



Andrew Simmonds
CEO

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“The AECB is a small charity: a network of individuals and companies with a common aim of promoting sustainable building. It brings together builders, architects, designers, manufacturers, students, educators, housing associations and local authorities, to develop, share and promote best practice in environmentally sustainable building.

Our collaboration with Caplor Horizons commenced in 2016. It has involved various important strands.

The AECB was initially invited to have one to one discussions with an Advisor to Caplor Horizons, Lord Tyler CBE, to explore the role of advocacy. This included how the AECB’s existing approach could be strengthened and how the organization’s extensive and expert knowledge might be more clearly communicated to influence Government strategic thinking and policy development.

As part of the very interesting sessions with Paul - which extended and deepened over time - he provided valuable insight into how the AECB could achieve better results through understanding the various governmental processes (barriers and opportunities). Subsequently we made changes that we feel has resulted in a more effective approach to AECB lobbying activity.

Over the years, AECB has benefited from attending ‘Caplor Community Days’ and we have appreciated the regular updates and the learning they contain. For instance, at one Community event, I was part of a group session where I was invited to discuss complex issues relating to the organizational health of the AECB with a selection of Advisors. This included using the ‘Caplor House’ model as a tool for exploring organizational issues and potential directions for improvement. This gave a unique perspective on some of the challenges faced by the AECB during difficult times for the organization and the sector.

My colleague, James Allen, and myself have both benefited from regular and highly effective mentoring from Spencer Thompson and Iain Patton. This has been greatly appreciated. James summed this up as follows: *‘I have been meeting Spencer on and off for a few years now. He has helped me navigate challenges both personally and professionally. Spencer has a wealth of knowledge from all sectors and levels in business. He offers invaluable advice. A great service and team at Caplor Horizons!’*



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“The AECB did some important work with Caplor Horizons with regards to strategy. The whole process was really valuable. Articulating the strategy to include a high-level ‘summary on a page’ is a very good discipline”

The most substantial and significant specific workstream that Caplor Horizons undertook was the renewal of AECB strategy

Lorna Pearcey and Ian Williams facilitated this. We have had very positive feedback about strategy that emerged from this process.

For instance, with our members it has been helpful. We hear key phrases in the strategy, such as being ‘relentlessly optimistic’, repeated. Also some of the elements have been picked up and used by members in their own materials.

Part of the new strategy was a greater focus on thought leadership. As it became a commitment within the strategy, greater attention has subsequently been devoted to it, including writing some technical papers. Having such a focus has been useful.

Moreover, in developing our strategy, we emphasized the importance of working collaboratively: this has been helpful in cutting through competition in the building sector and finding new ways of working together.

The contribution of Caplor Horizons has been extremely helpful to the AECB in a variety of ways that the organization would not have otherwise had access to. The manner in which the Advisors share their experience and knowledge so generously for the good of others is also a great inspiration. It is a great model and I continue to consider how aspects of it could