Compact Tailored Knowledge for the Construction Sector
SURECON – Sustainable Renovation and Construction

CURRICULUM STRAND - COMMUNICATION

Profile: Sustainability - Renovating

Building Owner Typologies: SURECON.EU-Advisory Process

In the framework of "NaSaBau"-project co-financed by the European Union:

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Transfer of Innovation
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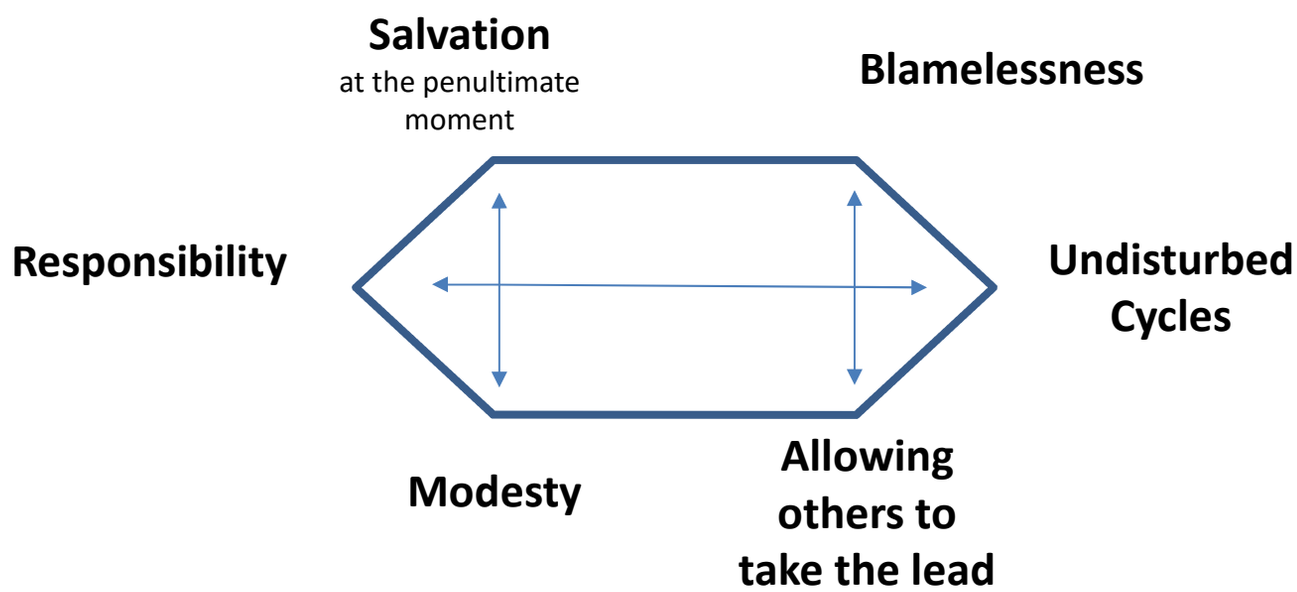
Overview:

- **Profiling „Sustainability“**
- **The sphere of „Renovation“**
- **„Residential Building Owners “: The types**
- **The SURECON.EU Advisory Sphere**

The Profile of Sustainability: The fear experienced by Dorian Gray

Studies carried out within the field of depth psychology, during which the interview partners were encouraged to expand on the strands of meaning which emerged in relation to the concept „sustainability“ can be summarized using the following diagram:



Thge profile of sustainability: The fear experienced by Dorian Gray

- The characteristics contained in the profile of sustainability are much more strongly polarised than is the case with other subject matter.
- While it is true to say that either of the two poles will always dominate, the profile as a whole can move to the other side „at the bat of an eyelid " to to speak (a visual puzzle).
- The main image of sustainability is characterised by the timely assumption of responsibility in order to eradicate the perceived mistakes of the past – grotesque and scandalous as they may have been.
- The image is fundamentally a positive one, but not one tinged with joy. It is more the sense of heavy responsibility which tends to accompany the undertaking of herculean tasks and which is made bearable from time to time by small imaginings of saintliness similar to unearned rewards.
- The smaller the space allocated to „blame" as the perceived source of the problem, (moving away from the precept „ think in solutions" towards manifest denial), the higher the likelihood that there will be a tipping over into the **secondary image**.
- Within the secondary image blame has already become transformed into fear (of punishment: „climate change").

The profile of sustainability: The fear experienced by Dorian Gray

Viewed overall the image of sustainability works in a similar manner to the plight of Dorian Gray. Our Dorian Gray wishes to redress the consequences of his way of life as depicted in his portrait and in doing so hopes to salve his palpably guilty conscience. For it was his portrait (Nature, the eco-sphere, earth) which has/had to bear the ravages of his dissolute life by proxy. He wants to reverse the depradations, which his real life actions have wrought in the pictorial representation of his face. His goal is to replace his image and likeness in the portrait with his actual face which has remained attractive.

However with a sense of foreboding rather than any factual knowledge Dorian fears that the deal made to his own advantage and to the detriment of the portrait could never be undone (e.g. „Go ye forth and subjugate the entire earth“). If the portrait were to be healed, all the sickness and ugliness associated with it, would suddenly revert onto him. He is not afraid that the portrait will become like him, but that he will recognise himself in the grotesque aftermath of the reparation. To see himself for what he really is, is exactly what he has expressedly wished to avoid - foisting instead his real self upon the portrait.

In so many words: **The ambivalence of sustainability** (visual puzzle) and the restrained take-up of this „good“ cause by mankind have their roots in the same causation that has in the interim turned sustainability into a necessity. Dorian Gray is afraid that „sustainability“ will prove to him once and for all that „wanting to make things better“ is futile. The choice is stark – either he or his portrait will have to bear the brunt.

Perhaps the portrait is the better option?

The polarities within the components of the profile:

Responsibility

The fear of a destructive overload is juxtaposed with the basic precept underlying an adult relationship with the world - namely that one takes responsibility for one‘s actions. For example - It is too much. We can never again bring it under control and we will wear ourselves out trying.

Undisturbed cycles

The hope for an end to conflict-ridden contradictions (at one with nature) can tip over into a nightmare vision that we will lose all forms of individuality and disappear into the powerful cycle of life „like a tear in the ocean“.

The polarities within the components of the profile:

Salvation at the penultimate moment:

On the one hand the emphasis is on the necessity for decisive interventionary action – which is already long overdue – and may involve the introduction of hard measures which can however be justified and will in general contribute to the building of discipline. On the other hand one cannot help but harbour the suspicion that strategy and overview are being overlooked while we focus helplessly on the countless challenges facing us - for example in the area of climate change.

Modesty

It is possible to find and implement an acceptable balance both in our thinking and our actions in order to counteract the hubris which has led to the current state of affairs. However this means facing the imminent danger that we may become impoverished for eternity.

The polarities within the components of the profile

Blamelessness

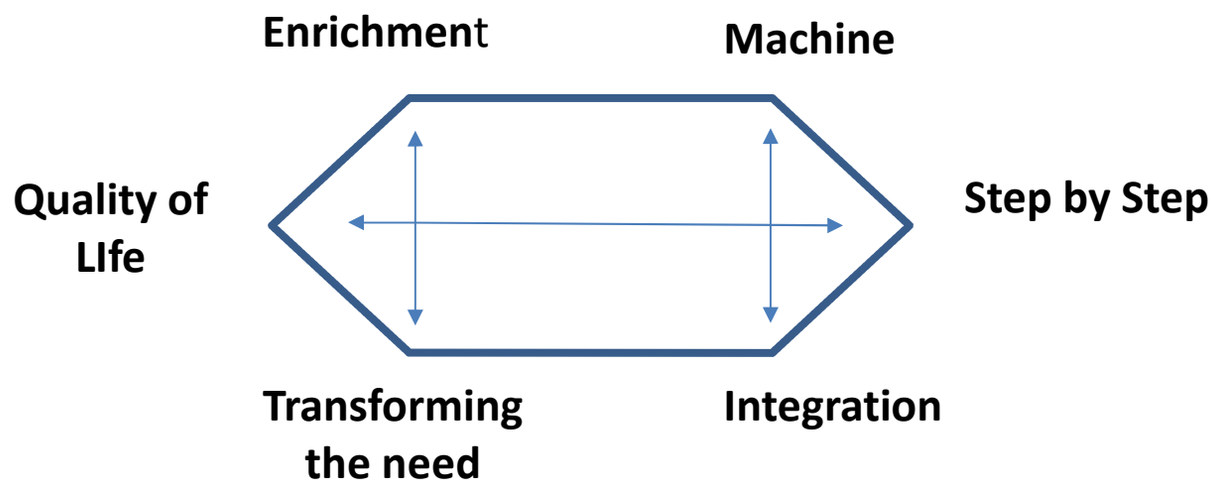
Here the moments of saintliness consolidate and become phantasies of blamelessness straight out of paradise (the principal motive in the profile). Parallel however these phantasies are also characterised by individual moments of considerable instability which quickly turn into the fundamental fear **of lapsing into a vegetative state**.

Allowing oneself to be led

The calming and exonerating sense that one can and should intelligently follow the path of (world) wisdom stands in contrast to the very worldly fear, that one will presumably end up rowing in with whatever is on offer (crooked deals under the guise of sustainability) based on the assumption that being a follower will over time result in the loss of the ability for critical thinking - that is, being able to stand back from the information given.

The psychological sphere „Renovating“

The basic tension in relation to building is that which exists between the planning phase as a desire for empowerment and control and the vast complexity of the subject matter involved, which fundamentally endangers the security motive.



Type I: Transforming the Need

- **Stresses the fact that he is not voluntarily undertaking the renovation**
- **Knows a lot about risks and dangers of all kinds (!) and…**
- **…has a sense of the futility of all human endeavour**
- **When renovating, would like to have what he already had, but this time wants it done properly**

Expectations of the advisory process:

- **Let‘s keep it brief. It isn‘t really going to achieve a lot**
- **Trying to cheat fate? You can be quite sure that fate will strike back.....**
- **…unless of course you guarantee, that the gag being pulled on fate is definitely going to work**

Advisory Pitch: Sustainability is a particularly honourable way of showing loyalty to fate

Type II: Enrichment

- Has picked up a lot about modern building methods, has probably done specific research
- Is considering all the possibilities and finds all of them interesting in one way or another
- Has already forged a few casual but noteworthy connections in life
- Sees renovation as a good opportunity to get one over on fate for forcing him to carry out this renovation

Expectations of the advisory process:

- I know what I want. I just don‘t know how to go about it. Tell me how.
- I want to enrich my life, but not the building sector.
- Shame that you haven‘t a clue about anything apart from building.

Advisory Pitch: A good concept will net you a lot of fish in one go – You‘ve hit the jackpot!

Type III: Machine

- **His house should do at least as much for him as he does for his house**
- **The nice new (building) world should not stop at his house**
- **It‘s allowed to play a few games, but it must obey**
- **By renovating he is finally able to achieve house number 2, something he has been unable to do up to this for reasons unknown**

Expectations of the advisory process:

- **I have finally met a kindred spirit (pro progress)**
- **Technology is a wonderful thing. I can‘t get enough of it. Do you have anything interesting for me?**
- **Between ourselves: There‘s sure to be something that would interest my wife, isn‘t there?**

Advisory Pitch: Exactly! We‘ll make sure that your house takes over your life. And we‘ll kick-start the process with a trendy concept.

Type IV: Integration

- His house is more than just a dwelling
- Regards complexity as a positive sign
- Believes that one can solve all problems by thinking them through in a in-depth manner
- Renovation is the fly swatter, with which he will be able to swat lots and lots of flies

Expectations of the advisory process:

- We are discussing something very important, which must be fully thought through.
- Are you really listening to me?
- Make sure to explain the more complex contexts. After all I'm not stupid.....

Advisory Pitch: Make use of the plethora of wishes, to come up with a building design which can be visualised.

Type V: Quality of Life

- **Regards comfort and cosiness to be the essence of living**
- **His ideas are not necessarily technically or aesthetically demanding, but are rather fixed**
- **Mistrusts big promises, above all in relation to anything which seems to „develop spontaneously“.**
- **The need to renovate is perceived as a disruption, which he would like to eliminate (if possible with a gain attached) without having to go to too much trouble**

Expectations of the advisory process:

- **If you have a more pressing matter on hand, we can always postpone our meeting**
- **We want to get this done without any fuss.**
- **My preference is for a long-term solution which will require minimal maintenance**

Advisory Pitch: A building which has been sustainably renovated, will soon have the „feel“ you like.

Type VI: Step by Step

- **Has reconfigured his life almost as often as his house**
- **Is not always entirely sure what he wants but looks forward to whatever is ahead**
- **The only constant in life is change**
- **Views renovation as one of the many wonderful challenges offered by life**

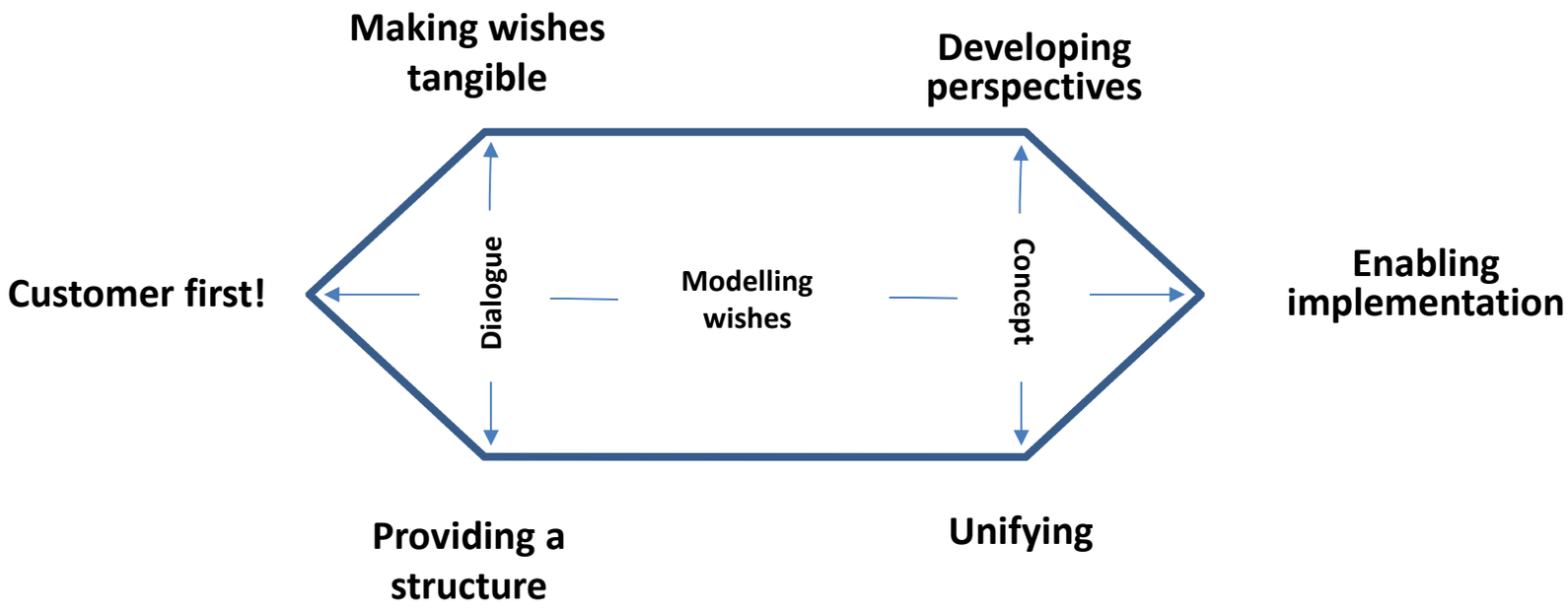
Expectations of the advisory process:

- **I want to make something of it. - Of what? - I thought you would have ideas for it.....**
- **How can we achieve all that in one go?**
- **Do you have anything modular, which could be changed around next year?**

Advisory Pitch: Sustainability is a colourful bouquet of flowers, which can be moved to a different vase whenever you want.

Working toward a good outcome: The Sphere of SURECON.EU-Advice "

The SURECON.EU-Advisory Process for Building Owners is as follows:



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