



## **Simon Allford**

### **My candidacy for RIBA president**

#### **Advocating Architecture**

Voting for the RIBA presidency is open from tomorrow until 4 August.

I have been sharing my ideas for the presidency in LinkedIn posts each day and this is a summary of them.

My campaign statement and video are here <https://lnkd.in/d7mT-tp>.



## #01 Opportunity and vision

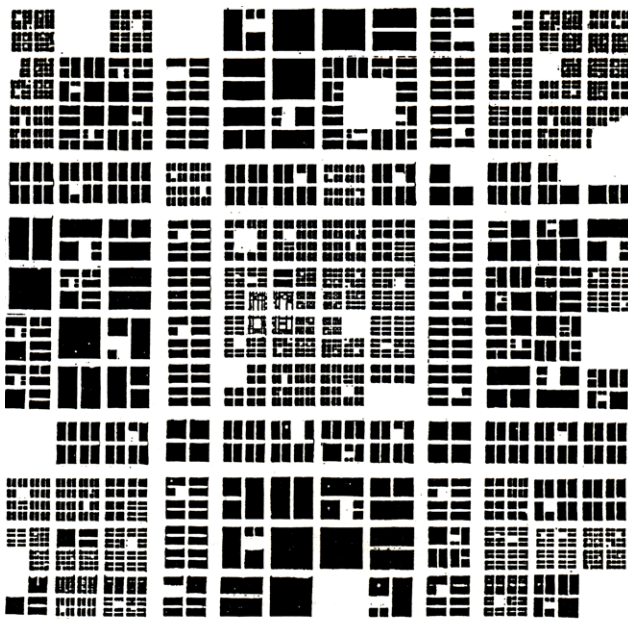
My campaign is very much word-of-mouth and I am grateful for all your comments and support. I'm sharing my ideas for the RIBA presidency in LinkedIn posts each day.

I believe by harnessing the interests and talents of our diverse membership, the RIBA can play a leading role in shaping the future for architects and architecture to the benefit of society:

- By becoming the hub and home of ideas and innovation.
- By promoting equality and diversity, encouraging excellence, nurturing talent and furthering the art of low carbon architecture for the benefit of society.
- By providing help and support for members through the post-Covid downturn. This includes leading the thinking on liability, procurement and fees together with engaging with the public and influencing government.

My vision is for an outward-looking, relevant and influential 21st century institute that supports architects as they tackle today's big issues while also helping the profession advance.

*Image: The Tees Transporter Bridge 1911 ' We should not only be interested in the design of bridges; we should be concerned about how best to get to the other side' Cedric Price. 'ExtraOrdinary' AHMM/ Simon Allford*



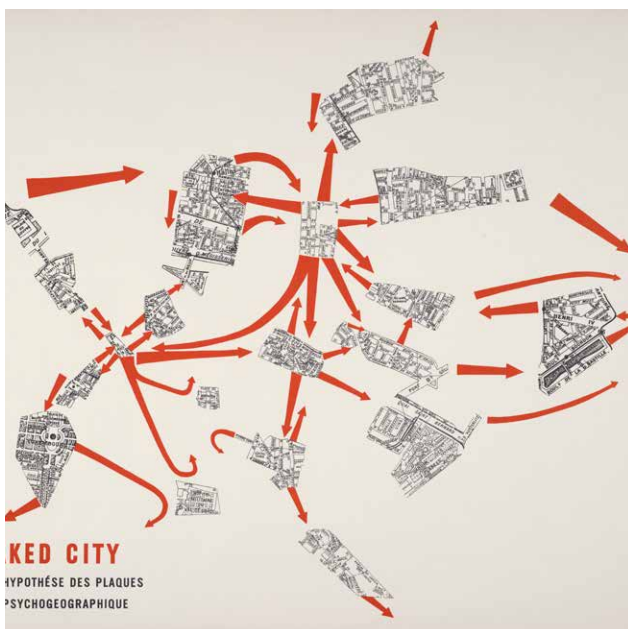
## #02 Experience counts

Experience counts. Architecture has been and remains a driving force in my life, from starting and growing a practice, encouraging talent in the office and as a teacher, judging awards, consulting and, on occasion, lecturing around the world. Architects must collaborate and I have made it my practice to work with clients, consultants and collaborators, to help forward the agenda for low-carbon buildings.

I've been Chair of the Architecture Foundation - working to get it back on its feet; RIBA Education VP - helping make education more accessible; and am a trustee of London School of Architecture. Above all, I've been lucky to have worked as a practising architect for more than thirty years.

I believe I have the experience to ensure that the RIBA becomes the institute that we all need. An RIBA that is inspiring, influential and relevant for the 21st century. An RIBA that advocates for architects and architecture.

*Image: generic city plan from 'The Fifth Man', final year thesis, UCL The Bartlett by Simon Allford, Jonathan Hall, Paul Monaghan and Peter Morris, 1986*



## #03 Global architecture community and global outlook

Imagine an architecture institute that could harness the collective and collaborative power of its talented membership?

Transforming the RIBA into the House of Architecture could make this possible.

Making the RIBA easily accessible online and physically can help create a resource for sharing and learning. It should become the hub and host of initiatives, seminars, debates and exhibitions online and physically around the country.

I know that many RIBA members feel disconnected from the institute, so I'm making a promise that, should I become President, I will create a series of events to unite the RIBA with all of its members. This will mark a new era for the institute.

At this time of crisis, I believe that a thriving RIBA can play a powerful role in helping architects shape a better world. I'm sharing my ideas for the RIBA presidency in LinkedIn posts each day.

*Image: 'The Naked City' map by Guy Debord 1957 reconfiguring the rational city grid as a psychogeography, networked by desire lines and 'drift' between these hubs at a single moment of time.*



## #04 Work harder to create a more diverse profession

Architecture is a challenging but fulfilling profession that benefits from being ever more accessible to all. I believe that talent drawn from across our communities enriches the built environment we help to create.

Architects do a great job of inspiring the next generation of professionals and this is a two-way exchange – engaging with children and young people gives valuable new insights. Working with primary and secondary schools and building on the RIBA's National Schools Programme has to be a priority.

We all need to work together to support the RIBA's equality, diversity and inclusion initiatives including mentoring programmes and work on closing the gender pay gap.

AHMM supports accessible pathway programmes in schools and universities. We mentor students through Open City's Accelerate programme and from the Social Mobility Foundation; and with the help of the Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust set up an Apprenticeship programme. We are also supporters of the Chickenshed Theatre where I am a Trustee.

*Image: Shoreditch, The County of London Plan, 1945, Extra Ordinary, AHMM/Simon Allford 2016*

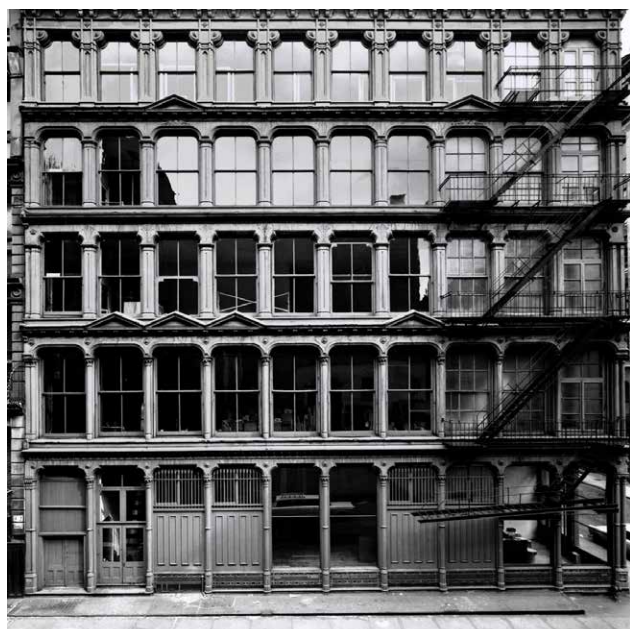


## #05 Sustainability and climate change

We all need to work together to tackle the climate emergency, and architects have a key role to play. We must lead by example: working with clients and collaborators to design, build and then evaluate exemplary low-carbon buildings; demonstrating that these are an achievable essential. RIBA can help best by capturing that knowledge base, and promoting it to clients and the wider built environment sector giving them the confidence to commit to low-carbon architecture.

Should I become President, I would form a low-carbon alliance with consultants and clients to push government to help us push ourselves. I speak from experience. AHMM's building performance team worked on the RIBA's 2030 Climate Challenge and Plan of Work and on an Innovate UK funded Knowledge Transfer Partnership with UCL. AHMM has completed 14 BREEAM Excellent and three BREEAM Outstanding buildings. Two, a new build and a retrofit, are for the same client and we work from both. BREEAM 2018 sets tough goals, and we need to push harder (accordingly AHMM has five more Outstanding, 27 Excellent and seven LEED Platinum in the pipeline).

*Image: 'Wheatfield – A Confrontation' by Agnes Dene, 1982, Extra Ordinary, AHMM/ Simon Allford 2016.*



## #06 Promoting excellence in practice

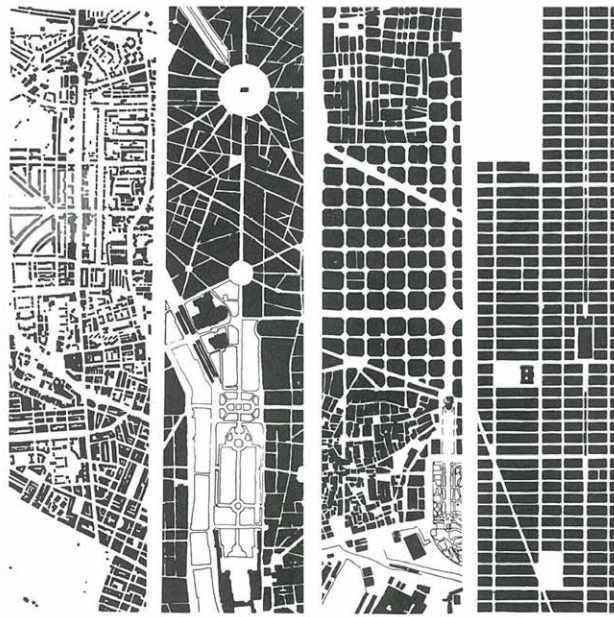
In the aftermath of the pandemic the RIBA needs to act as a practice friend supporting architects in leading the environmental design of a post-Covid-19 world.

The focus should be on capturing, sharing and promoting excellent examples of post-Covid architectural design - by practices of all sizes - that address the challenges of redesigning our environment. RIBA needs to lobby government, meet with policy makers and show how architects can help to make the 'Build, build, build' programme happen best by 'Design, design, design'!

Demonstrating design excellence is key to a successful RIBA, both through consistent awards organisation and promoting a post-OJEU national competitions policy. The RIBA must then seek to influence changes arising from the Grenfell Tower report in areas of responsibility, liability, authority, procurement and fees.

The RIBA must become the vehicle to champion best practice and the platform through which members can share ideas about professional practice and technical and regulatory change, regardless of size, scale and location.

*Image: Judd Foundation, 101 Spring Street, New York City. Extra Ordinary AHMM/ Simon Allford 2016.*



## #07 Promoting excellence in education

Supporting students is critical, particularly in the aftermath of Covid-19. Priorities must include enhancing the RIBA Student Support Fund and developing initiatives including internship models. I know that education is key to change and creating a diverse profession that better represents society and enriches how we work, design and build.

As RIBA Education VP, I set up Teaching Practices for new accessible pathways into the profession. This led to becoming a trustee of the London School of Architecture.

Engaging with students is an energising two-way exchange. I've taught and examined at many universities including The AA, Sheffield, Liverpool, Kent, Nottingham, Greenwich, The Bartlett and at Harvard GSD, Tokyo University and University of Virginia.

AHMM has established bursaries for architecture students at the University of Sheffield and The Bartlett. We were part of the RIBA's Trailblazer group, setting up the apprenticeship programme.

Education matters and so I'm delighted to be endorsed by Lesley Lokko, Dean of the Bernard and Anne Spitzer School of Architecture at The City College of New York <https://www.the-isa.org/2020/07/03/lesley-lokko-endorses-isa-trustee-simon-allford-riba-presidency/>

*Image: Comparative plans of London and New York City from The Fifth Man 1986, Extra Ordinary, AHMM/ Simon Allford 2016*



## #08 A wider perspective: Design, Design, Design!

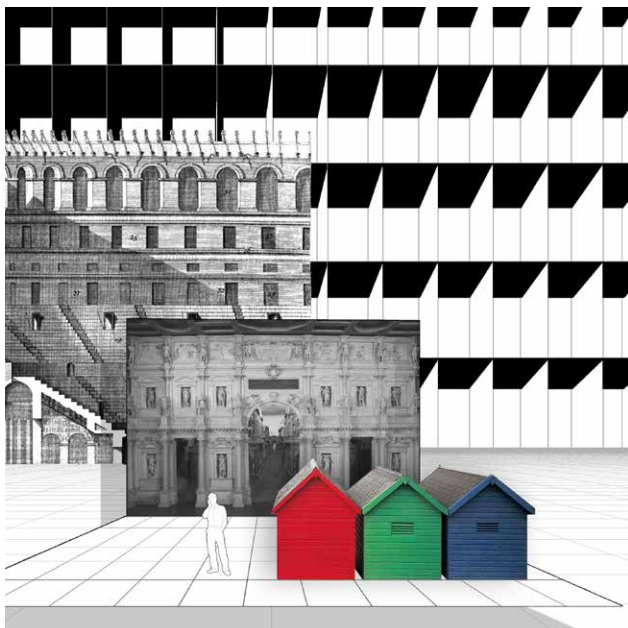
Architects much address global climate change, health, and inequality, and redefine the profession's vital role in a post-pandemic society. We must create a more diverse and capable profession working with clients as collaborators, galvanising government to build the low-carbon future.

My vision is to turn RIBA from an Institute of Inertia into an online Institute of Ideas. Globally relevant locally influential. A learned Institute whose talented members share exemplary projects as proof that the best answer to Build, Build, Build is Design, Design, Design!

I understand the very real challenges architects face. We have been small, medium and large and are now 500 strong employee owned. I know that collaborating brings the best out of us – and will help re-establish our role as leaders in construction.

A learned Institute with talented and committed members is the key to building a better low-carbon future. I have the experience to listen to the membership, engage with the RIBA's strictures and structures and talk with authority to policy makers.

*Image: Walsall Bus Station AKA 'Room for Walsall' by AHMM. International RIBA competition won in 1995, completed in 2000; photograph by First House Photography*



## #09 Consult Collaborate Communicate

Architects must work creatively with ideas and people to construct The Theatre of Everyday Life; and to do so to good effect we must consult, collaborate and communicate.

Architecture.com must become the free global portal to the House of Architecture @ RIBA, where ideas become knowledge: captured, stored and shared with members, public and government. An online and physical entity; a learned society which is:

A space where those who care about architecture and ideas gather together to create a more accessible education and open, diverse and capable profession.

A forum for sharing ideas about excellence in professional practice; for collaboratively responding to technical and regulatory change; and for addressing challenges on liability, procurement and fees.

A common ground where the public, students of all ages and practitioners - regardless of their size, scale of operation and location – come to further the cause of architecture to the benefit of society.

Then RIBA becomes a 21st century Institute of Ideas – using today's technology to help meet our charter obligations to advance architecture, to improve our towns and cities and to build the low carbon future.

*Image: Theatre, stage set and props: the architectural brief for extra ordinary buildings required by the Universal Use Class Order as imagined by AHMM, 2014.*