

## The impact of Inclusive Design for Getting Outdoors: How has our work influenced the future of outdoor environments?

I'DGO's aim is to influence age-friendly design approaches at a range of scales, from the places in and around people's homes, to local neighbourhoods and wider urban environments. While work is ongoing on the second phase of our research, the findings from our first studies have already had a significant impact on the decision makers and designers who shape the world around us. The stories below detail how our work has been cited in policy, strategy and guidance, both nationally and internationally, and how we have worked directly with professionals to translate evidence into practice. They tell too of the people for whom our research matters most; older people and those who care for them.

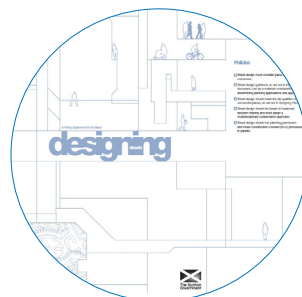
### 'Real world' citations and recommendations

Since 2007, we have been developing a series of guidance leaflets on how to design streets, parks and public open spaces with older people in mind. Collectively, these practical design guides are one of only two such sources referenced in the World Health Organization's international guide to creating **Global Age-Friendly Cities** (2007). We have been cited in national planning guidance by both the Scottish and Welsh Governments and in the cross-departmental UK **National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society** (2008). We are also described as a "very significant source of research and guidance" in **Lifetime Neighbourhoods** (2011) by the UK Department of Communities and Local Government, particularly with regards to evidence on walkable environments, shared spaces and greenspace.

We are committed to the 'trickling down' of policy to Local Authority and practitioner level, with an emphasis on delivery. We are cited in **Homes for our Old Age: Independent Living by Design** by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and the Scottish Association of Building Standards Managers' **Inclusive Design Handbook**. Our work on 'enabling' features in the streetscape has been used by the UK Department for Transport (DfT) in its Local Transport Note on **Shared Spaces** (1/11, October 2011) and the forthcoming LTN, **Shared Use Routes for Pedestrians and Cyclists**. In June 2011, we were referenced in the Age UK publication, **Pride of Place**; a call for local councillors to get involved in improving neighbourhoods for older people.

### Consultations

By invitation, we have consulted on the Scottish Government's Planning Policy document, **Designing Streets** (2010), the Government Office for Science Foresight Report, **Making the Most of Ourselves in the 21st Century: the Effect of the Physical Environment on Mental Wellbeing** (2008), and the **Bishop Review on the Future of Design in the Built Environment**, published by The Design Council / CABE in October 2011. We have contributed to a comprehensive evidence review by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE), which is developing public health guidance on local measures to promote walking and cycling. Working directly with Local Authority officers, we have advised on a 'streetscape design manual' for the London Borough of Southwark, the detailed design of pedestrian crossing facilities for Dorset County Council's **Specification for New Streets** (September 2011) and the development of guidelines by SaMERU (Safer Mobility for Elderly Road Users). This is a pan-European alliance led by Southend-on-Sea Borough Council, which has recently implemented our recommendations on town centre wayfinding.



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### Task groups and expert panels

We have spoken at a Ministerial Roundtable, hosted by Baroness Andrews, on ***Delivering Lifetime Neighbourhoods and Inclusive Eco-towns*** and an expert debate on ***Localism and Lifetime Neighbourhoods***, chaired by Baroness Greengross and organised by ILC-UK, publisher of the resultant report and thinkpiece in March 2011. We also sit on a number of task groups, including the Royal Town Planning Institute's ***Quality and Density Task Group***, the Town and Country Planning Association's ***Eco-towns Housing and Inclusive Design Panel***, the Scottish Government's ***Good Places, Better Health Evaluation Group*** and the ***Fairness in an Ageing Society Policy Forum: Living Well in Your Neighbourhood*** run jointly by the Fabian Society, Housing 21 and Counsel & Care.



1

### Training and awareness raising

Our events schedule has seen us work with a diverse range of professionals influenced by our findings, including the Association of Occupational Therapists of Ireland and the College of Occupational Therapists (UK), particularly its Specialist Sections on Older People and Housing. We have established strong links with older people's and inclusive access teams in the City Councils of Edinburgh, Manchester and Newcastle, the Greater London Authority, the London Borough of Camden and, through the SaMERU project, Southend on Sea, Lancashire, Modena (Italy) and Burgos (Spain). We have taken part in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) events for members of the Local Government Association, the Urban Design London Streets & Public Realm Network, Local Authority planners in Norfolk and Suffolk, Engineers Ireland and the National Register of Access Consultants. Having been consulted on ***Manual for Streets 2: Wider Application of the Principles*** (2010) by the Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation, we have subsequently presented at all four of the publication's UK national launch seminars in late 2010 (delegate attendance of 500+), spoken at a further two regional seminars and had six publications added to the Institute's paper-free technical library, the ***Transport Advice Portal*** ([www.tap.iht.org](http://www.tap.iht.org)).



2



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### Working with end users

Having taken part in the annual ***Kilburn Debates*** in both 2011 and 2012, we have established a close working relationship with the Kilburn Older Voices Exchange in London. We exhibited at the third ***Scottish Older People's Assembly*** in Edinburgh (October 2011) and have participated in a number of events involving the older people's steering group of ***A City for All Ages: Edinburgh's Joint Plan for Older People***; volunteers from which have kindly given of their time to be photographed by us. We organised a BBC radio walkalong with an older resident in Bradford as part of our media and public outreach activities at the ***British Science Festival 2011*** and count many older people's interest groups and advocates among our 750+ followers on Twitter. In May 2012, we will be co-hosting an event with Age Scotland and Planning Aid for Scotland as part of a nationwide campaign to end isolation through the effective engagement of older people in local decision-making.



4

We are delighted that, on the strength of our overall impact on policy makers and practitioners, we are featured as a case study in a major report on the value and impact of research – ***Making the Case for the Social Sciences: Ageing*** (front cover pictured right) – published collaboratively by the British Society of Gerontology, the Academy of Social Sciences & AgeUK and launched at a ministerial Q&A led by Baroness Greengross (Westminster, July 2010).





## The impact of Inclusive Design for Getting Outdoors: How has our work influenced the future of research?

I'DGO brings together a total of four universities and an international, multi-disciplinary team of researchers, many with a background in industry. Through a mixed-methods approach, engagement with a broad range of partners and emphasis on 'translating' evidence into real-world guidance, our project demonstrates the value of EPSRC-funded research and builds capacity for future collaborations across health and wellbeing, social inclusion and the built and natural environments. Our commitment to 'joined up thinking' extends to vehicles for knowledge transfer, particularly the 2,000+ member network, KT-EQUAL, of which Catharine Ward Thompson is a Co-Investigator. Highlighting research into Extending Quality Life, this project is also funded by the UK Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council.

### Bringing together international researchers

In June 2011, I'DGO hosted a three-day international conference on **Research into Inclusive Outdoor Environments for All**, attracting 120 delegates from 20 countries to the third in a series organised by lead partner, OPENspace. The event opened with a cross-consortia workshop for KT-EQUAL, on behalf of which I'DGO has also hosted seminars for over 100 participants, including **A Built Environment for All Ages** (2010), **An International Perspective on the Built Environment for an Ageing Population** (2011) and **The Competitive Advantage of Age Friendly Cities** (2011), the latter run jointly with the ActiveAge project and involving guest speakers from the UK and the Republic of Ireland. Links with Canadian gerontologists and policy makers have been formed and strengthened through **The Science of Age-Supportive Built Environments**, an Anglo-Canadian study tour of the UK supported by the High Commissions of Britain and Canada and hosted by I'DGO in Edinburgh (2010). Two years on, I'DGO team members have presented, by invitation, at a number of events in Canada, including a joint meeting of the CIHR - Institute of Aging and the Public Health Agency of Canada, **Fostering Knowledge Development and Exchange on Age-Supportive Communities** (Toronto, 2011), and the **Festival of International Conferences on Caregiving, Disability, Aging and Technology (FICCDAT)** (Toronto, 2011).



5



6

### Speaking on a global stage

Above and beyond the events I'DGO has hosted, our international knowledge transfer activity takes in events in Australia, Japan, China, the USA, Germany, Belgium, Éire, Italy, Iceland, Portugal, Denmark and Spain. Three of our researchers have taken part in the two-day **Healthy Ageing and the Physical Environment** workshop hosted by the Medical Research Council and the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council in co-operation with Tsinghua University (Beijing, 2010) and five at a major international conference on the impact of global change, **Vulnerability, Risk and Complexity**, organised by the International Association for People-Environment Studies (Leipzig, 2010). We have participated in the third international conference held by the International Association for Universal Design (Hamamatsu, 2010), addressed the Nordic Architectural Research Network, presented at **EDRA2011** (Chicago, 2011) and hosted a multi-disciplinary Chinese delegation exploring current trends and innovations in UK research into accessibility (Salford, 2010). We are proud that our workshop for the pan-European AENEAS network, who focus on Attaining Energy-Efficient Mobility in an Ageing Society, was rated the best and most useful of the organisation's training programme, which included events in Kraków, San Sebastián, Munich, Odense and Salzburg and concluded in a sell-out conference in Brussels in April 2011.



7



8

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### Building capacity and advising peers

Within the UK and Ireland, I'DGO has contributed to over fifty events aimed at sharing best practice among researchers, including KT-EQUAL workshops on...

***Research for Older People and those with a Disability*** (Manchester, 2010),

***From Ageing Research into Policy*** (London, 2010),

***Physical Activity Promotion: Blending Policy, Research and Practice*** (Bath, 2010),

***Qualitative Research Methods*** (Loughborough, 2010),

***Falls and Falls Prevention*** (Bath, 2010),

***Dementia: Innovative Approaches Towards a Better Quality of Life*** (Sheffield, 2011)

and ***Older People and Sight Loss*** (Glasgow, 2011).

We facilitated a session on evidence-based impact at the ***Enabling Health and Wellbeing in Later Life*** congress held by the Dementia Development Services Centre in Stirling (May 2011) and, with KT-EQUAL colleagues, at the two-day ***Ageing Globally - Ageing Locally*** conference in Dublin (November 2011), organised by the Centre for Ageing Research and Development in Ireland (CARDI). We have collaborated extensively with the British Society of Gerontology; contributing to its annual conference programme and writing for its journal, ***Generations Review***. We also sit on Advisory Groups for research projects in related fields, including a Lifelong Health and Wellbeing-funded study by University College London and the University of Hertfordshire to develop a multi-dimensional risk appraisal assessment system for older people (MRAO).

We look forward to the impact the project will continue to have following the launch of our second phase (I'DGO TOO) findings in Europe House, Headquarters of the European Commission and European Parliament in the UK, on 26th April 2012, in celebration of the European Year for Active Ageing.

