Editorial

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Having taken over as Honorary Editor and Chair of the Editorial Advisory Panel in March I would like to start by thanking my predecessor, Dr Susan Parham, for the time and longstanding commitment she has given to *Urban Design and Planning* over the last four years. This early de-facto six-month leadership position was very helpful in two ways. First, it provided a reasonable time period for me to refine the aims and scope of the journal in line with my new vision plan, and the restructuring of the journal in terms of a new editorial board and reviewers who have been very supportive to the work of the journal. Second, it enabled me to familiarise myself with the new article management system. The new journal's vision provides an inter disciplinary platform for critical discussion and debate that aim to address the complex nature of urban design and planning, and explore its multiple socio-cultural, physical, morphological, economic and environmental dimensions. It offers a valuable resource for all those concerned with the quality of the built environment such as urban designers, urbanists, architects, planners, landscape architects, and academic scholars involved in architectural and planning research, education and practice. Topics covered by the journal sit at the intersection of disciplines (sustainability, urbanism, urban design, planning, architecture, and landscape architecture); the intersection of spatial scales including their core and periphery (Cities, Neighbourhoods, Streets, and Public Spaces); and at the intersection of theoretical and contemporary thoughts, policies, practices and applications in urban design and planning. Bearing these three intersections in mind and with a new dynamic to the journal, I have brought together over 45 new international Associate Editors to the [Editorial Panel](#) of the journal from well-known institutions across academia and industry. Also, we are thrilled to confirm that for the first time 30% of the associate editors are established international female academics and we are committed to diversity in all its forms.

One feature of the journal is special and themed issues, and we have a number of these in preparation. However, any recommendations for future themes in line with the journal new vision plan would be appreciatively received. Recently, there are greater numbers of papers submitted to journals and there is now a steady inflow of papers that mean we can become more vigilant to ensure an even higher standard quality of papers. As Honorary Editor I would welcome any ideas or suggestions might be introduced by readers and would encourage you to contact me directly using (h.alwaer@dundee.ac.uk).

This issue presents three papers that represent a range of topics. The first paper (MacLean, and Salama, 2021) examines key indicators which impact quality of urban life (QoUL) in three heterogeneous neighbourhoods in Malawi's capital city from the perspective

of the residents. The study contributes to the ongoing discourse of QoUL research, decision making and practice from two angles: (a) guiding researchers and practitioners through academic research and evidence-based neighbourhood design and (b) to policy makers through the development of research-informed urban policies and aiding in the resolution of urban issues in the case-study neighbourhoods, and eventually to the city at large.

The second paper (Mirzahosseini, *et al.*, 2021) outlines plausible Transit-oriented development (TOD) locations through three complementary steps: first, the saturated links of network are investigated by traffic assignment which were 12 zones; second, the cross points of high demand for public transport stations and top saturated links are considered and third, the three essential criteria of density, diversity and distance (3Ds) are calculated for each of the selected stations to rank them by the analytical hierarchy process method. The paper promotes a shift from private cars and increases accessibility by finding mass transit stations' intersections.

The final paper (Karandeev, *et al.*, 2021) differs from the focus of the other papers, that explains a methodology of assessing the urban public spaces using three-dimensional mapping, data collected through remote sensing and field research as well as a questionnaire that included a comprehensive score for a small town in the Lipetsk Region. One of the distinctive factors that is confirmed in this research is the complete absence of infrastructure for bicycle use in all four towns studies in the paper, including the town of Usman' that boasts of favourable flat terrain. Also, an additional remarkable point worth mentioning is scarcity of parks, squares and public spaces, or their poor condition and absence of pedestrian access to them.

Last but not least, I hope you find these papers stimulating and enlightening. As stated earlier, I would welcome any comments or suggestion on this issue or any related matters to the journal more generally.

REFERENCES

- Karandeev A, Sedykh O and Yartseva E (2021) Assessing landscape design of small towns in Russia. *Urban Design and Planning* **174**(3): 118–130, <https://doi.org/10.1680/jurdp.20.00078>.
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