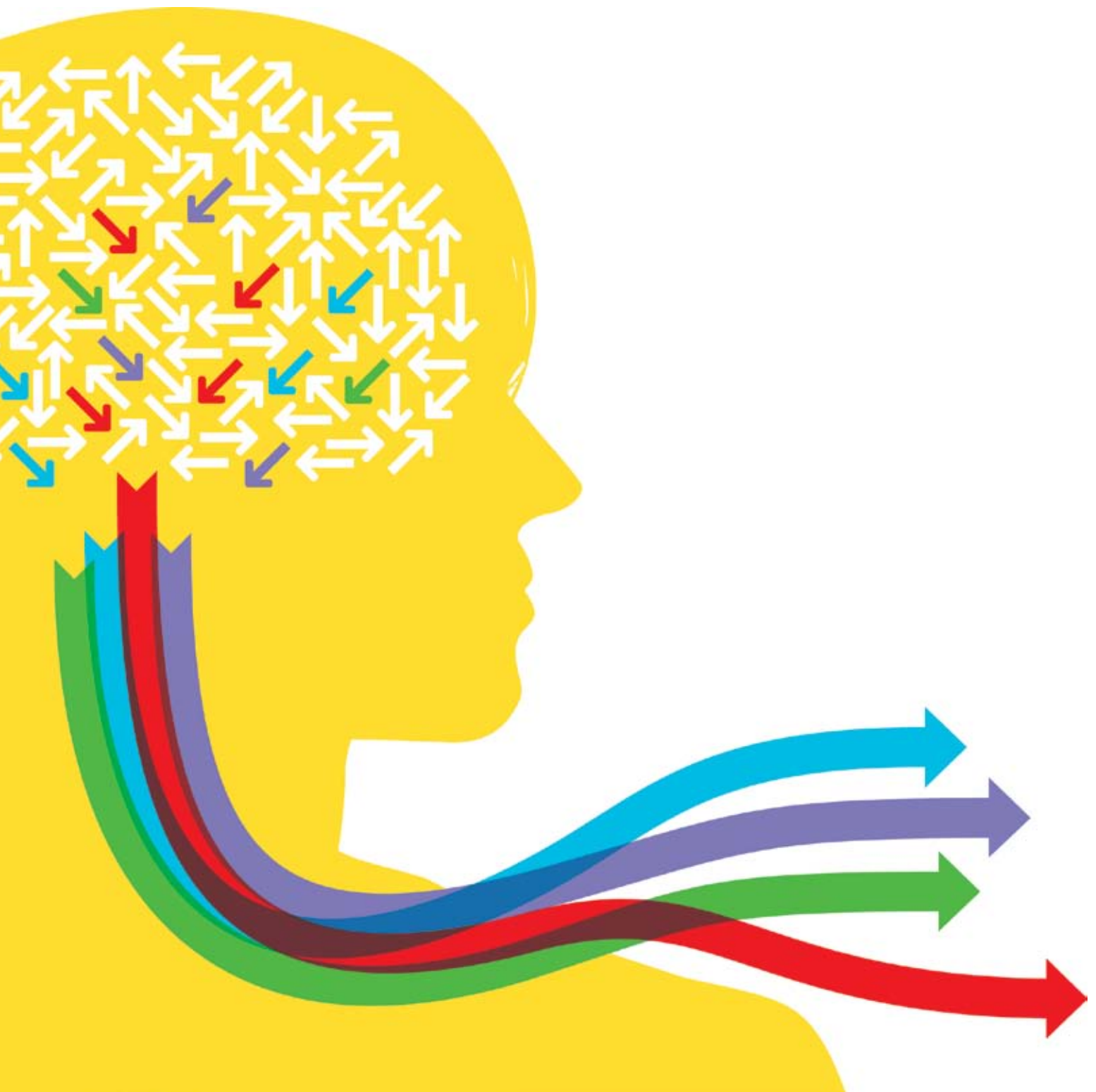


The power to transform



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About the Design Council

The Design Council enables people to use design to transform communities, business and the environment for the better.

As an enterprising charity, our work places design at the heart of creating value by stimulating innovation in business and public services, improving our built environment and tackling complex social issues.

We inspire new design thinking, encourage public debate and inform government policy to improve everyday life and help meet tomorrow's challenges today.

The power of design

Good design can deliver growth, sustainability, innovation and stronger communities.

Our role here at the Design Council is to enable people to use design in practical ways to transform communities, business and the environment for the better.

We achieve this by working collaboratively with our clients and partners – bringing the right people together to boost creativity, shift ways of thinking and translate ideas into real products, services and solutions that benefit everyone. We make sure every pound invested in design thinking pays back even more in supporting economic growth and social and environmental progress.

Here, we demonstrate how the transformative power of design makes a real impact, now and in the future. We show that good design creates things that are both beautiful and useful, and how design enriches our lives as well as meeting the challenges of the future.

“The role of design is to improve quality of life and, in challenging economic times, it can show people another way. Through innovation and creativity we can find tangible new solutions to everyday problems.”

Martin Temple CBE, Chairman of the Design Council

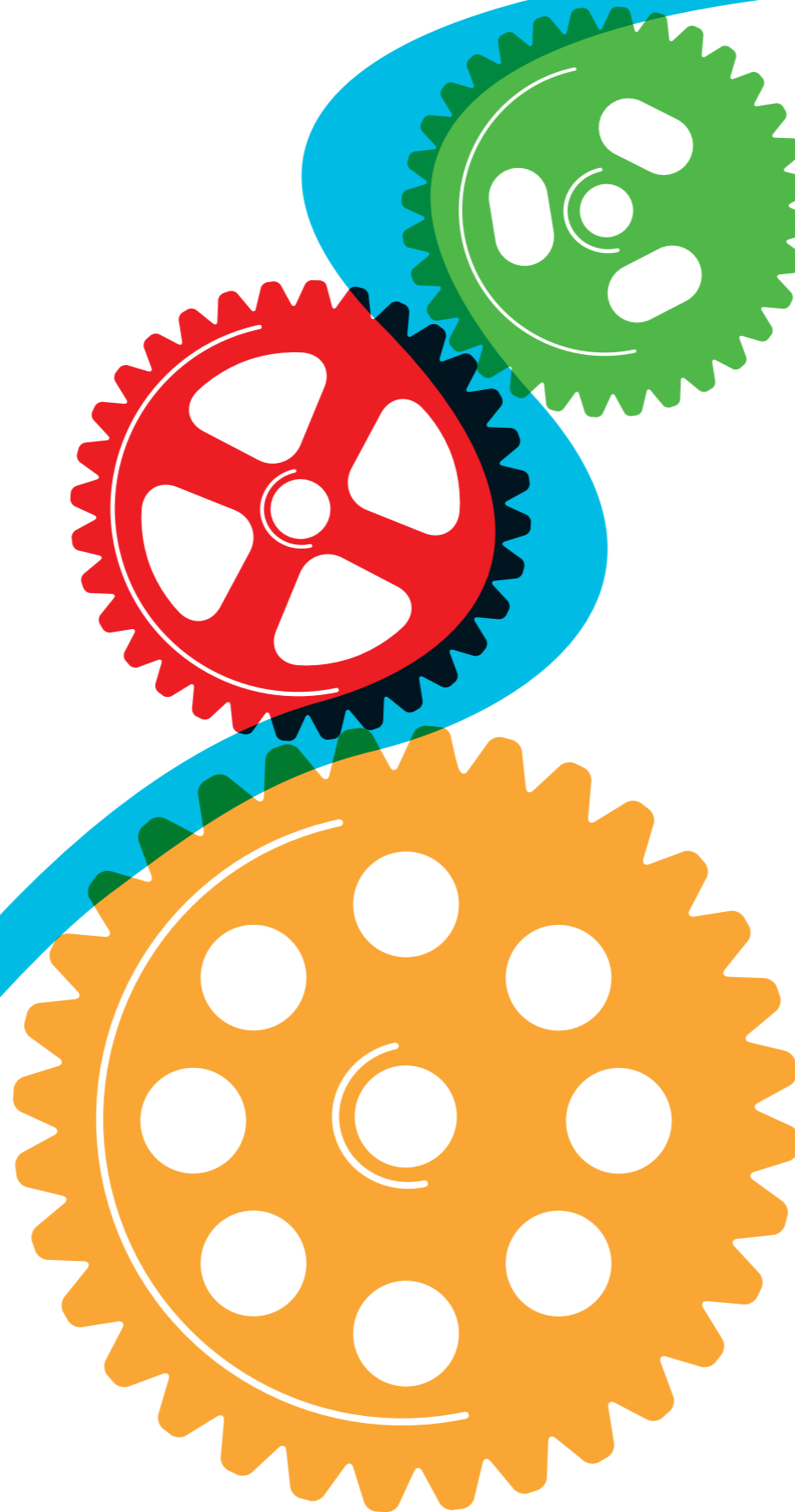


Stimulating growth

We help to grow businesses and translate ideas into products and services that generate economic and social value.

We work directly with businesses and public service providers and engage teams at the start of the project, so they fully understand how design can help them. Our support demonstrates the powerful effect of design on growth and efficiency now and generates a better understanding of the value it can add in the future.

Whether we're using design to improve business processes, develop new products and services or create a brand, our clients learn how design can help them improve efficiency and create sustainable growth.



Unlocking market advantage

Halifax-based business, James Heal, has a worldwide reputation for manufacturing testing instruments and materials for the textile industry. Exports account for 95% of turnover. Copycat products and price undercutting in the Far East were threatening the company's ambitions to remain in the UK. We helped them gain a competitive edge through strategic design.



“Until this point, we’d never seriously considered our brand or how to drive up its value. What happened next has had a fundamental effect on us.”

David Repper
Managing Director, James Heal

Design impact: Our team worked with James Heal, leading them through a tried and tested process to discover how applying the principles of quality design thinking to their product and their brand could give them market advantage. Guided by one of our Design Associates, Andy Cripps, the in-house team at James Heal developed new branding for their products. We also helped them to devise an industrial design initiative to improve their products functionality and make them harder to copy.

The results: James Heal has taken a leadership position in the market with a new world-class look and superior product performance.

37%

sales increase over three years

Creating new ways of developing young talent

There are a record number of young people not in education, employment or training and we are working with Nominet Trust to increase education and employment opportunities for young people.

Design impact: Our Working Well Design Challenge has made up to £50,000, and professional support available for three teams of designers and youth organisations. The task is to design, build and launch new digital products and services which help young people develop their talents and make a living.

“To create the right opportunities for young people, we urgently need fresh thinking and new solutions. Young people need products and services that help them prepare for, find and sustain employment. Digital technology allows us to explore new ways of helping them do just that in more meaningful and relevant ways.”

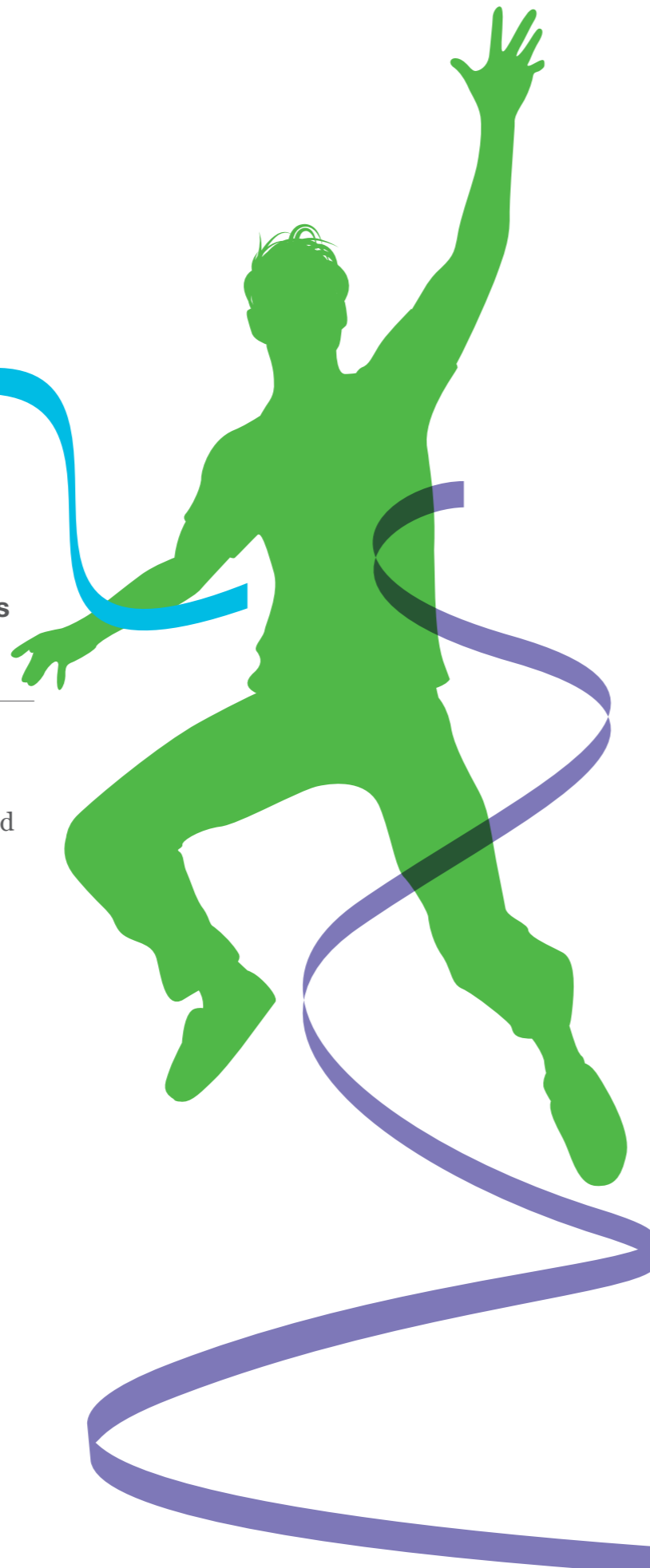
Annika Small
Chief Executive, Nominet Trust

Improving lives

We know that good design can improve people's health and quality of life, as well as creating products, services and places to enjoy.

We collaborate with others to put people at the heart of the design process – helping individuals learn new skills, inspiring innovative new products which benefit our ageing population and encouraging people to get involved in improving their neighbourhood.

We actively demonstrate that good design has the power to make us healthier and happier.



“Design isn't something to be scared of. It's just a new way of looking at things.”

Lindsey Craig
London Borough of Lewisham
Policy and Strategy Officer

Right: Sean Miller holds an ideas generation session with Lewisham staff



Service delivery efficiency savings of £350k in the first year

Better housing services

Lewisham Borough Council needed to ensure its customers could find support from its emergency housing service quickly and easily. The previous service was very rigid in its approach, resulting in unhappy customers and stressed staff. It had to adapt to meet better the needs of the people who required housing. Through design, a new way of thinking was introduced to change the way the space, the staff and the system for meeting customers worked.

Design impact: Design Associate, Sean Miller, used our people-centred design approach to solve the problem. Looking at the service from the users' point of view and adopting new and innovative techniques, such as video research and prototyping, helped Lewisham Borough Council to shape the service to be more customer-focused.

The results: Happier customers, reduced demand – leading to efficiency savings – and a real and positive impact on people's everyday lives. Staff morale is up and sickness leave down. And the change is sustainable, with skills and learnings from the project team having been transferred throughout the local authority service.



Above: The commode prototype designed by Pearson Lloyd

Cleaning up the NHS

Reducing the risk of infections in hospitals is a priority across the NHS. Hospitals need equipment and furniture that is easy to clean and use, while being cost effective and manageable for such a huge organisation. The Design Bugs Out challenge brought together designers, microbiologists, manufacturers, patients and frontline NHS staff to inspire new thinking and generate new solutions.

Design impact: We led a cohort of multi-disciplinary design teams, who co-designed a new suite of hospital furniture with NHS staff and patients, including cabinets, chairs, an over-bed table and a commode. Each of the new designs had to meet stringent clinical and commercial criteria, including cost, access and usability.

Existing hospital furniture tends to be made up of multiple parts, with complex junctions between different materials – this makes it difficult and time-consuming to clean. A simplified construction makes cleaning the new commode quicker and easier – aesthetic and functional changes also improve patient comfort and dignity.

The results: The new furniture designs have been tested and evaluated at eight NHS hospitals after undergoing rigorous assessments that replicated routine hospital cleaning procedures of typically contaminated hospital furniture. The commode is the best selling product and has sold over 2000 units since April 2010.



Stronger communities

Good design improves the buildings we live in, the open spaces we use and the neighbourhoods we call home.

We work with communities to help them create safer, more sustainable and better places to live. Our work puts local people centre stage, challenging and enabling them to take more control over their neighbourhood.

We enable people to have a vision for their community and then help them to get there.



“We feel that we can create a place that gives current and future residents a real sense of belonging.”

Rosemary
A long-time resident of Larner Road and campaigner for improvement

Left: A Cabe Built Environment Expert discussing estate design with Larner Road residents on an inspiring trip to see other schemes

Better homes for families

Larner Road, in the London Borough of Bexley, is one of the largest regeneration projects in London, where the social landlord Orbit Homes plans to replace six high-rise blocks with 540 family homes. The public spaces within the existing estate do not function well. Residents reported that they felt unsafe and had few opportunities to meet their neighbours.

Design impact: Our Cabe team worked with a group of Larner Road residents who are planning to stay on the estate. We introduced them to examples of well designed public space in London where attention to the simple things – like social seating areas – can make a place feel like a home. This helped the residents recognise how public space in the new development could form the heart of their community.

The results: Larner Road residents, who at the start of the project rated their design knowledge as limited, now feel increasingly positive, passionate and knowledgeable about their new neighbourhood and their role in shaping its future.



Above: Residents of Larner Road try out more natural solutions to public seating



Creating neighbourhoods for the future

Residents in Grovehill, Hemel Hempstead, are passionate about their community and have been working closely with Dacorum Borough Council and the Cabe team to develop a neighbourhood plan to shape the future of their area. They want new and improved homes and better community facilities for Grovehill.

We are working with local forum, Grovehill Future, on the development of its neighbourhood plan. Our Built Environment Experts are raising awareness and sharing knowledge about the impact of good design as well as holding design-led workshops to help shape the future of their neighbourhood.

“The design led workshops captured the interest and imagination of the group and gave them a flavour of what they could achieve for their neighbourhood. As a result the group is much more focussed and motivated.”

Dacorum Borough Council

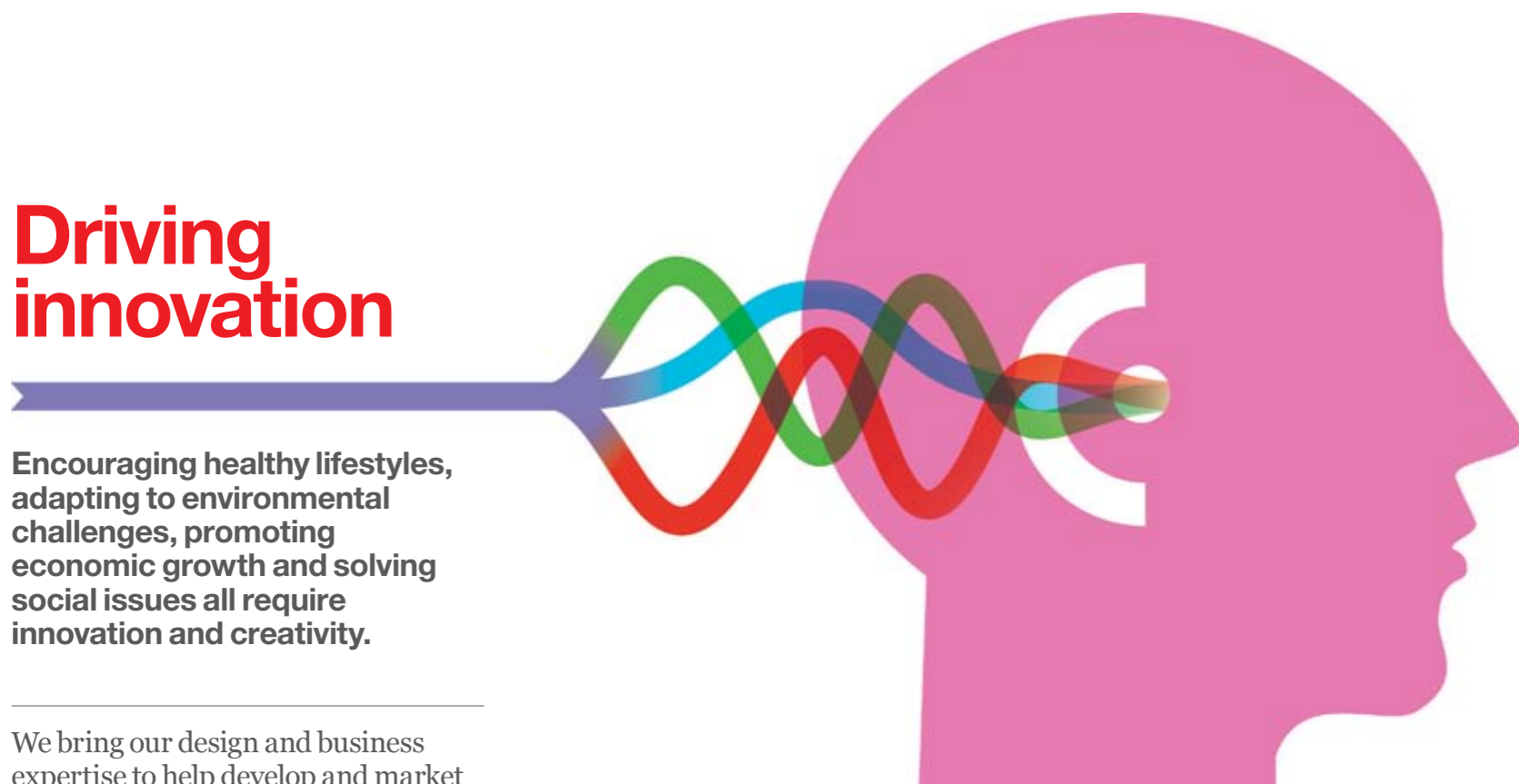


Driving innovation

Encouraging healthy lifestyles, adapting to environmental challenges, promoting economic growth and solving social issues all require innovation and creativity.

We bring our design and business expertise to help develop and market exciting, life changing, successful products and services.

We work with researchers, academics and entrepreneurs to understand and navigate the process for translating a great idea into something that can be taken to market. Some of our most impactful work has come from relationships with groundbreaking research teams changing people's lives through innovation.



LED Tinnitus technology

Our mentoring programme is funded by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), and links universities with designers to help find commercial applications for new technologies. This attracts investment and brings exciting new products to market.

The University of Leicester, working with Orthoscopies Limited, developed a technology to provide relief from the symptoms of tinnitus. This uses red, green and blue LEDs (light emitting diodes) tuned specifically to help each individual. Initial studies at Leicester have produced very promising results.

Right: Tinnitus Spectral Therapy technology

Relief for **40%** of tinnitus sufferers tested

Design impact: Paired with one of the Design Council's Design Associates, the university has continued developing the technology taking user needs into consideration. It is hoped that this will help accelerate this valuable device into the market place.



“Developing great ideas is only half the battle for universities. The hard part is showing how these ideas can work in practice. Innovate for Universities has helped universities commercialise their research.”

Tas Gohir
University of Leicester

Intelligent needle

Through our mentoring programme, Bristol University and Gloucester Royal Hospital were helped to bring their innovative Intelligent Needle product to market. This needle has the potential to quickly, accurately and cost effectively diagnose cancer when compared to current biopsy sampling.

Design impact: Our design and business understanding helped researchers identify and overcome barriers in turning their research project into a marketable proposition.



Shaping the future

Designing for the future is essential if we are to meet the challenges of an ageing population, environmental change and economic uncertainty.

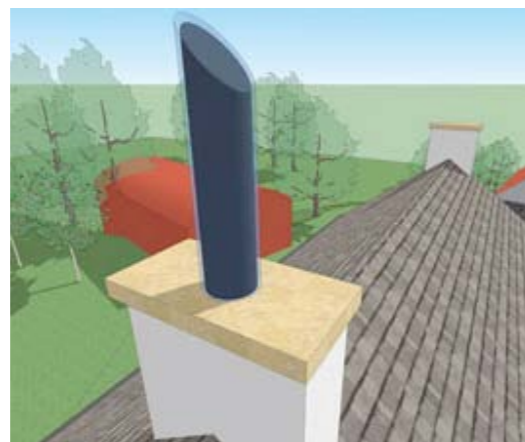
Our work helps “future proof” society through sharing, influencing and debating the role of design in solving tomorrow’s problems. We bring together exciting collaborations and new partnerships from different sectors to enable new thinking and build experience. We engage consumers, front-line staff and local communities who know their issues best. Our work provokes discussion, generates research and influences policy. By harnessing design, we can pioneer new ways of thinking and doing that address social, economic and environmental challenges now and for the future.

Making SolaCatcher commercial

SolaCatcher is an innovative, easy-to-install solar water heating solution developed by the University of Ulster. It collects solar energy, retains stored heat for longer and provides a shorter payback period than existing solar water heating systems.

The university has a fantastic, unique product, with the potential of being sold directly to consumers or to developers and local authority housing departments. This required questions to be addressed about how the product would be made and installed to make it as attractive as possible to potential customers.

Design impact: We worked with the university team to ensure it considered the appropriate product design routes and tested these with potential customers. We also helped the team develop their marketing plan which is now being implemented.



Above: A designer’s impression of the SolaCatcher on different roofs

“These innovative products have the potential to make a big difference to the quality of life of people with dementia and their carers. They could help people feel supported and enable them to live independently for longer.”

Jeremy Hughes
Chief Executive, Alzheimer’s Society

Rethinking life with dementia

Dementia is one of the biggest health and social care issues we face as the population ages. Alzheimer’s bodies report over 800,000 people living with the condition in the UK, with numbers expected to double in 30 years. Whilst research into effective treatments is progressing, radical new ways to improve the quality of life for those affected, whilst simultaneously reducing the burden and cost of care, are urgently needed. The Living Well With Dementia Challenge, in partnership with the Department of Health, brought together designers, innovators, service providers, healthcare experts and technologists to create practical product and service solutions.

Design impact: Guided by research and expert mentors, multidisciplinary teams were funded and supported to develop a range of concepts to serve people at or around the point of diagnosis. Working alongside those affected by dementia and their carers to co-design solutions, the five teams produced working prototypes that were launched to potential public and commercial partners.

The results: The resulting products and services include an aroma-emitting device to stimulate appetite and support healthy nutrition, a wristband personal alarm and monitoring system, and a new approach training assistance dogs to support people with dementia. They demonstrate the vast potential of innovative ideas in an under-served market and show how design can play a key role in confronting a major social challenge.

An independent audit report projects that, by helping people access better nutrition, personal security, shared care and more physical activity, these innovations could bring a social return of over £500 million, whilst the programme itself could generate £40 million of economic value.

All five prototypes will be further tested and developed with commercial partners with the aim of making them available as soon as possible.



How we work

We believe in the transformative power of design to change people's lives for the better. We are proud of the impact the Design Council has made over the last 60 years and excited about our future as an enterprising charity; leading, inspiring and influencing the use of design to improve everyday life. We work in a number of areas:

Challenges

Designing practical solutions to complex problems

“Great design can address complex problems in society – and our Challenges competitions deliver high quality, innovative and practical solutions.”

Mat Hunter, Chief Design Officer

Cabe

Creating better, more sustainable places

“Everything we do is about the design of the built environment; making accessible, sustainable and – above all – great places that people want to live and spend time in.”

Nahid Majid, Director

Leadership

Harnessing design to drive business growth and improve service efficiency

“We help businesses and public bodies realise the power of design to drive long term growth and improve efficiency. We show leaders how design can bring different parts of their organisation together to deliver great results.”

Ellie Runcie, Director

Insight

Leading and sharing the latest thinking on design

“We lead the way in generating evidence, building networks, and influencing policy to ensure that the benefits of great design are accessible to everyone.”

Tony Burton, Director

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