Home Modification Information Clearinghouse

Never Stand Still | Built Environment | City Futures Research Centre

Newsletter

Edition 34 | 17th December 2014

From the Editor

Dear Member,

Welcome to our Christmas instalment of the HMinfo Newsletter. Please feel free to distribute to your friends and colleagues. We wish you and your family a wonderful festive break.

National Affordable Housing Consortium Design Competition

UNSW awarded first place

UNSW Built Environment Master of Architecture Students were recently awarded first place in the National Affordable Housing Consortium (NAHC) 'Whole of Life, Whole of Use' Design Competition.

> The students' designs evolve around the production of standard residential dwellings that can be bought and sold in the general market. The buildings are flexible and adaptable for people from different disability groups to be able to live independently. See more here.

HMinfo Director Catherine Bridge was one of the UNSW Built Environment staff involved in the teaching of this Master of Architecture course. Also, HMinfo researcher Joanne Quinn, and HMinfo Advisory Committee member Nicholas Loder (NSW Land and Housing Corporation) were two of the outside guests providing advice on housing design for people with disability.

Community Engagement

- There will be a replacement for Sandi Lightfoot Collins who was our outgoing NSW Health Advisory Committee representative and we've negotiated with OT Australia for a replacement whom we're looking forward to meeting in 2015.

- HMinfo has been listed on the Centre for Applied Disability Research website (CADR).

- The Home Modifications State Council (MOD.A), OT Australia and HMinfo are working on a three way MoU in South Australia and look forward to new developments in 2015.

Website News

The HMinfo website has undergone the following major upgrades:

Colour Contrast Changes

Background and foreground colours have been adjusted across the website to ensure that the websites contrast ratios pass Level AAA requirements of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) for small and large font sizes. Background images were adjusted where necessary to remove patterns which disrupt contrast ratios.

Contrast adjustments were also made to the HMinfo newsletter template to maintain consistency with the websites updated theme and improve its legibility.

Vision Australia's Colour Contrast Analyser tool was used to test the websites and newsletters WCAG compliance.

Users will find it easier to distinguish characters on the website and newsletter due to these changes.

ZoomText Rendering Options

ZoomText is a screen magnifier application which allows users to enlarge images and text on their desktop.

According to Vision Australia, the average magnification level is 400% and the most commonly used screen magnifier in Australia is ZoomText. The website was tested using ZoomText at 400% magnification.

Tests revealed that rendering issues occurred in certain areas of the website when it was magnified by 400%. Some of the issues would have decreased the usability of input forms for users with motor impairments and other issues decreased the legibility of characters for users with vision impairments.

Input forms were upgraded to include resize options which enable users to resize text editors to a comfortable width, preventing vertical scrolling as they enter data into forms. User options are maintained during their website session to avoid the need to set options on every entry form.

Decorative backgrounds were replaced with solid colours to remove disruptions to text rendering, such as blurry character edges.

The Service Directory Coverage field was resized to accommodate 400% magnification, as it would have otherwise required extensive horizontal and vertical scrolling to use.

Forum Search

A keyword based search was added to each Forum section on the website to enable users to conveniently find conversations.

Prior to this addition, users attempting to find conversations would have needed to use the websites global search function. Global search results include pages from all sections of the website, thus there is a greater possibility of including irrelevant results.

Calendar Enhancements

The HMinfo websites calendar strongly relied on pop-up windows to display event information.

Feedback from users during the PDCN review indicated that pop-ups were presenting usability issues due to the manner in which they remove focus from the website and interrupt navigation flow.

Calendar pop-up windows have been replaced with conventional pages which display event information. Event information pages provide links back to their relevant calendar dates and also improve SEO due to the link hierarchy they establish.

Mega Menu Enhancements

Previous enhancements to the Mega Menu addressed issues which would be experienced by keyboard-only users.

The latest enhancements are aimed at addressing issues which were experienced by users of assistive technology such as turbo-mice. Internal and external feedback suggested that the Menu Menu's transition speed was overly fast and did not allow users to effectively navigate menu

Mega Menu transition speeds have been adjusted to provide sufficient time for users to navigate menu options. In addition to speed adjustments, transition animations were added to indicate the timing of focus changes.

We welcome our readers' feedback on our website and if you have any problems or difficulties with the way it works, please let us know. You can email us any queries on: hminfo@fbe.unsw.edu.au

Award for Best Paper

A/Prof Catherine Bridge and Phillippa Carnemolla have recently returned from presenting at the 5th International Conference for Universal Design in Fukushima and Tokyo 2014. The conference combined discussions around the legacy of the Fukushima disaster and the role of universally designed housing in its rebuild, as well as the role of housing in the lead up to Tokyo Olympics 2020.

The Tokyo conference culminated in an awards ceremony presided over by Princess Yōko of Mikasa of Japan. She was inaugurated as the Patron of the International association for Universal Design (IAUD) from August 2013. The paper presented by Associate Catherine Bridge won the award for best quality and research significance. This winning paper was titled "Consumer Choice and DIY home modifications: exploring Universally designed housing", and was co-authored by Associate Professor Catherine Bridge, Fred Zmudzki and Nicole McNamara. Phillippa Carnemolla also presented a paper discussing her PhD research results.

In September A/Prof Catherine Bridge was a project partner and Keynote Speaker on "Resilience and Ageing; Experiences" at the Resilient Communities Summit, Blenheim, New Zealand. She was also invited to be one of the main speakers in the "Symposium on Trends in Universal Design 2014: Tourism for the Ageing Population (STUD2014) that in Kuala Lumpur in December. The symposium was held in conjunction with the Official Launching of MS 1184: 2014, Universal Design and Accessibility in The Built Environment - Code of Practice (Second Revision) and The International Day of People with Disability that was celebrated on 3 December annually.

Current HMinfo Research Projects

Fire Safety - Smoke Alarms

As part of our agreed strategy work plan with our funders we prioritised documents published before 2006 for review and update. The HMinfo *Summary Bulletin: Home Smoke Alarms* (2006) required a complete new edition, due to the substantial changes in smoke alarm adoption, products and research since this publication, and the recent NCC 2014 requirement for linked smoke alarms in new dwellings.

The HMinfo Summary Bulletin: Fire Safety – Smoke Alarms 2nd ed. will be published in early 2015.

Publications by EBEP/HMinfo Team Members www.homemods.info/publications-by-hminfo

DIY Home Modifications: Point-of-Sale Support for People with Disability and their Carers Positioning Paper – M. Bleasdale, N. McNamara, F. Zmudzki and C. Bridge

The DIY home mods project, funded by ADHC is coming into its final year in 2015. The research aims to provide insight into people's experience of home mods, what was involved in the planning and management process, whether the modifications were successful, and the motivations for doing them DIY. Drawing from this, the research intends to develop information resources to be made available at the Point of Sale (POS) and online for consumers to assist decision making about DIY home modification projects. We also intend to hold an industry forum in 2015, to relate the findings of our research to assist retailers their provision of home modification products.

We are currently in the process of completing the surveys and are also excited to have a video ethnographer to do home visits with volunteers who have experience of DIY home mods. The filming is currently in progress and we intend to use the footage in the development of POS resources. We are looking forward to disseminating the results of the research in 2015.

HMinfo News Topics

- New Revised Standards for Termite Management
- ACAA - Universal Design: A Better Way National Conference & Trade Expo
- ATSA Expo

Events

NDIS Accelerator - Drive innovation and become NDIS ready

In March until June 2015, the School for Social Entrepreneurs (SSE) will launch Australia's first enterprise-based learning program to support disability organisations to develop market orientated, client focused business models, in response to the opportunities that the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) presents.

SSE Australia's NDIS Accelerator is a unique learning program starting in March 2015 that will build your organisational capability to meet National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) objectives.

Using SSE's global best practice Action Learning model, you will develop skills and tools to apply into current business models or to actively develop new enterprises in response to the opportunities that the NDIS presents.

The Program will provide unprecedented access to leading corporate, government and community expertise and networks from Australia and the UK to rapidly develop business models and enterprises within the sector. It will be limited to a maximum of 18 participants from the disability sector in Australia consisting of 12 days of core face-to-face workshops offered in 3-day Study Blocks over a 4-month period and a range of time-flexible elements to further your knowledge, networks and skills.

SSE is a not-for-profit organisation and the global-leader in social enterprise development. Over 1,200 participants have completed SSE learning programs across the world and participants will be able to draw on this body of global best practice, with specific disability sector case studies to be delivered as part of the Program.

For more information go to: http://sse.org.au/learning-programs/ndis-accelerator

or contact SSE Australia's Development Manager, Ben Jeffreys – ben@sse.org.au or 0418 347 822

Minor Home Modifications Function, Occupation, Clinical reasoning, Universal, Skill development
A professional development workshop for occupational therapists – 30th March 2015

This workshop was successfully held in 2014 and is scheduled to be repeated in 2015 due to popular demand.   The details of this workshop are as follows:

WORKSHOP PRESENTERS: Margaret Neuss and Yvonne Pennisi

This workshop is suitable for all occupational therapists regardless of experience in prescribing home modifications. The workshop will focus on:

• Increasing knowledge and skills related to prescribing minor home modifications

• Experiential learning – translating theory into practical skill development

• Developing/consolidating functional assessment and clinical reasoning skills

• Interpreting and applying AS 1428, as appropriate

• Increasing awareness/knowledge of innovations and new products within the home modifications industry.

The FOCUS skills and strategies developed in this workshop may also be applicable to other areas of occupational therapy practice such as:

• Supervision of occupational therapists

• Supervision of occupational therapy students

• Prescribing assistive technology.

HOW TO REGISTER   The registration process has changed – please register online by visiting the School of Health & Human Sciences' Continuing Professional Development webpage at www.scu.edu.au/healthcpd

To view our current Schedule of CPD Events, and/or to register for an event, please visit the School of Health & Human Sciences' Continuing Professional Development webpage at www.scu.edu.au/healthcpd

(Registration table opens at 7:45am. Note: the workshop begins at 8am sharp)

Enquiries: carla.robinson@scu.edu.au

Journal Article we like

Design of a website for home modifications for older persons with dementia
by Helianthe S.M. Kort and Joost van Hoof

ABSTRACT:

BACKGROUND: At present, persons with dementia and their family caregivers in the Netherlands are not adequately supported to modify their dwellings to match their personal needs.

OBJECTIVE: To facilitate aging-in-place for persons with dementia, a website was designed.

METHODS: The website was designed with persons with dementia and their spouses. In consultation sessions existing websites were discussed. Based on this discussion, a demonstration website was created and then discussed with and judged by the participants. Visits to the website were monitored using Google Analytics.

RESULTS: Participants prefer a website that is easy to print. In addition, the navigation menu should have a maximum of three levels, and the website menu should be positioned on the left. Participants dislike the use of meaningless photographs because these do not add any value to the information given.
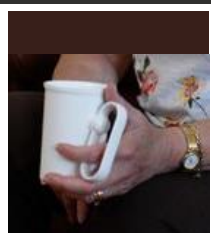
CONCLUSIONS: Participants prefer a website that is as accessible as reading a book. Some differences are related to culture, such as the participants dislike for the use of English terms. Therefore, preferences or dislikes of items on a website could not be generalized as such. However, the preferences and dislikes may provide useful input for the design process of an appropriate website.

This Journal can be downloaded here:
http://iospress.metapress.com/content/4r80m232r8522128/fulltext.pdf

Websites We Like

Adjustable handle   **Bra Aid**   **Kenguru wheelchair car**   **Braille Smart Phone**   **Talking Lids**

If you like gizmo gadgets, especially those useful for people with disabilities, have a look at this collection of diverse gizmos for all sorts of uses, from rotating cup handles, talking tin lids, to a one handed bra aid: https://www.pinterest.com/trabasack/disability-gadgets/

Or for 10 more ultra-snazzy Ingenious inventions for people with disabilities, go to http://mashable.com/2013/09/12/assistive-technology/ to see a collection of amazing gizmos collated by Matt Petronzio. This even includes a look at the Kenguru car that you just "roll into" and drive away! Or a Braille Smart Phone by Ted Fellow and more.

Journal Articles, Reports and Other Publications

Recent Conference Papers

Carnemolla PK, Bridge, Catherine. *How Home Modifications Support Ageing Well at Home: Towards a Lasting Housing Legacy.* The 5th International Conference for Universal Design in Fukushima & Tokyo 2014., Tokyo, Japan, 11 Nov 2014 - 13 Nov 2014. 14 Nov 2014 (Conference Paper)

Bridge CE, Sivaramen V, Thorne. J. *The Liveability Project - Mobile crowdsourcing older persons opinions on town pavements. Walk 21 - Speed Dating Under the Big Top*, Luna Park, Sydney, 21 Oct 2014 - 23 Oct 2014 (Conference Presentation)

Bridge CE, Sivaramen V. *Walk21 - The Livability Project – Crown Street, Surry Hills. Walk21 - International Conference on Walking and Liveable Communities*, Luna Park, Sydney, Australia, 21 Oct 2014 - 23 Oct 2014 (Conference Presentation)