

Create Streets – Researcher and Urban designer

Do you ...?

Do you care passionately about where people live? Do you believe that the role of community and residents needs to be prioritised in deciding what we build, where and how?

Do you love the traditional city scape, a strong sense of place, mixed communities with a diversity of residents and a blend of work and play? Do 'could be anywhere' developments make you despair? Do you worry about what we are currently doing to London and other cities?

Would you like to be part of a small but influential and prize-winning social enterprise which has attracted support from across the political spectrum, which has been described as 'influential' (*The Guardian*), 'brilliant' (Central Acton Neighbours' Forum) and as one of 'the 50 radical-thinking individuals and organisations changing the UK for the better' (*The Observer* and Nesta UK)? Would you like to work with an organisation which is influencing borough, London and national policy on housing *and* helping communities on the ground with popular design and development?

If the answer to the above questions is yes then the following opportunity might be for you.

It's a unique chance to influence research, policy and practice in the built environment through a combination of research and 'hands-on' community engagement, urban design and policy impact. As Alan Baxter, the Director of Alan Baxter Associates put it:

"What you are doing is totally right and, very importantly, right for the time in which we live. You're there at the beginning of a new wave of thinking"

About Create Streets

Creates Streets is a social enterprise that encourages the creation of more urban homes in conventional, terraced streets rather than complex multi-storey buildings. We do this through research, arguing for policy change, and consulting to councils and landowners. According to Sir Simon Jenkins, former Chair of the National Trust, 'Create Streets speaks London's language.' Our core argument is that more conventional development;

- is more popular, thus reducing resistance to new development;
- is provably better correlated with good wellbeing outcomes;
- can easily provide the density we need to solve the housing crisis; and
- is a better long-term investment.

We also believe that the UK planning system is fundamentally mis-designed and systemically fails to mediate between what gets built and what people actually like in the built environment. This can be fixed by more effectively and genuinely empowering local people

(we call it 'Direct Planning'), thereby undermining resistance to new development and thus helping to solve the housing crisis. The key question for politicians is not 'how do we build more homes' but 'how do we make new homes more popular.'

Create Streets has published a number of books, major reports and a range of shorter essays. These have achieved a real impact on opinion formers and on government, London and opposition policies. Many politicians have publicly backed our work. Kit Malthouse MP, the Housing Minister, has publicly supported our work. And Sadiq Khan, the Mayor of London, has said of our community-led design work at Mount Pleasant: 'This is great example of how big developments should work – working with local communities to design real neighbourhoods that work for the local community.' We have given evidence three times to the GLA Planning Committee, been cited on the floor of the House of Commons and the House of Lords and given many talks to councils, industry groups, community groups and universities in the UK and around the world. (Ireland, Sweden, Dubai and New York). In July 2018 the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published which reflected many of our arguments on design, early engagement with residents and design codes. From our first publication five years ago some of our key suggested policies, process and priorities are now at the very heart of the English planning system.

Our research has also generated significant media coverage including, to name but a few, *The Times*, *The Guardian*, *London's Evening Standard*, *The Independent*, *Financial Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The New York Times*, *The New Statesman*, *Private Eye*, *the Architects' Journal*, *Building Design* and coverage on BBC News and ITN News. You can read more about us at www.createstreets.com.

The opportunity

We have been getting bigger with a growing number of research requirements and community groups, public sector clients and landowners wishing to take advantage of our research and our work. We therefore need to find the right person to join our small and dedicated team initially primarily to focus on one major research project.

Role: researcher and urban designer

This role is about researching good urbanism with about 80 per cent of the role in the first year focusing on one major research project into what makes good cities and towns which are popular and aligned to good wellbeing outcomes for residents.

The major project will involve;

- Working closely with the director of Create Streets and the report's author to structure, sequence and plan the research programme;
- Preparing and visiting case studies around the world for this research project including urbanist, geographical and historical analysis, interviews and taking or sourcing photographs and sketching streets and buildings;

- Interviewing architects, planners, designers, investors and residents;
- Summarising and highlighting existing research into relationships and correlations between different design features and types of urbanism with physical and mental wellbeing, behaviour and value;
- Carrying our primary statistical analysis into the relationships and correlations between different design features and types of urbanism with physical and mental wellbeing, behaviour and value; and
- Working with the director of Create Streets to draw upon other members of the Create Streets team and network as necessary.

In addition you will support other projects in the office. These will or are likely to include;

- A major London-wide programme of training, walking tours and community-led design which we are running with London Citizens and which is being funded by Trust for London;
- Helping deliver urban design and development consultancy to a varied client base (community groups and London boroughs, landowners and developers);
- Helping prepare urban design, community engagement and consultancy pitches;
- Liaising with local authorities, community organisations and landowners; and
- Helping organise events and workshops.

Depending on the strengths, experience, interests and skill-set of the right candidate we expect to be able to 'dial-up' or 'dial-down' different elements of the role as appropriate.

Necessary skills and characteristics

We don't necessarily need each and every one of these skills but our 'ideal candidate' would have;

- A very good knowledge of the existing literature on 'good' urbanism and design;
- Photographic and sketching ability and experience;
- Experience of statistical and open map analytics;
- Experience of urbanist research techniques (street usage, visual preference surveys etc.);
- An ability to synthesis research into usable summaries;
- An ease interviewing people;
- Very good command of written and spoken English;
- Meticulous attention to detail when drafting or editing documents;
- A self-starter;

- Knowledge of British planning system and/or development industry and economics;
- Inquisitive and creative thinker;
- Good relationship-building skills with the ability to establish effective professional and working relationships with people of all working styles and backgrounds;
- Able to present professionally to clients, and to act diplomatically across party political affiliations;
- Keen to work in a small but very strongly committed team;
- Interested in public policy as well as planning and built environment;
- Passionate about built environment and its capacity to promote greater wellbeing through beautiful and popular design;
- Broadly in support of Create Streets aims and values;
- Ideally need to know QGIS, R or SPSS and SQL; and
- Ideally (though not necessarily) possessing relevant vocational qualifications above all a qualified Architect, MRICS, or MRTPI.

We recognise that this is a very long list. It is unlikely that any one candidate will have every one of these skills. Please don't be put off if you cannot tick every one of these boxes. However, if you have a reasonable sample, would like to learn the rest please do get in touch and/or work with people who do, then please do get in touch.

Experience and qualifications

- Your first degree is likely to be in a subject like Geography, Economics, History or Architecture with a relevant subsequent Master's Degree or PhD in Urban Design, Urban Morphology, Urbanism or Environmental Psychology;
- You might be a professionally qualified as an Architect, Chartered Surveyor or Town Planner (ideally MRTPI or MRICS);
- However for the right candidate with the right skills, energy and enthusiasm we expect to be flexible;
- Possibly 6 months+ experience in a real estate or town planning environment;
- Prior professional experience in consulting and policy analysis is a plus; and
- Knowledge of Adobe Illustrator, InDesign and Photoshop is a major plus.

Salary

TBD depending on applicant. Likely to be around £26,000 though we will pay more for the right candidate.

Hours

Full time.

Office

Based in South Central London, near Oval tube station, zone 2. Likely travel.

What to do if you're interested

If you're interested in this position, could you please send letter and CV by 2nd November to constance@createstreets.com. Interviews will be taking place during November with new role expected to start at the start of 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter.