Reflections on Making Space 2016

People • Process • Product
About Making Space 2016

Making Space 2016 was an international design competition celebrating excellence in the design of spaces for children and young people.

It culminated in a two-day conference and awards dinner, held in Glasgow in November 2016.

Part of the Festival of Architecture 2016 and the Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design, the project was managed by Children in Scotland in association with the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS), with support from the Scottish Government, Architecture and Design Scotland, the Scottish Futures Trust, and Taylor Wimpey.

This publication reflects on the journey to Making Space 2016 — the conference and awards — hearing from the young people directly involved in the process.

It accompanies the Making Space 2016 retrospective exhibition displayed at The Lighthouse, Glasgow, from 2 - 30 March 2017.

For more information visit:

www.childreninscotland.org.uk/makingspace2016
www.foa2016.com
www.scotland.org/year-of-innovation-architecture-and-design
Ministerial Foreword

I am delighted to introduce this publication and to celebrate the achievements of some of the most innovative and exciting architects and designers as they work to create ambitious yet practical spaces for children, young people and communities to use.

Learners are at the heart of Curriculum for Excellence, and where young people learn is every bit as important as how they learn.

Great design, therefore, has a huge part to play in improving the learning, play and living experiences of young people and in supporting them to become active responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to their education, their school and the world they grow up in.

The Making Space 2016 programme was a key part of the Festival of Architecture and the Year of Innovation Architecture and Design, encouraging and supporting dialogue on what makes a great space in which to learn, live and play, and challenging architects and planners to listen to the voices of children and young people when designing new spaces that they will use.

I am grateful to Children in Scotland for developing and managing the Making Space 2016 programme, and to all the sponsors and supporters who enabled its success.

Fiona Hyslop,
Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs
The Scottish Government

Fiona Hyslop
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The Making Space 2016 Awards: the process

The participation and engagement element of Making Space 2016 was all about ensuring young people had a chance to share their views and input into what made a space appealing and effective for them.

Pupils from St John’s RC Academy in Perth worked with professional architects and mentors from Stone Opera throughout. Ranging in age from P6 to S6, some also sat on our young people’s judging panel, contributing to discussion and ultimately helping to decide the final winner.

Pupils Emilia, Fergus, Keiran, Ann, Ara, Sean, Tom, Kofi, Claudia and Caitlin share their experience:

“We were involved in two judging sessions. In the first session we collaborated with the architects to create success criteria to help us observe and judge the entries effectively. We considered various points such as aesthetics, suitability for use, sense of place and creativity of the designer. In the second session we split into groups of mixed ages to narrow our entries into a shortlist for each category using the success criteria as a guide.

“We presented our opinions and received comments from the architects. For some people, this was a nerve-wracking experience. But as we progressed and started discussing the designs, we became more comfortable and were encouraged to express our opinions more confidently.”
They continued:

“We found it interesting to hear from architects and to find out that architecture has its own language. We now have new words to describe buildings and can understand how varied spaces can be.

“Some of us also changed our perception of architects. At first we thought they would be eccentric, formal and intimidating. However, we found them to be approachable and down to earth!

“We think it is important to have children involved in designing spaces as you get their opinions and not just adults’ views. Children may have very different views on buildings.

“As you grow up you limit yourself to logical things and this can restrict your imagination; children don’t do this so much. Architects might also be thinking of big stuff and forget the importance of little things.

“We have learned that working with different age groups has helped us to view other people’s perspectives. Group presentations boosted our confidence and expanded our overall knowledge of architecture and now we look at buildings differently.

“One member of our team felt he’d learned about being confident and being able to have a say.”
The Making Space 2016 awards: the winners

The young people collaborated with a panel of architectural professionals to choose the winners in each of the four categories of Health, Home, Learning and Play. A fifth category, Our Space, was decided by public vote.

The winners were announced at a parkling awards ceremony, hosted by designer, writer and TV personality Charlie Luxton.
Health

Shortlist:
- Brothock Bridge Dental Surgery, Arbroath (Voigt Partnership Limited)
- Camden Active Spaces, London (Wayward, Erect Architecture and LUC)
- Windmill Community Campus, Kirkcaldy, Fife

Winning Entry: Camden Active Spaces, London (Wayward, Erect Architecture and LUC)

Commissioned by Camden Council, Active Spaces is a pilot project aimed at addressing the borough’s childhood obesity rates, which are amongst the worst in London.

Wayward, Erect Architecture and LUC worked with seven Camden schools to design physically challenging and imaginatively stimulating play spaces for a range of age groups from infant to secondary. The facilities are also intended for use outside school hours by the local community.

Why it was chosen as the winner by the young people’s panel

They said: “Camden Active Spaces, based in London, was a favourite with the group. We really liked how the structures are complex but safe for children to play on. We liked the use of shapes, which were jagged, uneven and creative. We also felt the use of primary colours made the building less intimidating for children.”
Home

Shortlist:
- The Ramp House, Portobello (Chambers Macmillan Architects)
- Bramble Cottage, Angus (Angus Council)
- Tymianek Family Café, Poland (mode:lina™ architekci)

Winning Entry: The Ramp House, Portobello (Chambers Macmillan Architects)

The ambition behind the Ramp House was to design and build a family home for a girl who is a wheelchair user, enabling her to lead a barrier-free, included life.

The design of the house made a significant difference to the everyday life of the family: for a child who cannot move around independently, the connectivity of the spaces becomes all the more important. All family members, including children, were involved in the design process. This design proves accessibility does not need to be about constrictions, but can be a delight.

Why it was chosen as the winner by the young people’s panel

They said: “The winner of the Home category, The Ramp House, was an amazing house that had been built for a family from Edinburgh whose child is disabled. It was very homely with different personal touches. The use of light was also very clever with large windows and enough light sources to illuminate the house.”
Learning

Shortlist:

• Central Library – Children’s Library, Edinburgh
• Holding Innocence (Design School), Hong Kong (Nelca Wan Chi Yuen)
• The Soyoo Joyful Growth Centre, Beijing (Crossboundaries)

Winning Entry: The Soyoo Joyful Growth Centre in Beijing (Crossboundaries)

Soyoo Joyful Growth Centre is a children’s facility in China. To house Soyoo, Crossboundaries revitalised a building that had been unused for 10 years, implementing a design which included architectural adjustments, interior, façade and landscape. The facility inspires China’s next generation to freely explore and to discover their skills.

Why it was chosen as the winner by the young people’s panel

They said: “The Learning category winner was The Soyoo Joyful Growth Centre in Beijing. We thought it looked fun, mystical and colourful. Ara said: “I like the use of colours, it has complementary colours and unique use of shapes.” Caitlin voted for the building because she liked all the different colours and the ‘gradient façade’ and because it looked playful, like the children’s game Kerplunk!”

Discussing the building also raised some thought-provoking questions about the design. For example, Emilia thought that “the light wouldn’t be as natural in the middle, since windows are only on the façade” though the group still felt this was the strongest entry in the Learning category.
Young people from the judging panel announce the winner of the Learning category.
Photography © Becky Duncan / Open Aye Ltd
Play

Shortlist:
- Adventure Cove @ Culzean Castle, Ayrshire (Capco)
- Between the Port and the Sea, Poland (Mio Design Studio – Anna Maraj)
- Lycée Français Charles de Gaulle de Londres, South Kensington, London (Wayward London Ltd)
- Pollokshields Playhouse – #TinkerTown (City of Play)

 Winning Entry: Adventure Cove @ Culzean Castle

The National Trust for Scotland hoped to offer a stimulating and participative learning experience at Culzean Castle. They wanted to develop a playscape that encompassed, engaged with and reflected the historical elements, creating a ‘hub’ for families. They sought to create an ‘Adventure Destination’, attracting family groups to explore, play and have fun. Building on the creativity within the existing landscape, the playscape had to indulge the visitors’ imaginations with an exciting and engaging offer.

Why it was chosen as the winner by the young people’s panel

They said: “Adventure Cove @ Culzean Castle in Ayrshire was the winner in the Play category. We thought it looked like it would be interesting for the children because of the natural materials and also the unique use of shapes. It is really good how it is like a fantasy castle, which would be really fun for the children. Its use of unique shapes gives children more places to play.”
Our Space

Shortlist:

- Brothock Bridge Dental Surgery, Arbroath (Voigt Partnership Limited)
- Camden Active Spaces, London (Wayward, Erect Architecture and LUC)
- The Leaving Care Team Office, Falkirk Council
- The Muirhouse Avenue Play Space and Tyre Amphitheatre (Centipede Project), Edinburgh
- The Speech Language Communication Company, Dundee

Winning Entry (by public vote):
The Muirhouse Avenue Play Space and Tyre Amphitheatre

The Muirhouse Avenue Play Space and Amphitheatre, created by The Old Kirk and St Andrews Church with North Edinburgh Arts, was developed following local consultation to construct a play area and community growing beds. Children of all ages and their families use the space developed, with the site near the local primary school and surrounded by houses. The site is temporary pending construction of housing in 2018.
Delegates enjoy the awards ceremony, held at the Royal Concert Hall, Glasgow on Monday 28 November 2016.
Making Space Conference
Monday 28 November - Tuesday 29 November 2016

Over the two-day conference, an international delegation had the chance to share, discuss and see a range of diverse examples of inspiring and innovative places and spaces, designed to provide ‘good environments’ for learning and leisure.

As part of the conference programme, delegates went on practical study visits, which allowed them to explore places and spaces across Scotland that were created with children, young people and families in mind.

On day two of the conference, delegates had the chance to listen to, and engage with, architects and designers responsible for spaces that have received international recognition, including Japanese architect Takaharu Tezuka who has won worldwide acclaim for his Fuji Kindergarten in Tokyo. The school was the focus of a 2014 TED Talk, delivered by Professor Tezuka entitled The Best Kindergarten You’ve Ever Seen. The talk is widely cited worldwide as inspiration for the design of spaces for young children and has been viewed more than 700,000 times on YouTube.

“Making design is just like breathing air for me, it’s a part of my life all the time”
Professor Takaharu Tezuka

Images courtesy © Becky Duncan / Open Aye Ltd
As part of the conference, the young people from St John’s RC Academy in Perth were invited to attend and contribute. They told us:

“We were all really excited about attending the Making Space 2016 conference. We all had different roles on the day including writers, social reporters and promoters. We had a special area in the conference where we could invite delegates and speakers to come and talk to us and share their thoughts on the day.

“We created a mascot called the Fergus the Bot to go and interview delegates. We spoke to a lot of people including: David Dunbar, Chair of the Festival of Architecture 2016; Professor Takaharu Tezuka, Tezuka Architects as well as Daniel McKendry and Morag Bain, both from Architecture and Design Scotland.

“Here are a few of our favourite things from the event:

- Fergus the Bot
- Filming and interviewing lots of interesting people
- Judging the winning entries
- The awards dinner
- Doing a speech on stage!

“The best bits about being a part of Making Space 2016 were being able to interact with architects and getting to understand how much work they put into their jobs. It was also really nice to be able to spend time with different year groups in my school that have the same interests as there are not a lot of opportunities to do that within the school.

“On reflection, this was a very valuable experience for all of us and one that we will remember for a long time.”

“[As a result of this experience] many of us are now actively considering a career in architecture!”

Young participant from St John’s RC Academy, Perth
Reflections

The young people who were involved in the process of Making Space 2016 reflect on how they feel having participated. They said:

“When we discussed the Soyoo Joyful Growth Centre, we imagined ourselves in that space to further extend our knowledge and create accurate judgment. Everyone imagined themselves swinging on the circular chairs and walking through the green and red room; we commented how it appeared humid and fun as if we were playing laser tag.

Caitlin said: “I’ve realised what it takes to create a certain atmosphere in a building as there are lots of things that we identified in the success criteria which contribute to it. I hope this will help me in my future of architecture and if I am ever creating a space for children I will be able to evaluate it through different ages groups instead of having a fixed mindset.”

Here’s a final thought from Tom: “Looking back on the day, I think about how I see the world of architecture differently. Like how whenever I see a building I think about whether or not it meets that success criteria. This is good though. It is a good thing to see the world like this, as it will help you in life no matter what job you take.”

“Whenever I see a building [now], I think about whether or not it meets the [Making Space 2016] success criteria. This is good though. It is a good thing to see the world like this.”

Young participant from St John’s RC Academy, Perth