

TG26 - Open Building Implementation (TG26 is now W104)

5th Business Meeting

Task Group TG26 met for its fifth annual business meeting in Brighton, United Kingdom from 27th - 29th September 1999. Previous International Conferences and TG26 meetings have taken place in the Netherlands, the US, Taiwan, and Finland. Twenty-two members and five guests took part in this most recent meeting, originating from ten countries in Europe, North and Central America, and Asia. A highlight of the meeting was the decision by colleagues from Finland, the Netherlands, Hong Kong and Mexico to join the Task Group, thus increasing its membership to more than 45 from 15 countries. CIB Secretary General Wim Bakens attended the last of the three days of the meeting.

Open Conference Day

We have on a previous occasion drawn attention to the commendable practice of TG26 whereby one day in its three day meetings is given over to putting on a Day Conference for construction professionals in the host country.

Richard Moseley reports on the most recent one, which attracted upwards of 100 participants.

This September such an Open Day was held in Brighton, United Kingdom jointly hosted by Task Group Member Obuild Consulting and the Science Policy Research Centre at the University of Sussex. Sponsorship was also provided by Wilcon Homes and Willmott Dixon Housing, both leading housebuilders in the United Kingdom. The title was Flexibility and Choice in Housing: The Open Building Dividend.

Through the Conference the Task Group was able to share and discuss up-to-date project and research experience on Open Building with UK practitioners. Included in the 100 attendees were delegates from UK Government agencies, The Housing Corporation (the central source of funding for social housing development), housebuilders and developers, housing associations, training agencies and building professionals.

Keynote speakers were Dr. Francis Duffy (DEGW Architects, UK) who drew useful parallels between housebuilding and commercial development, and Professor Age van Randen (Matura International, Netherlands), who presented his vision of an alternative approach to housing construction. They were followed by presentations of recent projects in Finland, The Netherlands, Japan and Mexico.

Critical OB Issues

Critical issues around the introduction of Open Building were presented by other TG26 members. Nils Larsson (Coordinator of W100 - Environmental Assessment of Buildings) discussed his work on the potential contribution of Open Building to sustainability, and Hideki Kobayashi and Tomonari Yashiro (Building Research Institute - Ministry of Construction, Japan) and Gerard van Rossum (Koophuur, The Netherlands) reviewed their experience of using an Open Building approach to provide wider choices in tenure and funding for housing development. Marcel Kastein (De Regie, The Netherlands), discussed his involvement in one of the built projects presented, in developing structures and methods for implementing occupiers' control over design decisions.

Ib Steen Olsen (Ministry of Housing, Denmark) described the introduction of Open Building in

Denmark, and Professor Sarah Slaughter (MIT, Cambridge, USA) presented current research on analysing the requirements for flexibility and adaptability in housing.

Workshop Sessions

Five workshop sessions on Flexibility and Change, Unfreezing Tenure and Funding, Building an Industry, Designing for Sustainability and Housing as a Consumer Product were led and resourced by TG members.

The day closed with discussion of the recent Dessau Conference (see [Information 2/99](#)) organised on the initiative of TG26 Member Seiji Sawada, in conjunction with the EXPO 2000 Sachsen-Anhalt GmbH. Possible follow-up activities were discussed for 2000 (and reference is made to what follows on the special project Open Building and the regeneration of large housing estates). This was the first of the "local implementation" meetings which is one way in which TG26 tries to support local initiatives where open building principles and practices can be useful.

Notes Richard: TG26 has found that these Day Conferences, previously held at its meetings in Washington and Helsinki, are an important way of raising awareness of the potential of Open Building for addressing local and national construction agendas, and of ensuring feedback from a wide range of practitioners and interested organisations on work in progress.

Plans for the next annual TG26 meeting were presented by members Seiichi Fukao and Tomonari Yashiro. It will be held from 16th - 18th October 2000 in Tokyo. Titled "OBT2000: Continuous Customisation in Housing", it is being supported by the Architectural Institute of Japan and The Building Center of Japan. Further details will be available at the TG26 web site www.decco.nl/obi soon. Those interested in the Conference should contact the Conference Secretariat Tomonari Yashiro at CIB-TOKYO@ken-mgt.t.u-tokyo.ac.jp (More [here](#).)

Karel Dekker To Hand Over

After three years, Karel Dekker, Head of Strategic Studies, Quality Assurance and Building Regulatory Division, TNO, Delft, is stepping down as a Joint Coordinator. His leadership in the Open Building arena over the past 30 years has been pioneering and that work now continues in the recent Inspectoren project in the EU, a project which he now heads. He will continue to manage the TG26 web site. Members nominated Ulpu Tiuri of Finland to succeed him. She, along with Stephen Kendall from the US - who with Karel Dekker was initially appointed as a coordinator - will work together in the coming years as Joint Coordinators.

New TG26 Book

A new book titled Residential Open Building is now available from E&FN Spon (an imprint of Routledge). Co-authored by TG26 members Stephen Kendall and Jonathan Teicher, it is the result of a commitment by TG26 at its initial meeting in Tokyo, 1996, to provide a state-of-the-art report and review of residential open building, fundamental principles, recent developments, and international coverage of current projects on both the public and private arenas. For further details, email info@routledge.com (see also [here](#)).

Upcoming TG26 Projects

At the Brighton Meeting, a number of projects were identified and commitments made to undertake them. These include the following projects with the teams of members working on them and Karel Dekker has compiled a succinct account of what each entails and equally importantly, what are the expected deliverables.

- **Open Building Database of Experts**

Karel Dekker

This project will produce a database of experts in various aspects of Open Building Implementation. Members of the Task Group will be included according to their specific expertise, region, and experience in research, design and engineering practice, construction management, product development, manufacturing, education for Open Building and other areas of professional knowledge and skill.

This is a continuing project with the results included in the group's web site at www.decco.nl/obi

- **Open Building Life Cycle Costs and Sustainability**

Richard Moseley, Nils Larsson, Tomonari Yashiro, Karel Dekker

This project will build on the work started by Nils Larsson of Canmet on the sustainability value of Open Building. The project group, which includes members from the UK, the Netherlands, Denmark and Japan, will develop a range of Open Building assumptions that can be quantified and fed into national housing whole-life cost models. These will include the potential advantages of accessible and adaptable subsystems in long-term maintenance and renovation.

A report of the Group is planned for 2001.

- **Open Building and Performance Based Construction**

Rob Geraedts, Ib Steen Olsen, Frits Scheublin

Performance Specifications

Performance specifications are an important tool for Open Building. They are necessary for the fundamental description of user demands on the different decision levels. They are also necessary for the assessment of the market supply on the different levels, from a building and its components to the different products. The proposed qualities also have to be weighted against the projected costs. Producers of construction components are stimulated to develop general products (not bound to a specific project), thus stimulating innovation in the construction industry.

OB & PS Research Project TG26

The principles of Open Building, like the use of different decision and plan levels and the flexibility of process and product according to rapidly changing user demands, form the framework of a new research project of CIB TG26: Open Building & Performance Specification (OB & PS).

The initiative for this project was taken in the CIB Conference in September 1999 in Brighton, UK. The research efforts of TG26 and W060 - Performance Specifications in Buildings will be combined in this project. Project leader of the OB & PS research project will be TG26 member Rob Geraedts. There will be a strong working relation with George Ang, Coordinator of W060.

Objective

The objective is the development of a decision making tool that deals with performance specification of the user demands on the different decision levels on the one hand (tissue level, base building or support level and infill or fit-out level), and with the assessment of the market supply on the different plan levels

(urban plan, building plan, unit plan, building components) on the other hand.

Results

The results of the research project will be described in a report and form the frame of the performance specification of a decision making tool that can be computerised. The results of the research project will be published in a paper and presented at the CIB Conference in Wellington 2001.

- **International Inventory and Analysis of Fit-Out Systems**

Stephen Kendall, Rob Geraedts

With the recently published book RESIDENTIAL OPEN BUILDING (E&FN Spon, 1999) as a starting point, this study will broaden the scope of investigation and analysis of products and processes at the fit-out or infill level. It will include both residential as well as office and retail and other kinds of uses. The scope of the study is international.

The study will include chapters on the basic principles of levels with emphasis on the fit-out level and further levels within it, the reasons for the growth of the fit-out level, individual country reports, and a catalogue of comprehensive fit-out systems and products. It will also include a matrix of infill or fit-out technology characteristics as a basis for evaluation.

This project is projected to be completed by Autumn 2001, and to be available in a book or monograph.

- **International Developments in Education for Open Building**

Stephen Kendall

There is an increased demand for experts who understand how to design, build and manage built facilities that have planned capacity for change. There is some evidence that educational institutions have difficulty in shifting to this reality. Nevertheless, some experience has been gained in teaching for open building. These experiences will be presented in this study.

This project will discuss the background in which this shift is occurring and the barriers to it, on an international level. It will also bring together examples of course structures and the results of teaching in which open building is the central theme, drawn from countries where members of TG26 are active.

This project will be completed following the International TG26 Conference on the same theme, scheduled to be held in Spring 2002.

- **Regeneration of Large Housing Estates**

Seiji Sawada, Nils Larsson, Ib Steen Olsen, Ulpu Tiuri

The term "large housing estates" refers to housing estates built during the economic boom after World War II to cope with the surge in urban population. Referred to as "mass housing", these housing estates are rapidly deteriorating after 40-odd years, and are becoming increasingly incapable of accommodating a modern lifestyle. The Open Building concept can offer valuable insights and useful methods for the comprehensive task of rehabilitation and revitalising these communities while renovating the residential environments.

Actions

Based on this understanding, an international workshop "Plattenspiele II" was organised in May, 1999 by EXPO 2000 Sachsen-Anhalt GmbH in collaboration with CIB TG26 to study the Open Building concept and the refurbishment of Panel Housing Estates in Eastern and Central Europe. Several follow-up activities have been put in motion:

1) Publishing a special issue of Open House International covering the Workshop.

2) Planning for an international Workshop to materialise the issues will be organised in Berlin in 2000 with the following objectives:

a. To inform professionals in architecture and urban design, as well as the building industry, about the problems concerning the regeneration of housing estates in Eastern and Central Europe.

b. To broaden the understanding of professionals and local parties involved in refurbishment in Germany and other EU countries, as well as in other countries, on the possibilities and provisions offered by the Open Building approach.

c. To organise demonstration projects where the Open Building concept is utilised in the implementation of Panel Housing refurbishment.

3) Planning for the evaluation of the results from the demonstration projects, and dissemination of its results to other regions in the world.

Future Meetings

These include:

- **International Conference**, Tokyo, 16-18 October 2000
- Annual Business Meeting and Local Symposium (Pre-Congress Symposium at UNITEC), Auckland, New Zealand, 29-30 March 2001
- CIB World Congress, Wellington, New Zealand, 2-6 April 2001
- Provisional International Conference, Mexico, Fall 2001
- Provisional International Conference, USA, Spring 2002

Stephen Kendall

