

ARCHITECTURAL ASSISTANT

Recruitment Pack | July 2020

Contents

About us	2
Our strategy	3
Our values	4
Organisational structure	5
The Role and Person Specification	6
Key Responsibilities	7
Key Skills and Experience	8
Additional Collective Responsibilities and Other information	10
How to Apply	11
Studio Profile	12



We are Transition by Design, an RIBA Chartered architecture and design cooperative.

// We design beautiful and environmentally-conscious residential and commercial buildings.

// We specialise in the provision of housing for individuals, communities and groups; inclusive of design and technical advice.

// We are experts in the design of community spaces. Our architecture is informed by the people that use spaces and buildings. We seek to understand individual needs by putting people at the centre of our design approach.

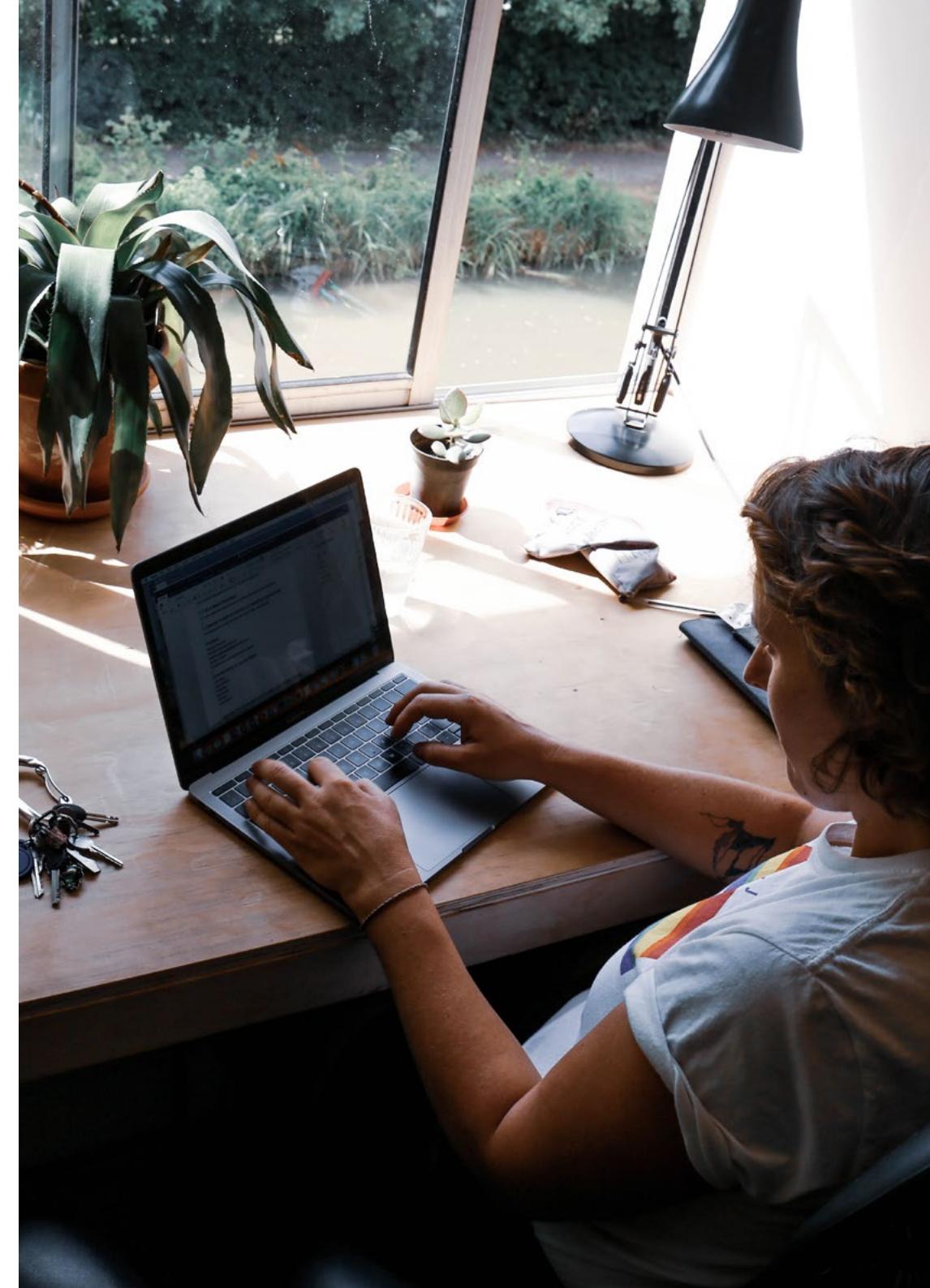
// We are experienced project managers with a proven track record of delivering projects on time and on budget.

A LITTLE BIT ABOUT US...

Transition by Design (T/D) is an Oxford-based architecture practice. We were founded in 2011, but re-formed into a [workers' co-operative](#) and [community interest company](#) (CIC) in 2015. We currently have seven employees with six of us being voting members.

We offer varied expertise from community-led housing to Passivhaus design, urban design and participatory design. We love working with a range of partners to find the most creative and appropriate solutions.

We regularly work with local clients from councils to community-led housing groups and charities to churches. We centre the voice of our clients and users in our design process and are constantly developing codesign and participatory design techniques which ensure meaningful engagement.



OUR STRATEGY

T/D is a cross-disciplinary design co-operative operating at the junction of architecture, strategic design and social change practice.

Our team builds homes, neighbourhoods and cities for an ecologically sustainable and convivial future.

Our work is motivated by the belief that collaboration combined with good design can solve complex problems and improve the world we live in.

As an interdisciplinary co-operative we have access to a range of skillsets that can unlock solutions to complex problems. We're passionate about using these skills to make the world a better place by design.

Architecture // Community engagement & participatory design // Community-led housing // Cooperating Ecological design // Placemaking, urban design & masterplanning // Research & thought leadership



House of the Commons, a conference we ran in 2014 and 2016

OUR VALUES

Transition by Design is committed to preventing any type of unwanted behaviour at work including sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse. We are committed to promoting the welfare of children, young people, adults and clients with whom we engage as per our safeguarding policies. We place a high importance on the dignity, respect and wellbeing of our colleagues.

T/D expects all staff to share these commitments. The role holder will undertake the appropriate level of training to ensure they can comply with our code of conduct.

Training on internal communication will be provided so that the role holder can appropriately engage with our decision making processes in the spirit of a co-operative organisation.



ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

As a workers co-operative, T/D is progressive in our approach and organisation as well as our work. After their first year at T/D an employee has an annual review after which they may be invited to become a member of the co-operative. This transition to membership provides the opportunity to be involved in strategic decision-making.

Our Members work collaboratively to progress the coop and the impact of our work. We work with a high level of flexibility and autonomy and members have the opportunity to bring their own skills, interests and projects to our practice.

The canal side studio is based in Makespace Oxford, just north of Oxford city centre. Makespace is a truly affordable workspace developed by T/D and forms a community hub for like-minded thinkers, makers and doers.



Makespace Summer Party 2019



THE ROLE

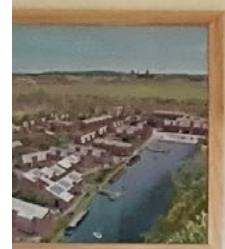
Transition by Design (T/D) is recruiting for an RIBA Part II Architectural Assistant. The role holder will also have the opportunity to contribute to our strategic design projects including; community-led housing, action research and activism. Current T/D projects include: an action research project exploring how alternative and community-led housing can help meet the needs of people without a home; an innovative new approach to reclaiming empty and underused buildings for community use; technical advisory for community-led housing groups.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

We require a creative and progressive individual who is committed to challenging the role of the architect in society and building on our experience of ecological design and beautiful architecture. We are seeking an Architectural Assistant who is experienced and capable of taking full responsibility for discrete tasks within a project team.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- The core role is assisting the architecture team with the management of individual architectural projects, through all of the RIBA's work stages.
- The role is based on experience level where you are expected to be responsible for the work you assigned by the accountable project lead. Work produced is expected to be of high quality and competence. You will be expected to be able to identify and mitigate risks related to your project tasks and, by extension, to the co-operative as a whole.
- You will be responsible for managing your time and resourcing your projects to ensure design quality and profitability.
- Management and support will be provided by the Architecture Lead who is accountable for the Architecture Team





KEY SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

- Minimum RIBA Part II or equivalent
- High level of competency and experience (1 year practice experience minimum) with ArchiCAD and representation software
- Technical knowledge of low energy and ecological design and able to produce planning, tender and construction drawing packages
- Experience in architectural practice (ideally in residential, new-build and retrofit)
- High level of competency and experience (1 year practice experience minimum) with ArchiCAD and representation software
- High level of proficiency in using Indesign
- Strong drawing and representational skills

KEY SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

DESIRABLE SKILLS

- Experience in residential and housing projects
- Passivhaus certified and familiar with PHPP
- Experience of working across the RIBA Work Stages 0-7
- Experience in using the Adobe Creative Suite
- Participatory design knowledge
- Community engagement experience
- Knowledge of, or interest in, co-operative organisational structures
- An entrepreneurial approach to architectural practice
- A healthy interest in or experience of social or environmental activism
- Experience of needs-based communication or similar





ADDITIONAL COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

- You may be asked to assist in the co-operative's strategic work, as required.
- As a co-operative organisation you may be asked to participate in the wider operations of the co-operative such as in quarterly and annual meetings despite not having voting rights as afforded to members (employees who have been with the co-operative longer than one year).

OTHER INFORMATION

- A peer manager will be assigned as part of the non-hierarchical governance of the co-operative
- Work equipment is provided at the studio, including a laptop and drawing equipment.
- We embrace flexible working hours around the core hours of 10am-4pm.
- Remote working is possible although it will be essential to attend regular team meeting and site visits. All employee details are covered in the Employee Handbook.

HOW TO APPLY

Please get in touch if you are excited by this opportunity to redesign and progress your architectural career in a way that can meet your social and environmental values.

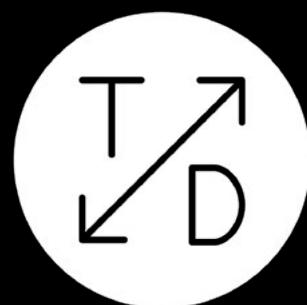
Applications to recruitment@transitionbydesign.org

The deadline for applications is the **31st July 2020**. Late applications will not be accepted.

In your application please state your availability between **Monday 10th August and Friday 14th August 2020** to attend an interview.

Include in your application:

1. A **covering letter** stating your interest in the role, your interest in Transition by Design's unique business model and your interview date availability.
2. A relevant and succinct **portfolio**
3. Completed **Application form** and optional **Equalities Form** (both in recruitment pack which can all be downloaded [here](#))



Studio Profile



Architecture +

Alongside our architectural work, we are actively researching and implementing models for how alternative housing can meet housing need across Oxfordshire. In doing so we often take on roles as project managers, consultants and action researchers for groups, businesses and individuals across the UK. This work informs our architectural design and ensures an evidence-based approach;

// We are successful applicants to the Community Housing Fund from Homes England. We are using the funds to design social housing people want to live in, build partnerships between the Local Authority and civil society partners; as well as strengthening the presence of community-led housing across the country.

// We understand the business models and financial modelling for different community organisations. We have developed some ourselves when setting up community-led housing groups and businesses; as well as supporting others in setting up their own organisations.

// We understand the pioneering processes of groups-led housing. We can help you navigate the best possible use for your site in response to social impact and local context.

Manor Farm

Low impact extension for a listed Georgian manor house and barn conversion

Location: Boars Hill, Oxfordshire

Status: 2018

Construction cost: £550,000

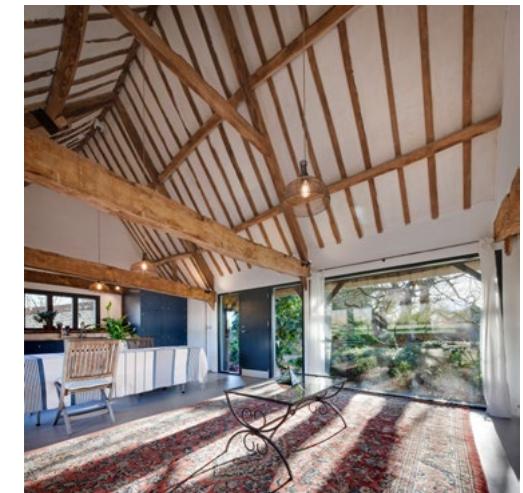
Client: Private

The project is an elegant ecological extension and deep energy retrofit to a Grade II listed Georgian manor house. The design harmonises natural materials and low energy design within the challenges of a listed building. We carried out the role of Architect and Contract Administrator for both; acquiring planning permission, listed building consent, building control approval, managing the tender process and developing both the technical and construction drawing packages.

We were appointed based on our knowledge of Passivhaus design principles and energy retrofitting of existing buildings.

The brief was for a new entry sequence to the main house; inclusive of a new kitchen, dining room, garden room and utility spaces. The very high thermal comfort is delivered at near zero carbon and effectively nests a high-performance new build within a historical solid masonry building.

The very high thermal comfort is delivered at near zero carbon and effectively nests a high-performance new build within a historical solid masonry building. Elements included: a thermal-bridge free thermal envelope, triple glazed floor-to-ceiling glazing, a ground source heat pump, as well as mechanical ventilation and heat recovery. The south-facing building optimises solar gains, allowing light and warmth to pour into the garden room yet protected in excess summer heat by the oversailing roof. The glazed west façade is respectfully set back in line with the 1750's building whilst embracing the formal front garden. The new 45° axis between the front and rear gardens is expressed in the brick coursing and orientation of the timber ceiling.



"Transition by Design designed and project managed the super-insulated, low energy extension to our house. Their vision and knowledge of green, sustainable building techniques is unrivalled. They showed incredible attention to detail and dedication to their work."

We highly recommend them."

Natasha Ginks, Client

Thame Community Land Trust

Developing a community-led housing scheme

Location: Thame, Oxfordshire

Status: Ongoing

Construction cost: not disclosed

Client: Thame CLT

Transition by Design has in-house accredited Technical Advisors for advising community-led housing groups on various elements of their strategy, governance, vision, business plan and community engagement. Through this role we have advised over 10 community housing groups in Oxfordshire and across the UK.

Over the last 18 months, Transition by Design have worked with Thame Community Land Trust, supporting the group's development from incorporation to securing a 3-acre site for c.30 homes. Our team have supported Thame CLT in developing a clear vision and set of objectives which has been instrumental in enabling them to secure grants from the Community Housing Fund and Community Led Homes Start-up Fund.

Transition by Design has supported Thame CLT to date with their procurement of a housing needs survey, development of a communications strategy, advised on tenure and RP partnership options, financial modelling and development appraisal and most recently, brief and design development.

Transition by Design is currently appointed to provide architectural services including the development of a design brief, site options appraisal and design development to support an application for pre-planning advice.

Transition by Design believes good communication is key, especially when working with clients comprising a broad membership. As such, we prepare regular reports and encourage touching base via phone and face-to-face meetings with both steering committees and sub-working groups, where appropriate. This has enabled us to support Thame CLT to get to a place where they are confident and comfortable with their direction in an effective and efficient manner. Thame CLT are now in a good position to secure their first site and move through their Community Housing Fund milestones towards Full Planning Application submission.



"Transition by Design have demonstrated real value and been a key player in helping Thame CLT develop a strong vision, supporting our bids for Community Housing Fund and Community Led Homes funding."

The team are skilled problem solvers and a pleasure to work with. They have helped us bring together the pieces of the puzzle needed to progress to site acquisition and commencing a pre-planning application."

Bob Austin, Chair of Thame CLT

Champion Way

Transforming disused garage sites into new community-led affordable housing

Location: Littlemore, Oxford

Status: Ongoing

Construction cost: not disclosed

Client: Oxford City Council

Oxford City Council owns 36 garage sites and over 2,000 garages across the city, almost 1/3 of which lie vacant or derelict. The often awkward nature of these sites, varying in size, shape and accessibility, makes them less favourable to large-scale developers. They present a great opportunity however to provide affordable housing by small, local developers driven by purpose over profit.

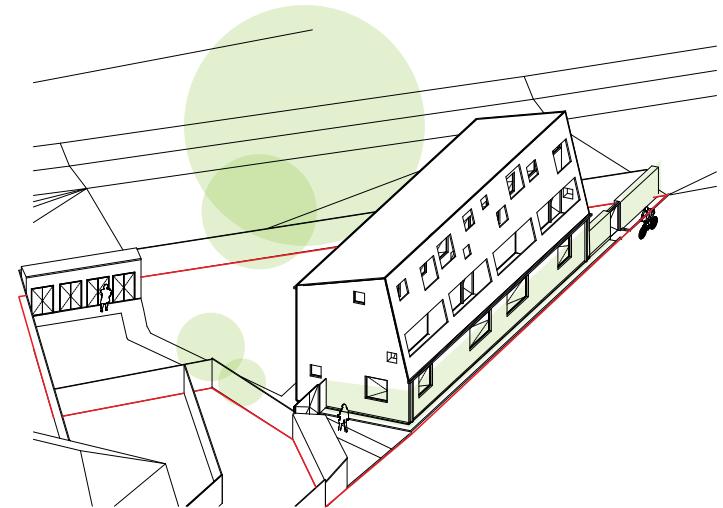
In 2018, Transition by Design secured a Community Housing Fund grant for pre-development work on a garage site containing seven derelict garages in Littlemore, east Oxford, owned by Oxford City Council. The funds have enabled us to develop a business model and pre-planning application for creating five new affordable homes at social rent levels; homes that people want to live in.

Transition by Design are acting as enabling community developer, Architect and project manager. We are in the process of brokering a partnership with Oxfordshire Community Land Trust to be the long term housing managers and have built a robust design team procuring and managing a range of consultants including planning advisors, transport consultants, aboriginalists, ecologists and surveyors.

The project is being seen by both Transition by Design and Oxford City Council as a catalyst; building towards unlocking further sites in the city. A further ten sites have been identified as suitable for housing development adopting a similar model.

Alongside our architecture skills, expertise in financial viability modelling and understanding of community-led housing we are also leading on community engagement. A strategy has been devised which will be implemented in the New Year.

We hope to secure planning permission and start construction in 2020 working in partnership with Greencore Construction, who have played a strong advisory role in the project throughout.



"Transition by Design have shown they can find opportunities and solutions and deliver where others' see only problems and barriers. They are a dynamic team with a varied skillset able to unlock complex problems and sites and take a creative and entrepreneurial approach to problem solving."

Dave Scholes, Housing Strategy & Needs Manager, OCC

Wolvercote Papermill

Working with community-led housing organisations to masterplan a 262-home zero-carbon development and mixed-use community centre

Location: Wolvercote, Oxford

Completed: N/A

Construction cost: not disclosed

Client: Homes for Oxford

In 2016, Transition by Design worked in partnership with a number of community groups to masterplan and model an innovative new neighbourhood for Oxford. Our intention was to provide truly affordable, net-zero housing alongside multiple new community spaces. The bid for this project was put together by a consortium of community-led housing groups, including Oxford Cohousing and Oxfordshire CLT under the umbrella of Homes for Oxford.

We were appointed based on our specialism in community-led housing, master-planning; our understanding of intentional communities; and, working with groups to enable them to develop their vision. We carried out brief development, codesign workshops and architectural design services resulting in a masterplan and accompanying visuals for the bid.

Our proposal intended to optimise the amount of affordable housing on the site; made up of 1/3 for social rent, 1/3 intermediate affordable and a 1/3 for market value. The mixed use site is primarily residential, with a community centre and commercial units. Mixed tenure was proposed across 262 units; including two cohousing groups, a range of cooperative groups and a sheltered housing community group. Well-considered shared, community spaces were integral to the success of the cohousing and cooperative groups. An integrated energy and transport strategy increased capability for on-site renewable energy generation, reduced car parking requirements and allowed for a higher proportion of gardens, public and amenity space.

Oxford is in desperate need of housing that its residents can genuinely afford and places people want to live in. Our intention was to meet this need at scale, through high quality architecture, community led design and placemaking.



One Floyds Row

Designing Oxford's new homelessness accommodation together with the people who will be sleeping there.

Location: Oxford city centre

Status: Complete (January 2019)

Construction cost: c. £1m

Client: Oxford City Council

In 2019 Transition by Design were commissioned by Oxford City Council to design a new 60-bed accommodation and assessment centre for people who are sleeping rough. We ran a month-long consultation with people experiencing different forms of homelessness and translated what we heard into a design for the new building.

We worked in partnership with Jessop & Cook Architects, a highly regarded local practice. The two practices shared the responsibility of taking the project from concept to completion within an extremely ambitious timeframe.

Transition by Design drove the project from brief stage through to full planning application. We were appointed for our unique combination of skills in community engagement; relationships with people experiencing homelessness and the services set up to help them; our experience of running Open House; and, our expertise in ecological architectural design.

The project presented a few key challenges including being in a conservation area and a very tight programme. Working closely with the client and local planning authority, alongside rigorous research, meant we were able to develop a design that worked within these constraints, celebrating its historical features and complimenting neighbouring Christ Church.

As a commercial building with class 'sui generis', Floyds Row presented the opportunity to challenge preconceptions of a 'homeless shelter' and the design process. Through our engagement with different stakeholders, we developed a set of key design principles at an early stage to guide the design decisions going forwards.



Open House

Building inclusive community spaces for conversations on housing and homelessness

Location: Jericho, Oxford

Status: Completed (October 2019)

Project cost: not disclosed

Client: Homemaker Oxford

In 2018, Transition by Design proposed to open a public talking shop on housing and homelessness in an empty shop unit on Little Clarendon Street, owned by University of Oxford Estates. We sought grant funding from a local foundation and secured a peppercorn lease in partnership with Makespace Oxford, a vehicle for bringing empty and underused spaces back into community use. Transition by Design were one of the founding partners of Makespace Oxford and sits on its board.

After a number of focus groups and open design sessions we created a design code and interior design for the space. The question at the heart of Open House is; how can we do housing better? We asked this question through centering the voices of lived experience of those who are experiencing homelessness or poor housing. We created a space actively welcoming to everyone, including people experiencing homelessness and filled the space with conversations on how the current system is failing us and how we can explore solutions together.

With this in mind we designed the space around 'conversations' and making it as easy as possible for people to talk to each other. We ran multiple events series and created a sound installation called Oxford is My Home, housed in 1:4 housing pods. In addition we created a set of public opinion shelves to enable visitors to interact with each other.

Open House became a thriving community space; and, an active design experiment into spaces for civic engagement and active democracy in marginalised groups. The shop demonstrated Transition by Design's skills in participatory city making and unrivalled experience in providing welcoming spaces for people who are experiencing homelessness.

