# **Built Environment Professional Education Project**

Report of Progress March 2017







Inspired inclusive design that achieves a truly accessible and inclusive environment has real value to society.

Every built environment professional can help make an inclusive built environment a reality.

Greater awareness and understanding, increased knowledge and skills, and a commitment to deliver inclusive projects, will ultimately lead to better access and inclusion for everyone in all our buildings and public spaces.

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# **Introduction by the BEPE Project Board Chair**



This is the last year of the BEPE Project Board, but it is by no means the end of the BEPE programme: only, I hope, a stage in the metamorphosis of the industry's response to accessibility – from caterpillar to butterfly.

It is also, though, a moment to celebrate what has been achieved.

We have published the Essential Principles Guide and are well on with writing a Teaching and Learning Guide. We have, through the CIC, motivated the creation of an award for the design of inclusive environments. Working with the Quality Assurance Agency, we have seen the Subject Benchmark Statement for Land, Construction, Real Estate and Surveying revised to include a threshold standard requiring graduates to have knowledge and understanding of accessible design.

Above all, and starting with a blank sheet of paper, there are now no less than 20 professional institutions who have signed up to support the objectives of the BEPE programme, 12 of which accredit courses, and 7 of those have shared a route map that sets out how and when they are making the changes needed to embed inclusive design into their courses.

For all of that, thanks are due to the many BEPE supporters for the many ways you are helping to change mind-sets with the same objective of turning accessible design into the norm; to all of those who have served on the BEPE Project Board; to the CIC who have hosted the programme over the last year; and to the Minister for Disabled People who supported the programme during its first 2 years when it was very much a government initiative with industry participation. Last year, its direction passed to the industry, with one more year of partial funding from the Department for Work and Pensions to help bridge the programme into a self-sustaining one in the care of the industry.

So if the BEPE programme has done enough to get the industry's attention, I hope that brings us to our time to break out as a butterfly. For some time we have been talking about broadening the programme so it connects to many other initiatives underway in this industry and others, reaching across our traditional silos, and addressing the whole issue of disability and access in a joined up way. In an age of branding we even offer a title for the programme: BuildAbility, turning what might be seen as an industry cliché into something purposeful, and accentuating the positive.

To live up to that brand, we need to build into our design and procurement processes not a series of regulations, but a route map of how to chart a path from inception to occupation that considers the needs of all. The Essential Principles Guide is a foundation upon which a more project-related process of that kind can be built; and we need to support that

process with well-researched guidance and standards, so that those who want to do the right thing know what "the right thing" is.

We need to recognise that people who are locked out of getting to work are locked out of work itself, and that the obligation to create access to employment applies to our own businesses as well: and we call upon all companies working in the industry to demonstrate their genuine commitment to this programme by signing up for the government's Disability Confident scheme.

We also need to recognise that, with almost 20% of the population having some form of disability (and with all of us, if we live long enough, destined to need some allowances to be made in the built environment to accommodate, at the least, a reduction in mobility), buildings made mindless of that need will simply not be fit for purpose – and so, eventually, will not be tradeable. So we need to engage our clients as well. And we need to keep working on the education and accreditation processes so that thinking of this kind is second nature to those coming into the industry.

We have tended to design, as we have been taught, for that famous etching of Vitruvian Man, but that represents a very small proportion of the population. That is why this subject cannot be the subject of regulation alone, but must instead be the subject of a process backed by guidance, being always mindful, as the prayer has it, of the needs of others. Those needs will be as different as each of us is: individual and distinct, and sometimes inconsistent or even contradictory; but resolving problems such as conflicting needs and requirements is fundamentally what design is about. This is not about design with a few things added; and still less about design with a few compromises: it is just about good design.

As industry takes over the baton, but with the continuing attention and support of Government, it is a good time to ask, what would an industry that we can be proud of look like? How would it behave? What regard would it have for those it works for, and those who work for it? One part of the answer to that question is that it would always have in its mind the whole idea of accessibility: of welcoming the greatest possible number of people, in all the many shapes we come in, into our buildings and our businesses, and designing into both whatever accommodations may be necessary to make everyone feel at home. To do that, all we have to do is first to care; then to know what to do; and then just do it. These are challenges of attitude, academics and action, and rising to all of those challenges would be to achieve real BuildAbility.

### Paul Morrell

BEPE Project Board Chair

# **Executive Summary**

- 1. This report summarises progress with implementing the Built Environment Professional Education Project (BEPE) between April 2016 and March 2017.
- 2. The project has continued to make progress since it was transferred to the Construction Industry Council (CIC) in April 2016. Notable milestones include the introduction of inclusive design as a threshold standard in the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Subject Benchmark Statement for Land, Construction, Real Estate and Surveying in October 2016, and publication in March 2017 of the CIC's Essential Principles Guide for Built Environment Professionals.
- 3. Inclusive design knowledge and skills are gradually being embedded into built environment professional education programmes and working practices, but there is still much to do it was expected to take at least 5 years to effect a systematic change. The CIC is now considering ways to take the project forward in future years.

# **Background**

- 4. BEPE, launched by the Minister for Disabled People in December 2013, formed part of the Government's London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Legacy Programme. The almost unique level of inclusivity achieved in the Olympic Park and venues provided the opportunity to stimulate an increase in inclusive design in the built environment in the UK.
- 5. The aim of the five year project was that:
  - "Every newly qualified built environment professional will have the knowledge, skills and attitude to deliver accessible and inclusive buildings, places and spaces."
- 6. This would be achieved by:
  - "Embedding inclusive design as a core part of the required curriculum in the education of built environment professionals, with student assessments and Assessments of Professional Competence that reflect this."

When the project was launched in December 2013 the expectation was that it would take at least 5 years for systematic change to start to take effect. The original project plan was:

- Year 1 focus on securing commitment from the professional institutions
- Year 2 start to turn that commitment into concrete change in professional standards and accreditation
- Year 3 focus on universities and see the development of new courses and assessment systems and teaching capacity developed

- Year 4 roll out of new courses and assessment systems
- Year 5 measure impact.

Support has been building and progress has been made in all areas, but inclusive design is not yet fully embedded in professional standards or education accreditation systems – it is a slow burn project and it will take time to see real change in all parts of the construction industry.

7. A report of progress was published by the Office for Disability Issues (ODI) in March<sup>1</sup> 2016. In April 2016, CIC signed a grant funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions agreeing to assume responsibility for BEPE in its transition year from a government driven project to an industry owned and led project and take the project forward into its next phase of development.

# **Project Governance**

8. The BEPE Project Board was reformed by CIC and met four times in June, September, December 2016 and March 2017. The Board, chaired by Paul Morrell, has 14 members, eight from the original Board and six new members including Tony Burton, previous chairman of the CIC (see Annex). All are key figures in the built environment professions and are champions for inclusive design education and training.

# **Progress by the Professional Institutions**

9. See Table 1 for summary of progress.

### a) Landscape Institute (LI)

The Landscape Institute is currently drafting a Technical Note on Inclusive Design for their members. The aim is to help landscape architects embed inclusive design within projects from inception through to completion and to provide an audit trail of the decisions made to achieve good inclusive design.

### b) Engineering Council (EC)

The Engineering Council has agreed in principle to consider amending the UK Spec – the UK standard for professional engineering competence – to embed inclusive design, when the UK Spec is reviewed later this year.

### c) Architects Registration Board (ARB)

The government's periodic review of the Architects Registration Board has delayed any review of the ARB Criteria which form part of the prescription of qualifications needed to become a registered architect. However, although a major review of the routes to registration is unlikely, ARB has agreed in principle to consider how inclusive design could be embedded into the general criteria when the criteria are reviewed, which is now likely to be later this year.

### d) Royal institute of British Architects (RIBA)

All RIBA members must undertake at least two hours of CPD on inclusive design each year. 14 CPD sessions are being provided throughout the country this year and encompass:

- the five principles of inclusive design
- legislation and regulations
- collaborative and inclusive planning and place-making
- access statements and strategies
- building and places in use
- understanding disability
- detailed design
- the notion of inclusion, equality and diversity in design and place-making.

# e) Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB)

CIOB supported the changes to the QAA subject benchmark statement and are now adding inclusive design skills into their Education Framework, the review of which is due for completion by the end of 2017. Following this there will be a review of CIOB's Chartered Membership exams and Site Management qualifications. The aim is to then seek to articulate those standards into the competency frameworks (Professional Development Programme and Professional Review). The implementation of these new standards is anticipated to take effect in 2018.

# f) Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)

The RTPI published Practice Advice called 'Dementia and Town Planning Creating better environments for people with dementia' as part of their Inclusive Planning guidance, and is considering further training initiatives to help embed inclusive design into town planning training programmes.

## g) Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)

As part of the review of RICS Pathways and Competencies, which define the knowledge, skills, experience and competence required to become a chartered surveyor, inclusive design will be included as a core competency to Level 1 for all pathways, optional to Level 2 or 3. This should give more emphasis on inclusive design as a technical area. The existing 'Teamworking Inclusion and Diversity' competency is also being developed as a mandatory competency to Level 1 for all pathways. Both these proposals will be subject to further consultation later this year.

# h) Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE)

Inclusive design has been added to the remit of CIBSE's newly re-constituted Diversity Panel and consideration is being given to incorporating inclusive design into CIBSE projects and publications.

Table 1 Summary of Progress (see paragraph 9)

		Initial education/qualifications	/qualifications		Route to recognised professional membership	ised nbership	Continuing learning for chartered professionals	ning for sionals
Professional Area	Professional Institution	Professional Standards Framework amended	Course Support to accreditation / build teaching validation capacity process provided reviewed	Support to build teaching capacity provided	Assessment of Professional Competence Process reviewed	Guidance & resources updated	Profession specific Inclusive Design CPD provided	Promotion / profile raising activities
Facilities Management	BIFM							
Architectural Technologists	CIAT							
Planning	RTPI							
Surveying / Building /	RICS							
Construction Management	CIOB							
Engineering	EC							
	ICE							
	CIBSE							
Landscape Architecture	П							
Architecture	RIBA							
	ARB							
Interior Design	BIID							

Progress begun

# **Engagement with the higher education sector**

# **Quality Assurance Agency Subject Benchmark Statements**

10. The Quality Assurance Agency published its revised Subject Benchmark Statement for Land, Construction, Real Estate and Surveying in October 2016.<sup>3</sup> It includes, as a threshold standard, the need for graduates to have knowledge and understanding of the principles and processes that deliver an inclusive environment, and to recognise the diversity of user needs by putting people (of all ages and abilities) at the heart of the planning for development / building surveying / real estate process. This will encourage those higher education institutions teaching these subjects to address inclusive design more effectively.

# **University Initiatives**

11. The University of Reading has embraced the aim of the BEPE Project and is addressing the changes made by the QAA through their Breaking down Barriers Project (BdB). The Minister for Disabled People visited the University on 20 October 2017 to view progress with the project and the project received a Highly Commended Award for Innovation in Education and Training in the 2016 Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) International Innovation & Research Awards Scheme. The award recognised the unique cross-disciplinary initiative to embed inclusive design across the University. The BdB project aims to ensure Reading graduates across all disciplines advocate inclusion in their professional practices and bring real benefits to the everyday lives of all users. Students say that the BdB workshops have helped them:

"gain insight as to how thoughtful design can influence other industries and how we as designers must work together with these other industries in order to make the lives of the people that need a helping hand that little bit easier."

- 12. The BEPE Project Lead gave a lecture to second year Architecture students at Westminster University. The students will be assessed on their learning as part of a site diary project that includes reviewing an Inclusive Design Strategy.
- 13. Interior architecture students at Westminster University are involved in an Arts Council funded project called Dis/Ordinary Spaces led by Jos Boys. In one particular workshop called Tilting Horizons led by disabled artist Liz Crow, the students are considering the relationship between horizontal planes in architecture in relation to the human body when lying down an exciting and different way of thinking about inclusive design.

- 14. A new MSc programme on Health, Wellbeing and Sustainable Buildings<sup>4</sup> commences at The Bartlett, University College London, in September 2017 and will include an optional module on Inclusive Places developed by the Centre for Accessible Environments.
- 15. Oxford Brookes University sees Inclusive Design as a significant research topic for the future and is setting up PhD research projects in partnership with industry to study inclusive design in the UK and it is hoped, on a wider global platform.

# Global Disability Innovation Hub

16. The BEPE Project is a partner project in the Global Disability Innovation Hub<sup>5</sup> a new initiative launched by the Mayor of London on National Paralympic Day in 2016. This partnership should provide opportunities to work with the universities relocating onto Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. The BEPE Project will be promoted at the first Global Disability Innovation Summit to be held at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in July.

# **Inclusive Design Awards**

# **CIC Inclusive Environment Award**

- 17. The winner of the new CIC Inclusive Environment Award<sup>6</sup> was announced at the Construction Industry Summit in September. The London Borough of Camden won for its development at 5 Pancras Square, and Penarth Learning Centre in Wales was highly commended both nominated by the LABC (Local Authority Building Control).
- 18. The Minister for Disabled People announced at the BEPE Reception on 9th March the call for submissions for the 2017 CIC Inclusive Environment Award and presented a plaque to Camden Council, the 2016 winners, to display in their building. The CIC award aims to inspire professionals already in practice to raise the standard of inclusivity achieved across the industry and compliments the RSA Student Design Award.

# The RSA Student Design Awards

19. The winners of last year's Inclusive Cities Award, announced in June, were Deborah Abidakun (De Montfort University) for her project 'A More Inclusive Pedestrian Wayfinding System' and Maryia Virshych (Centro Universitario de Diseno de Barcelona) for her Sign Out Loud project. Deborah has undertaken a successful two month work experience placement at BuroHappold Engineering.

20. This year's Inclusive Living Student Design Award brief sponsored by PRP Architects was launched in September 2016, with a closing date in March. The students will be judged on their proposals for inclusive living that respond to changing social structures, challenges the current way we design our homes and fosters positive inter-generational connections. The winners will be announced in June and the winner offered a two month work placement with PRP Architects or the £1000 prize awarded by the ODI. The CIC will continue to support the RSA in the development of a new brief for 2018.

# **DEC! Design Challenge for Schools**

- 21. With the support of the CIC and the BEPE Project Board, Class of Your Own, launched on 1st February a Design a Home for Everyone brief for their 2017 Design Challenge for schools<sup>7</sup>, part of their Design Engineer Construct (DEC!) programme. It is open to UK primary schools, secondary schools and first year undergraduates. Students are asked to design a house that is safe, comfortable, accessible and secure, and that truly supports health and well being.
- 22. DEC! is an accredited learning programme for secondary-school age students, developed to create and inspire the next generation of built environment professionals. The aim of the design challenge is to inspire young people to develop an interest in making the built environment accessible to disabled people.

### Conferences

23. Progress with BEPE was presented to the SCHOSA summer meeting in June, and to the Schumacher Institute's 'Designing Environments as if People Matter' conference in November. A breakout session called Fit for An Inclusive Future was held at the Construction Industry Summit in September when six innovative initiatives were showcased including the BEPE Project and Disability Confident (the slide pack is available to download from the CIC web site<sup>8</sup>).

# **Publications**

# Production of a guide for built environment professionals

24. The 'Essential Principles Guide for Built Environment Professionals – Creating an Accessible and Inclusive Environment' endorsed and supported by 15 key built environment professional institutions, was launched at the BEPE Reception on 9th March. Based on the Engineering Council's guide to sustainability, it uses the six principles outlined in the next steps section of the ODI's BEPE Progress Report. It aims is to guide, support and motivate all built environment professionals when making decisions for clients, employers and society which affect the achievement of an inclusive environment. The principles should help meet professional obligations to seek to

- achieve inclusion and ensure that this goal is integrated into all professional activity. It is available to download from the CIC web site.<sup>9</sup>
- 25. A convenient wallet card with the 6 essential principles on one side and the 5 principles of inclusive design on the other side has also be designed and copies can be purchased from the CIC.

# Essential Principles for Achieving an Inclusive Environment

- Acquire the skills, knowledge and confidence to make inclusion the norm
- 2. Apply professional and responsible judgement
- 3. Apply the Principles of Inclusive Design from the outset
- 4. Do more than just comply with legislation and codes
- 5. Seek multiple views to solve accessibility challenges
- 6. Contribute to building an inclusive society now.



# The Principles of Inclusive Design

- 1. Place people at the heart of the design process
- 2. Acknowledge diversity and difference
- 3. Offer choice where a single solution cannot accommodate all users
- 4. Provide for flexibility in use
- Create an environment that is convenient and enjoyable for everyone to use.



# 26. The six principles are:

Essential Principles for Achieving an Inclusive Environment

- 1. Contribute to building an inclusive society now and in the future
- 2. Apply professional and responsible judgement and take a leadership role
- 3. Apply and integrate the Principles of Inclusive Design from the outset of a project
- 4. Do more than just comply with legislation and codes
- 5. Seek multiple views to solve accessibility and inclusivity challenges
- 6. Acquire the skills, knowledge understanding and confidence to make inclusion the norm not the exception.

# **Teaching and Learning Guide**

27. A Briefing Guide for Teaching and Learning Inclusive Design for the higher education sector based on previous Higher Education Academy teaching and learning guides, will shortly be published by the CIC. Its purpose is to illustrate the key issues in terms of improving knowledge, skills and understanding in the creation of an inclusive built environment. It explains the implications for education and provides examples of good practice in teaching. By learning the necessary skills from the outset, graduates should be emerging into the workplace with a basic knowledge of how to deliver inclusion in their professional working practice. The guide aims to help educators equip their students with techniques and examples that give them the confidence to deliver inclusive buildings, places and spaces in the future.

### 28. It recommends that educators:

- a. Ensure all built environment professionals finish basic training with an understanding of the impact of their professionalactivities on the achievement of an inclusive environment
- b. Ensure training for all built environment professionals includes a consideration of the impact of the built environment of the inclusion in society of disabled and older people
- c. Establish an inclusion-related cross-professional development programme for inclusive environments
- d. Bring the evidence base from research and practice into the realm of educators and policy makers in an accessible and relevant form.

# **Press and Publicity**

# **BEPE Updates**

- 29. BEPE Updates were published on the CIC web site in June and September, December 2016 and March 2017.
- 30. A number of press releases relating to BEPE and to the achievement of an inclusive environment have been issued by the CIC throughout the year. For example:
  - a) The BEPE Project Lead gave verbal evidence to the Women and Equalities Committee Disability and Built Environment Inquiry and the BEPE Project Board submitted a short written response in relation to the questions about the role of designers, architects and built environment specialists. A summary of the key messages is now on the Committee's web site.<sup>10</sup> The importance of the government as client and commissioner of buildings setting an example of best practice to the construction industry and the importance of continued cross government support for the BEPE Project and wider inclusive environment initiatives were stressed. The Committee is expected to publish its final report this summer.
  - b) Disability Confident<sup>11</sup> The CIC has signed up to Disability Confident and has written to all CIC members encouraging them to start their Disability Confident journey. As a result, RICS, RTPI, BIFM and CABE have now started their Disability Confident journey. Others are expected to follow.

# Next steps to ensure a lasting legacy

- 31. Despite the progress outlined above, work to promote better inclusive design education is still needed. This could include:
  - a. continuing to work with those institutions who are yet to amend their accreditation criteria for education programmes
  - b. helping CIC members address changes to their professional standards
  - c. supporting CIC members in the production of specific guidance to their members on inclusive design
  - d. support CIC members in the production of profession specific CPD programmes

- e. support and encourage CIC members to develop Inclusive Environment Awards and / or embed inclusive design criteria into their standard award programmes for built environment professionals
- f. promote implementation of the Teaching and Learning Guide by the HE sector
- g. support built environment higher education students through continuing to support the RSA with their Student Design Inclusive City Awards
- h. support Class of Your Own in the DEC Design Challenge to assist school children consider inclusive environments
- i. implement other initiatives that could help deliver the BEPE objective
- j. measure progress and assess success in the project's final year (2018)
- k. develop a mechanism for ensuring that inclusive design education continues in future years
- l. report progress to the Minister for Disabled People
- 32. To help with the future sustainability of the BEPE work and to develop and link initiatives that go beyond education and achieve greater engagement across the construction industry, the CIC is considering whether and how to establish an Inclusive Environment Group (IEG). Subject to obtaining adequate funding, the IEG could:
  - promote changes to education and training by continuing the BEPE work
  - manage and promote the CIC Inclusive Environment Award
  - work with a consortium of organisations including the Design Council to achieve greater engagement across the construction industry
  - promote the take up of Disability Confident amongst construction employers
  - build an Inclusive Environment Campaign with clients / developers / commissioners / building owners

# Conclusion

- 33. Progress has continued to be made with the BEPE Project but, as expected at the outset, it is taking time to make the necessary structural changes within professional institutions and within the higher education sector. Support for the work continues to build, inclusive design is gradually being embedded into professional standards and there are some good examples of teaching practices that will help students improve their knowledge and skills.
- 34. However, to effect significant change the work now needs to go beyond education, beyond the professional institutions and to be embraced by clients, developers and building owners. This can only be done with strong government support.

# **Annex**

# **BEPE Project Board Members**

Alexander Wright

Anne Skippers

Clare Devine

Danna Walker

**David Petherick** 

Geoff Cook

lain McKinnon

James Sutton

Jean Hewitt

Louise Brook-Smith

Nathan Baker

Paul Morrell - Chair

Peter Caplehorn

Rachel Smalley

Tony Burton

**Graham Watts** 

Observers from ODI and DCLG

# **Glossary of Acronyms**

ARB Architects Registration Board

BIFM British Institute of Facilities Management

BEPE Built Environment Professional Education Project

BIID The British Institute of Interior Design

CABE Chartered Association of Building Engineers

CIAT Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists

CIBSE Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers

CIOB Chartered Institute of Building

CIC Construction Industry Council

EC Engineering Council

ICE Institution of Civil Engineers

LABC Local Authority Building Control

LI Landscape Institute

ODI Office for Disability Issues

QAA Quality Assurance Agency

RIBA Royal Institute of British Architects

RICS Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors

RSA Royal Society of Arts

RTPI Royal Town Planning Institute

SCHOSA Standing Conference for Heads of Schools of Architecture

### **Notes**

- <sup>1</sup> Built Environment Professional Education Project Report of Progress Office for Disability Issues Mayor of London March 2016 www.gov.uk/government/publications/built-environment-professionaleducation-project-progress-report
- <sup>2</sup> www.rtpi.org.uk/knowledge/practice/dementia-and-town-planning/
- <sup>3</sup> www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/SBS-Land-Construction-Real-Estate-and-Surveying-16.pdf
- <sup>4</sup> www.ucl.ac.uk/bartlett/environmental-design/programmes/msc-health-wellbeing-sustainable-buildings
- <sup>5</sup> www.disabilityinnovation.com/
- <sup>6</sup> http://cic.org.uk/news/article.php?s=2016-09-21-winner-of-the-cic-inclusive-environment-award-2016-announced
- <sup>7</sup> http://designengineerconstruct.com/competitions/home-everyone-design-challenge/
- 8 http://cic.org.uk/projects/project.php?s=built-environment-professional-education-bepe-project
- <sup>9</sup> http://cic.org.uk/projects/project.php?s=essential-principles-guide
- <sup>10</sup> http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/ evidencedocument/women-and-equalities-committee/disability-andthe-built-environment/written/47288.html
- <sup>11</sup> www.gov.uk/government/collections/disability-confident-campaign



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