

Architecture &  
Design Scotland

Ailtearachd is Dealbhadh na h-Alba

# Corporate Plan 2021-24



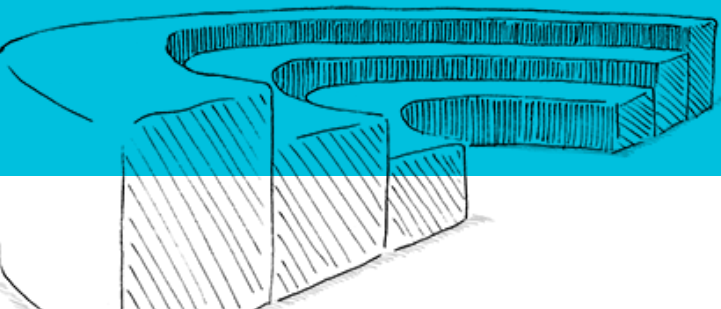
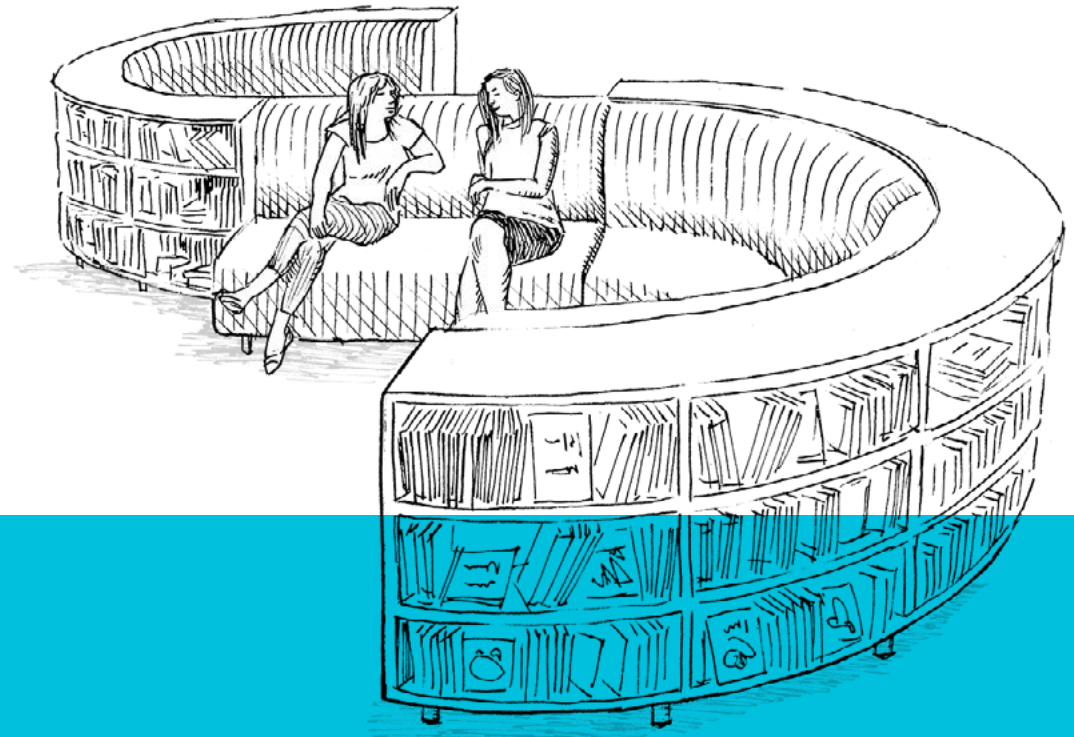




**Fiona Hyslop**  
Cabinet Secretary for  
Economy, Fair Work  
and Culture

“ Scotland’s efforts to recover from the global pandemic will rely on our ability to work together effectively, so I am delighted that Architecture & Design Scotland has chosen to focus its work on making this happen.

As our national champion for architecture and design, I see first hand how A&DS brings creativity and energy to everything they do. I would therefore encourage anyone with ambitions for their place to work with A&DS to help realise these.”



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# Architecture & Design Scotland

## Who we are

**We are Scotland's design champion.**

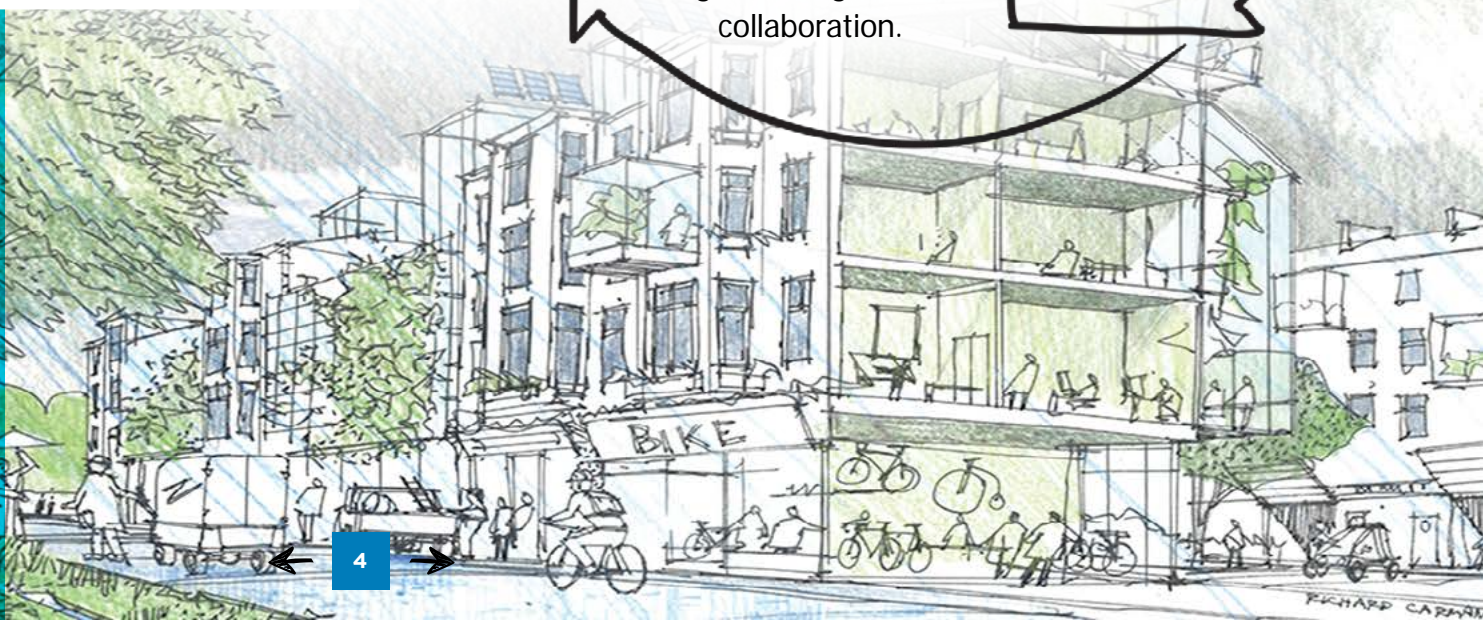
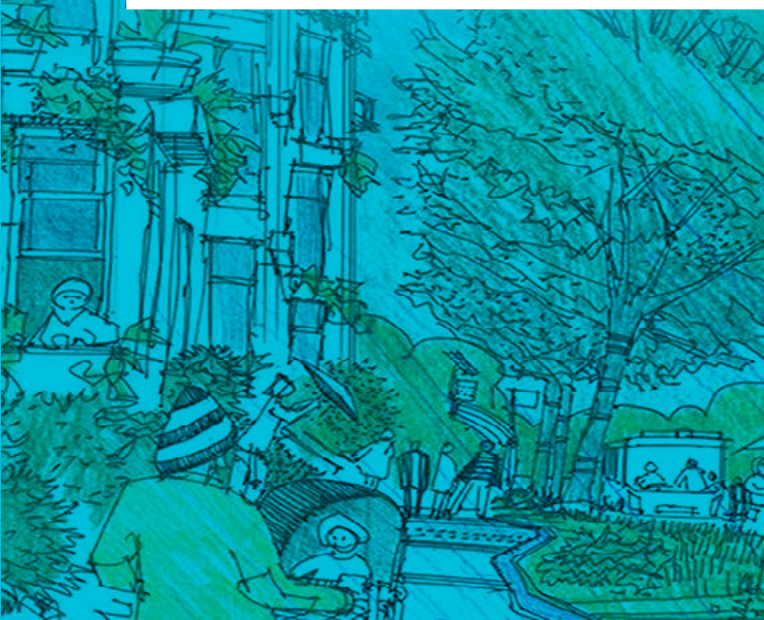
We believe in the power of design to improve people's lives. We bring people together to make better places for everyone.

## Our vision

**A Scotland whose places are healthy, sustainable and thriving,** where everyone works together to shape their future.

## Our aim

**To see the benefits of the Place Principle** become an everyday reality in the way Scotland's places are created, adapted and sustained.



# Introduction



**Ann Allen**  
Chair, A&DS

**There is no doubting the dramatic and varied impacts the Covid-19 pandemic has had on our lives. Amongst these has been a rethinking of what places – cities and towns, villages and townships, urban and rural – are for, how their quality impacts people’s lives and how they might change as the country begins its recovery.**

At Architecture and Design Scotland (A&DS) we are determined to play our part in putting people at the heart of this recovery and will work with our partners across Scotland to create the very best places for everyone.

At the same time, other challenges remain, including climate change, the housing crisis, inequality, a fragile rural economy and transforming the planning system. We are equally determined to help address these. In this way we will contribute to delivering the National Outcomes in the Scottish Government’s National Performance Framework and to implementing national policies including Creating Places: Scotland’s Policy for Architecture and Place, the Infrastructure Investment Plan, Scotland’s Climate Change Plan, the National Transport Strategy, Housing to 2040 and National Planning Framework 4.

Within this context we prepared our new, ten-year Strategy for 2021-31, which sets out an ambitious

and compelling vision for Scotland’s built environment over the next decade and guides the work within this Corporate Plan.

The ambition of our strategy is to see the transformation of how we design, plan and deliver our places. From our discussions with stakeholders, it is clear this supports others’ ambitions and I am very grateful to everyone who shared their thoughts as we shaped our programme. This plan articulates how we will deliver on this strategy over the next three years and sets out our priorities during this time.

I would also like to recognise the contribution of the staff and Board of A&DS whose commitment, expertise and passion are inspiring. It is my privilege to see at first hand the work they do and the difference this makes to so many lives. As an organisation, our ambition is to see the influence of that work extend across Scotland and in doing so, for us to bring to bear our belief in the value of design and the power of collaboration.

So, as we embark on an exciting and important journey, I look forward to working hard to promote the value of good design and its potential to transform people’s lives. I invite you to work with us to create great places for and by everyone.





# Context

## Our vision

**A Scotland whose places are healthy, sustainable and thriving, where everyone works together to shape their future.**

## Our aim

**Our aim for the next ten years is to see the benefits of the Place Principle become an everyday reality – for it to be the way buildings, spaces and places are routinely designed, created and sustained in Scotland.**

## The challenges

We prepared this Corporate Plan in the middle of an unprecedented global pandemic and the escalation of the climate emergency. Alongside these world-scale challenges are more local issues to tackle – decent housing for all, provision of high-quality greenspace, the regeneration of town centres and access to modern public services.

Now, as we look forward to recovery, we do so with a heightened awareness of both the importance of place and the focus it can provide in designing a better, fairer and more prosperous Scotland.

During lockdown, people became much more aware of their surroundings and how these affect their wellbeing. For some, this is driving a change in living patterns that may have a lasting impact on our urban and rural places. For others, it has highlighted the work still to be done to have neighbourhoods that provide everything needed for a healthy and fulfilling life.

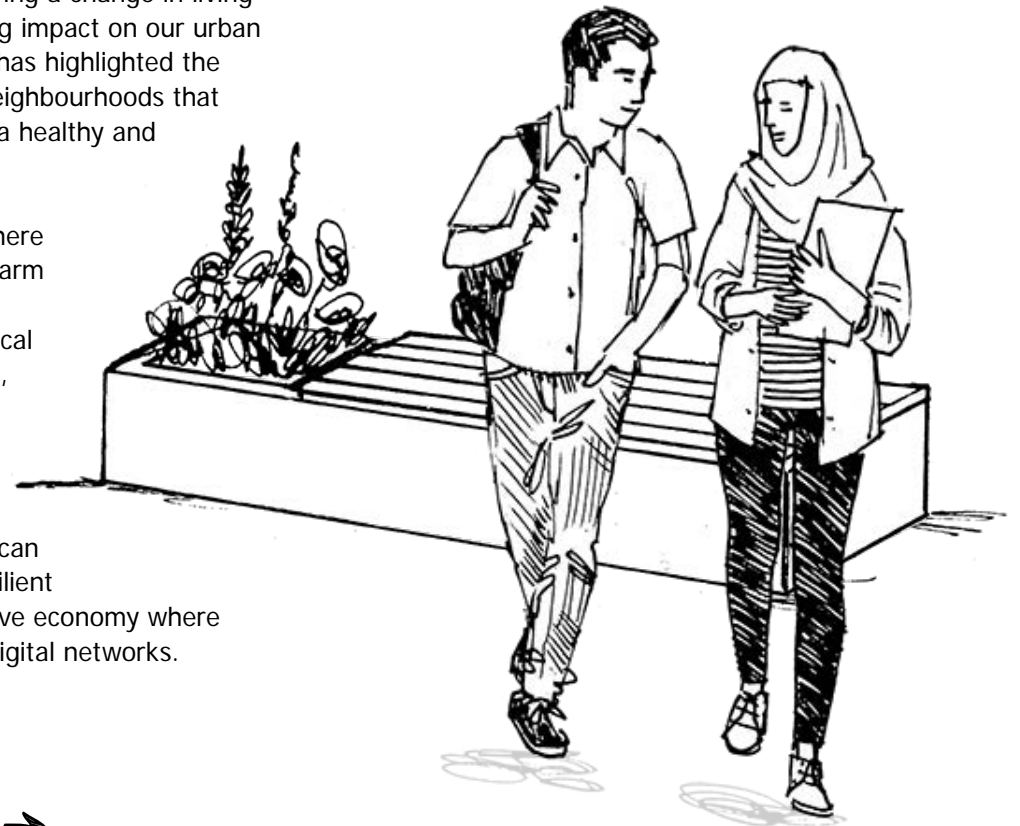
This means neighbourhoods where everyone has access to safe, warm and affordable homes; quality greenspace on the doorstep; local work and training opportunities, and infrastructure that enables active, sustainable travel.

This means places that promote health and wellbeing, can be zero-carbon and climate resilient while supporting a local, inclusive economy where people are well connected by digital networks.

## Our response

Our response to all of this is to support a whole-place collaborative approach to the way Scotland's places are planned, designed, delivered and sustained. This approach will lead to tangible improvements to the lives of communities and individuals across the country.

It will contribute to delivering the National Outcomes sought by the National Performance Framework and will support inclusive growth, long-term wellbeing and the green recovery. By putting this approach into practice in individual places and sharing the subsequent learning from across Scotland, we will make it possible for those benefits to be realised.



# Working together

## Our people

We are a small, committed team with a wide range of skills and knowledge. Everything we achieve relies on our people and we will invest in their wellbeing and development as the basis for our success.

## Our partners

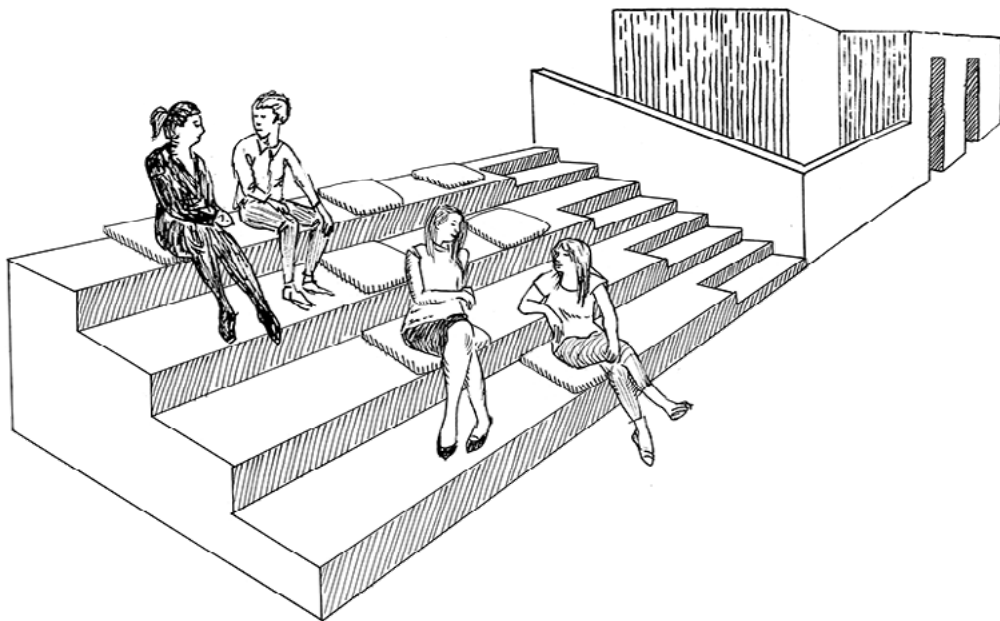
Whether it is designing a single building or planning the future of a whole settlement, success in the built environment relies above all on effective partnership and collaboration. For this reason, partnership and collaboration with stakeholders are fundamental to our approach.

This Corporate Plan is founded on conversations with our stakeholders, including Ministers and other decision makers. These conversations highlighted what stakeholders think is needed to make a whole-place approach the new 'business as usual'. They want us to provide thought leadership, offer direct advice, support collaboration, make the case for the

whole-place approach and ensure the wider changes needed to make this happen are understood.

The Scottish Government is a key partner in this and we will continue our close working relationship with colleagues in Health, Learning, Energy & Climate Change and Regeneration Directorates as well as with our lead sponsors in Planning and Architecture Division.

Working with other national agencies, we are developing new ways of working within planning and investment systems. These will ensure our collective expertise adds value to these systems and sets them in a whole-place perspective. In this way, development and investment plans can be rooted in their places, serve the needs of the communities they support and be a basis for delivery of much needed infrastructure.



## Our contribution

We have shown we add value by:

- bringing a range of perspectives together to broker change
- using design to make sense of complexity
- mapping the link between the nature of the physical environment and the experience of people who will use it.

This unique set of expertise can be invaluable to stakeholders, and drive real change in the relationship between Scotland's places and its people.

# How we believe our work will lead to change

## If we...

Champion the benefits of systems based on place collaboration

Begin by working with those who are open to lasting change

Support change on the ground and take learning from it

## and...

Share what we learn from specific projects with others across Scotland

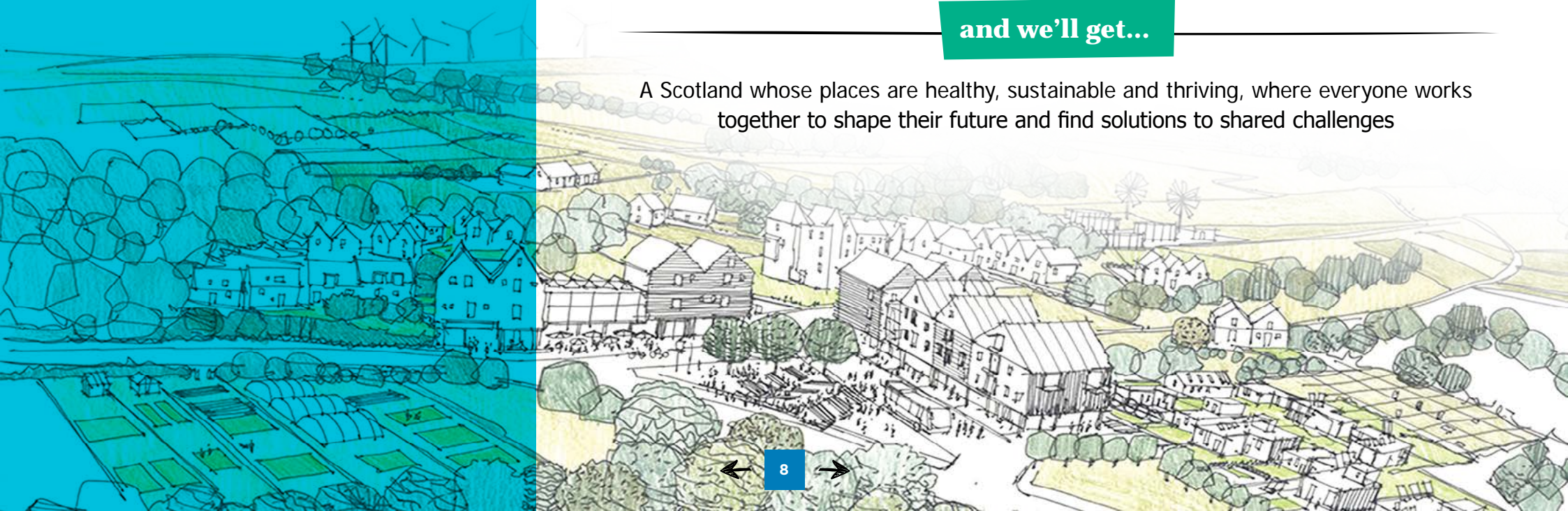
Champion the benefits of the Place Principle to a wide audience, including policy makers

## then...

A critical mass of people involved in planning, designing, delivering and sustaining Scotland's places will approach and do things in a way that makes the Place Principle an everyday reality

## and we'll get...

A Scotland whose places are healthy, sustainable and thriving, where everyone works together to shape their future and find solutions to shared challenges





# Corporate Plan for 2021-24

**This Corporate Plan is framed by our Strategy for 2021-31. The Strategy outlines how, over the next ten years, we will focus on embedding the Place Principle across Scotland by:**

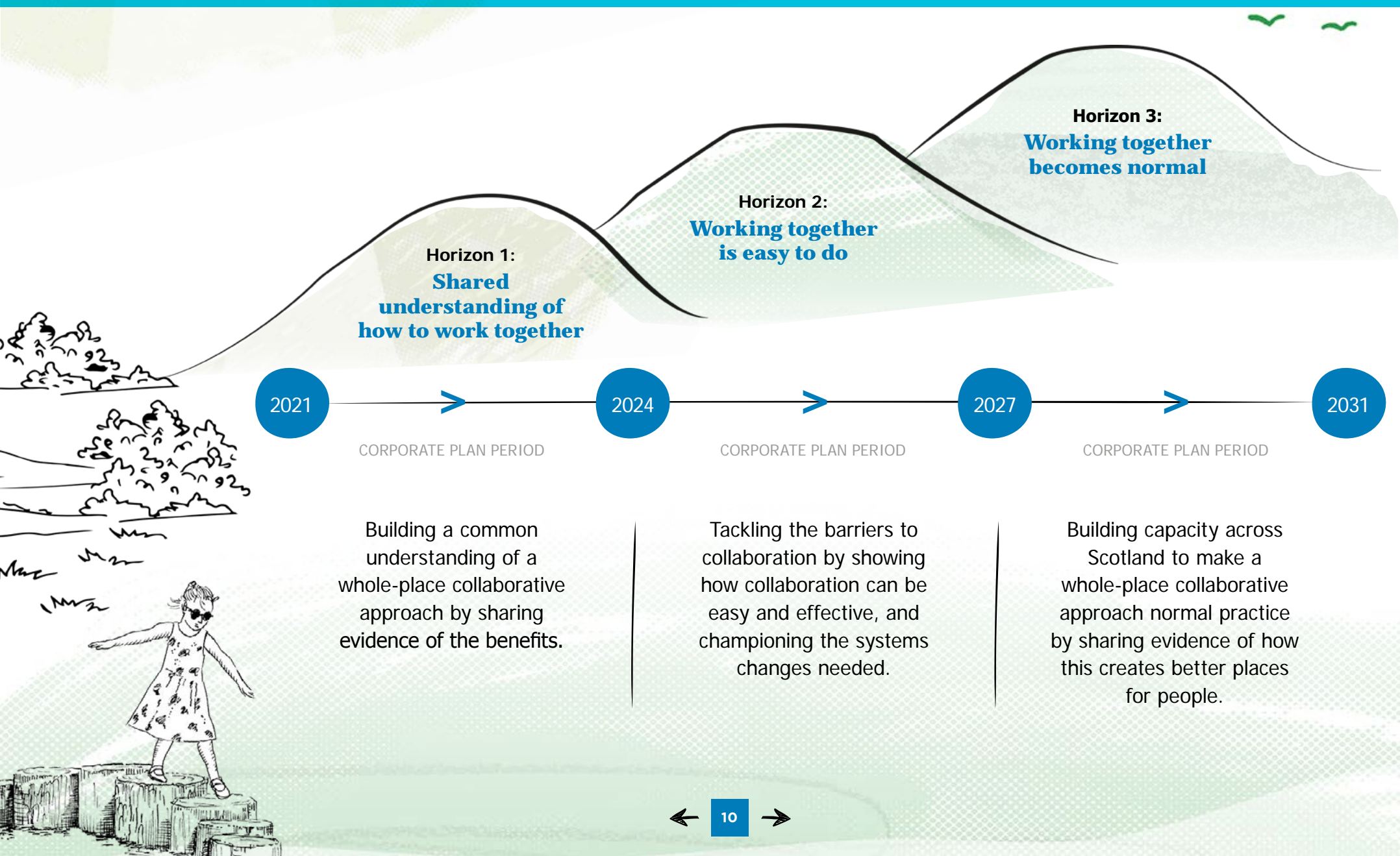
- Championing the benefits of a whole-place collaborative approach to a wide audience, including policy makers
- Collaborating across communities to create lasting change
- Supporting early adopters and examples of the Place Principle on the ground
- Capturing and sharing the learning gleaned from these examples
- Identifying the systemic changes needed to foster a place-based approach, and working to remove barriers
- Helping to build capacity and embed practice around Scotland.

Within the Strategy, we set out three horizons to illustrate how we will go about achieving our aim. This Corporate Plan focuses on the first horizon: building evidence and a widely accepted understanding of the benefits of a whole-place approach.

The range of work involved in this will lead us forward to a point where we can begin to see a prospect of the second horizon – a more fundamental system change.

The final horizon would see practice and systems working together and the embedding of a whole-place collaborative approach, where local people are fully involved, for all places across Scotland.

# Timeline

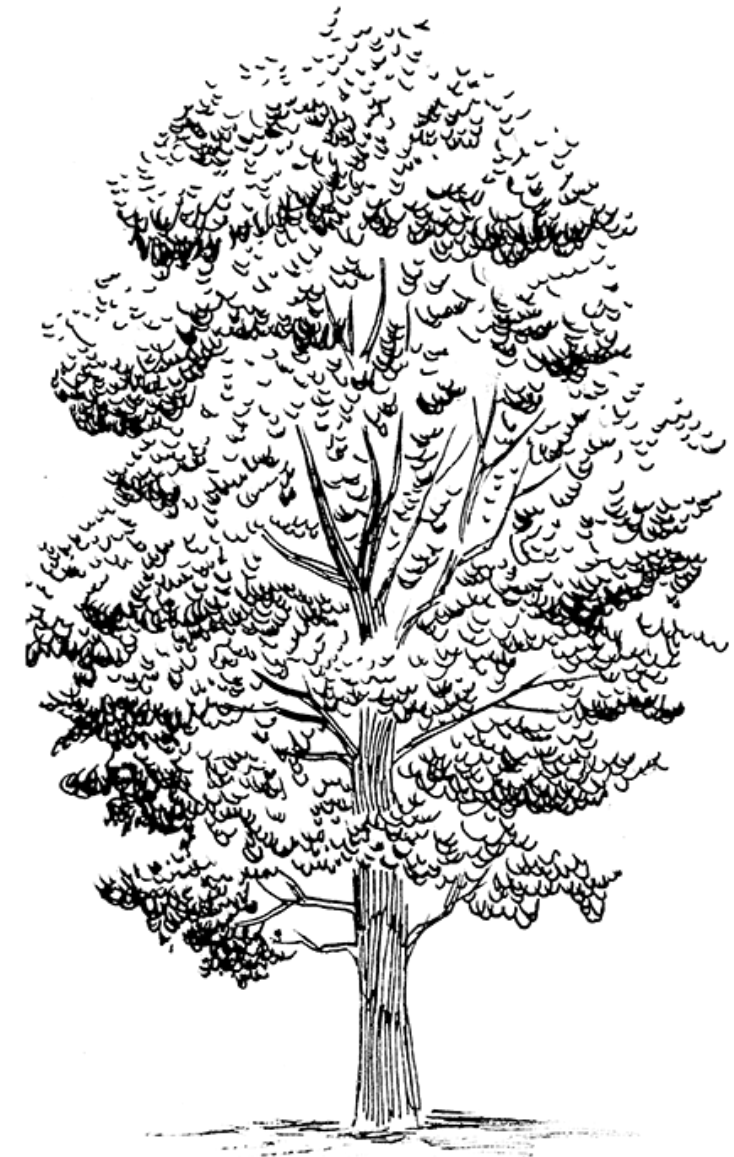




# Outcomes to 2024

This plan aims to build evidence and understanding of the benefits of a whole-place approach. This will rely on achieving the following by 2024:

1. We are widely known as Scotland's leading authority on applying the Place Principle to the built environment.
2. We are relied on by partners, stakeholders and decision-makers for providing leadership, skills and added value to support a collaborative whole place approach.
3. We have the knowledge and relationships to pursue systemic change that will remove barriers to – and actively encourage – a whole-place collaborative approach.
4. Our partners and stakeholders can access evidence of the benefits of a whole-place collaborative approach, and know how to measure the benefits in their own work.
5. All those with an interest in undertaking whole-place collaborative projects across Scotland can access examples of what such an approach looks like.
6. Our partners and stakeholders across Scotland share a common understanding of what a whole-place collaborative approach is.
7. Whole-place collaborative approaches are being adopted and embedded in eight local authorities or other organisations responsible for planning and/or investment in places.
8. In each of Scotland's 32 local authority areas, real change on the ground – for the benefit of local communities – has begun, following our support of whole-place collaborative projects.



# Work plan

The activities we expect to undertake to achieve our outcomes

## OUTCOMES 1 AND 2

**1** We are widely known as Scotland's leading authority on applying the Place Principle to the built environment.

**2** We are relied on by partners, stakeholders and decision-makers for providing leadership, skills and added value to support a collaborative whole-place approach.

### How we plan to achieve these:

We will continue to engage and collaborate with our stakeholders and advocate on the benefit of collaborative approaches both nationally and internationally.

2021-22

- Launch a digital engagement strategy to reach a wide audience.
- Use key events – such as the Venice Architecture Biennale and COP26 to highlight our work.
- Develop a blended model of digital and face to face engagement to help us reach audiences across Scotland.

2022-23

- Continue to share our learning through our digital channels.
- Review impact of our engagement in major events and share findings.
- Work with partners to co-ordinate the hosting and promotion of learning across each other's networks, building momentum around issues.

2023-24

- Review the impact of our digital engagement strategy.
- Use learning and ideas from work to inform Scotland's participation in Venice Architecture Biennale in 2023.



## OUTCOME 3

**3** We have the knowledge and relationships to pursue systemic change that will remove barriers to – and actively encourage – a whole-place collaborative approach.

### How we plan to achieve this:

We will work with our stakeholders to understand existing barriers, build relationships and channels that can bring these issues to the attention of decision makers.

2021-22

- Implement a stakeholder engagement strategy.
- Regularly engage with our stakeholders to understand their ideas and issues and take the collective learning into their networks.

2022-23

- Further develop our relationships within the Scottish Government and in other strategic partnerships.

- Use learning from recent work to inform the processes being developed to implement National Planning Framework 4.

2023-24

- Analyse and communicate issues raised by stakeholders.

- Support those leading and developing policy and processes with learning from work on the ground.
- Help partners with an interest in developing skills in the professions to build capacity to mainstream collaborative, sustainable approaches to place and design.
- Bring partners together to develop approaches to common issues and publish their shared research and development around place.

## OUTCOME 4

**4** Our partners and stakeholders can access evidence of the benefits of a whole-place collaborative approach, and know how to measure the benefits in their own work.

### How we plan to achieve this:

We will work with partners to gather evidence on the positive impacts of working collaboratively in a place, and using design thinking to address multiple issues.

2021-22

- Gather lessons from temporary adaptations that were made in response to Covid-19 and understanding the difference it made to people's lives.

- Build relationships with projects which are developing novel approaches to using place-based data, digital delivery and nature-based solutions. Share evidence with partners.

2022-23

- Continue to share evidence from our work to demonstrate the positive impact of collaborative work.

2023-24

- Develop additional ways of measuring success in collaboration with partners.



# Work plan

## OUTCOMES 5 AND 6

**5** All those with an interest in undertaking whole-place collaborative projects across Scotland can access examples of what such an approach looks like.

**6** Our partners and stakeholders around Scotland share a common understanding of what a whole-place collaborative approach is.

### How we plan to achieve these:

We will take learning from supporting change on the ground, share what we learn with others across Scotland and support partners to exchange insights.

2021-22

- Share our learning on engaging with communities using digital methods and make other examples from our previous work more accessible.

- Share insights from our work, including on the climate emergency and housing, supporting partners to celebrate their successes and good practice and thereby help others in similar situations.

- Gather data to understand barriers to collaborative work.

2022-23

- Listen to our audiences to identify the examples they need to support them.
- Work with partners to identify suitable examples and sharing these widely.

2023-24

- Analyse the learning and evidence and gather this into reporting that goes to key stakeholders, including Scottish Government.

# Work plan

## OUTCOMES 7 AND 8

**7** Whole-place collaborative approaches are being adopted and embedded in eight local authorities or other organisations responsible for planning and/or investment in places.

**8** In each of Scotland's 32 local authority areas, real change on the ground – for the benefit of local communities – has begun, following our support of whole-place collaborative projects.

### How we plan to achieve these:

We will work with people who are open to lasting change and provide advice on place-based collaboration.

2021-22

2022-23

2023-24

- Work with local authorities and partner agencies to develop plans that support green recovery.
- Work with those who manage public infrastructure, such as health and schools, to help develop a collective approach to place-based investment.
- Build strategic partnerships on local and national level to identify best places and projects to support.
- Ensure that the people who will use or benefit from a new plan or project are involved.
- Streamline our systems to enable a more proactive approach.
- Work with new partners to trial new ways of working in plans and development projects to increase benefits for local communities.
- Review the impact of the work with partners and support them to adopt developed ways of working.
- Review our reach and adjust focus as needed for our next Corporate Plan.
- Increase our capacity to support work across Scotland.

Progress and impact will be reviewed annually and elements of the work plan adapted as appropriate.



# Performance and evaluation

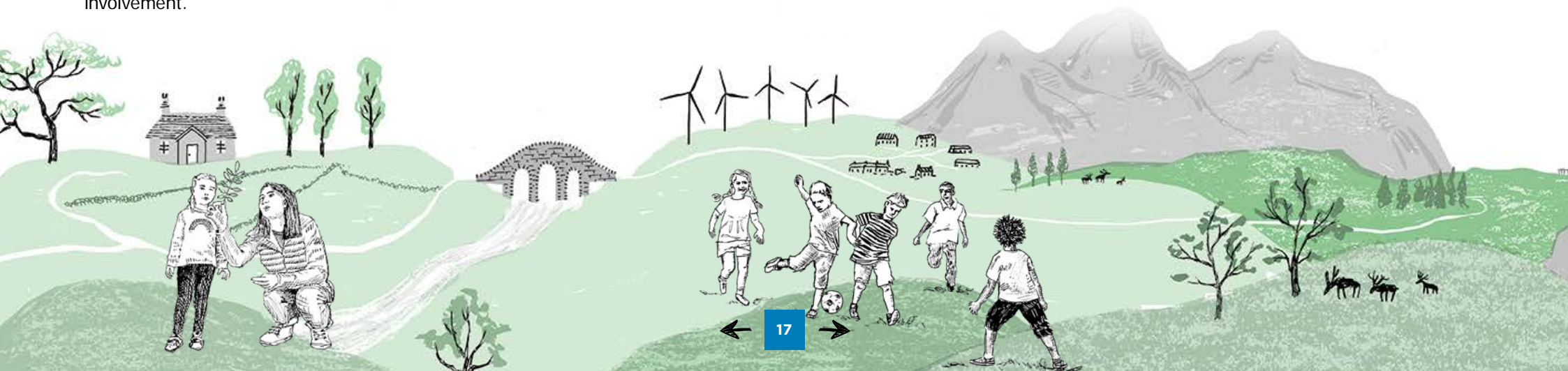
**To achieve our aim of making the Place Principle an everyday reality** in the way our places are planned, designed, delivered and sustained, we need to be able to evaluate the impact of our work and measure our performance in delivering it. Sharing evidence of the benefits of applying the Place Principle within our networks is also a key part of our overall approach.

To help us do this, we have identified seven key questions related to the outcomes in the plan and the work we will do to achieve them. These will be expanded upon and added to through our business planning process, and what we learn will shape our operational plans.

In this way, we will know whether our work delivers benefits for communities, how the insights from our work are transmitted via our networks and where these generate change in places outwith our direct involvement.

## Outcomes evaluation questions

- Are the projects we support leading to real benefits for people and communities?
- What progress are the eight organisations we have partnered with making towards adopting and embedding a collaborative whole-place approach?
- Can we see a shared understanding of what a collaborative whole-place approach is across our partners and stakeholders?
- Are those who start collaborative whole-place projects using our examples to support their work?
- Do our partners and stakeholders know how to measure the benefits of this approach in their projects?
- Are we in a position to promote systems change that will remove barriers and make a collaborative whole-place approach the easier option?
- Are we being seen as leaders in applying the Place Principle to how places are planned, designed, delivered and sustained?





# Conclusion

**As we look forward to recovery from the global pandemic**, the future of our places is set to take centre stage. We know that a sustainable future for our places depends on communities and those who support them working together.

We believe the role we have been given by Ministers can play an important part in this, and the work we set out here is designed to make a positive difference to the lives of people across the country.

To realise our ambitions will, above all, rely on strong partnerships at local and national level. We invite anyone who shares our commitment to creating great places to work with us.

Sign up to our newsletter to be kept informed on the work within this Corporate Plan, and to find out how we can help you.

[www.ads.org.uk/newsletter-subscriptions](http://www.ads.org.uk/newsletter-subscriptions)





# Credits and links

## Illustrations

Cover; pages 4, 8, 18: **Richard Carman**  
Pages 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 11, 17: **Silje Eirin Aure**

## Links

**Creating Places: A policy statement on architecture and place in Scotland**  
[www.gov.scot/publications/creating-places-policy-statement-architecture-place-scotland](http://www.gov.scot/publications/creating-places-policy-statement-architecture-place-scotland)

**The Place Principle**  
[www.gov.scot/publications/place-principle-introduction](http://www.gov.scot/publications/place-principle-introduction)

**Scotland's National Performance Framework**  
[www.nationalperformance.gov.scot](http://www.nationalperformance.gov.scot)

**Housing to 2040**  
[www.gov.scot/publications/housing-2040](http://www.gov.scot/publications/housing-2040)

**Community Wealth Building**  
[www.gov.scot/policies/cities-regions/community-wealth-building](http://www.gov.scot/policies/cities-regions/community-wealth-building)

**Town Centre Regeneration**  
[www.gov.scot/policies/regeneration/town-centre-regeneration](http://www.gov.scot/policies/regeneration/town-centre-regeneration)

# Architecture & Design Scotland

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