DSE and UCA Autumn School
Intensifying the town centre: Margate

Organised by Design South East and the MA Urban Design course at UCA Canterbury, this year's Urban Design Autumn School will be based at the Turner Contemporary in Margate. Confronting development pressures across Kent, and leading on from last year's theme 'Growing the City: Designing the Urban Edge' this Autumn School will explore how intensification could help activate underused town centres and reduce development pressure on the greenbelt. We will use Margate as a test bed for ideas, considering how new development can be positively integrated into the existing urban fabric, and how this can help provide successful public spaces.

Through the 2-day programme this KENT DESIGN event will introduce you to creating well designed, well connected and sustainable places. Participants will work in small groups, with each taking an individual site spanning from the seafront towards the town centre periphery. Each group will be mentored by leading urban design practitioners, there to help you in developing your own design proposals. This will take into account specific issues faced by Margate based on the recent increase in demand for development associated with the upturn in the creative industries, the technology sector and tourism. Although the distinctive historic fabric of the town is relatively intact, decades of neglect and insensitive development have created a series of holes in the town centre. This workshop will focus on strategies to stitch these areas back into the fabric of the town centre, considering issues such as the potential to improve connectivity between currently severed locations, and the activation of underused public spaces.

By the end of the event you will be able to:

- Undertake site research through a series of methods, including mapping, photography and social studies to produce a well-rounded portrait of an urban area
- Analyse site research to understand the challenges and outline key opportunities related to town centre intensification and connectivity issues
- Develop a strategic vision for the area, with a focus on 'landscape led masterplanning' in which spaces between buildings help drive the development programme
- Create a clear and assertive brief for the development of the wider area, which can provide a framework for individual developers to work within
- Gain the visual 2D and 3D design skills to communicate your ideas
- Present your ideas to peers and public audiences

This map shows the site locations for individual groups to analyse. Each considers the connection from the seafront to the town centre and beyond, overlapping with neighbouring sites to take into account the east west connections across Margate and Cliftonville:

Sites

Site 1 - Train station to Arlington House
The arrival to the town from the train station is in need of improvement. How could this be addressed, considering how the development of the large-scale underused area around Arlington House could support this?

Site 2 - Dreamland to the old town
The connections between the east and west sides of Margate town centre are currently severed. How could development and public realm improvements support a more permeable town centre?

Site 3 - The old town to the Turner Contemporary
How could smaller-scale development of back land sites help revive the historic centre, and how could the Turner Contemporary interact more with the surrounding public realm?

Site 4 - Margate meets Cliftonville
The area around Zion Place was demolished in the 1960s to reinforce a divide between Margate and Cliftonville. How can this interruption in the town fabric be repaired to help reconnect the two towns?

Site 5 - Lido to Bugsy's Bowling
Despite housing some of the area's most distinguished buildings and public spaces, this site is currently under-used. How can it be reconnected into the town centre, considering key sites such as the lido, the bowling alley and Northdown Road?

Site 6 - The Oval to Walpole Bay Hotel
This area currently suffers from a lack of purpose, with poorly maintained public spaces and run-down buildings. How could this area be programmed and improved to act as a link between the town centre and the suburbs and neighbouring towns beyond?