillors and encouraging civic champions
- Tweaking the NPPF
- Enhancing response to climate change issues
- Creating Urban Rooms as recommended by FAR



The Lyons  
**Housing Review**

The Labour Party is also looking seriously at the work of Professor Matthew Carmona of the Bartlett School (UCL) on the creation of a Place Alliance that would advise and help co-ordinate policies and programmes across government in order to support the delivery of better places.

This follows the call from Sir Michael Lyons, in his Labour Party commissioned review of housing, to adopt Farrell Review recommendations and replace design reviews with Place Reviews. Place Reviews would see design review panels

radically extended to include planning, landscape, architecture, conservation and engineering experts to enable a more holistic assessment of existing places that aren't subject to the planning process like housing estates, streets and parks.

Sir Michael Lyons also supported the recommendation to skill-up planners "to support their role as champions of place" and backs the FAR recommendation of entrenching better design through the planning process.

# Place Review Conference to Reset the Debate on Design Review



On 5th February 2015, the Farrell Review and Design Network will host a half-day conference on Place Review at the New London Architecture Centre– what it is and why it will make a difference. The Farrell Review called for a new era of Place Review (Planning, Landscape, Architecture, Conservation and Engineering) to ensure that all aspects of the built environment are given equal consideration. The idea is to broaden this out to existing places which aren't subject to the planning process like streets, parks and new infrastructure.

This conference will explore how Place Review could work in practice and debate how to enable access to expertise, how to put communities at the heart of the process, how to plan proactively and how to move away from consultation and towards community participation.

Delegates will hear from a wide range of speakers including Sir Terry Farrell, Sir Michael Lyons, Professor Matthew Carmona and Richard Upton, CEO of Cathedral Group.

## We should usher in a new era of PLACE Review

Replace Design Review Panels



option A?



option B?



option C?



... with PLACE Review Panels!!



PLANNING



LANDSCAPE



ARCHITECTURE



CONSERVATION



ENGINEERING

...and review existing places

# Government Supports Establishment Of Industry-Led 'Place Alliance'



The Hon Ed Vaizey MP, Minister of State for Culture and the Digital Economy, will attend the next industry-wide 'Big Meet' on the Place Alliance to show his support for the establishment of a cross-sector collaborative alliance for place quality.

On 24th February 2015, UCL will host the third 'Big Meet' of over 100 leading figures from over 70 different organisations to discuss the remit and structure of the Place Alliance. The case for a cross-sector Alliance was strongly endorsed by the first Big Meet in August.



Ed Vaizey MP, Minister of State for Culture and the Digital Economy

The new organisation will provide a powerful collective voice on questions of place quality as well facilitating cross-sector discussion and debate around improving our everyday environments.

Following the first Big Meet, the idea of a cross-sector Alliance was strongly endorsed by Ed Vaizey MP, the Minister of State for Culture and the Digital Economy, who argued that it perfectly encapsulated the need for the sector to take on the mantle of place leadership.

At the third 'Big Meet' in January, attendees will discuss and agree the core objectives and structure of the organisation as well as hearing the Minister's views on the role that the Place Alliance can play within the wider policy landscape.

Professor Carmona's team at UCL is now working on developing the brand identity for the Place Alliance and can be found tweeting at @PlaceAllianceUK.

## Farrell Review Sets the Agenda at Political Party Conferences

In October, the Farrell Review – alongside RIBA and Cabe at the Design Council – hosted fringe events at both Labour and Conservative Party Conferences. Chaired by Chris Rumfitt of CRC, both events discussed a broad range of Farrell Review recommendations - from education and the role of the arts, to proactive planning and the importance of placemaking. Most importantly, the debate focused on how Government, policy-makers and industry can work together to improve the quality of the built environment and provide greater leadership in these areas.



At the Conservative Party Conference, Sir Terry Farrell led a panel which included RIBA President Stephen Hodder, Design Council CEO John Mathers and the Hon Ed Vaizey MP, Minister of State for Culture and the Digital Economy. A packed audience of journalists, local government officials and industry representatives attended the event, which was generously hosted by Fazeley Studios and the Conservative Arts and Creative Industries Network (CACIN).

At the Labour Party Conference, we were joined by Helen Goodman MP, Shadow Minister for Culture, Media and Sport and the event was kindly hosted by architect Ian Simpson in his stunning penthouse home in Manchester's Beetham Tower.



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