

OUR CITY?

**COUNTERING
EXCLUSION
IN PUBLIC SPACE**



*Edited by Minouche Besters,
Ramon Marrades, Juliet Kahne*

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OUR CITY?

**COUNTERING
EXCLUSION
IN PUBLIC SPACE**

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Editor in Chief:

Minouche Besters

Editorial team:

Juliet Kahne | Project for Public Spaces

Ramon Marrades and Dima Yankova | La Marina de Valencia

Roos Gerritsma and Philippa Collin | Inholland University of Applied Science

Renée Rooijmans, Nienke Sluimer and Konstantinos Gournianakis | STIPO

Collaborating editors:

IJsbrand Heeringa | Yacht

Kate Louise Milosavljevic | Nabolagshager

Marko Zlonoga | MODUL E3

Viktor Kasala | City of Bratislava

Maria Adebowale-Schwarte | Foundation for Future London

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FOREWORD: PLACEMAKING EUROPE

DEAR READER,

Public space quality is the backbone of a sustainable city. To ensure a quality public realm, cities need great streets, places where you intuitively want to stay longer, human scale inspired by interaction between buildings and streets, user ownership, placemaking, good plinths and a people-centered approach based on user experience.

The importance of public space as a foundation for good cities is recognized across Europe both at a policy level and among practitioners. Through the Placemaking Europe network we have collected best practice examples and methods from hundreds of participants and we have shared them openly on our websites and in our publications.

Through open source sharing, we build capacity and increase the impact of the placemaking movement. This growing network of placemakers from Europe and beyond is an accessible source for those seeking out like-minded professionals, or useful lessons and examples.

Placemaking as a strategy helps people co-create economically viable, livable, and sustainable city spaces, which depend on the interaction of three important components:

HARDWARE:

physical structures that provide the basic services required in a city – think of infrastructure, housing, design.

SOFTWARE:

the people and communities that make use of the city every day, the way they program the plinths and the public space. Their activities dictate whether a space is useful or not.

ORGWARE:

the networks and processes that underpin city spaces, such as financial operations, decision-making and maintenance.

The inherent value of placemaking as a process is that in each context it is closely tied to the local community's needs and specific circumstances. However, most placemakers find their footing in tools, mechanisms and strategies developed by their peers in other contexts.

During the Cities for All Conference, which we organized together with our partners in Stockholm in April 2018, we explored opportunities and challenges related to placemaking and inclusive cities. When do people feel at home in a city, when do they call it 'our city'? What are the suitable strategies for fostering inclusivity? There are many ways to look at this subject. From gentrification to shrinking cities. From safe cities for all to healthy, sustainable, and resilient cities.

This book is a natural follow-up to our Stockholm conference and it captures relevant stories gathered by the Placemaking Europe network over the past year, and not only.

It provides inspiration and tools for placemakers, politicians, civil servants, institutions and other city lovers. We are very grateful to all those parties who chose to share their knowledge and expertise with us and with the greater placemaking community.

We believe this book will boost the continuous cooperation between placemakers and other professionals working on inclusive cities.

Jeroen Laven
Chair Placemaking Europe

www.thecityateyelevel.com
www.placemaking-europe.eu

FOREWORD: LA MARINA DE VALENCIA



DEAR READER,

Waterfronts are extraordinary places. An urban waterfront is generally a good representation of its city's heritage, memory, identity and struggles. Throughout history, waterfronts have been highly contested for their strategic role in trade, as key assets for flourishing economies, as epicentres of the urban aspirations for access to water, in the fight against grand developments or in the preservation of industrial jobs. Thus waterfronts gained an important role in the everyday life of citizens, serving both as a place of work and a place of retreat.

Valencia's waterfront, La Marina de València, is also an extraordinary place. However, during the last decades, its way of being extraordinary was much closer to the strict meaning of the word: it was a place out of the ordinary. Upon receiving a 500-million-euro investment and hosting the America's Cup of sailing two times (2007 & 2010) along with the European Gran Prix of Formula 1 (2008-2017), the newly transformed harbour of Valencia was increasingly seen as exclusive and unattractive, detached from the needs and wishes of ordinary Valencians. Sometimes, more often than we would like to, grand urban projects, funded for the most part by taxpayers' money, come at the cost of displacement and exclusion. Ours was one of those cases.

In the spring of 2016 we initiated a process to reactivate the waterfront based on a combination of placemaking and creative bureaucracy: taking advantage of the existing infrastructure to attract innovative economic activity which generates wealth and long-term value for the local community, rather than immediate short-term profits for a handful of investors; co-creating the transformation of public space with the community starting with lighter-quicker-cheaper improvements; and setting up a set of rules —or rather a lack thereof— to promote an institutional shift from a 'no, because' culture to a 'yes, if' culture, as Charles Landry eloquently put it.

Countering exclusion was one of our main goals. Is it possible, however, to increase the attractiveness of a place without making it exclusive? Despite our best efforts, there is still a danger that the transition from a closed-off leisure-only marina to a vibrant public space and a soon-to-be innovation district could still generate exclusion. We have to remember that opening up a space to the public does not automatically generate inclusion.

When we started this project, we did not have all the answers nor a magic wand. In fact, nobody does. That is why books like the one you are now holding are so relevant. Public institutions, like ours, rely heavily on existing knowledge and the experience of practitioners, researchers, cities and communities. We find inspiration in the work of all those people who have contributed to this publication and the organisations behind them, especially Project for Public Spaces and Placemaking Europe.

Inclusion is not necessarily a set objective you can obtain, but an incremental process. The publication of this book and its presentation at Placemaking Week Europe 2019, which we have the pleasure to host, will be a significant stepping stone in this process.



Ramon Marrades
Chief Strategy Officer
La Marina de València

www.lamarinalivinglab.com
www.lamarinadevalencia.com

MEET THE TEAM



MINOUCHE
BESTERS
EDITOR IN CHIEF



JULIET
KAHNE



RAMON
MARRADES



ROOS
GERRITSMAN



PHILIPPA
COLLIN



RENÉE
RODIJMAN



NIENKE
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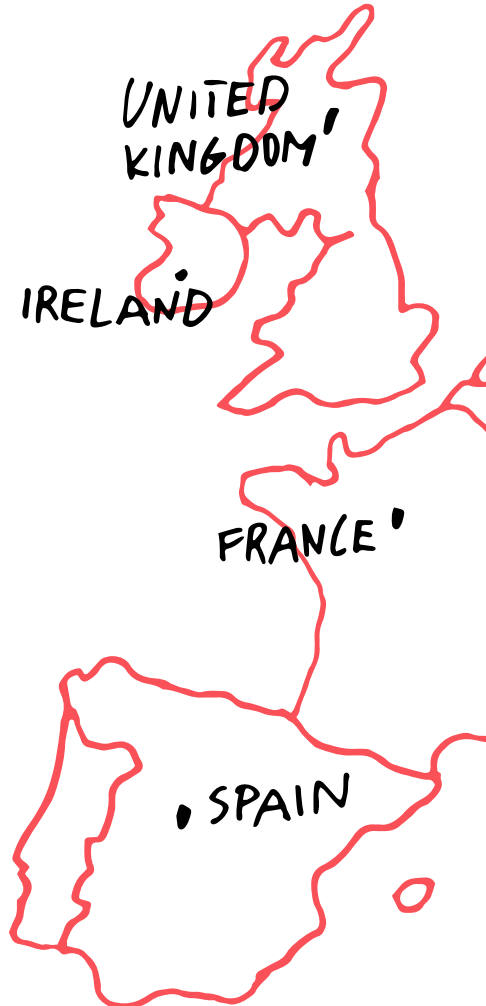
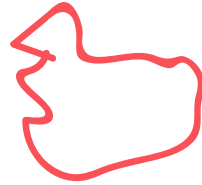


VIKTOR
KASALA



MARIA
ADEBOWALE-
SCHWARTE

THINKERS AND DOERS SHARING KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICAL CASE STUDIES FROM ALL OVER EUROPE



← USA

↙ BRAZIL

↙ CHILE



FINLAND

SWEDEN

DENMARK

NETHERLANDS

AUSTRIA

HUNGARY

SWITZERLAND

SLOVENIA

ROMANIA

ITALY

TURKEY

GREECE

ISRAEL

**OUR CITY?
COUNTERING
EXCLUSION IN
PUBLIC SPACE**

Cities cater to everyone, regardless of lifestyle, religion, culture, wallet size, age, sexual preference or demand for theater, food, sports or greenery. They absorb newcomers, negotiate differences between opposites and create narratives for everyone to relate to. Such is the story we are often told, and of course, it is all true. But at the same time, we must ask ourselves, do the residents of our ever-popular cities continue to feel at home in them? And are the public places within a city really even ours?

It is no secret that cities are booming. They continue to attract the world's top talent, stimulate the economy, act as innovation hubs, and serve as the cultural melting pots of all nations. With that success comes the need for a better understanding and more adequate strategies to ensure that the mechanisms behind our beloved cities maintain that incredible vitality to welcome all and make them feel right at home.

THE OTHER SIDE OF SUCCESS

Many macro developments challenge this ability of absorption and adaptation for both newcomers and the generations before them. Think of the quick turnover of old neighbourhoods to the next urban hotspot, leaving the 'original' inhabitants strangers in their own street between hipster ginger tea, gin tonic cafes and designer bakeries. Or the apartment blocks and postal codes that thrive on the coming and going of Airbnb tourists, their anonymity diminishing social cohesion and ownership in the buildings and the overall neighbourhood. And more anonymity, the role big international money – whether from private investors buying second or third homes in the best part of town or from big time developers who not only develop for the highest bidder but also create a new kind of 'public' but privately owned space – affects the lives of ordinary citizens daily.

Combine all of this with the large influx of strangers who come to live in our towns, all in a mix of well educated & informally trained, rich & poor, worldly & rural raised, difference in how they entered the country with the title expat, refugee or migrant, we get a potentially toxic mix that severely undermines the city's potential for absorption and inclusion.

PERSONAL STORIES

In the personal lives of people these macro developments manifest in all sorts of ways, often widening the already existent gap between different social groups. There is an increasing lack of understanding amongst people in how we experience the city, and how different our experiences are.

As a girl you will think twice about walking outside in the dark, but at a certain age you also no longer enjoy going to the park with your girlfriends. It does not feel safe with all the older boys chilling there, there is no wifi nor nice places to sit. And perhaps your parents and family no longer allow you to be outside without the proper male companion. Research in Scandinavia shows that from the age of 9 the girl-to-boy ratio of kids playing outside suddenly drops from almost 50-50% to 20-80%.

For an elderly citizen public life can become a distant phenomenon: something you look at from your window, but cannot enjoy yourself. Seniors often do not feel brave enough to walk all the way, what if they get tired and there are no places to sit and rest? Clear routing, proper sidewalks, benches every few meters, and the close proximity of house doctors, dentists, daily shops are all prerequisites for their participation in public life. But that is just the basics, what would attract them, make it fun? The next food truck festival, or perhaps something simpler, like playing chess with their old buddies or an old fashioned dance with live music in the park.

Central in these two examples are the questions of mobility and the extent to which you feel at home in your surroundings, in the sense of ownership and being able to claim your right to be there. The topic of mobility is a crucial one. The pace and ease with which people travel through the city, and their ability to move from point A to point B, differs tremendously from one group to the other. For the well educated global city dweller the city, or better the world, feels like their playground whereas many of their neighbours in other parts of town stay confined to the invisible 'borders' of their neighborhood. If the cheap supermarket is replaced with a boutique grocery or if the public library closes they do not just take the subway or a bike to find another elsewhere in the city. Instead they feel that yet again something has been taken away.

Living in the city is turning more and more into something for the happy few who can afford it. That is not what cities are about. We need to be inventive here. It is not just about designing the right policies, it is also about new types of ownership, collective financing, local grassroots initiatives. Exactly the things that will also increase the feeling of belonging, provide people with some control over their surroundings and make development truly sustainable.

TAKING ACTION

We sense an urgent search amongst politicians, policy makers, property developers, housing corporations and financial investors to find new approaches to work on inclusion and cities for all. It goes beyond placemaking alone. As urbanists of all sorts, we wish to contribute to this ongoing international debate, raised by UN Habitat and many others – a daily topic and a reality in our work – by offering practical alternatives that create cities where everyone can feel at home.

We also feel a responsibility to collectively learn and develop a better understanding of how we influence inclusion and exclusion in our work. As Maria Adebawale, Placemaking Europe leader and established urbanist in the UK, points out, placemaking is highly political. Every intervention in a square, street, neighbourhood strategy or area development we do has an effect on the public realm. That is of course

why we are asked in the first place and for good reasons. But while working, we should be really aware of how our interventions play out, whether they contribute, unwillingly, to alienation and exclusion, and understand what we can do to avoid that.

The collective exercise of writing this book, collecting all the case studies, editing and discussing all the materials, gave way to a greater and deeper body of knowledge that we now proudly share with you. We look forward to hearing your thoughts and all upcoming discussions as we are fully aware that this is just the beginning.



Minouche Besters
Editor in Chief

June 2019

HOW TO READ THE BOOK

This book features **a range of cases that explore how exclusion in public space is being countered across Europe.** We present research insights, local stories, tools, and actions, from a variety of different voices, to provide you with a clear understanding of what is needed to maintain a sense of belonging in our cities' public places. We also show how actively working with the local community, from engagement through to design, can change the way urban spaces are created and activated, particularly by reaching out to and encouraging participation from those whose voices often go unheard.

PART 1:

FOCUS ON UNDERSTANDING

In the first part of the book you will find research, interviews and case studies exploring the mechanisms that cause feelings of exclusion or replacement. We will first look into four major developments: gentrification, touristification, big money and big tech, and the special challenges for villages. The important takeaway from these chapters is the notion that exclusion is not the result of just one actor. It is rather caused by an intricate process where several forces intensify each other's side effects.

From these larger developments affecting our cities we then move on to people. If we step away from the dominant white adult male perspective – how unintended and subconscious it may be – how do other people experience public spaces? Girls, people in wheelchairs, refugees, kids, the elderly? A diverse set of case studies, personal stories and interviews will give you a holistic perspective and illustrate that 'public' does not automatically mean 'accessible, open or welcoming' to all people. We need to go the extra mile, from understanding and being sensitive to providing opportunity and actively inviting people in.

PART 2:

FOCUS ON ACTION

If there is one thing we would like you to take away from this book, it is that neither gentrification, nor exclusion are inevitable. They will occur if we do not pay attention, but there are many illustrative cases, research outcomes and proven practices that show an alternative way is possible. In the second part we distinguish three types of actions: designing with people, doing development differently and actively reaching out. It is not a matter of choosing one above the other, since they are mutually complementary.

You will find process designs for engaging all types of citizens, methods to cocreate and design collectively, but also examples of how to make placemaking sustainable by adopting different financial models. And even if all is done right, collectively and with innovative instruments, still some people might be missing in the process or feel left out. The last few chapters provide anchors that inspire the development of concrete strategies to reach out to those groups and help them become part of the city.

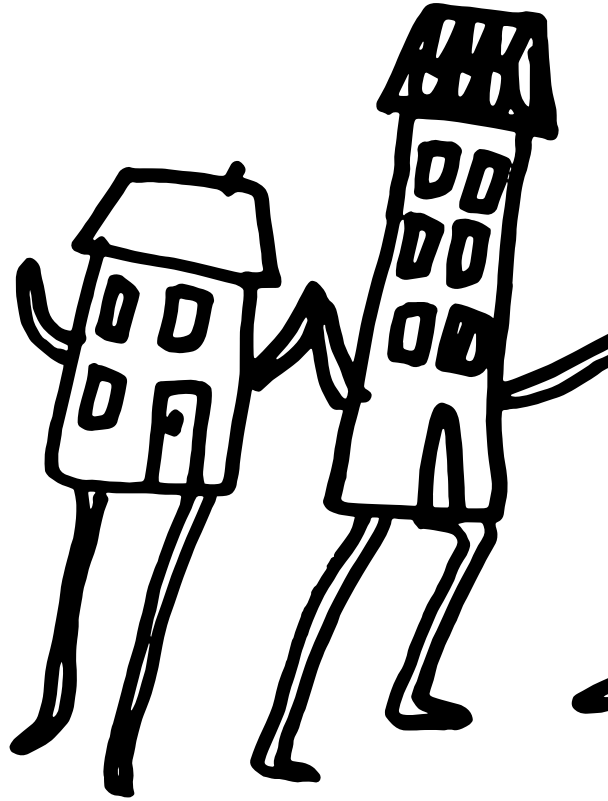
BROWSE, CHOOSE AND TRY FOR YOURSELF

There is no need to read the book cover to cover. Seek out the articles that you are interested in, and do not limit yourself to just reading: start exploring and share your findings. Fellow placemakers can be found at the facebook pages of Placemaking Europe.

WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

PART 1

**IN & OUT OF PLACE.
WHAT ARE THE
MECHANISMS
CAUSING
DISPERSION
AND FEELINGS
OF EXCLUSION?**



GENTRIFICATION



THE GENTRIFICATION CHALLENGE: PLACEMAKING AS THE PROBLEM, OR PLACEMAKING AS THE SOLUTION?

ESSAY

Michael W Mehaffy



It is on the urgent issue of gentrification that the placemaking movement faces perhaps its greatest challenge – and, in the end, may prove its greatest value. This will require a rigorous confrontation with the dynamics of gentrification, and a joined-up, evidence-based response. We will have to ask ourselves honestly, is placemaking part of the problem, or part of the solution? And if the latter, how exactly?

We begin by acknowledging one fact. It is common to hear placemakers blamed for making neighbourhoods more attractive to wealthier buyers, and thereby fueling gentrification. But of course, that is an absurdly superficial view – as if keeping a neighbourhood ugly is the key to its affordability. In fact, there are much deeper forces at work with gentrification, as Peter Moskowitz documents in his book ‘How to Kill a City’. Gentrification happens, he says, “not because of the wishes of a million gentrifiers, but because of the wishes of just a few hundred public intellectuals, politicians, planners, and heads of corporations.” More particularly, he says, “gentrification is a system that puts the needs of capital (both in terms of city budget, and in terms of real estate profits) above the needs of people.”

It’s also important at the outset to clarify what we mean by gentrification – and by kinds of gentrification, and what is (or perhaps is not) bad about them. Jane Jacobs famously argued that an increase in people with money in a neighbourhood is not automatically a bad thing, IF it thereby increases diversity and opportunities for all, and IF it does not result in displacement of existing residents. So, for example, a neighbourhood that is in decline, with many vacant buildings, can be considerably helped if new people move in with higher incomes – AND if those who already live and work there are not displaced.

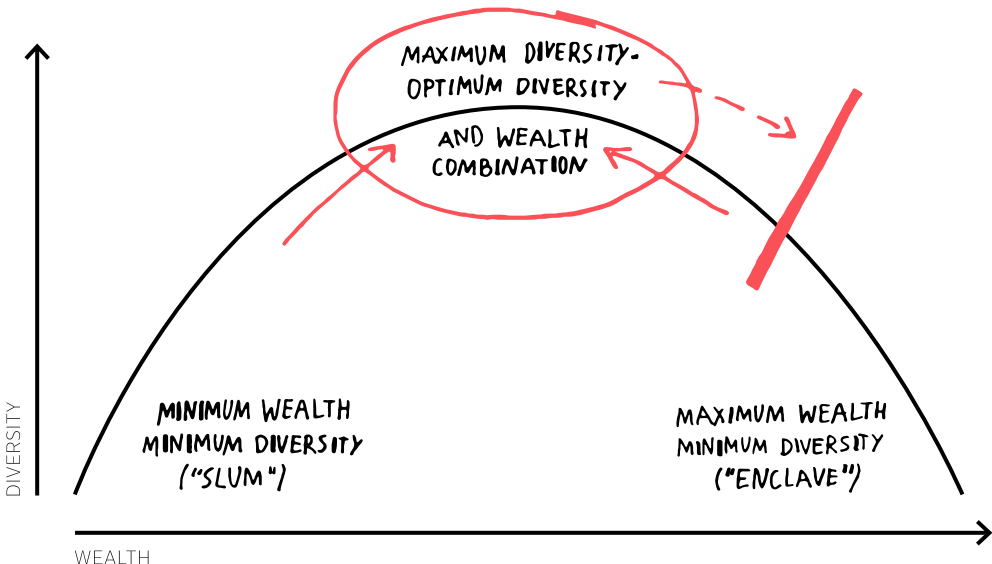
The problem, she said, is when a neighbourhood becomes a monoculture, either of wealth or of poverty – when it experiences what she called “the self-destruction of diversity.” That is a very bad thing – both because it displaces people who can no longer afford to live there, and because it destroys the very urban vitality that drew people there in the first place.

So we can conclude that gentrification is a very bad thing when it causes the loss of diversity and opportunity, and the involuntary displacement of existing residents – on either side of the income spectrum. In the middle range, however, is a kind of ‘Goldilocks zone’ – not too rich, not too poor, but just right in terms of its diversity of incomes (and people too).

We might think of this as the ‘Jacobs Curve’, and the goal of a city’s leadership ought to be to maintain this dynamic balance between too rich and too poor. We should focus less on whether a neighbourhood is becoming wealthier in any relative sense, and more on whether it is becoming more diverse – or less so.

THE ‘JACOBS CURVE’ PLOTTING WEALTH WITH DIVERSITY, SHOWS THAT THERE IS A KIND OF ‘GOLDILOCKS ZONE’ IN THE MIDDLE RANGE, WHERE WEALTH IS NEITHER TOO LOW NOR TOO HIGH, BUT SUFFICIENT TO SUPPORT MAXIMUM DIVERSITY

Source: author’s personal archive



"JACOBS CURVE"

How do we manage this dynamic balance? One way is to recognize when a core is overheating, and use tools to dampen the growth and shift it elsewhere. Jacobs referred memorably to using ‘chess pieces’ and other strategic moves to catalyze growth in declining areas. She urged us to look at a broader kind of diversification, not only of people and wealth, but of geography too.

Unfortunately, we seem to be intent on killing our cores with kindness. Newly popular city cores are drawing more people, pushing up prices, and driving out small businesses and lower-income residents. City leaders, alarmed by the trends, try to build their way out of the problems, on the theory that more supply will better match demand, and result in lower rents and home prices. But the efforts do not seem to work – and even seem to exacerbate the problems. Vancouver, B.C. is a conspicuous example: it is now one of the world’s most expensive cities.

That is because cities are not simple machines, in which we can plug in one thing (say, a higher quantity of housing units) and automatically get out something else (say, lower housing costs). Instead, cities are ‘dynamical systems’, prone to unintended consequences and unexpected feedback effects. By building more units, we might create ‘induced demand’, meaning that more people are attracted to move to our city from other places – and housing prices do not go down, they go up. For example, Vancouver has been an attractive place for wealthy investors and those with second, third or fourth home, often from China.

Unfortunately, we have been treating cities too much like machines, and for an obvious reason. In an industrial age, that has been a profitable approach for those at the top, and in past decades, it seemed to fuel the middle class too. More recently, we have begun to see very destructive results – creating cities of winners and losers, and large areas of urban (and rural) decline. Even government programmes meant to address the problems have seemed at times like a game of ‘whack-a-mole’ – build some social housing here, see more affordability problems pop up over there.

In the years after World War II, and especially in the United States, the largest areas of decline were often in the inner cities, leaving the ‘losers’ of the economy behind, while the ‘winners’ (often wealthier whites) fled to the suburbs. But more recently it has been the cores of large cities that have become newly prosperous, attracting the winners of the ‘knowledge economy’.

Meanwhile, the inner-tier suburban belts and the smaller industrial cities have suffered marked decline, with a predictable political backlash from the ‘white working class’. Lower-income and minority populations have been relegated to even more peripheral locations, with limited opportunities for economic (and human) development. This gap in opportunity means a gap in the lower-end ‘rungs of the ladder’ that are so essential for immigrants and others to advance. It is a gap in urban justice too – and it is not just bad for those in the peripheries, it is bad for the city as a whole.

This more recent pattern of core gentrification and geographic inequality has also been an unintended result of conscious policies. This time we aimed to achieve not suburban expansion, but the urban benefits of

knowledge-economy cities, and their capacities as creative engines of economic development.

In the USA, authors like Ed Glaeser and Richard Florida have come to prominence by promoting the undeniable economic power of city cores. Florida's 'creative class' ranks alongside concepts like 'innovation districts' to promote a critical mass of talent and interaction. Glaeser's 'triumph of the city' points to the environmental efficiencies of compact living, as well as the economic benefits.

These and other authors have cited Jacobs as inspiration, particularly referencing her later economic theories. In works such as 'The Economy of Cities' and 'The Nature of Economies', she did indeed champion the remarkable capacities of cities, and their synergistic 'agglomeration benefits', as creative engines of human development. But she also warned against a kind of 'silver bullet' thinking that imagines that the benefits of an innovation district or a downtown creative class will automatically trickle down to the rest of the city and the countryside. On the contrary, she pointed to the dangers of any form of concentrated 'monoculture' – including even the partial monoculture of an innovation district or of a creative class. More recently, Richard Florida has expressed the same sober re-assessment of his own earlier work.

Instead, Jacobs argued for a more diverse kind of city – not only diverse in population, and in kinds of activities, but diverse in geographic distribution too. Hers was a 'polycentric' city, with lots of affordable pockets full of old as well as new buildings, and multiple opportunities waiting to be targeted. In such a region, economic growth – and likewise the demand for housing – could be tempered and modulated to remain more even and equitable.

This is a point that Ed Glaeser and the fans of 'innovation districts' might not yet comprehend. Glaeser for one has been harsh in criticizing Jacobs' defense of old buildings – for example, in Greenwich Village – which he sees as a sentimental preservation instinct that only feeds gentrification. His formula has been to demolish and build new high rises.

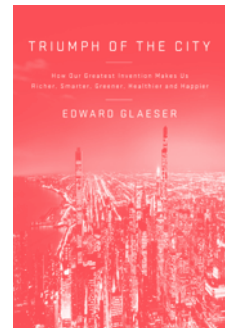
But Glaeser and other critics seem to miss Jacobs' point. For Jacobs, the answer to gentrification and affordability is not an over-concentration of new (often even more expensive) housing in the same overheated cores. Rather, we need to diversify geographically as well as in other ways. If Greenwich Village is over-gentrifying, it is probably time to re-focus on Brooklyn, and provide more jobs and opportunities for its more depressed neighbourhoods. If those start to overheat, it is time to focus on the Bronx, or Queens. Or Cleveland, Detroit, Baltimore, New Orleans...

There is almost no end to the existing good urban fabric, in the US and in other countries, that is ready for some positive gentrification, the kind that increases diversity and opportunities for human development (as we also offer targeted protections against displacement for existing residents).

At the same time, it seems more important than ever to provide good urban fabric in the suburbs too, where increasing percentages of the population live (including increasing numbers of displaced poor). 'Good urban fabric' means walkable, mixed, transit-served, with expanding

THE BOOKS
'TRIUMPH OF THE
CITY' BY EDWARD
GLAESER, AND
'THE RISE OF THE
CREATIVE CLASS' BY
RICHARD FLORIDA,
BOTH HAVE PROVEN
HUGELY INFLUENTIAL
IN STOKING THE
OVERHEATING OF
CITY CORES – AS THE
AUTHORS HAVE NOW
ADMITTED

Source:
Penguin Books (Up),
Basic Books (Down)



opportunities in older as well as newer buildings. It means the same type of geographic and other kinds of diversity, achieved through conscious strategic actions to dampen, incentivize, catalyze, and use a variety of tools.

It is not wise to over-concentrate on the existing cores, in the belief that this 'voodoo urbanism' will magically benefit all of the city's residents. Like George H.W. Bush's 'voodoo economics', this approach reveals a naïve faith in the capacity of the top of the economic pyramid (or the core of the city) to generate wealth that trickles down to all the rest. In that sense, it is ironic that so many supposedly progressive city administrations are lured by this approach.

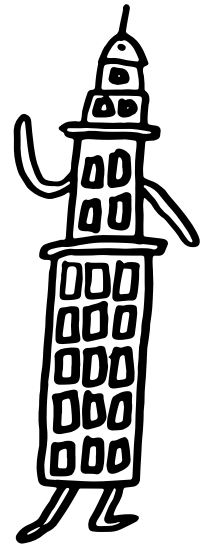
A second, related issue is the scale of urban plots or lots. Here too we need diversity at the smaller scales, just as we need geographic diversity at the largest scales of the city. Just as old buildings tend to be more affordable, accommodating smaller businesses and startups, so too, small plots and lots tend to be more affordable for those same users. There are other strategies for providing a diversity of opportunity too.

But as the cores experience hypertrophic growth, often the pressure to build very large buildings on very large sites also becomes financially irresistible. A mix of small and large plots, established by zoning code, can help to tamp down this tendency. At the same time, other tools can manage overheating of the core, and steer growth into new locations. For example, we can use land value tax to dampen speculation in real estate – so-called 'Georgist' policies. As Jacobs recommended, we can also use new public projects in new locations to serve as catalytic 'chess pieces' to redirect growth into more benign forms.

These and many others are examples of Jacobs' 'toolkit' approach – one that is badly needed today, to cope with the dynamic challenges of rapid city growth around the world.

The lesson is that we need to become wiser stewards of urban diversity, in both scale and location, so that we can counteract the effects of gentrification, especially when it is caused by overheated urban growth. There are ample lessons in the past successes of cities that offer us effective tools and strategies. By doing so, we can support a more even and equitable growth of smaller businesses, and viable employment for lower and middle classes.

Out of that creative exchange, we will continue to get unimaginable marvels of innovation, and we might also get the next new world-famous startup. But we will also get many thousands of other healthy and creative businesses, forming the backbone of great cities.



GALATA, ISTANBUL: UNDERSTANDING CONFLICT AND TENSION IN A GENTRIFYING NEIGHBOURHOOD

LOCAL
STORY

Aysegul Can

ABSTRACT

This paper examines gentrification as an ongoing process and investigates its consequences on social mix and inclusion. The goal is to unfold and examine the tensions between different groups of residents in Galata neighbourhood, Istanbul, through the lenses of inclusion and exclusion. The paper highlights a number of cultural and political issues in gentrified neighbourhoods, with significant importance placed on the tensions between gentrifiers themselves, how these tensions grow and operate, and how they affect the issue of inclusion (or lack thereof) in the inner city.

INTRODUCTION

Gentrification studies are dominated by theorization and conceptualization from Western Europe and North America (Lees et al., 2016). The term 'gentrification' itself was coined in London by sociologist Ruth Glass in 1964 and was borrowed later in discussions of global gentrification (Atkinson & Bridge, 2005). This article addresses the issue of market-led, or in other words classical, gentrification as an emancipatory and ongoing process that not only creates tension between old and new inhabitants, but also between different groups of gentrifiers. By doing so, the article argues that gentrification not only fails as a policy tool for social mix and inclusion in the inner city, but it also deepens social segregation to the point of stirring up tensions among groups of people that belong to similar social classes.

To illustrate this point, I use a neighbourhood from historical Istanbul that has been going through gentrification since the early 1990s. This neighbourhood is called Galata and was part of my PhD research where I analyzed the process of gentrification through interviews with the local government, academics and neighbourhood residents.

Gentrification research in Turkey started relatively early, in the 1980s, focusing primarily on historic neighbourhoods in central Istanbul (Islam & Sakizlioglu, 2015). Their gentrification process occurred in private housing markets and it seemed to share many of the same features as classic gentrification in Europe and America. Galata is a strong example of market-led gentrification, and indeed, it received two waves of gentrification, sometimes referred to as 'super gentrification'. Super-gentrification is another level of gentrification imposed on a previously gentrified neighbourhood by incomers with higher purchasing power than the previous middle-class gentrifiers (Lees & Butler, 2006). It exposes tensions between old and new inhabitants and certain antagonisms between different groups of gentrifiers. This is important, as this level of 'further' gentrification and the tensions it causes are understudied in the literature, yet they show how exclusionary the process can become. Although Galata falls into the category of market-led gentrification, the municipality has had a considerable role to play in initiating the process indirectly. I will first briefly discuss social mix, inclusion and social spatial segregation, and then move onto the discussion of Galata and how processes of gentrification created various levels of exclusion in the neighbourhood.

SOCIAL MIX VS. SOCIAL SPATIAL SEGREGATION

There are two concerns in this section with regard to social mix during gentrification: the first is about residents from different classes sharing the same neighbourhood; and the second is the question of the extent to which such residents mix in practice. In spite of the ongoing debate about whether or not gentrification leads to displacement and social segregation, the process has been supported by policy circles globally (e.g. Urban Renaissance and Housing Renewal Programme in the UK) in the belief that it will lead to socially mixed, 'more habitable' neighbourhoods. Gentrification has been associated with the attraction of diversity and social mixing (Lees, 2008), and "is said to be a relief from the sub-cultural sameness and 'boredom' of many suburban communities" (Allen, 1984, p. 409-428). However, there is little evidence that gentrification creates socially mixed neighbourhoods. As Rose (2004, p. 280) puts it, there is an "uneasy cohabitation" when it comes to gentrification and social mix. According to many studies on gentrification and social mixing (see Goodchild and Cole, 2001; Atkinson, 2005; Cheshire, 2007; Freeman, 2006; Lees et al., 2008; Rose, 2004; Uitermark et al., 2007), it seems to produce more tension between different classes rather than less.

A gentrification process that results in some or total displacement would typically push working class inhabitants to the periphery. However, these residents tend to maintain most of their work and social connection in the inner city and the city centre (Kesteloot, 2005). This creates many problems for them in the long term, such as further deepening of social and income polarization. As the process of gentrification progresses and reaches the point where the middle class is displaced from the inner parts, 'bubbles' of social classes begin to form in the city where no class interacts with another. 'Bubbles' refers to working-class people not only losing the chance to socialize and spend time in the city centre, but also losing their jobs in the area and all connections to it. It is not

merely that the higher income classes benefit from this process, but that working-class people are not able to access the amenities and jobs that can guarantee them satisfactory standards of living and health. This can cause further demonization of the poor by increasing the economic gap between different social classes, causing a rise in what Butler (2005) calls 'the urban other'.

GALATA

From the 19th century Ottoman era to the 1950s, Galata was a middle-class neighbourhood. Its population consisted of mainly Turkish citizens of Armenian, Greek and Jewish origin. These groups formed the merchant class of the Ottoman Empire, but with the founding of the Turkish Republic in 1923, they started to face suppression. Between the Armenian Genocide in 1915 and the invasion of Cyprus in 1974, many political events pushed them to flee the country.



*GALATA'S LOCATION
IN ISTANBUL*

*Source:
www.ibb.istanbul/en*



After the departure of the minorities, Galata and other historical neighbourhoods were abandoned. Housing became very cheap. Many immigrants from the central and eastern part of the country purchased flats and formed another identity in those neighbourhoods. Unfortunately, historical buildings were not well-maintained because of the complicated bureaucratic nature of the conservation law which required legal and architectural assistance that poor residents were unable to afford (Belge, 2002).

However, in the late 1980s, some historical neighbourhoods caught the attention of middle-class intellectuals and artists, who started buying and renovating houses in these areas. Hence, gentrification began, and with the change of inhabitants, local governments started providing better services (more frequent garbage pick-up times and cleaning, giving away planning permissions more easily for a change of function such as cafés or hotels), and the number of hotels, cafés, designer shops, and art galleries increased dramatically. Recently, Galata has experienced a second wave of gentrification, which consists of people who are financially better off than the first-wave gentrifiers. Now I move on to analyse the dynamic changes which occurred with the arrival of second-wave gentrifiers.



GALATA NEIGHBOURHOOD

*Source: author's
personal archive, 2018*

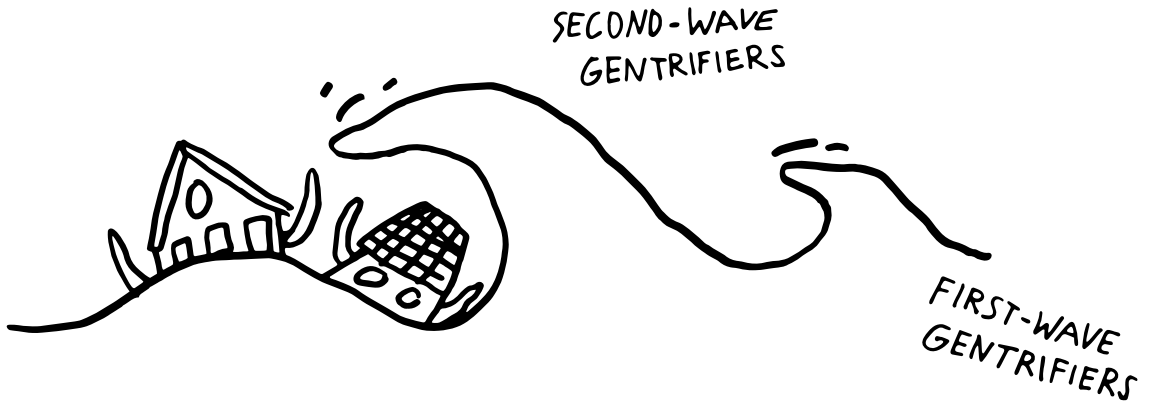
ANALYSIS

Classical gentrification has been an important phenomenon in Istanbul, and it has been caused by some of the same processes observed in the global North. The main elements such as rise in finance and business services, transformation of the economy, rise in the numbers of professional workers and the culture and taste of these professionals have been observed in many cities around the world, and they are also present in Istanbul. In this section, I analyze and interpret this story deeper by looking at four points: relationships between old and new inhabitants, tensions in Galata, indirect state involvement and social inclusion.

GENTRIFICATION LEADS TO ALL SORTS OF TENSIONS

The first point is that tensions in gentrified areas are not limited to those between old and new inhabitants. Gentrification creates many levels of tension between different groups and between groups of gentrifiers as well: these are indifference, antagonism, and indirect conflict. In Galata, it is clear from the statements of the working-class residents I interviewed that the local government had essentially ignored them by not providing adequate municipal services. However, my respondents did not realize that, and instead, felt grateful when the first-wave gentrifiers arrived because that is when the Municipality started providing better services. This is one reason why working-class respondents felt no antagonism towards the gentrifiers. However, recently-opened art galleries, cafés and restaurants have certainly made the district much more popular and improved the demand for housing. Yet, old inhabitants are not in the market for designer clothes or vintage bags. This makes them feel

excluded, as if they are no longer part of the neighbourhood, which in turn creates tensions between old and new inhabitants. According to first-wave gentrifiers, second-wave gentrifiers demonstrate indifference towards them, and they do not socialize with them in any way. First-wave gentrifiers openly show antagonism and in some cases, seek indirect conflict with second-wave gentrifiers (for example, by calling the police when it is too loud), and they also do not believe second-wave gentrifiers should be living in Galata. Similarly, first-wave gentrifiers show indifference towards the old inhabitants.



THE GENTRIFIERS THAT 'MADE' THE DISTRICT TRENDY DISLIKE THE NEW WAVE OF RICH GENTRIFIERS

People who moved to the district because of its history, architectural beauty and narrow streets that remind them of 19th-century Istanbul or people who like to enjoy exhibitions in nicely-restored buildings that used to belong to the Levantines, generally do not want other higher-income classes moving in only because the district is popular and 'trendy'. This is an interesting kind of tension that is not commonly emphasized in the literature of gentrification. The complaints of first-wave gentrifiers are mostly directed towards second-wave gentrifiers, because the latter do not exhibit the same desire for cultural significance that pioneer gentrifiers do. According to most of my respondents, including old inhabitants and recent gentrifiers, the housing prices in Galata will only go up. There were some first-wave gentrifiers that stated that Galata is becoming 'too gentrified' for their taste and they are thinking about moving to other parts of the city as they believe not only the neighbourhood is getting too expensive but also it is losing the kind of authenticity these gentrifiers were seeking.

LIVING TOGETHER DOES NOT MEAN SOCIALISING TOGETHER

I found little evidence of social mixing between the old and new inhabitants. Even though Galata has been gentrified since the early 1990s and most of the old inhabitants have left the neighbourhood because of gentrification, those remaining did not have social interactions with any of the gentrifiers. In the case of Galata, it is clear that it is not only old and new inhabitants who do not mix, but also first and second-wave

gentrifiers. Most first-wave gentrifiers said they enjoyed the diversity and sense of community that Galata once had and that this was one of the factors that attracted them to the area. However, they did admit social mix was not a priority when purchasing a property in the neighbourhood. In addition, first-wave gentrifiers were more likely to complain about the old inhabitants as the interview progressed. This suggests that once a neighbourhood starts experiencing gentrification through private housing market, having an association to help navigate the process could be beneficial. There used to be a Galata Association, which is no longer active and which did little to resist gentrification or promote social mixing in the area. However, an association where inhabitants can contribute freely to an increased sense of community and make demands from the local government for better police and municipality services before the area gets mostly gentrified can help manage the process of gentrification in a manner that is less exclusionary. Even so, the workings of the private housing market and the desire to exploit rent gaps cannot be controlled by a group of residents, and this makes it really hard to maintain a socially-mixed neighbourhood in a neo-liberal setting.

MUNICIPALITIES PLAY A SIGNIFICANT ROLE

Next, I found that although this is not state-led gentrification, but rather one produced by the private housing market, the local municipality played a significant role in promoting the process in the area. In Galata, this happened with planning permissions in favour of construction firms, making it easier for them to build new apartments on heritage sites that do not necessarily fit in the neighbourhood, or by allowing second-rate renovation practices and better municipal services. This contributes partly to the tensions between gentrifiers. On the one hand, some first-wave gentrifiers demand better restoration and urban conservation projects, while on the other hand, second-wave gentrifiers demand more hotels, cafés, bistros and overall, more development in the neighbourhood.

CONCLUSION

Gentrification is a process that can generally improve a neighbourhood's physical condition and its place in the private market, but in doing so, does not really take the current inhabitants into account. Gentrifiers create this imaginary sense of neighbourhood and neighbourhood relations that actually help satisfy new consumption habits of the higher-income classes.

Gentrification is not a tool for social mixing in run-down neighbourhoods. Not only because it displaces the low-income people who are the very focus of these policies, but also because these policies ignore the structural inequalities such as access to similar opportunities as middle-class people, decline in tenure security, ability to stay in the gentrified area, and failure to create a community between social classes based on proximity (Davidson, 2008; Newman & Wyly, 2006). Only because different social classes live close to each other does not automatically guarantee a decline in social and income inequalities or high levels of inclusion (Davidson, 2011).

In short, gentrification not only fails to create a more cohesive collective identity, but it also produces tension and segregation between different groups of gentrifiers. It appears that the process only romanticizes the notion of social mix while in reality it creates various types of conflict. As Davidson (2011, p. 5) puts it “gentrification operates in an emancipatory mode” creating further levels of social distance. As a result, different groups are led into conflict with each other and the dream of social mix and inclusion can only be understood as a lure.

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FUTURE-PROOF RETAIL INNOVATION AND INCLUSIVE PLACEMAKING IN AMSTERDAM NORTH: A REAL CHALLENGE

LOCAL
STORY

Marie-Ange de Kort

ABSTRACT

"We plan more 'city streets' like the Van der Pek, to connect neighbourhoods, easy to stop and shop, with a mix of functions and services, next to quiet streets to live in."

City planner Jos Gadet

"All these hipster stores, in Amsterdam and Berlin: they are just very similar. I love the ugliness of the shops here, where every daily need is met"

Bottom-up city-maker Eva de Klerk

"Amsterdam should definitely not become a raked garden!"

Shopping area 'doctor' Nel de Jager

INTRODUCTION

When it comes to shopping and spending time in the city, much of the traditional offering has made place for something new, usually more expensive: coffee bars like Starbucks with a wide range of cafés and lattes; bakery stores with a big choice of luxury croissants, sourdough, gluten free or spelt bread; concept stores with a mix of special brands, vintage stores and again good coffee or glass of prosecco at 17.00. But a crafts shop, a furniture upholstery or a good butcher? Hard to find.

One of the main reasons for this change is that newcomers generally bring more money to an area but also different lifestyles and tastes, going with the flow of the latest trends and ready to pay for special brands and exceptional or innovative concepts. In the meantime, prices are booming. The term we often use for this phenomenon is gentrification: in my view, it describes a process whereby the renovation of a particular city area attracts newcomers with a higher socio-economic status who in turn make the area more popular. The effect of this popularity is an increase in housing prices as well as leisure offerings, meaning (recreative) shops, bars and sport or cultural activities, which tend to push out the original residents of their own neighbourhood.

In this article you can read about gentrification and its visible effects on three shopping areas that feature market places and leisure activities – Van der Pek street, Zonneplein and Purmerplein situated in Amsterdam North, a previously traditional area. I will share with you the outcomes of our research into the liveability of these shopping areas, and our placemaking suggestions, based on the key indicators of the placemaking movement (Madden, 2018).

THE RISE OF AMSTERDAM NORTH

Amsterdam, especially the city centre, is becoming a densely-populated urban area. In the past 10 years, the former industrial part of Amsterdam North on the other side of the IJ has turned into a popular place to move into (now counting 92 000 residents), because of the space it still offers, affordable housing and mainly free parking. Many open spaces are being filled with ambitious building projects. North aims to grow to 100 000 residents in 2019 and 143 000 in 2040 (Couzy, 2019).

The recent newcomers to Amsterdam North are generally highly educated. They belong to the so-called creative class of knowledge workers and have different needs for leisure, hospitality, retail and events than the original labour and multicultural population. They also demonstrate a different consumer behaviour (Milikowski, 2018). This raises multiple questions. For instance, how should public spaces change for the benefit of all? What does it mean for the retail offering? What are citizens and entrepreneurs afraid of? City planners should consider the needs of the superdiverse population (Crul, 2013) in order to avoid an increasing inequality and segregation, which is what Richard Florida warned us of (Florida, 2017). Bearing in mind the increasing superdiversity of the area, the main question underlying current research is: “How to create future proof retail areas with a mix of functions in Amsterdam North, which are inclusive to everyone and still keep their specific (historical) identity?”

RESEARCH METHOD

Together with Leisure & Events Management students we carried out a practice-oriented research, commissioned by the street managers, Ymere housing corporation and Stadsherstel. The research focused on two typical squares at the heart of the former labour villages, Zonneplein

and Purmerplein. These squares need a dynamic boost and a clear strong vision for the future. Interviewing both old and 'new' entrepreneurs, our students compared both squares to the Van der Pek street, which is visibly further in the gentrification process (Milikowski, 2018) and a good example of a 'city street' (Gadet, 2019). In the end, innovative placemaking concepts were developed and presented to stakeholders and commissioning clients. We also tested a prototype of the Inclusive Design Toolbox for Creative Professionals, which researchers at the Inholland Urban leisure & Tourism Lab (Collin, 2018) are developing. The most significant outcomes and insights from my own in-depth interviews with retail and city planning experts are discussed below. These are preliminary results, as the research has not finished yet.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND GENTRIFICATION IN NORTH

Amsterdam North, now hip and upcoming, is more accessible to visitors after the opening of the new metro line North-South this year. But thirty years ago, it was a no-go area. The 'opposite side' of the water IJ was just not felt as part of Amsterdam. North consists of three different zones: first the garden villages, developed in the 20s and 30s by the industry (Shell, Stork, and NDSM Shipping Dock association) for their workers (in 1974 there were still 12 000 labour jobs). The closure of the harbour and the factories in the 80s drove up the unemployment rate amongst the once proud locals (Hieselaar, 2010). Second: the dikes along the waterfronts, former villages, with very nice houses inhabited by a middle-class population. Third: the 'wijken' or districts, built in the 70s, consisting of many flats, inhabited by various ethnic minorities. In the past 10 years, new areas have been built for middle-class newcomers and only now, after the economic crisis of 2008, do we see big building projects for luxury apartments along the IJ, Overhoeks, and Buiksloterham. This process will continue for the next generation: the Amsterdam City Council aims to build 70 000 new houses by 2040, among them – several projects in North (Gadet, 2019).

PLACEMAKING SHOPPING AREAS IN THREE OLD 'GARDEN VILLAGES' TOGETHER WITH STUDENTS

First, I will describe the current situation, and then give suggestions for inclusive placemaking for two of the squares. Right now, on the one hand, we see an ambitious local government and corporations developing a future vision and a policy to open up and modernise North. On the other hand, older residents and retailers have mixed feelings: they do not seem to be heard and are anxious for change. Some of the old shop owners have difficulties in adapting to new needs and standards. Rental lots are often not renovated or, if so, rents go up. The old squares are charming but now they look a bit shabby, we hardly notice the visual effects of gentrification. Gentrification gets a lot of attention in books and media (Couzy, 2019) though it is still a slow process according to Louise de Rooij, 'kwartiermaker' of 'undivided [inclusive] neighbourhoods' in North (Rooij de, 2019).

VAN DER PEK STREET

In the past years Ymere and the municipality have worked together to innovate this neighbourhood and transform it into a more modern urban area. The facades got a facelift, so that the architecture of the houses shines again, and, as part of the policy, new modern shops, bars and restaurant concepts were attracted. This new positive image is appealing to the newcomers and those who work nearby at the IJ-side, with lovely shops, such as the bookstore 'Over het water', Bike store Rahtour, flowershop Bloomies – according to the Parool Stadsgids (Posthumus, 2018) one of the best in town – Cheese store Fromagerie Kef and hip Italian restaurant Il Pecorino (Doorneveld, 2018).

But not everything turned out so positively. The marketplace was moved from Mosveld to the Van der Pekstreet, with the idea of creating a real 'city street' (Gadet, 2019; HIOR, 2018). In reality though, our student interviews showed that the market functions less well than before; it contains more and more empty spots and because the stalls are placed in a line, the market just stops abruptly. Hence, it is not inviting visitors to stroll around. Average sales declined drastically. One of the reasons is that many of the usual shoppers have moved out of the city, due to rising rents. The atmosphere and solidarity of the old days seems to be lacking (Interviews Van der Pek, 2019). The enthusiasm from city planners about this particular city street project differs from the perception of current retailers.



ZONNEPLEIN 'SQUARE', TUINDORP OOSTZAAN

Zonneplein 'square' looks like a little gem, hidden in the centre of the old garden village, enclosed by unique architecture. It is a protected cityscape (Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, 2012). The square has a beautiful eye-catcher, the Zonnehuis, once a theatre and a boxing school, now still a theatre with two stages. The local residents are mainly elderly people, former working-class employees from the NDSM shipping dock association. Now some of the small houses (70 m², 3 or 4 rooms) have been put on the market and sold to young families for around € 300 000 (Funda, 2019).

The square looks empty, very silent with just a few visitors. There are closed or empty shops and only one open café/restaurant, lokaal Spaanders. Interviews with shop owners and residents tell us that hardly any action has been taken by the housing corporation; initiatives from the past like organising a weekly or monthly market were thwarted by market

stall owners from Mosveld even though the latter are far away. Everyone agrees that the square has to be revived. There is a group of engaged residents active for that purpose: 'Fijn Zonneplein' – a perfect informal structure, or a sparring partner for decision-makers to stimulate the liveability of the place (Kamp, 2018). Many placemaking ideas emerged based on the needs and wishes of residents and current retailers:

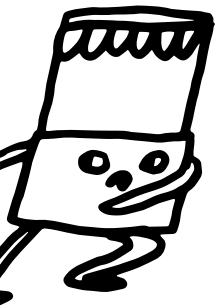
Access: make the place more accessible by clear signage.

Uses: fill in the empty front stores with shops for daily necessities. What do people miss? A little grocery store (there is no room for a real supermarket), a fish store (the old one was never replaced), a flower shop, a drugstore and maybe a cash machine. Besides that, a simple snack bar and typical 'bruine kroeg' with a terrace are lacking.

Comfort: redesign the square, engaging in a co-creation process with the community; create places to sit (there are only 3 little benches, which are not inviting at all); build a mosaic pavement in the form of a sun, plant more green; reduce some ugly parking places; refurbish the place with a fountain.

Image: make residents proud by telling their story. Install a monument for the former labourer; add augmented reality or a QR code to give information about the special architecture and wooden houses, collect stories from the neighbourhood, for example about the enormous flood in 1960 (Hieselaar, 2010; VPRO, 2012). A documentary has already been made and broadcasted on national TV. The story and authenticity of this place and its people should be emphasized. It could be linked to the theatre. Visitors and new residents should know about this.

Activities: provide leisure activities, such as having a music or a theatre stage at the square in order to organise cultural performances in the open air, playground and activities for children, a bowling alley for older people, a vintage market or a 'braderie' with live music twice a year.



PURMERPLEIN 'SQUARE', TUINDORP NIEUWENDAM

This square is wide and open, with busy traffic on both sides, a protected cityscape as well. The shops and restaurants are doing well, but the store windows look old-fashioned and a bit neglected. There are no trendy shops, the square itself needs renovation. Once again we see some empty store fronts. This square has a convenient position: close to Nieuwendammerdijk, where we find middle-class residents who spend easily and order delivery services on a regular basis. Most of these people just shop and go. There are informal WhatsApp or FB groups that decision-makers can talk to (Klerk, 2018) in order to work from the bottom up. Here are some ideas for how to vitalise the square:

Uses: new shops and more hospitality; people feel the lack of artisanal shops like a cheese store, a special wine bar, a drugstore but also a cash machine at the square. More affordable places to eat, in addition to the pizzeria, Puspita and Place du Nord, both of which are doing well.

Comfort: redesign the square. Provide benches to sit, make a playground for children, a meeting corner for mothers with children, a nice fountain with water basin for the summer.

Linkability: reduce the speed limit of vehicles to 30 km an hour; organise a temporary test making one side car-free, in order to increase safe access to the square.

Sociability: once the traffic situation is safer, a big greenhouse could be built at the square with a space to organise regular long table dinners with the community, using shop owners as main suppliers; or a permanent coffee truck (at affordable prices) with chairs outside to have a cup of coffee or tea together. Fewer stones, more green. Places to sit or play if the weather allows.

Activities: these could include organising seasonal dinners with the community, a music event or open film evenings during the summer time. Maybe the green areas at the end of the square could be used for sports, like an ice rink during the winter.

CONCLUSION

Gentrification and its effects are already visible in the renovated Van der Pek neighbourhood, very close to the new building projects of Overhoeks and Buiksloterham, and it gives the area a more modern urban lifestyle. But older residents have started selling their houses and leaving the city to make place for the yuppies. At Zonnepein and Purmerplein gentrification is not yet noticeable in retail offering, but steadily people's needs are changing. These squares still have an authentic image. Residents and entrepreneurs like to think about the future of their neighbourhood, about what kind of shops, bars and leisure activities are needed and they long to see a more vivid square. The successful efforts of Fijn Zonneplein to bring the Amsterdam 'canal' Festival this summer to the town square is a wonderful example of community collaboration. But they are suspicious of the top-down plans of city policy-makers and corporations. My advice to them is: let's make time to experiment with organic placemaking, together with the community of residents and entrepreneurs, let's nurture the historic authenticity of the place, stimulate special craft shops and redesign the square as a place to meet, making people proud to live and work there. That is the next big challenge for the future.

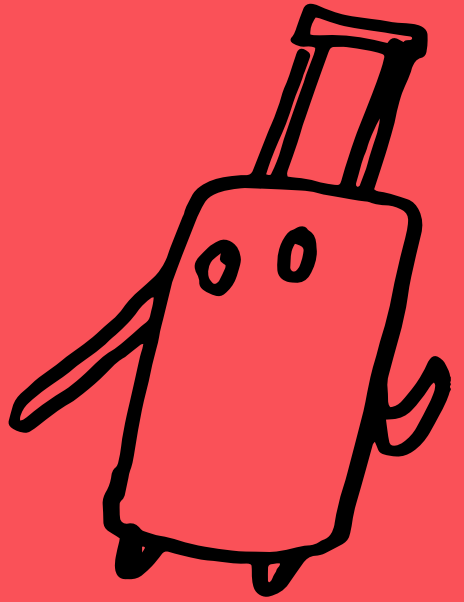
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- Interviews with Adri Doorneveld, Jos Gadet, Nel de Jager, Linda van de Kamp, Eva de Klerk, Louise de Rooij.**
- Interviews with entrepreneurs Van der Pek street, done by students from Leisure & Events Management: Romy & Sophie Worthington, Michelle Butterman, Romy Schruijer, Milo Jaspers and Shenya Jörke.**



TOURISTIFICATION

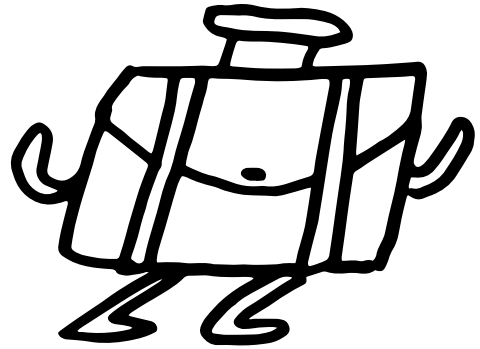




THE IMPACT OF URBAN VACATION RENTALS IS AIRBNB AN INCLUSIVE CURE, OR AN ALIENATING DISEASE FOR CITY RESIDENTS?

ESSAY

Jeroen Oskam



Urban vacation rental platforms such as Airbnb emerged around 2010, right in the middle of a severe economic crisis. Initially they were welcomed as emancipatory and ‘sharing’ initiatives: staying at a stranger’s place allowed for access to cheaper travel and it enabled ordinary citizens to benefit from the tourist economy, all the while creating a more authentic contact between travellers and residents. Cities embraced growing visitor numbers as a life raft for their problematic economies. The ‘sharing’ platforms seemed to offer a utopian alternative to the abusive profit-seeking behaviour that had caused the crisis. Advocates of the ‘sharing’ movement, such as Botsman (2010), Gansky (2010) and Sundararajan (2016), explained the advantages of a world that no longer obsessed with ownership, but instead shared access to resources. We would not need to individually purchase power drills, for that would mean that the devices would only be used during twelve minutes in their entire lifetimes. Sharing cars, instead of leaving them idle for eight hours after we commute to work, would not only save money but also the environment. City residents would be freed from alienating 9-to-5 jobs so that “Piketty’s ‘renters’ [could] begin to experience the other side of the coin by making money through investing or owning rather than laboring” (Sundararajan, 2016, p. 126).

This chapter will analyse how urban vacation rentals have evolved, and how their evolution has deviated from these initial promises. Two fundamental fallacies in the utopian ‘sharing’ narrative will help illustrate this difference. In the first place, if my neighbour and I share a power drill, it still is a drill to both of us; but if I share urban housing with a traveller, it is transformed into something else, namely tourist accommodation. The price difference between the two makes this a profitable venture. In the second place, the ‘entrepreneurial utopia’ will not make us equal, but sharpen socio-economic divides: put simply, a homeowner in an attractive part of town will make more money than a tenant in a less privileged neighbourhood.

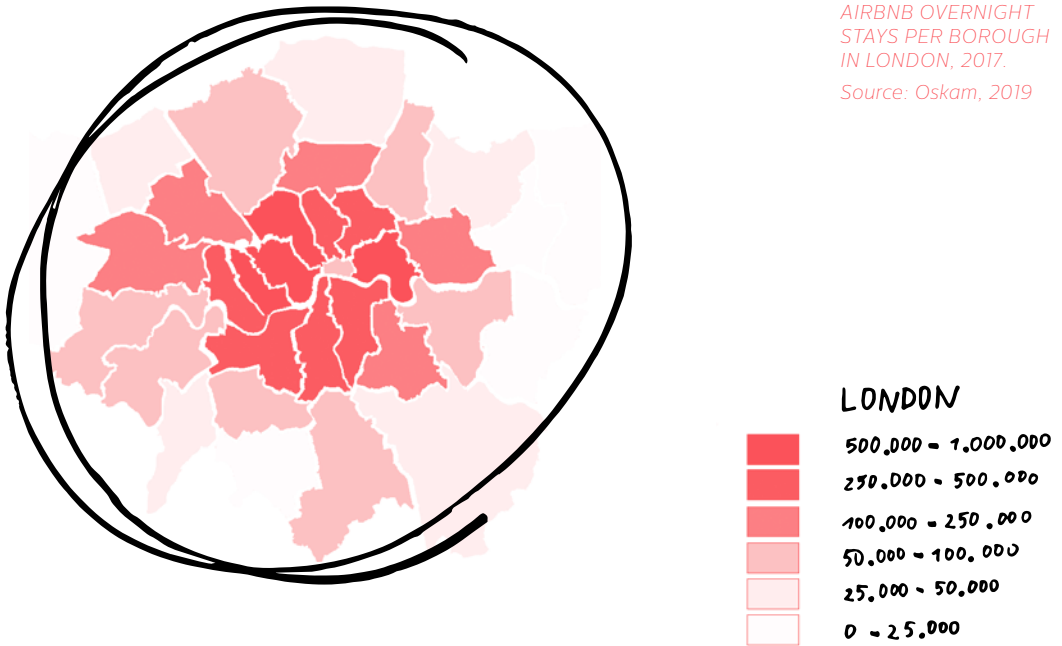
HOST INEQUALITY: HOW INCLUSIVE IS AIRBNB?

Research has provided massive evidence for this inequality. Obviously, bigger houses make more money (Chen & Xie, 2017; Gibbs, Guttentag, Gretzel, Morton & Goodwill, 2017). More importantly, a substantial part of Airbnb listings —between one third and two thirds in European cities— is offered by hosts who already have multiple listings. Part of these ‘multilisters’ are intermediaries or ‘concierge companies’; another part are investors who buy or rent properties to benefit from Airbnb’s profitability. These professional hosts are more successful in achieving bookings and can charge higher rates than hosts with one listing (Li, Moreno & Zhang, 2015; Oskam, Van der Rest & Telkamp, 2018). The analysis of this property accumulation process for London shows that out of the 3 060 hosts with a single property in 2012, 885 had acquired multiple listings by 2017, with 29 of them responsible for 679 Airbnb listings (Oskam, 2019).

In an unregulated market, even ethnic origin can become a factor in commercial success: studies have shown that in different US cities, black, Hispanic or Asian hosts achieve lower prices on Airbnb (Edelman & Luca, 2014; Gilheany, Wang & Xi, 2015; Kakar, Voelz, Wu & Franco, 2017). In New York’s black neighbourhoods, a 530% economic disparity was found as hosts pertaining to the 13,9% white population accumulated 73,7% of Airbnb revenues (Cox, 2017).

SPATIAL CONCENTRATION: OFF-THE-BEATEN-TRACK?

Despite Airbnb’s claim that the platform has spread tourism to the neighbourhoods, international studies consistently find a concentration in city centres (Arias Sans & Quagliari, 2016; Gutiérrez, García-Palomares, Romanillos & Salas-Olmedo, 2017; Picascia, Romano & Teobaldi, 2017). To be precise, people in peripheral neighbourhoods may try to earn extra money by offering their house on Airbnb, but they achieve few to zero listings as demand remains concentrated in the city centres (Quattrone, Proserpio, Quercia, Capra & Musolesi, 2016). The following map shows the concentration of Airbnb bookings in London, 2017:



The distance decay in London amounts to 27,5%: every kilometre away from the centre stands for 27,5% less Airbnb listings. In cities like Barcelona, Copenhagen, Paris and Stockholm this decay is close to 70%. Prices in London decrease 4,6% with every kilometre distance; in Copenhagen this is more than 10%, and in Milan even close to 13%. Finally, every kilometre from the centre equals 4-5 nights less booked in Paris or Barcelona, and more than 6 in Zagreb.

This concentration in city centres does not only underscore the inequality effects of Airbnb, but also contradicts another claim of the platform's marketing: rather than 'living like a local', the Airbnb user shows a very traditional preference for tourist hotspots. The authenticity promised by the platform has little to do with blending in with residents: if we analyse Airbnb's promotional messages, what sets its proposition apart is the promise that the traveller can be him or herself without following the tourist herd (Oskam, 2019). But most Airbnb users are driven by price and tangible advantages rather than idealistic motives (Guttentag, Smith, Potwarka & Havitz, 2017).

NEGATIVE EXTERNALITIES: WHO PAYS THE PRICE?

The financial transaction between three parties –traveller, host and platform – does not cover all costs incurred; liabilities are partly externalized and borne by outsiders. Tourists use elevators, common spaces, a city's infrastructure and public services. While Airbnb is certainly not the cause of 'overtourism' – but rather, a symptom or a catalyst– the platform contributes to crowdedness and nuisance in many cities. Meanwhile, tax evasion seems to be a typical practice among Airbnb hosts (Oskam, 2019; Van Heerde, 2019).

A textbook principle dictates that additional tourist demand for residential housing must increase its price. More and more evidence is found that vacation rentals contribute to housing scarcity; the effect on rents has been quantified at \$ 800 per year for popular New York areas (Wachsmuth & Weisler, 2018). A real risk for cities is the displacement of residents by tourist activity: in Athens, for example, foreign investments attracted by 'golden visas' have become a driver of mass evictions of local tenants as properties are turned into Airbnb rentals (Papadimitriou, 2019).

Urban vacation rentals may even have a deeper effect on our lives. In Barcelona, 53% of Airbnb hosts have used rental incomes to stay in their homes (Airbnb, 2013). That does not mean that Airbnb has become the cure for struggling residents, as the company has argued (Whyte, 2018); it is part of the problem as receiving tourists has ceased to be an act of choice. Our private lives thus become subject to commercial considerations: can we still afford to invite friends and family to our homes if there is for instance a sports event in town, if that is the moment when we should be receiving tourists (Frenken, 2016)?

CONCLUSION

Airbnb and similar platforms are not about sharing and using assets together; they are about making profit from the price difference between residential housing and tourist accommodation. It is true that ordinary people can participate, but affluent homeowners and investors will get the lion's share of revenues. Urban vacation rentals are concentrated in city centres. They are a factor in "overtourism" and contribute to the displacement of residents.

The utopian marketing narrative has promoted the belief that Airbnb represents the man in the street standing up against the hotel industry. It seems more accurate to define urban rental platforms as a new business model that is part of that same hotel industry. They imply a further pervasion of commercial activities into our neighbourhoods and into our daily lives.

As Slee has argued, "the Sharing Economy is a movement: it is a movement for deregulation" (2015, p. 24). An unregulated industry cannot be monitored; municipalities cannot prevent the displacement of residents nor manage tourist streams. The function of regulations is to protect consumer and worker rights, the housing market, the safety of residents and visitors and to ensure a fair competition. Not only must cities recover their regulatory control over tourism, but they must be enabled to enforce their regulations by demanding greater transparency from the platforms.

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IT IS NOT ABOUT TOURISTS: THE CASE OF BARCELONA

LOCAL
STORY

Albert Arias, in an interview with Minouche Besters and Konstantinos Gournianakis

Barcelona was the first wide-known example of a city becoming so popular that its own citizens began rebelling against the mass influx of tourists. But it was also among the first to develop a structured approach that combines lovability with livability. Albert Arias, a leading expert on tourism at Barcelona City Council wants to make one point very clear: “We won’t solve tourism-related issues through tourism policies solely, but with an integrated urban agenda for tourism activities.” Those two are very different, as we come to understand during our interview.

CLOSING OF PARK GÜELL

Albert says it was the closing of Park Güell as a public city park that prompted him to recognize a new approach to touristification was needed. Park Güell, located on the outskirts of the central city area, had grown so popular that it was frequently getting overcrowded. In response the municipality decided to close off a large part of the heritage site, turning it into a tourist attraction with entrance fees, and thereby effectively turning a public park into an “open air museum”.

Tourism was not such a hot topic back then in 2009. Albert was an urban academic, coordinating courses on city management at the university. “Park Güell was my backyard, I lived nearby, so the whole talk about closing it off made the discussion on tourism personal. As residents, from the social movements at that moment, we did not blame the tourists. We also didn’t want to segregate domestic residents and tourism at all, as what was at risk was the openness of this public space.” However, as a professional, he came to understand that he did need to reevaluate the way local policies work with respect to tourism issues. Park Güell was partially closed in October of 2013, but the discussion on touristification had just begun.

MORE NEGATIVE SIDE EFFECTS: AFFORDABILITY

Back in 2007 Barcelona’s downtown residents were already feeling the impact of their city’s rising popularity. Property rental prices in the city centre had become unaffordable for locals. The authentic feel of La Barceloneta and other traditional ‘barrios’ was largely lost as the areas became more and more touristy. Not just during the day, but also at night. Residential buildings were refurbished to cater to AirBnB guests, while local shops disappeared. The situation was so dire that the local government decided to ban hotels in the city centre to try and mend the unwanted situation.

Eventually, it became clear to city makers that Barcelona was facing an unprecedented challenge of having to deal with the tremendous impact of the city's attractiveness to tourists. In just two decades Barcelona went from a industrial regional capital to one of Europe's hotspots. The 1992 Olympic games only added fuel to the fire and low-cost companies did the rest.

"Can anyone blame the tourists for visiting a city and having a great vacation", asks Albert? "Of course not, but everything should be better managed and regulated by legislation to make the city enjoyable for everyone without jeopardizing the quality of life of residents."

KEEPING THE BALANCE

So the question then becomes: how can we maintain a balance between having an enjoyable public space for everyone, both tourists and residents, while safeguarding it from an overwhelming tourist influx that would certainly decrease its attractiveness along with the quality of life? The key is to understand that once we have made a place attractive, it is very difficult to turn it back. To tackle the issue of touristification we need to look at the bigger picture. It is really a question of inclusivity.

REFRAMING THE PROBLEM

According to Albert, tourism should be grasped as an inherent activity of the the city, not as an external discrete object. More than 150 000 tourists flock to Barcelona each day. However, this is number alone is not a problem. Rather, it should be contextualized according to the effects generated in the city. Restrictive measures to regulate activities are just part of the solution but there is no unique answer to tackle a phenomena such as overtourism. The answer lies in reframing the problem.

In the current status quo the wealth generated by tourism does not flow back into the whole of the city and its inhabitants. At the same time Barcelona residents suffer many negative side effects: lack of affordable housing in the city centre, inaccessible heritage sites that are no longer public, diminishing sense of ownership and community feel in the neighbourhoods, to name a few. There is no question that tourist amenities should be present in a city, but a local grocery shop should not be closed down to give way to another fish spa or a Nutella store. The problem is not the tourists per se. It is not just a matter of how many visitors can carry the city but but the lack of integration of tourism-related effects in the general urban agenda.

INTEGRATED POLICY

"We won't solve tourism-related issues through tourism policies solely, but with an integrated urban agenda for tourism activities." Albert proposes the swift implementation by the municipality of an integrated strategy for managing the destination by ensuring its sustainability, reconciling to the maximum all the elements at stake and promoting the greatest possible social return of tourism activities satisfying the enjoyment of visitors without jeopardizing the quality of life of the locals.

He believes that the integration of tourism in the Barcelonese urban agenda should be prioritized. Tourist-related revenues, although they are very scarce yet, should be invested directly in city infrastructure, affordable housing programmes, better public spaces throughout the city and so on. The adequate redistribution of wealth generated from tourism should benefit Barcelona residents and help create a more sustainable long-term strategy for tourism.

Barcelona offers a vivid example of how tourism can overwhelm a city. At the same time it shows a way forward which makes compatible the interests of tourists and the rights of residents, instead of treating them as mutually exclusive. Inclusiveness should never give place to opportunism, and sustainability must become a top priority for every city, providing great places for both local residents and foreign visitors.

FROM RURAL HAVEN TO PARTY HEAVEN

HOW A QUIET VILLAGE IN CRETE BECAME THE MECCA OF PARTYING IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

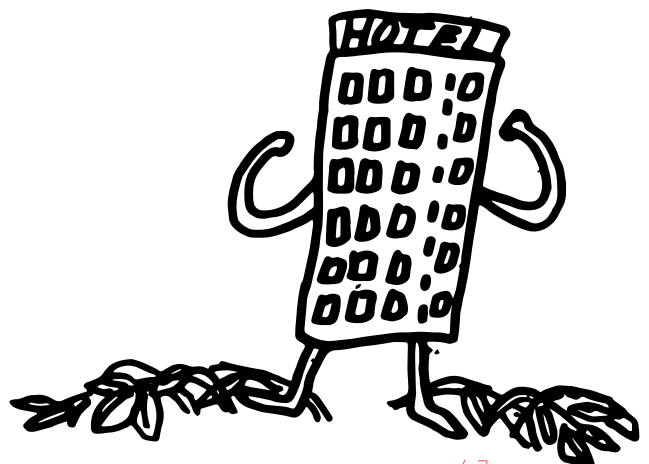
LOCAL
STORY

Konstantinos Gournianakis

This case study will shed some light on the phenomenon of touristification and how it transformed the economy and infrastructure of a remote village in Crete into a must-visit destination for partygoers.

QUIET RURAL VILLAGE

Malia is a small village in the eastern part of Crete, one of the most famous islands of Greece. Up until the 1980s, Malia was just another small village within driving distance from large cities like Heraklion (the capital of Crete), mostly famous for its production of potatoes, picturesque sceneries and clearwater beaches. The locals were enjoying the solace of the countryside, accommodating only a handful of tourists each year. To that end public space was completely tailored to the needs of the locals without any out-of-the-box interventions. Each year the number of tourists coming to visit Malia was growing and the locals were starting to realize that the potato fields could be utilized in other ways besides agriculture. Eventually, large hotel units sprouted from those fields and it was in the beginning of the 1990s that the village of Malia started reinventing itself as a hotspot for touristic action.



SEIZING DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

At that same time the municipality and the locals realized that new facilities would need to be built in Malia to satisfy the touristic demand for the coming summers. A new hotel, a pub and a brand new rent-a-car were amongst the first things to be built. Inclusiveness was on top of the entrepreneurial agenda. Suddenly public space was altered to further the amenities offered to tourists by the municipality. In a sense, the need to accommodate the influx of tourists made the locals invest more into public services and create a more vibrant and inviting public space.



However, the modernization of Malia was mismanaged. Instead of upgrading local infrastructure to promote the cultural treasures of this village, the locals transformed their hometown into a rural cosmopolis. Little by little the tiny “Tavernas” became “Restaurants” and large gift stores took over small shops. Multinational eateries like McDonalds, KFC and even Subway, all managed to set up a franchise in Malia to satisfy the late night or early morning cravings of the visitors. Gentrification was more than obvious in Malia as cultural authenticity became a thing of the past and everyone seemed to be dancing to the beat of a different drum.

NON-STOP PARTYING

Speaking of dancing, the one thing Malia is known for nowadays is non-stop partying. The locals tried their hardest to offer tourists the best entertainment possible for a low price. This resulted in Malia attracting a different kind of traveler. Spring-breakers consist of young kids that need to go all-out before another year of studying. It became obvious to them that Malia had the potential of being their go-to destination for partying and that of course did not go unnoticed by the local entrepreneurs. The majority of the local bar owners offered large amounts of alcohol at very low prices to establish a feeling of freedom within the young community. Unfortunately, “Happy hour” and “Ten shots for the price of one” did not contribute to their academic prowess. Instead, what the locals did to themselves was create a public space full of intoxicated youngsters that in many cases caused problems in the public sphere. These initiatives were implemented to make youngsters feel at home but soon it became obvious that they helped create a reputation for Malia which proved more dangerous than profitable.

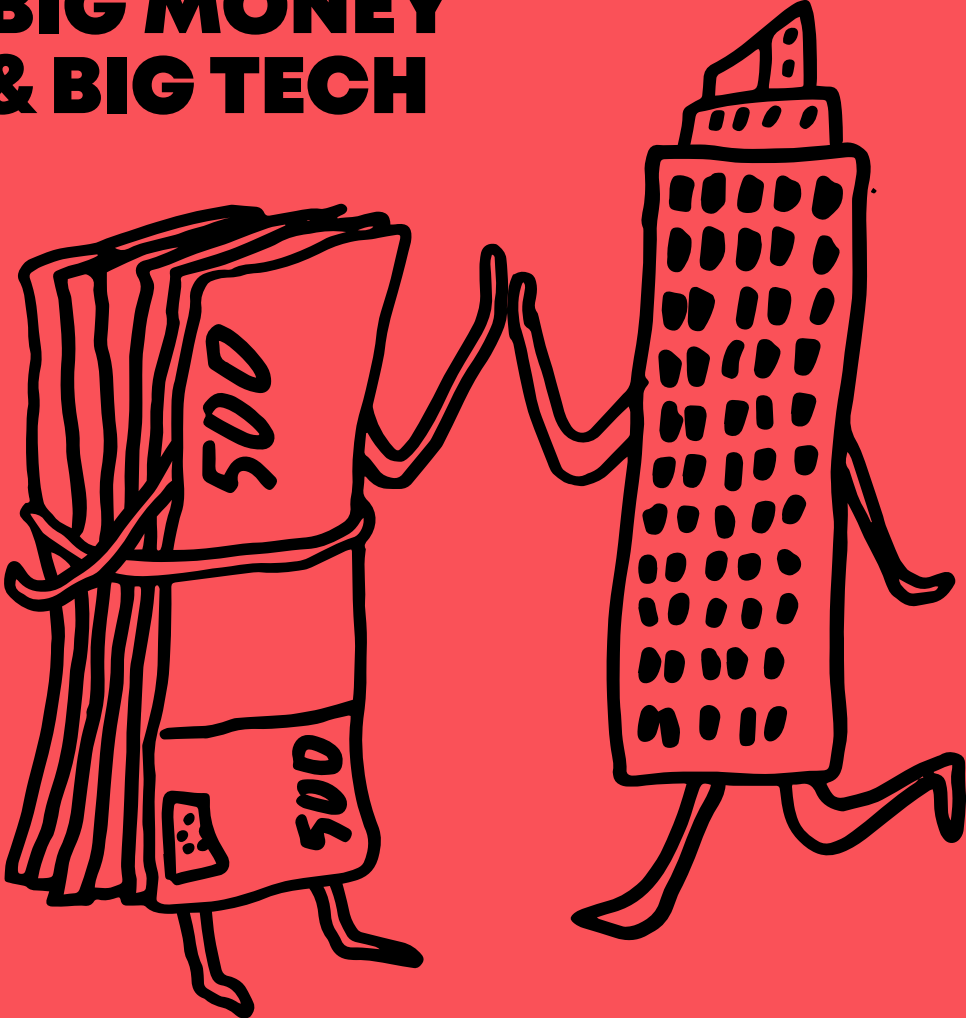
In fact, it was not only the infrastructure of the village that was affected. The whole industry of Malia was transformed, focusing on the modern sector rather than the traditional one. Furthermore, visitors not interested in partying were left to wonder what to do with their summer vacation because all of the village’s natural beauty was now transformed into big clubs and modern hotels. The three S’s: Sex, Sun and Sand became the motto of the area and for quite a long time it remained as such. Even today Malia is seen as a bucket list destination for anyone that wants to have fun without having a care in the world.

DANGEROUS PRECEDENT

All things considered, the village of Malia set a dangerous precedent in Crete. It became obvious that modernizing a rural economy through interventions meant to promote inclusiveness only among a specific audience – which contradicts the meaning of inclusiveness in the first place – has brought about controversial outcomes. During winter Malia can be described as a ghost town full of closed bars waiting for the touristic season to begin. Private and public initiatives in similar scenarios should bear in mind that intervention is a two-sided coin and that balance must be kept between preserving natural beauty and introducing a specific place to modern ways of sustaining itself.



BIG MONEY & BIG TECH



REAL ESTATE AS AN INVESTMENT VEHICLE – THE LONDON STORY

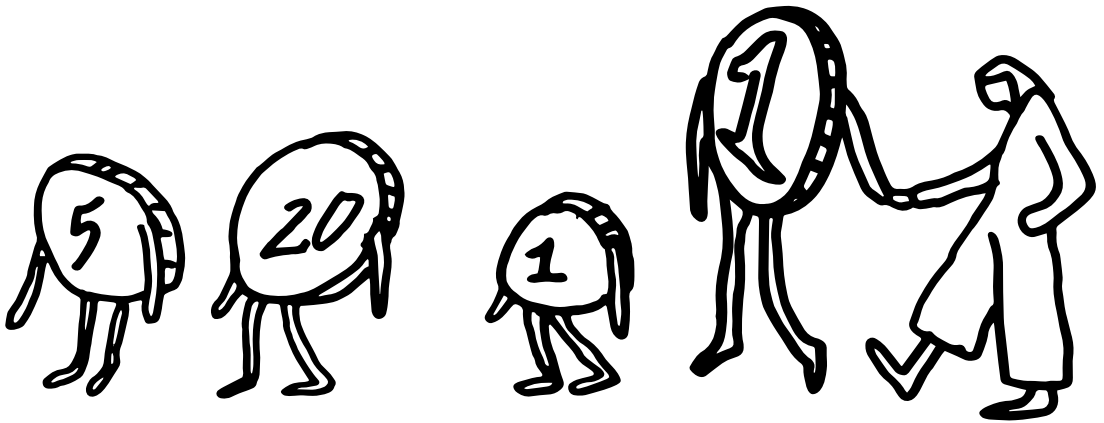
ESSAY

Jacqueline Bleicher

ULTRA HIGH-NET-WORTH INDIVIDUALS (UHNWI)

In 2017 the UK was home to some 4 589 individuals with a net worth of over \$ 50 million (a decline over 2016 levels) and some 220 demi-billionaires. Globally the number of super rich is growing and 129 730 people each own over \$ 50 million in assets, according to the Knight Frank 2018 wealth report. This represents an increase of 10% from 2017 and a total value of \$ 26.4 trillion. That money is moving globally, and London is a popular destination for investment. Ultra High-Net-Worth Individuals (UHNWI) i.e. those with \$ 50 million in assets and demi-billionaires, those with over \$ 500 million in assets, are displacing multi-millionaires, those with over \$ 5 million in assets, and High-Net-Worth Individuals (HNWI), those with \$ 1 million in assets, in London's prime real estate market, which sees properties listed above the £ 10 million mark.

In 2016 some of London's wealthy elite, under pressure from UHNWI sold their property and moved out of exclusive, desirable areas like Mayfair, Chelsea, Hampstead, South Kensington, Highgate and relocated to areas in South or East London – Battersea, Clapham, Acton, Aldgate, or abandoned the capital altogether in favour of the suburbs of Surrey or the Chilterns. The displacement of the monied classes pushed house prices up in the areas they relocated to and caused gentrification. There is still activity in the super prime £ 10+ million property market, even though the number of purchasers has decreased, and sales have slowed due to increased taxation, with properties in that price range now attracting over £ 1.4+ million in taxes. Uncertainty over Brexit and the weakening in the value of the pound has meant that British properties are good value for foreign investors, with strong currencies, offering some 30% discounts even with the high property taxes.



REAL ESTATE AS AN INVESTMENT VEHICLE

According to RCA and Knight Frank, some 56% of UHNWI invest in real estate, the second most popular choice after equities which 62% of UHNWI invest in. Property investments in central London in 2017 amounted to \$ 20.8 billion, the second top city after Los Angeles for investment, including the office market. The trend for investing in property is influenced by many factors and depends on the person's age, nationality and occupation. Some UHNWI choose to invest in residences in countries where their business operates or where they relax, where their children are enrolled in school (like Monaco, for example, or other prestigious locations), in solid markets where they can make a return on their investment, or for tax purposes. A significant number of UHNWI are globally mobile with houses all over the world. Residency by investment programmes could be a determining factor. The Henley passport index ranks the UK passport in third place in terms of value, offering visa free access to 175 countries. A minimum investment of \$ 2.7 million will buy a UK residency. According to Knight Frank, some 34% of UHNWI already hold a second passport and a further 29% are planning to purchase one.

The UK, and London in particular, is a popular market for first-time foreign investors from Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East and Russia accounting for a third of investment purchases. In the £ 10+ million residential sector Chinese buyers account for 8% of purchases, Middle Eastern buyers 17% of purchases, Russian investors 12% of all sales and British buyers account for 38% of all purchases. London remains an expensive market though not as expensive as it once was dropping some 1,8% between June 2017 and June 2018 according to Frank Knight.

In 2017, \$ 1 million purchased 29 m2 of space in London. As a comparison \$ 1 million bought 16 m2 in Monaco and 137 m2 in Dubai. However, there are still investors willing to bank money in property with the expectation that their investment will grow overtime as others invest in premium real estate creating scarcity and increasing high values buoyed up by demand.

GROWING INEQUALITY

The wealthy value privacy and exclusivity. Participating in public and civic life is a security risk, or a potential opportunity for privacy invasion. UHNWI do not feel a need or a strong inclination to shop local or support local businesses. Small businesses close, replaced by international luxury brands; property values and rents increase; the poor and middle class are displaced, sometimes forcibly; and the gated and fenced enclaves required by the wealthy, heavily secured and fortified, serve to divide the city between the 'haves' and the 'have nots'. What the wealthy require can be brought to them when they are in residence and many spend their time across multiple homes in different countries, sometimes without utilising an investment property at all. They leave expensive houses empty, typically guarded by high-end security companies. Hence, there is little to no contribution towards increasing vitality, diversity or inclusion in the places UHNWI acquire for investment purposes. These behaviours are not new or unique, as the UK has a history of landed gentry and their modern counterparts, however the impact on the places that UHNWI acquire for profit, is more keenly felt with today's global challenges of population growth, housing crisis, growing inequality, declining health, education, economic prospects, civic disenfranchisement, and the challenges of sustainable stewardship of natural and environmental resources.

The desirability of a prestigious address has led to income sorting within cities like London. There are notable physical differences across neighbourhoods including: form, character, variety, neighbourhood amenities, access to green space, access to quality food, jobs, education, quality housing, infrastructure and services. This growing inequality has real consequences. For example, health inequality from neighbourhood to neighbourhood has meant shorter lifespans for London residents the further east one goes in the city. There are marked health improvements just north of the River Thames compared to life spans just south of the same river. According to 'Lives On The Tube' research done by Dr James Cheshire, residents born in Lancaster Gate can expect to live 6 years longer than those born in Mile End. UCL professor Michael Marmot ascribes the difference in lifespan to factors like: early child development, environment, proclivity to smoking, alcohol consumption, obesity, diet, education, employment, working conditions, and inadequate income to live a healthy life. Governments' reliance on the GDP as a measure of economic growth and success of its people belies the fact that the average can be pulled upwards by outliers like a few wealthy individuals amassing and accruing great personal wealth, while simultaneously more people at the bottom end of the spectrum (poor and lower middle class) struggle to survive, sign on to government aid programmes, and need services, increasing governments' expenditure. The number of those at the bottom of the pyramid can increase year upon year requiring greater budgetary allocations for social services like food, housing, mental health services and healthcare while on the surface the country's GDP grows.

More reliable signs of a healthy economy should include wage growth, low cost of living, people's happiness and well-being, educational attainment levels, employment, health (mental and physical), overall fitness and longevity, overall satisfaction levels with the places people live and work. All of these measures are significantly influenced by access to jobs,

education, quality housing, quality food, clean air, reduced stress, access to nature and green space, amenities, exercise, vibrant social networks, recreation, spending power, and the shape and form of the built environment. In the long term it costs government less to keep families in adequate housing and to foster an environment that supports social inclusion, health, and equity rather than pay the attendant far-reaching costs of social services resulting from inequality.

BUSINESS AS USUAL

Scarcity at the top and bottom of the residential market increases house prices for everyone across the board, wealthy, middle class and poor. This might explain why private sector developers are so reluctant to build affordable housing as increasing housing supply to meet pent-up demand will reduce house prices and impact their bottom line and returns on investment. In super-inflated and constrained markets like London, house prices are many times the national average and even affordable housing at 80% of market price is beyond reach for many civil servants, especially as wage growth has stagnated for the last ten years. According to the Land Registry UK price Index for May 2018 the “average property value in the capital is £ 478 853”. The National Statistics Office value is £ 460 000. Even with housing prices falling in London that average sales price is unattainable for many people. The ‘average’ first time house buyer in the UK is 30 years old and earns £ 42 000 per annum qualifying for a loan of £ 142 452 at a loan to value of 85%. The price of the house is 11.4 times the ‘average salary’.

The ‘average salary’ quoted for a mortgage when compared to the average salary across all occupations equates to the average salary earned by engineering professionals in the UK – a specialist field requiring an expensive university degree and professional certification. The average salary in 2017 for teaching and other education professionals n.e.c. was £ 18 236. In the same year, health and social care associate professionals earned an average of £ 22 011; police community support officers earned on average £ 25 948; administrative and secretarial occupations earned on average £ 20 560 (National Statistics Office). At that salary the ‘average house’ is 23.3 times a civil servant’s salary. A 20% discount to make the average house price ‘affordable’ does not make home ownership attainable for this segment of society and many other segments of London’s population. Women, People of Colour (PoC), immigrant residents and those at the intersection of these groups are paid less than their Caucasian male age cohorts, employed in the same occupation. These people are equally challenged by London’s housing market.

According to researchers David Albouy and Mike Zabek (2016), “since construction costs vary little within cities, much of the growing inequalities in housing value seems to be due to the inequality in land value, or the right to build on such land.” Albouy and Zabek also suggest that “constraints may play a role within cities as new housing in the most desirable neighbourhoods may be the most constrained”. Constrained here is taken to mean: legal, political and institutional barriers, financial and budgetary restrictions, lack of political or public acceptance of new housing and cultural attributes, practical and technological barriers to land use and transport policies including barriers to land acquisition

and lack of technical expertise (regarding community engagement, community-led design, co-design, community capacity building, etc).



A WAY FORWARD

It is critical that models to provide housing move away from the segregation by income norm that has been spreading in London and other global cities. This requires a shift away from the business as usual model, which relies on short term financial analysis for single uses, and toward a mixed-income, mixed-use, compact human scale development model where the sale of enough diverse housing and commercial units pays for the provision and maintenance of green and open space as well as community amenities.

Housing makes up the bulk of cities so if we improve its quality and our ability to deliver mixed-income housing, we improve the city and make it more accessible to all. An urban designer trained to provide a financial feasibility spreadsheet to explore residential valuation, can deliver a mix of housing types, sizes and price points, in addition to mixed uses, community amenities and green space in a quality, highly desirable, walkable environment that is financially viable and even highly profitable.

Unless this fundamental principle of mixed-income housing and mixed-use development for an inclusive city is grasped and replicated, we will

continue to see housing inequality and displacement when our goal should be a city of 'complete neighbourhoods'¹ where people can 'age in place' and everyone, babies, women, girls, boys, men, the elderly and the disabled have equal right to the city and can access and participate fully in public life. The Greater London Authority is one of the largest public sector landowners in London and as such is well-placed to deliver 'complete neighbourhoods', using the land resources it already owns, in addition to acquiring derelict, rundown, abandoned and vacant properties, and recycling and repurposing suitable brownfield and light industrial sites. There could be a concerted effort to acquire a land bank that could be used to develop 'complete neighbourhoods'. London has a unique advantage in that its Mayor chairs Transport for London (TfL) which is responsible for all transit in the city. This means that there is the potential to ideally locate housing near exiting transit via TfL land or alternatively take transit to land earmarked for a 'complete neighbourhood' for optimum connectivity and walkability. The former is preferable and capitalises on existing synergies reducing expensive outlays on capital infrastructure.

Singapore is an example where the city owns the land. Some 85% of residents live in social housing delivered through the Housing and Development Board. This model ensures not only stability in the housing market but also affordability and the elimination of the stigma of 'social housing'. The above is not the only model. Developers also have a role to play and can fulfil section 106 agreements by integrating truly affordable housing into the built fabric of market-rate housing on opportunity sites. This ensures there is no difference in the material quality of the built structure and eliminates the 'poor door' syndrome associated with affordable housing.

The diversity of tenure in a mixed-income development in conjunction with mixed use brings vitality, patronage, opportunities for inclusion and access to green space and community services, amenities and infrastructure that are usually excluded from single-use affordable housing development. Implicit in improving the city is the access to: jobs, quality food, shopping, recreation, entertainment, culture, leisure, worship, healthcare, education, civic and public institutions, public green and open space, public transport and all the components that make up 'complete neighbourhoods'. The integrated mixed-use mixed-income model avoids social segregation and the built-in inequality seen in some London neighbourhoods, often in close geographic proximity. It is time to rewrite the tale of two cities and transform London into a universally healthy, active, vital, and equitable city for all.

1. 'complete neighbourhood' refers to a neighbourhood where one has safe and convenient access to the goods and services needed in daily life. This includes a variety of housing options, grocery stores and other commercial services, quality public schools, open public spaces and recreational facilities, affordable active transportation options and civic amenities. An important element of a complete neighbourhood is that it is built at a walkable and bikeable human scale and meets the needs of people of all ages and abilities.

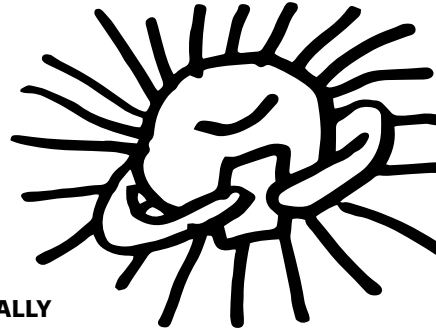
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WILL GOOGLE BE YOUR NEXT MAYOR? A REFLECTION ON TECHNOLOGY AND THE FUTURE

ESSAY

Ramon Marrades and Dima Yankova



WHAT IF THE PACE OF TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE ACTUALLY SLOWED DOWN?

We are often told that we live in a period of accelerating change. The decade that is about to end was supposed to be a decade of massive technological innovations; innovations that are quickly substituted by new ones as soon as they become obsolete. We are often told that the world is rapidly evolving and therefore we must adapt.

Confused by our addiction to banal inventions, like smartphones, we believed the words of the tech preachers and goodwill optimists, who are truly convinced that everything is being transformed. Is there anyone who challenges this vision? Could it possibly be that the pace of innovation is not accelerating but the opposite? What if the truth was that the world has not actually evolved that much lately?

Focus on what Glaeser (2011) considers to be the most important innovation in the history of humanity – the decision to live together, close to each other in dense settlements – cities. Think about how they've evolved in the last century. How has our lifestyle, or the way we behave publicly and privately, evolved too?

It would be amazing to be able to get teleported. Actually most people did believe some decades ago that this would be a possibility by today. Imagine that a citizen from 1919 could be teleported to a city in 1969 and that a citizen from 1969 could be teleported to the same city in this very moment. Who would feel more disoriented? It might be counter-intuitive but we are pretty sure that the second one would be more lost.

Last century's most important changes in developed cities are social, cultural and economic – individual freedom, women and minorities rights, diminishing religiosity or rising precariousness of jobs – that have no direct link to the adoption of new technologies.

Actually, when the Atlantic magazine talked to some 50 respected scientists, historians and tech experts, in order to make a list of the 50 most important innovations for humankind since the invention of the wheel (Fallows, 2013), they could not point to any innovation that showed up in the last half century. Among the innovations in the list there is no surprise to find the print (1430), electricity (end of XIX century), penicillin (1928), optical lenses (XIII century) or the internet (the most recent one, invented in 1960).

Of course, positive modern-day innovations do exist, although on a more local scale. One good example would be the mobile banking app M-Pesa, which revolutionized the banking system in several developing countries by giving millions of poor and marginalized people access to the formal financial system (Alliance for Financial Inclusion, 2010).

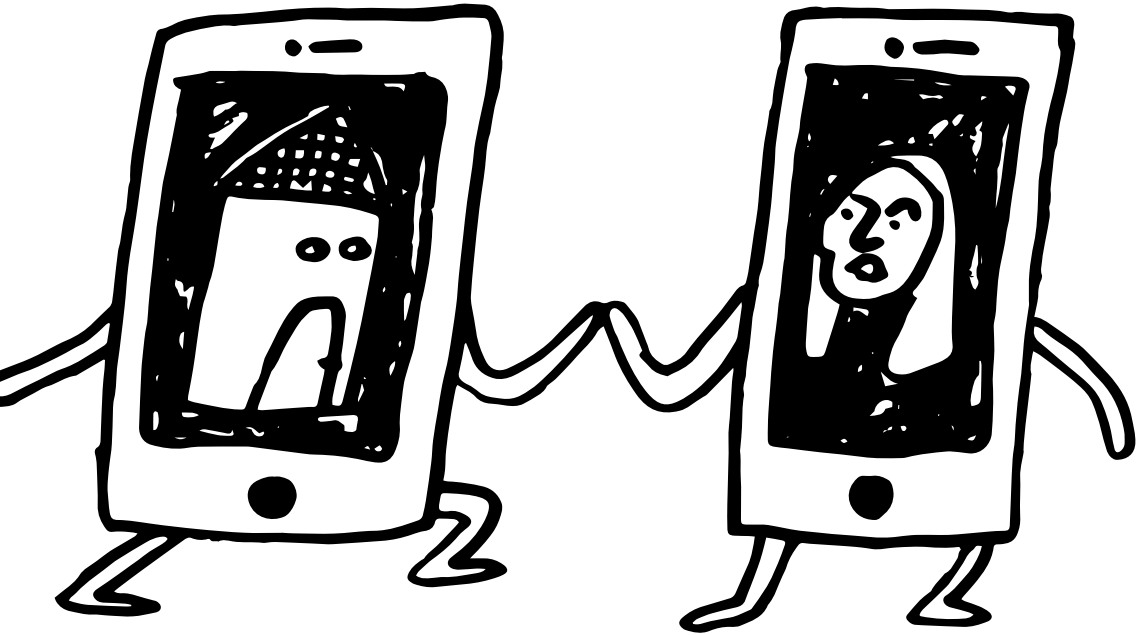
Or the development of Aadhaar, India's biometric ID system, which addressed one of India's biggest challenges – establishing each citizen's identity. In a country where 42% of the population, typically those at the bottom of the pyramid, did not have any documents and could not access any basic services, Aadhaar offered hope for a less corrupt and more just distribution of resources. The new ID system was devoid of classifications based on caste, creed, religion and geography. It enabled millions of people to apply for government subsidized education, public health, food, fuel and rural work. As the chairman of the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) asserted, "The most important growth driver is expanding access to resources and opportunity" (Khanna & Raina, 2012).

But such stories of technological innovation, albeit inspiring, are often dwarfed by the ever-growing challenges of rising social and economic inequality worldwide to which a much stronger response is needed.

It would be great to be able to get teleported to a debate that happened in 2014 about the future of technology with Peter Thiel –the co-founder of Paypal– and David Graeber –an anarchist scholar who was among the initiators of Occupy Wall-street (Schuessler, 2014). Curiously, both the techno-libertarian and the anti-capitalist agreed that the second half of the twentieth century was a dead period with regard to innovation. To assert this, Thiel used the slogan of his venture capital firm: "we wanted flying cars, instead we got 140 characters [today we have 280]."

Thiel blamed sclerotic bureaucracies and the lack of private initiative, while Graeber said it was the fault of a disoriented ruling class. The solution for Graeber would be the adoption of a genuinely participative democratic system because the main problem is not the lack of great ideas but that "the overwhelming majority of people are constantly being told to shut up." For Thiel, on the other hand, a self-proclaimed 'political atheist', the key to progress is not in expanding democracy, because he believed that even the most innovative organisations are hierarchical ones.

If we challenge this belief in the inevitability of technology and of certain changes, we will liberate ourselves from being fascinated by the theoretical magical power of technological progress. It will increase our consciousness about the social, economic and environmental impacts of technology; about the role of personal relationships, diversity and inclusion in the progress of society. There is no device able to save someone from poverty or teach someone else to be more tolerant.



HOW SMART IS A SMART CITY?

A smart city is a city that uses different kinds of electronically collected data on a big scale to manage its resources in an efficient way. In a smart city devices and sensors —mobile phones, cars, houses, street lights or trains— are connected to exchange information through the internet in real time and make automated 'decisions'. Tech companies already realised a decade ago the potential of this growing market while public institutions, seduced by the attractive promise of improving people's quality of life in a silver bullet, turned into an ideal target.

Smart cities are not free from criticism. Critiques can be summarised in three main groups. The first concern relates to the use of data and privacy. If data is not democratically managed and if it can be used for commercial purposes, there will be growing surveillance, citizen control and value extraction from everyone. A recent example is the 2016 announcement of the Chinese government that it will launch a social credit for promoting good behaviour (Denyer, 2016). Citizens could be ranked using online data as if they were hotels or restaurants. It is no surprise the political move has been compared to the Big Brother from 1984 (Botsman, 2017).

The second group of critics rejects the purely technocratic approach of smart cities that relegates citizens to a secondary role. Technology becomes an end goal. An extreme version of this technocratic approach surfaced when a partnership of corporations set off to design a smart city for 35.000 inhabitants in a New Mexico desert called CITE —Center for

Innovation, Testing and Evaluation— to test new technologies. This smart city will be inhabited by no one while working as a real scale Sim City video-game. The partners envisioned the creation of a smart city where people's role was so secondary that eventually they became unnecessary. No single brick was laid. But there are many other examples in the world of ongoing projects and unfinished or ghost cities that never actually totally worked. Masdar, a sustainable utopia in the Abu Dhabi desert designed by Norman Foster is still far away from its sustainability goals and from being finished (Miller, 2016).

The third group of objections relates to the vision of cities as democratic places that citizens have the right to shape and transform, the right to the city. For this group of activists, thinkers and practitioners cities should make room for unexpected, spontaneous interactions, citizen engagement and diversity. The unexpected and some degree of inefficiency are behind urban success (Jacobs, 1969). The inherent inefficiency of cities is a prerequisite for urban innovation. They cannot be planned in a detailed and exact way only by professionals even if they are extremely skilled in using the newest available technologies. It is not difficult to relate the battle between smart city preachers and urban activists for the right to the city to the one between Robert Moses, the demon that transformed New York (Molins, 2012) and Jane Jacobs, the woman that changed how we look at cities.

What is actually important is how to use the data that technology creates and not the data itself. Smart cities can be another tool to improve cities and make them more sustainable, inclusive, prosperous and diverse; only if technology is seen as a means and not a goal, if it serves to optimise decisions with those objectives in mind. But, as the Chinese government's proposal demonstrates, the very same tool can also serve to optimise pointless processes that simply make no sense.

AN ALGORITHM FOR MAYOR?

Tech companies see cities as a big market to apply their solutions. In the previous section we explained how cities that aim to become smart turn into a perfect target for those companies' salespersons.

Cities might use technology, buying services from different suppliers, to gather more information about their citizens and to improve the management of public services like mobility, waste, energy supply or healthcare.

Originally, specialised companies opened the market for smart cities. Traditional tech companies specialised in hardware and software followed. The last ones to show up in the business have been big tech companies that harvest an immense amount of data from citizens through apps and social networks.

This information about our daily habits —how we move, what sports we practice, our sleep patterns— is highly valuable not only for the ones that want to sell their products but also for planners and city officials that can use it to design new neighbourhoods, redevelop existing ones or plan new services.

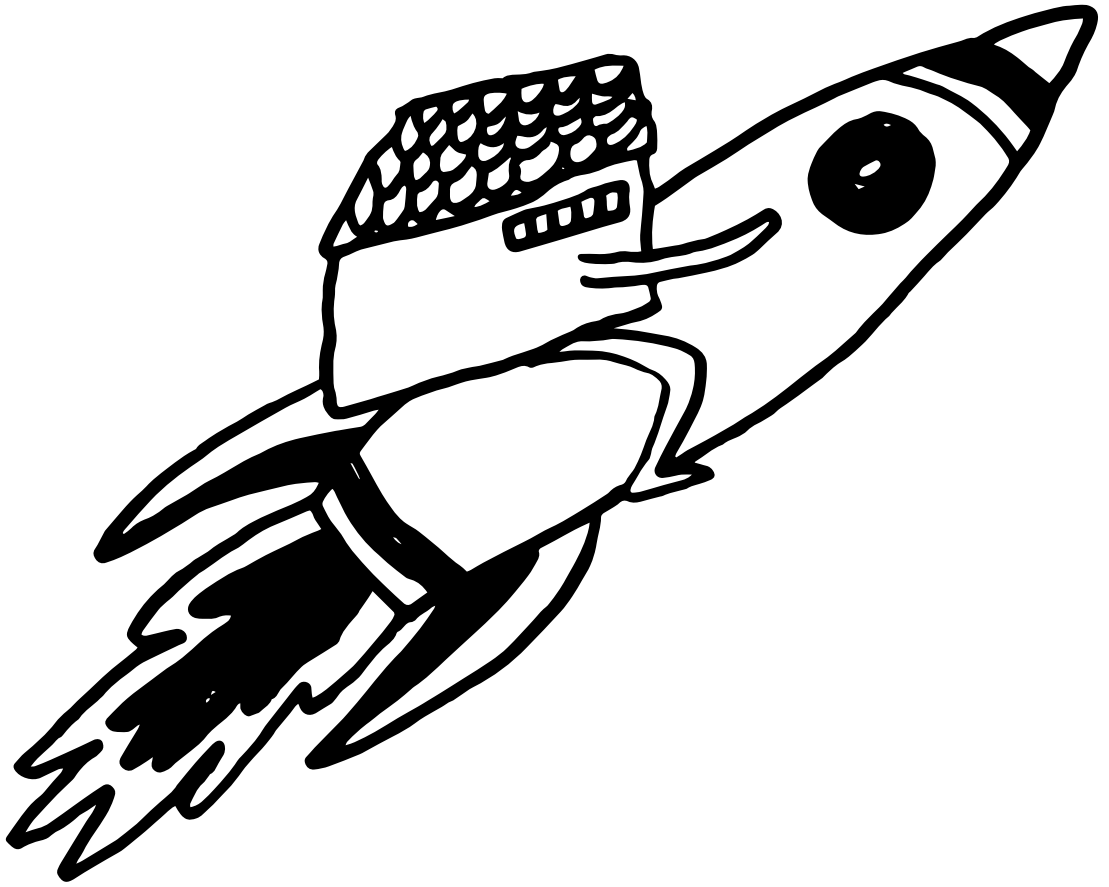
Tech companies could move a step ahead using this information and dominate another market competing with municipalities and traditional real estate developers conquering city making. Actually Google, through its subsidiary Sidewalk Labs, is already developing a kind of “complete community” in Toronto’s waterfront, with mixed uses (housing, public spaces and offices) arguing that “by combining people-centered urban design with cutting-edge technology, we can achieve new standards of sustainability, affordability, mobility, and economic opportunity.”

But the collaboration between the city’s waterfront development agency, Waterfront Toronto, and Sidewalk Labs has raised many red flags. Among those are concerns over data collection, access, and storage. Google’s subsidiary has given little reassurance that gathered data will be anonymized at its source, nor that it would be stored on a local server, instead of overseas, raising the question of potential privacy breaches (The Globe and Mail, 2018).

The controversial plan for engineering the world’s first ‘smart city’ has also reignited the debate over who would really reap the benefits of such public-private partnership. In the era of the knowledge economy, intellectual property (IP) and big data are tech company’s best bet for staying in the game. That is likely why Sidewalk Labs is still keeping IP ownership questions out of its ‘updated’ agreement, without explicitly denying plans to develop IP from all the knowledge and data the project is expected to generate (The Globe and Mail, 2018).

But what can Toronto residents expect? As we already discussed, the promise of smart cities is a kind of ultra-efficient urban environment, which increases quality of life through cutting-edge technological innovations. Yet, what residents really wish to see is a more human-centered design that creates spaces for spontaneous human interaction; at least those are the themes that surface repeatedly in Sidewalk Lab’s workshops with the local community. It is not yet clear how computer algorithms can ever produce this human-centered design that our cities, smart or not, so desperately need.

There is a long history of big companies infiltrating urban development. An example from the 1950s is Walt Disney and his “Experimental Prototype Community of the Future”. However, now is the first time that big giants dare to play the role of ‘mayors’. As Eric Schmidt (CEO at Alphabet-Google) publicly said when Sidewalk Labs was selected to develop Toronto’s waterfront, “now, it is our turn” (Sadowski, 2017). Being mayor, of course, without the need of being voted into office.



FUTURE

When the future of cities is discussed, when the stories of possible futures are told, we hear about futures that sound extraordinary, magnificent, brilliant or successful. For others, the future is in crisis: it will probably be disappointing, uneven, predatory or just unsustainable.

It seems normal to look into the future and feel dazzled. People's dreams are full of disruptive changes, eternal living or talkative robots. It seems fair that if we picture ourselves into the future, we do not see us boiling an egg or brushing our teeth. The ordinary, the utopian everyday, belongs to different futures, written in small letters.

Having explained the likely deceleration of technological change and our scepticism of its supposedly magic healing effect on cities, we would like to share our intuitions about how the future of cities might look like and some radical alternatives to make it better for all.

THE CITIES OF THE FUTURE WILL HAVE A SIMILAR SHAPE

There might be a densification process or an improvement in public transport networks, but the main urban attributes: apartment blocks, buildings, streets and squares, will remain intact. Following the same example we used in the beginning, we could be teleported fifty years into the future and the urban landscape will be recognisable. The big future changes will be more related to the software (uses) and the orgware (institutional organisation) than to the hardware (urban form).

WE WILL RECOGNIZE THAT TECHNOLOGY HAS AN UNEVEN IMPACT

If technology helps foster diversity and inclusion, it will lead to innovation and long-term development for all. But technology can also serve to concentrate capital or productive capacity, while generating exclusion. Socio-economic systems that lack diversity will ultimately stagnate.

WE MUST STOP FETISHISING URBAN EFFICIENCY

In cities, inefficiency is actually a virtue, as Jane Jacobs explored in the *Economy of Cities* (1967). Cities must still be chaotic to a certain extent, they should make room for the spontaneous, they have to be unpredictable. The operative efficiency, which smart city technologies provide, is useful for fabrication processes, but at the urban scale we need the unexpected and the surprising mixtures of people and cultures to be creative and innovative. Innovation is a slow process, inherently inefficient and based upon trial and error, generally collective and place-based.

EMPATHY HAS NO SUBSTITUTE

Some current jobs will be automatised. But there is no robot that could substitute human care, a sympathetic local vendor that smiles and wishes you a good morning, an inspiring and passionate school teacher or a dedicated nurse. Empathy has no substitute and its economic value will rise. It is likely that the most important jobs of the future are today's feminised tasks. The radical idea of a 4-day week, explored by the British think-tank Autonomy (Stronge & Harper, 2019), will help counteract job polarisation, precariousness, gender inequality, stagnant productivity, and even climate change.

FEMINISM WILL CONTINUE TO BE SOCIETY'S BIGGEST TRANSFORMATION ENGINE

During the last decades and especially in the recent one, the feminist revolution has been one of the most important drivers of progress. Gender equality benefits all. In the near future, if women could contribute as much as men to the economy, global GDP will grow an added 26% by 2025 (Madgavkar, Ellingrud & Krishnan, 2016); this is growth equivalent to the joint economies of USA and China. Another research (International Growth Centre) demonstrates that women can help reduce corruption if they are in positions of power and part of the policy-making process. An illustrative figure: the yearly cost of corruption in Spain is estimated to be 90 billion euros (Molina, 2016). At the firm scale, gender equality improves productivity: when a group of companies were analysed (Dezso & Ross, 2012) the ones with a higher rate of women at C-level positions were on average 1% more productive, which accounted for more than 40 million euros in total.

DIVERSITY FOSTERS PROSPERITY

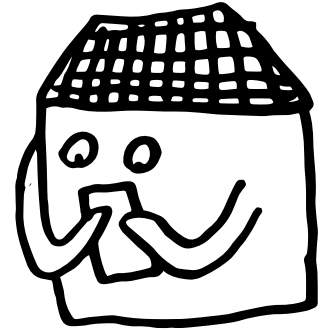
Despite the traditional understanding of wealthy places attracting migrant people from diverse origins thus creating more diverse societies, it is proven that causality can go in the other direction (Ashraf & Galor, 2011). Diversity stimulates economic growth and homogeneity slows it down. Cultural diversity and geographical openness have had a positive impact on development especially since the industrialisation era. Openness and diversity operate jointly with technological innovation and human capital as the engines of prosperity. We can even consider them as the fuel for intellectual evolution, innovation and art (Florida, 2011). In general, diverse groups, either companies, collectives or societies are more innovative than the more homogenous ones. Those diverse groups perform better at solving complex wicked problems. Diversity stimulates greater effort and creativity because it helps us imagine different alternatives while forcing us to put ourselves into someone else's shoes.

Actually, we cannot predict how the future will exactly look like but we know precisely the necessary conditions to create together –the future is a collective project– a brighter future for all. We will do so if cities maintain and enhance its main virtues: the possibility of individual anonymity, tolerance toward the stranger, coexistence, the freedom to be oneself – virtues that are in danger today; virtues that guarantee progress and prosperity in an inclusive way. If cities manage to preserve and develop these virtues, we can be sure that something positive will come out.

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Minouche Besters



In recent years we've seen a surge of local social sharing platforms that enable ordinary people to share talents and possessions. Examples of these in the Netherlands include: thuisafgehaald.nl (food sharing), snappcar.nl (privately owned automobile sharing), peerby.com (personal items sharing) and NLvoorelkaar.nl (time sharing: helping each other). Meanwhile, in other European countries similar platforms have also developed.

1. Besters, M, van der Ham, S (2015). Nieuwe Rijkdom in de Wijken, online delen is het nieuwe hebben.

These platforms function nationwide or even internationally (for instance: Peery.com), but they are organised locally, and often at a reasonable travel distance. They tend to create closeness and transparency within the demand and supply cycle, which is important in our increasingly transient society where we need each other more and more. Research undertook in 2016 by myself and Sander Van der Ham looked at this phenomenon in greater detail. In the article I will share some of the findings.¹

Platforms like Airbnb, UBER and others of their kind are progressively seen as the source of many problems in our cities today – increasing housing prices, false competition and sharpening divisions between the Haves and the Have Nots, like is also addressed in other articles in this book.

So what do we make of it all? In this article I will focus on the impact of online sharing on people, and how it influences feelings of inclusion, belonging and social cohesion.



HOW TO DEFINE ONLINE SHARING?

People have been sharing services and items since forever. While in the past this usually took place between people who knew each other, the online sharing platforms of today provide the opportunity to also share with strangers. Reviews, ratings and the protocols on the platforms all work to provide a sense of trust. The word sharing implies that no money is involved. Yet, in the current debate all sorts of platforms, be they on-demand paid services, house or car renting, or non-monetary item or service exchange, all fall under the umbrella of the sharing economy. A distinction can be made between platforms for profit, looking to create shareholder value, and the non or semi-commercial platforms whose main goal is to provide societal value. The lack of clear boundaries complicates the possibility of a proper discussion, but it is also a symptom of a new sector in the making. In this article, I focus on platforms that enable people to share their own underused stuff, their houses or their time; what Frenken et al (2015) call “consumers granting each other temporary access to underutilised physical assets (idle capacity), possibly for money.”²

2. Frenken et al, 20 mei 2015. Smarter regulation for the sharing economy www.theguardian.com/science/political-science/2015/may/20/smarter-regulation-for-the-sharing-economy

Thuisafgehaald.nl: makes it possible to share food with your neighbours in case you live alone and like to cook, or cook for a family and do not mind to make some extra food for others, or if you really like to bake bread or Thais. The food is collected at the cook's home, and a small fee is paid to cover expenses.

“Even after more than 50 collected meals, I still think it is special to walk into someone's kitchen and have a chat, when they fix my dinner. It is remarkable how hospitable and trustfull people are.”

A user of thuisafgehaald.nl

THE BENEFITS OF SHARING

On a greater scale the sharing economy was welcomed as a way of living more sustainably. Sharing instead of buying equals less stuff. It also increases social contacts between people who did not know each other previously.

The jury is still out on the first assumption. What if the earnings made through sharing end up stimulating new consumption? And does cheap accommodation actually fuel more travel? The only real good case seems to be that of car sharing. For instance, in its five years of existence SnappCar helped avoid 47 500 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions.³ Other research showed that people who use a carsharing platform drive less kilometers per year and are less likely to buy a second car.⁴

The assumption around social contacts is more promising. In our research we learned a lot about why people lend their stuff to others, cook freely for neighbours they did not know, and volunteer their time to help strangers. We also heard back from the people on the receiving end of the sharing platforms: why they used them and what it did for them. As it turns out, sharing platforms:

- Help people grow weak ties: informal casual contacts that have proven to be very effective in finding a new job or a house for example;
- Provide people with the necessary assistance: for elderly men living alone the opportunity of having a home-cooked meal with a short social talk was important. For elderly women having someone to go to the supermarket with, or someone to help out at home and have a brief conversation with was a real lifesaver. With the European welfare states in decline, these platforms can fulfill a direct need.
- Show people their talents and offer opportunities to develop new skills: cooking for neighbours requires – next to passion for food – also structured preparation, sales and price management, kitchen organisation and social skills. Same goes for someone volunteering to assist an elderly lady: good listening, setting boundaries and empathy are amongst the key skills people reportedly acquire while on the job;
- Make people feel valued and needed: whether you lend out a disco lamp for a birthday party, prepare a warm meal for someone or help them in the garden, you matter. Even if you do not know many people in the city, if you are retired, or you do not own a lot of stuff, sharing platforms vividly illustrate that you can still be of value to someone.

3. 2015 Cijfers Snappcar, based on research by adviesbureau Avance, adviesbureau True Price and Planbureau voor de Leefomgeving (PBL)

4. Effecten van autodelen op mobiliteit en CO2-uitstoot, PBL-publicatie 1789, Planbureau voor de Leefomgeving, 2015. Goudappel Coffing in opdracht van Greenwheels (dec 2018). Hoe Greenwheels the steden leefbaarder maakt.

The individual benefits of sharing platforms often spill over to the entire neighbourhood. Most platform users greet other people they've met

through the apps when they see them on the street. A smaller yet sizable group stops for a short talk and some people even arrange to meet up. Almost a quarter of platform users improve their perspective on their neighbours.

These results are important when we are seeking alternative ways to create resilient neighbourhoods. Sharing platforms facilitate participation between neighbours and face-to-face contact in a way that is still compatible with individualistic big city life. The platforms can be equally instrumental in filling the gaps that our welfare states have created over the years since the crisis. Not as a solution, but as a support system.

Peerby.com:
makes it possible to borrow from your neighbours anything from a hammer, disco lights for a party, a tent for camping to a guitar for that new, but possibly brief hobby. The stuff is picked up at someone's house. No money is involved, but often people give a chocolate bar just to say thanks.

"I came to realise it is not necessary at all to rush to the shop and buy stuff. Lending is easy and saves a lot of money."

A user of Peerby.com

EQUAL SHARING FOR ALL?

HAPPY FEW

In our research we noticed that a very small number of non-Dutch nationals (expats, migrants) and non-white people (Suriname, Indonesian, Turkish, Moroccan and other Dutch nationals) were using the platforms. Through a limited postal code review we figured out that usage was more or less confined to the richer, whiter parts of town. This is rather frustrating when research results clearly indicate there is much to be gained by all people using the platforms; especially for people with limited social networks and little money to spend.

RACISM

Similarly, "the peer-to-peer nature of sharing economy transactions may also increase peer-to-peer discrimination".⁵ Airbnb specifically has had a great number of complaints and even lawsuits related to racism. Research shows that guests with African-Americans names are 16% less likely to be accepted as Airbnb guests, in comparison with guests with recognizable white names. Also, African-American hosts earn 12% less on bookings than white Americans.⁶ It would be useful to understand if the same applies to Turkish, Moroccan, and Suriname minorities here in Europe. Additionally, the research could not distinguish clearly if it was blatant racism or the lower socioeconomic status associated with the racial background that created these discrepancies. In any case, it is evident that the opportunities on the Airbnb sharing platform are not equal. Airbnb has responded to the issue by allying with NAACP to actively promote inclusivity, also within its own workforce, and better target communities who could benefit greatly from the additional income associated with home-sharing.⁷

5. K. Frenken, J. Schor / *Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions* 23 (2017) 3-10

6. Edelman, Benjamin, Michael Luca, and Dan Svirsky. 2017. "Racial Discrimination in the Sharing Economy: Evidence from a Field Experiment." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 9 (2): 1-22.

7. *Airbnb teams up with the NAACP to fight racism on its platform*, The Verge, Nick Statt 26 July 2017

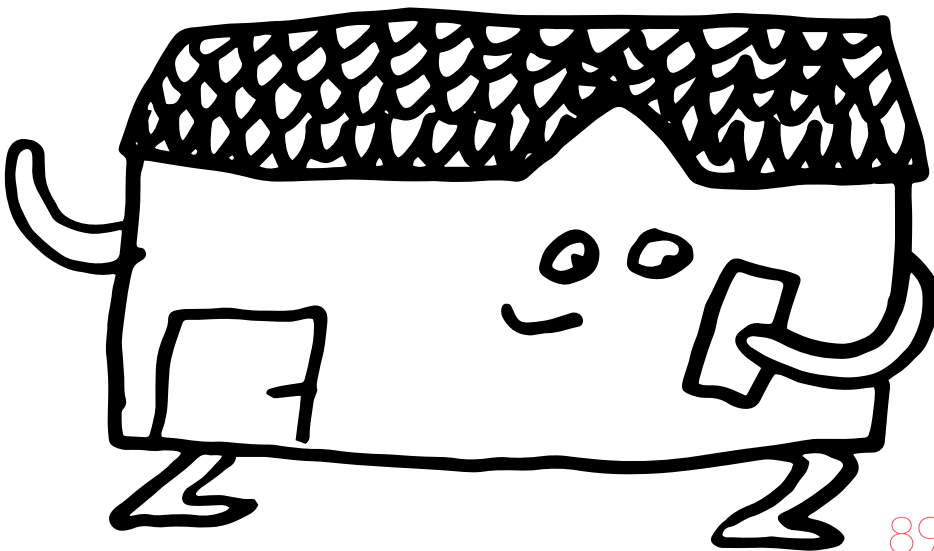


LOWER SOCIAL CLASSES ARE DISADVANTAGED

Making extra money through cooking for neighbours, renting out your car or house has financial consequences for someone's social welfare support. It is also prohibited by social housing corporations. Thus, people in the welfare system have limited or no opportunity to participate in the sharing economy except for being on the receiving end of it. The Haves are gaining more from the sharing economy than the Have Nots. Governments and housing corporations should look into this issue and see if they can bend the rules for these platforms. Some Dutch housing corporations for instance do allow people to rent out or exchange their houses for a limited amount of days.

SOCIAL SKILLS AND CULTURAL NORMS

Navigating online platforms, making appointments, receiving people at your door all requires some solid social skills. Through conversations with welfare professionals we learned that although opportunities for their clients, or for the people in the neighborhood they worked in, did exist, people often worried about their 'social cleverness'. These professionals brought in a very valid point about women opening the door to men, when the latter come to pick something they've lent through the platform. It might be that certain cultural norms prohibit women from doing so, but sometimes there is also a big safety concern. This prompted a number of Dutch welfare organisations to assume the role of a mediator. After their involvement, for instance, the home cooking and dinner collection was all done at a shared community center. Experiments like these help us understand what is needed to support the more vulnerable groups in society and how to organise the sharing process better.



ACCESS TO THE INTERNET

Online platforms naturally require access to the internet via computers, tablets or smartphones. Depending on the country, this prerequisite may prove tricky. The Netherlands for instance has one of the highest rates of internet uptake in Europe. Even for the older age groups or people from lower socioeconomic classes internet access is a given. In our research, the users of the NLvoorelkaar.nl platform were typically the oldest, yet data showed they had no trouble in accessing the online tools. However, for countries where access to internet is still limited, the online aspect of sharing platforms might become an obstacle.

LABOUR RIGHTS

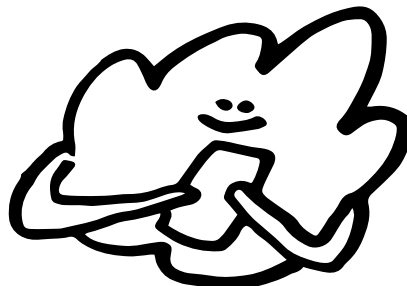
Platforms like Uber which enable people to organise their work hours are often seen as part of the sharing economy. It is beyond the purpose of this article to discuss these platforms here. Nonetheless, it is important to mention that if we were to make people's time subject to the algorithms of online platforms, we risk dehumanising their labour. Yes, the freedom of planning your own hours can be liberating; think of students or perhaps also parents, working around school hours. Unfortunately, it is often the low paying jobs with few or no skills required that are organised this way. The workers are easily replaceable and have little opportunity to organise themselves properly. With no front man to talk to, no floor manager to understand your personal situation, no colleagues who stick together and get each other coffee, it can become pretty cold and lonely looking at the app for your next ride.

NLvoorelkaar.nl:

matches people who are in need of support with volunteers in the neighbourhood. It can be for a one time question, but often people connect for longer periods to help out with the weekly trip to the supermarket or by keeping someone company on a regular basis. No money is involved.

"Someone in my neighbourhood needed help with sorting out boxes after moving here. I was happy that I could help him out and it made me also feel better about myself."

A user of NLvoorelkaar.nl



CONCLUSIONS

The debate surrounding online sharing platforms is greatly complicated by the discussions circling Uber, Airbnb and other commercial sharing platforms as well as the enormous variety in setups (from nonprofits, social enterprises to commercial companies with international shareholders) and purposes (as sharing could imply both monetary and non-monetary transactions).

Although the discussions on labour rights and the impact of tourists on our inner cities are important, they can also take away attention from the real benefits of the online sharing platforms, namely:

- Providing assistance to people when they grow older, connecting them to neighbours who can cook a nice meal for them, mow the lawn or simply offer a friendly chat;
- Shedding light on unknown talents and skills, allowing people to develop themselves further and to be of value to each other;
- Taking a safe step towards entrepreneurship, exploring for instance what it means to have dinner ready on time at a fair cost for your neighbourhood 'customers';
- Growing confidence and self-esteem through the social contacts, the feedback loops and the knowledge that you actually have something to offer to someone else.

But before all people can truly benefit from these social platforms, local governments, welfare organisations and placemakers alike must recognize and address the negative externalities which end up excluding large groups of people from participating in the sharing economy. Technology is merely a tool that helps us do things more efficiently: connect, organise, match, pay, administrate. But if we leave out the human interaction aspect, or have no eye for the human scale, it all becomes soulless. So let's make online social sharing platforms truly social together!

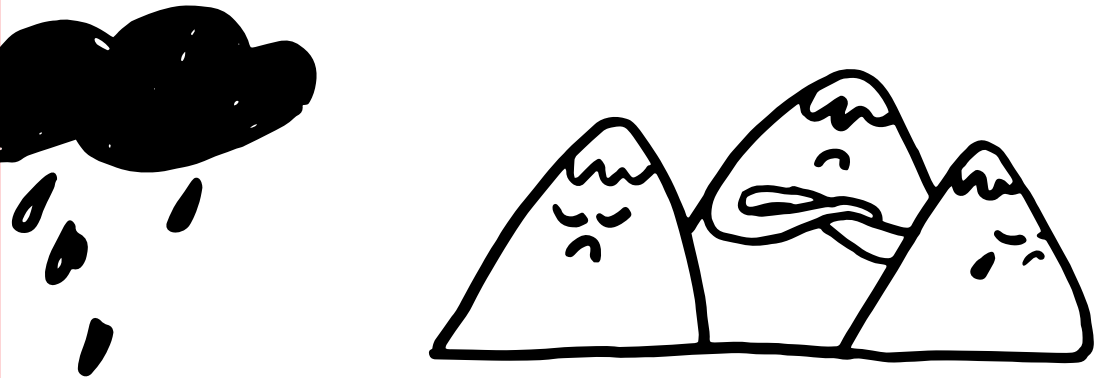
CHALLENGES FOR VILLAGES





IJsbrand Heeringa

INTRODUCTION



In the urban debate one fact is shared more often than any other: in 2050 80% of the world's population will live in cities. This massive wave of urbanization is going to threaten the liveability and sustainability of the world's cities (Mckinsey, 2016). Without a doubt, their inclusiveness will also be at risk.

However, focusing on the growing cities of the future creates a serious blind spot, and that is shrinkage. In Europe, one could almost say that for every growing city there is a shrinking one, and a few dozen shrinking villages. This case study demonstrates that shrinkage deserves our attention, and that it is a serious threat to the inclusiveness of our society.

In the spring of 2017, I conducted a research study on shrinkage and its effects on the Spanish region of Asturias. During my stay there, I saw first-hand the vast impact of shrinkage and how it affects the minds of the people wrapped up in it.

MANIFESTATIONS OF SHRINKAGE

Asturias is a mountainous region in the north of Spain. It is known mostly for its natural reserves and beautiful coastline. The region is sparsely populated except for the three central cities of Avilés, Gijón and Oviedo. The region currently has slightly less than one million inhabitants, some 60% of them are concentrated in the central cities.

The region of Asturias has struggled with shrinkage for decades. Its rural towns have been losing population since the 1940s, and since the 1980s the entire region has lost around 100 000 people. According to the Spanish National Institute of Statistics the region will lose another 100 000 in just over half that time.

The process began with a decline in the rural economy caused by the introduction of the European market. This put the small traditional Asturian farming industry in direct competition with the agricultural giants of Northern Europe. The mountainous landscape of Asturias prevented the farming industry from implementing modern techniques. As a result farming has declined and the rural population has more than halved.

In the 60s and 70s, the Asturian population suffered another hit, when the region's large coal mining industry entered a crisis (Prada Trigo, 2014). Large swaths of the region's workforce were laid off and dozens of coal mines were closed. This was one of the region's most turbulent periods, filled with violent clashes between miners and the government. Coal mining has now all but died out in Asturias.

The combination of these two waves of decline is now causing a third one: out-migration and aging. According to Eurostat, Asturias currently has one of the fastest aging populations and lowest birth rates in Europe.

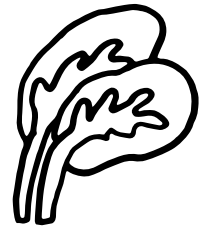
IMPACT

Shrinkage has had a substantial impact on the life of many Asturian cities and villages. It has been more than a mere demographic transition, but rather a fundamental change in regional landscape with severe consequences for the local social networks.

Ghost towns have become a common sight. The region now counts more than 600 abandoned villages. Here the downward spiral of shrinkage is felt hardest. Local governments have to make do with increasingly less income from taxes. This makes it almost impossible to provide people in the villages with services and to protect the environment. The effects of shrinkage are reaching further than just the buildings. Continuous neglect of the countryside has given rise to various environmental problems such as forest fires and soil degradation. This problem exacerbates when the more vulnerable elderly population is left behind, while the young make their way to larger cities.

In recent years there has been some renewed activity in the mountain areas of Asturias, mainly in the form of eco-farming. However, due to the impasse of the local governments (which are down on manpower and

resources) support for such initiatives is non-existent. As one interviewee told me: “a couple of friends of mine tried to get permits to start a farm, but they had to wait for so long that they decided it would be quicker and more profitable to start growing cannabis instead.”



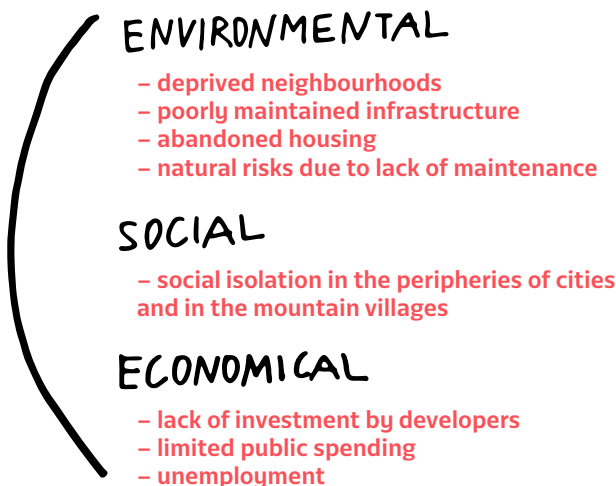
In the former mining cities of Langreo and Mieres life is not much better. The landscape there seems identical to the one we've seen in images from Detroit city. Half-dismantled factories and overgrown railway tracks give a sense of deprivation. Since the economic restructuring of the 1970s thousands of people have left these towns, vacating many houses and estates. The remaining population consists of former mine workers who are living off their state pensions.

Interestingly, the regional government has made several attempts to reignite life in these towns. With the help of European funds they have relocated part of the regional university to Mieres, hoping that the student population could revive the town. But as one of the university professors told me, “this has never really worked, all the students come by bus, they live in the big cities.”

Even in the larger cities, Avilés, Oviedo and Gijon, the effects of shrinkage are starting to show, especially on the periphery, where one can find vacant apartment buildings and abandoned construction sites. These places are a reminder of the period when planners still imagined that population growth might come back to the region. The dynamic of out-migration also works on a neighbourhood scale. Younger more mobile families migrate from the periphery to the centre of bigger cities, leaving the elderly population behind.

Shrinkage has clearly had a disproportionate effect on poorer communities and people in not-so-favorable circumstances, especially elderly citizens who are typically left behind in smaller towns and on the peripheries of cities. Despite attempts from the local planning agencies, little has been accomplished to improve their lives.

The consequences of shrinkage in a nutshell:



PLANNING

Local planners have tried often enough to reverse the process of shrinkage, occasionally aided by national and European funding. However, most of their efforts have gone to waste because regaining growth simply isn't an option any more. Many decision-makers in the region are still far from accepting this fact. As an interviewee from the regional government told me, "people are just not ready to accept that a new direction is needed."

This has deeply affected the overall approach towards planning. The large number of failed plans has created an attitude of pessimism among the regional population and among decision-makers. According to one interviewee "people have had enough of beautiful plans that accomplish nothing." Few plans or initiatives find their way to implementation. The regional government has failed to update its regional strategy since 1991.



OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN SHRINKAGE

It is not easy to identify the changes needed to improve the situation of regions like Asturias. However, the fact that change is needed is undisputed. Most crucial is the change of perspective. As has become clear from the sheer number of shrinking regions throughout Europe, regaining growth is an unlikely scenario. Instead, what is needed is a mindset change. The scarce resources of regions like Asturias should not be invested in regaining growth, but in improving the quality of life for the remaining population.

As Hollander et al. (2009) put it "the lack of strong market demand and an abundance of vacant land create unprecedented opportunities to improve green networks and natural systems in shrinking cities."

There are encouraging examples in practice today that illustrate a different approach to the shrinking city. The initiatives of 'Parkstad Limburg' and 'IBA Thuringen' are two good examples of former industrial regions that have found a new way forward. Both of these projects are backed by regional and national governments, but they have moved away from traditional planning practices. They focus on two things: the reuse of vacant space and the empowerment of local communities. Many of these initiatives aim to provide livelihoods for young people and social connection for the elderly.

They have also made regional funding available for small scale programmes such as urban gardening and reuse of former factory spaces. By displaying these programmes on a regional scale they attempt to inspire communities throughout the region to take ownership of their environment. Such initiatives will not reverse the process of shrinkage, but they do demonstrate that there is a potential future beyond shrinkage.

ABANDONED HOME
IN MIERES

Source: author's
personal archive



ABANDONED
FACTORY GROUNDS
IN THE HEART OF
LANGREO

*Source: author's
personal archive*

VACANT LAND IN THE
CENTRE OF AVILÉS

*Source: author's
personal archive*



CONCLUSION

The case of Asturias demonstrates an extremely difficult situation that has no straightforward answer. A new perspective is needed. One can draw hope from some of the examples from abroad, yet it is unclear how widely adaptable these examples are, nor how much impact they could have. However, we can be sure that cases such as Asturias will not go away soon. If we value the inclusiveness of our future society, we'd better give them our attention.

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TEMPORARY USE OF SPACE AS A SHORT-TERM INTERVENTION FOR LONG-TERM REVITALIZATION

Tina Vilfan

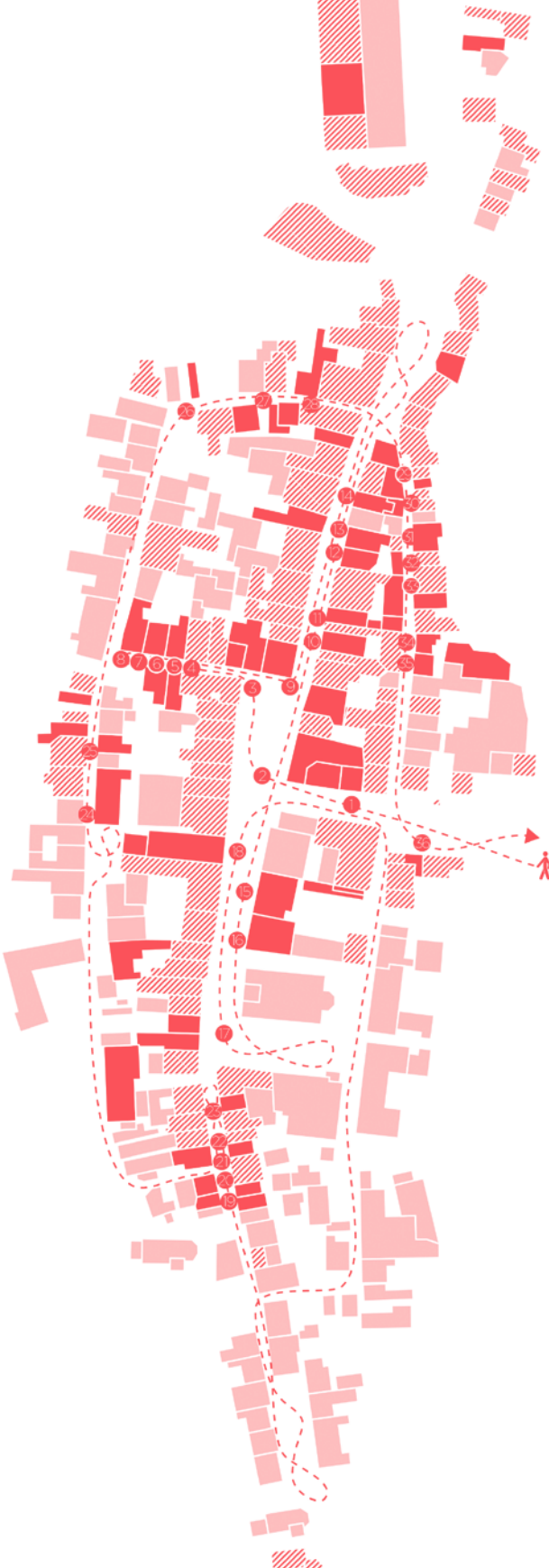
Smaller Slovenian towns are fighting a decline in visits to their historical cores. The trend is caused by shopping malls popping up on the outskirts and new potential users opting to go to larger cities or more car accessible areas. This case study focuses on the method of temporary use of space, mostly because of its capacity to show results in a short period of time. Temporary use of space is a way to boost the liveliness of old city cores while protecting their built heritage. When applied in practice it offers the possibility of testing out complementary uses 1:1. The aim is to explore new patterns of use with emphasis on small interventions of high visibility that are appropriate for dense urban areas and interesting to the residents.

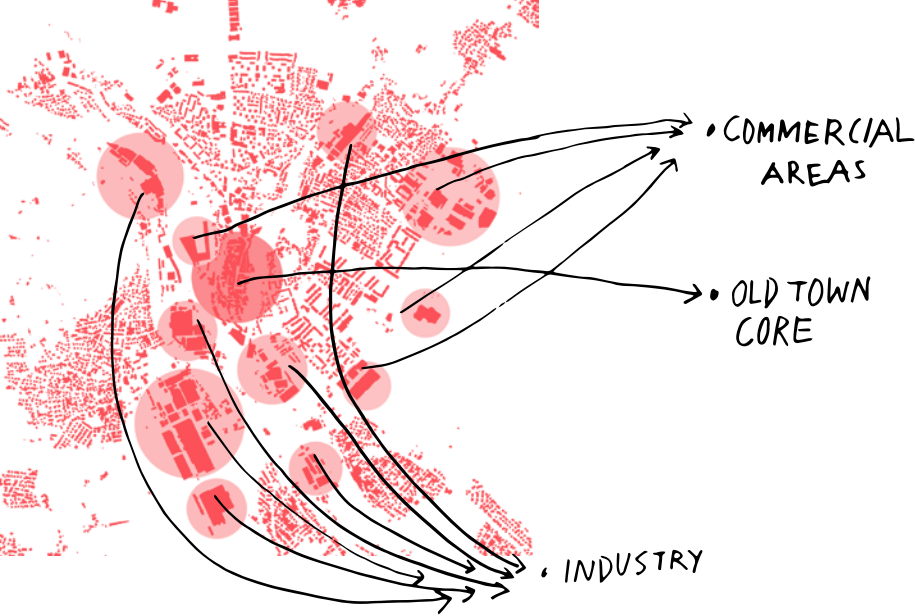


The old romantic town centres can be described as the heart of the city but they suffer from high rents and a low flow of people which in turn causes local shops to change tenants or even worse – be left empty. With few visitors and a limited cultural programme, old city cores are losing their commercial and cultural appeal. When a building becomes vacant it is crucial to establish a new use for it as soon as possible to avert its own deterioration and that of the wider area.

In order to establish a repetitive pattern, the ground floor activity of four towns in Slovenia was mapped based on whether or not the space was in active use or vacant. The findings were then graphically analysed. A larger scale graphical analysis also included the town core in relation to the areas surrounding it.

MAP OF EMPTY
SPACES – OLD TOWN
CORE (BLACK);
KRANJ, SLOVENIA
Source: author





CITY OVERVIEW –
 OLD TOWN
 CORE, INDUSTRY,
 COMMERCIAL AREAS;
 KRANJ, SLOVENIA

Source: author's
 personal archive

The results showed the old town cores were mostly orbited by easily accessible satellites zoned for competitive use which affected the emptying out of shops in old town cores. The study also examined other factors causing the problem such as high rents, poor foot traffic and too little focus on the users of the space.

The proposed approach can be described as a spatial organisational model of temporary uses. It links owners of empty properties with potential renters through governmental assistance and subsidies. As a short-term intervention, it tests suitable types of uses on a 1:1 scale in order to find those that fit well with each other and that can offer an appealing alternative to the shopping malls on the city outskirts. An in-between use prevents degradation of buildings that have lost their previous function and are transitioning to a new one, while also reversing the negative trend of general area stagnation.

The aim of this approach is to re-establish liveliness by activating the empty spaces with creative ideas, linking different uses and generating a strong sense of community in the area. This would benefit upcoming small businesses and include weaker social groups that need space but can't afford the high initial cost. It is a tool that would enable municipalities to find new and appropriate activities for historical cores with actual users, including those weaker social groups. It would highlight successful usage that improves foot traffic and would provide new functions in old town cores showing immediate effect. The temporary use model is also community-based, because involving more shareholders will help preserve the area in the long run.

The model of temporary use aims to establish an active ground-floor policy through cooperation between different social groups, experts and the local municipality. In particular, it seeks to improve the situation of socially vulnerable groups, while preserving architectural heritage and

repositioning empty spaces as an asset not a weakness. After finding a better permanent use or one that is more optimal for the owner, the temporary usage can be substituted. In this process, compromise is key to establishing a good relationship between all stakeholders. The guiding principle is small interventions, which can be immediately applied in the space and do not require long-term planning or fundraising.

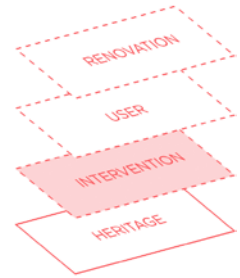
Interviewing potential future users is an important part of solving the problem. Current users would often share that they are unable to afford their own place and that they are willing to team up with like-minded complementary users in figuring out activities for the empty spaces.

It is impossible to foresee how much foot traffic one user could generate through his or her business. If the user's activity does not attract interest, they should empty the premises and give a chance to a new user. Since this issue is of general interest to the city, the space owners and the citizens themselves, the process must be fair and honest. In the event that a user's business proves successful, he or she must start paying rent at market conditions.

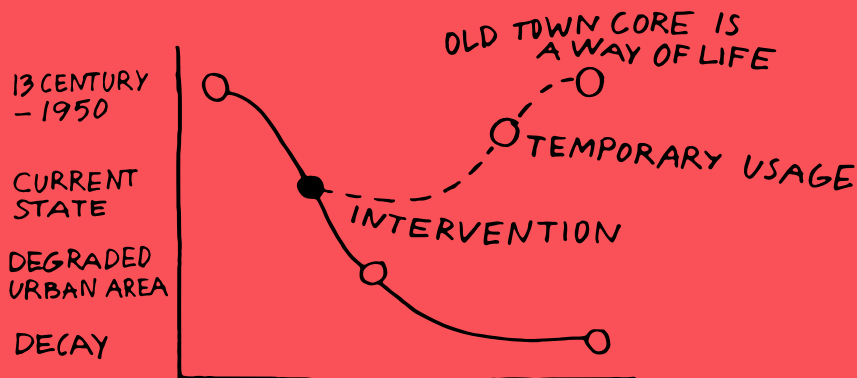
Since temporary use is a fairly new approach to revitalizing cities, this case study sought to offer a theoretical base for several applications that can boost the liveliness of historical city cores. It also reviewed the possibilities for adopting temporary use as a tool to test out appropriate possible zoning scenarios. Finally, it questioned the status quo and contributed to developing a community-based approach as a viable tool for urban regeneration.

NEW ORGANISATIONAL MODEL DIVIDED IN LAYERS, WHERE BUILDINGS GIVE THE FRAME FOR SOCIAL INTERVENTION WITH THE SUPPORT OF USERS THAT WOULD PROMOTE RENOVATION IN THE LONG RUN.

Source: author's personal archive



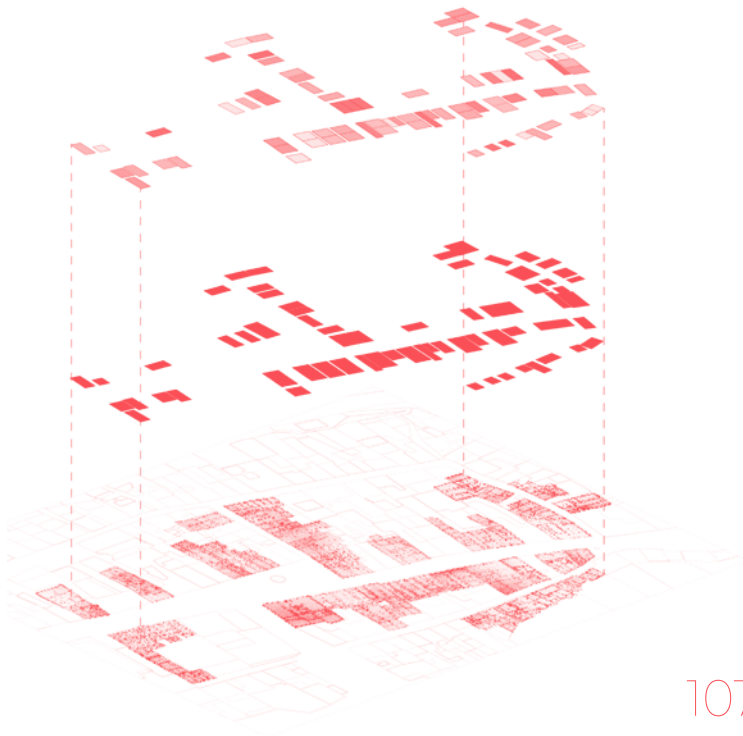
POSSIBLE SCENARIOS OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT
Source: author's personal archive





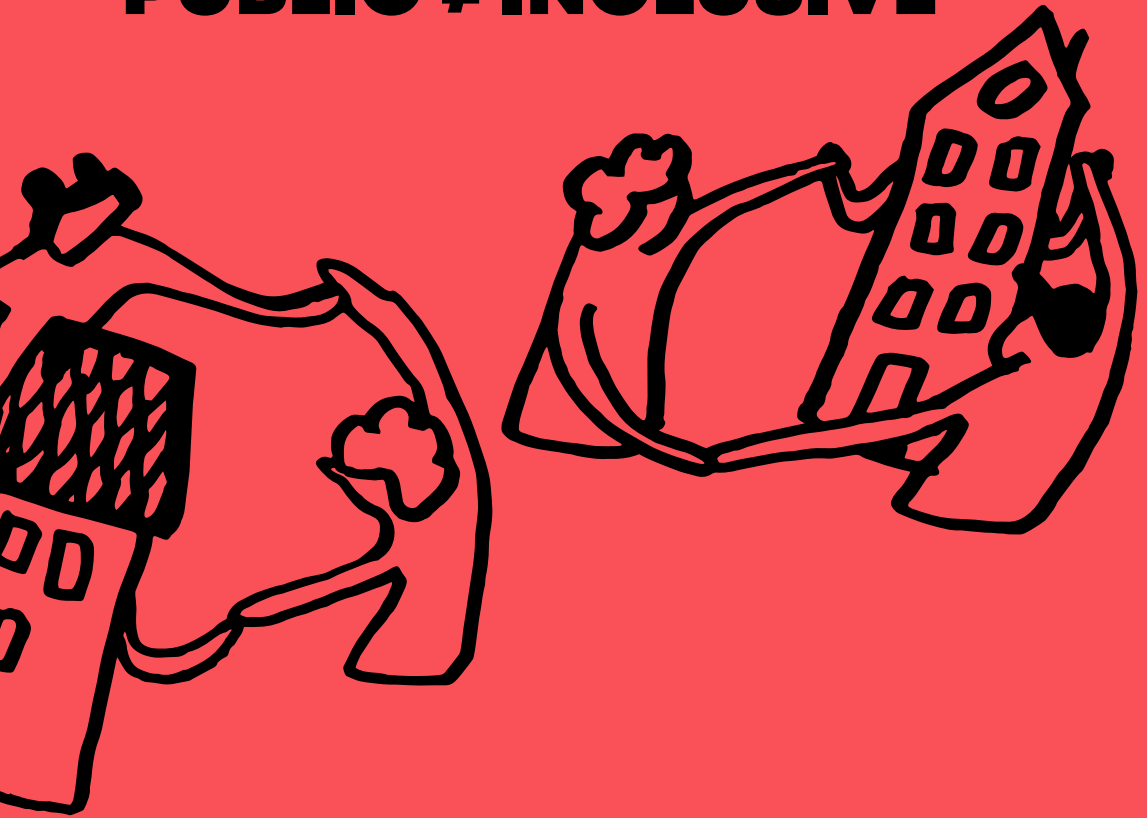
FIRST AND SECOND
MAP SHOW RESULTS
OF MAPPING
EMPTY SPACES
AND THE THIRD
AND FORTH SHOW
THE TEMPORARY
USE MODEL WITH
2 DIFFERENT
PROGRAMME
SCENARIOS.

Source: author's
personal archive





PUBLIC ≠ INCLUSIVE



INTRODUCTION

Public spaces and public events or activities, taking place on the streets, squares or parks of our cities, are there for everyone to enjoy or participate in. The word public here is easily mistaken for accessible, suitable, appropriate or fitting for all citizens.

In this part of the book we would like to draw your attention to the many reasons why something can be public but still not inviting. If we strive to create cities where everyone feels at home, we must understand what is it that makes someone feel excluded, how they perceive the space around them and what are their needs and wishes. Through the voices of the different citizens, the local stories and the research essays presented in this part you will be shown around in their world and pointed towards a better understanding of their perspectives.

Let us not make the mistake of categorizing people into target groups, like kids, the elderly, the muslim women, the homosexual or the single mom. People are more than just one target group. They are many things at once and during our lifetime we will go from that small kid, to being the youth hanging out in the square to the commuting worker and eventually to the grandparents sitting on a bench at the playground watching their grandchild play.

Also not every public space is a place where everyone meets. A great neighbourhood offers pockets of green and spots to play and explore for everyone so that we all fit somewhere, where we can learn, grow and feel safe amongst our peers. It also provides bigger places that are jointly used by different people, but perhaps not collectively. This is where we see each other, meet new people and learn to live with the frictions of city life.

Exploring the following chapters will offer you guidance in how, where and when to be sensitive and alert to these different, and at times conflicting, aspirations.

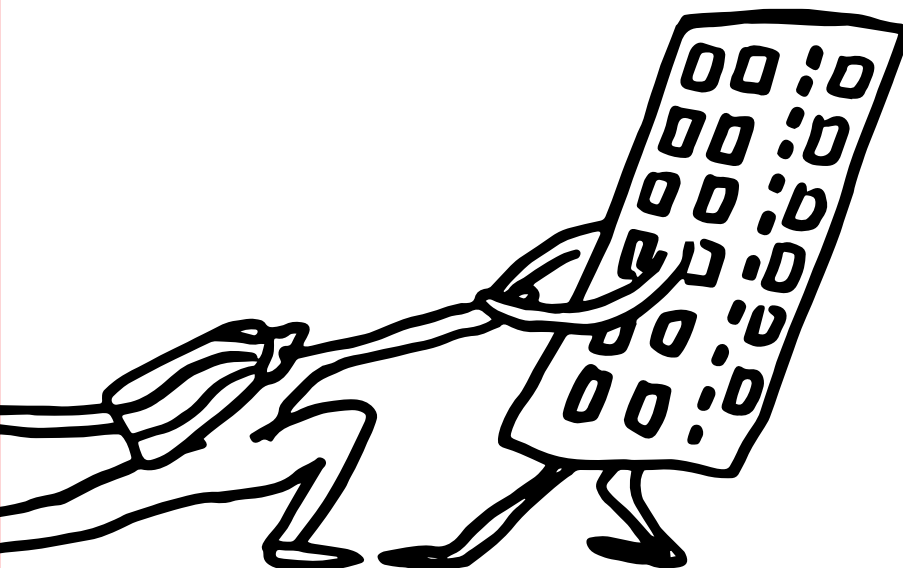
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EVERYONE SHOULD FEEL AT HOME. THE PITFALLS AND POSSIBILITIES OF INCLUSIVENESS

ESSAY

Fenneke Wekker

In the scholarly fields of migration and integration on public health and welfare-states, and in urban and globalization studies, social scientists generally agree that feeling at home, being rooted and socially embedded in the environment where one lives is of great importance. Feelings of safety, familiarity, being embedded in a community, as well as having a sense of control over one's own life, and a place of dwelling, are not only regarded as a prerequisite for well-functioning individuals, but also for self-supportive local communities, neighbourhoods, and cities. Society at large will improve as it stands on such well-balanced building blocks.



At the same time, classical sociologists such as Georg Simmel, Emile Durkheim and the by-now classical author Jane Jacobs, have argued that feelings of home and belonging in urban settings are not self-evident at all. They claim that city life is defined by its opaque and chaotic nature. It is marked by the ongoing presence of 'strangers', tourists and temporary inhabitants. Therefore, instead of providing a natural basis for feelings of safety, familiarity, community and a sense of control over space among urban dwellers, city life tends to produce quite the opposite: feelings of anxiety, estrangement, anonymity and a loss of control. While some urbanites are attracted to city life precisely because of its lack of social control and community life, others suffer from feelings of loneliness and social isolation.

This essay deals with the possibilities and pitfalls of attempts to enhance feelings of home and belonging among urban dwellers. These exist precisely because policies and social interventions in contemporary Western societies that aim to strengthen local communities and create inclusive cities also involve processes of exclusion. Therefore, before embracing the ideal of inclusive cities where everyone can and should be able to feel at home, it is important to take into consideration the complexity and politics that are at stake in building inclusive heterogeneous urban settings.



THE DIFFICULTIES OF BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE LOCAL HOME

An inclusive city where every single resident can feel safe, accepted and recognized by others, embedded in a community, and with a sense of control over social and physical environment, is not easily established. Whereas feelings of home can be regarded as universal and important to all human beings, those very same feelings can generate tensions and collisions between (groups of) residents when normative ideas of what a good home is and should be differ.

Policy-makers, urban developers, housing corporations, and social organizations that attempt to build inclusive local communities often encounter difficulties and resistance when they try to govern or enhance feelings of home and belonging in urban settings. It often transpires that when one group of residents feels strongly rooted and embedded in the physical and social environment, other groups tend to withdraw from this space. The question therefore arises, whether it is possible for everyone to feel truly at home in settings that are marked by difference and fluidity.

Between 2010 and 2018, I conducted several ethnographic studies on feelings of home and belonging in heterogeneous urban settings. Around 120 people were thoroughly interviewed and asked about their feelings of home with regards to the place where they live. Although everyone seems to know what home means and why feeling at home is so important, I found that home for every individual refers to a very specific situation. What a good home entails for someone, encapsulates all the sensory, physical and social aspects of the situation one has experienced as a child. Back then, things were self-evident and 'normal'. As a child, home was simply 'good' as it was, because we did not know any better. Home was the environment in which we knew what was expected of us, in which the sounds, smells, people, faces, bodies and customs were familiar; an environment in which we could navigate safely and blindly, because we knew the place by heart. In sum, the ability to navigate blindly through a physical and social environment creates feelings of home. It provides a sense of safety, familiarity, community and control over the (social) spaces people find themselves in.

Exactly which situational aspects create such feelings of home thus vary per individual. Home-feelings draw on very early memories. And even when those memories are filled with fear or despair, they refer to what is familiar and thus, sometimes in a paradoxical way, to what is perceived as 'normal,' and thus 'good'. Some of my respondents were born and raised in violent or unsafe domestic environments, but still recalled the home of their youths with a sense of longing. Even bad memories of home can continue to carry a certain touch of nostalgia, simply because they refer to a time and place in which you were a child, the time and place in which things were just 'normal' as they were.

Since notions of home are so strongly sensory and related to our earliest memories, knowing what home means becomes a second nature: we have completely internalized those notions and are always able to recognize a-situation-like-home, even though it is hard to explain in words. We just know when we are home. Moreover, this knowing-by-heart evokes a feeling of being at a place that is good just as it is. As I learned from my respondents, early memories of home can provide comfort and guidance

in times when people feel temporarily out of balance; it provides comfort in times of change and identity crises. Personal normative ideas of home help people remember who they are, where they belong, and to recall a collective identity.

On the other hand, knowing what 'a good home' is, but not finding it in the situation at hand, can also evoke very negative feelings of discomfort, unbalance and up-rootedness. Social scientists have shown that moral ideas about what is 'good' and 'bad' only become clear and visible once those ideas are violated. In other words, the moment moral boundaries are crossed, we become aware of them. The word 'normal' obviously encloses the word 'norm', because that what is perceived as 'normal' is implicitly seen as the right thing to do. Thus, when the situation where one lives is considered 'abnormal', it is also hard to regard it as 'good', let alone to feel at home in such a situation.

One of my respondents, who became painfully aware of the unbalance between his normative ideas of home and the situation he found himself in was William, as I will call him. William was born and raised in Ethiopia, but had lived in the Netherlands for a decade. He shared some despairing thoughts with me, in which he explained how it felt not to be at home: "I have lived in Hoofddorp for ten years now, and I don't even know the name of my neighbours. In Ethiopia, that would be impossible, it would be a shame. And I do really feel ashamed about it, because I do not know the people I live amongst." (William, 61) As William explains, it is the discrepancy between the memories of his home situation in Ethiopia and his living situation in the Netherlands, that makes it so difficult for him to feel at ease: "You start to think 'am I not good enough, not sociable enough?' You really start doubting yourself. Yeah, and then, after a while you start to feel so isolated and down, you know. How can I improve myself? What did I do wrong? It is really hard to get used to it, to adapt here."

William's self-consciousness, his experience of not-being-at-home, is a typical example of what Jared Zigon has called 'a moment of moral breakdown', which is the moment in which one becomes stunningly aware of his or her own morality and normative ideas. While William sees his inability to adapt to his new home-situation as a personal failure, I would rather suggest it is a social one. Many of my informants who were not born and raised in the Netherlands reported such 'moral breakdowns.' Even after many years of residency, they found themselves unable to become comfortable with the detached social behavior of their native Dutch neighbours.

Recently however, many native Dutch citizens have also begun to report moral breakdowns. In both public and political debates, nostalgia rules supreme, proclaiming the loss of a country in which people could 'count on each other', and feel part of a national community. Many of my native Dutch respondents stated that they did not 'feel at home' in their neighbourhood any more, or that they felt like 'a guest in their own street.'

One respondent worried about the fact that his street had turned 'black' – by which he explicitly referred to the 'abnormal' presence of non-white people in a setting he used to call 'home'. Bert (75) said: "Those foreigners dominate our lives. My street has turned black completely. And it is going to get worse. We'll be strangers in our own country." As I found, in order

for people to feel at home, very specific normative elements have to be combined. Home, then, is a combination of 'the right' place, with the right practices and the right people. Ultimately, the idea of home connects certain places, bodies and minds to what is perceived as normal, and therefore, morally good. Following these insights, I suggest the normative idea of home must be regarded as a moral category; a mental framework that helps people distinguish between what is good and bad, between those who can be included and those who should be kept at bay.

In an era of globalization, refugee crises and mass migration, polarization, as well as collective feelings of anxiety and unsafety rule supreme in Western societies. In an attempt to counter the increasing lack of social cohesion, politicians and policy-makers, as well as social organizations, now emphasize the importance for all citizens to 'feel at home', independent of their background and social position. Cities should become inclusive spaces where all inhabitants can feel safe, accepted, and embedded in the local community. However, every single individual needs very specific aspects for feelings of home to emerge.

For example, while William only feels at home by having contact with neighbours, Bert indicates he feels less at home because his neighbour William is black. How to solve this impasse? Both William and Bert are longing to feel deeply at home. They crave a sense of community and familiarity in the environment where they live. On the other hand, both persons embody the reason why the other one feels deprived of home.

The paradox that presents itself in the call for feeling at home in the city, is that although the feeling might be universal and familiar to everyone, the normative idea of what home is and should be is unique to everyone. No one can feel at home everywhere, with everyone. Home, as a moral category, is an exclusive notion. A situation-like-home has to exclude 'others', in order for the insiders to feel safe, socially embedded and surrounded by those who are familiar to them.

TOWARDS A 'LIGHT' FEELING OF HOME IN HETEROGENEOUS URBAN SETTINGS

Instead of aiming to create cities that allow everyone to feel at home, I suggest it is more feasible to strive for inclusive cities in which every single individual is aware of the fact that no-one can recreate their specific normative ideas of the 'good' home to the fullest – in public and semi-public spaces that is. Just like the social fabric of city life itself, being at home in the city is multi-layered and fluid. While one can feel at home in certain spaces and among certain people, the situation can become unfamiliar and unsafe when entering other spatial and social settings. Home can be created in private spaces and with familiar others who share similar notions of home. The rest of city space will always have to be shared with 'strangers', a fact of urban life that can bring about feelings of insecurity, anxiety and of being out of place – as in both William's and Bert's case.

Instead of encouraging urban dwellers to feel deeply at home in their street, their neighbourhood, their city, I argue it is more congruent with urban reality to limit such social interventions to encourage 'light'

feelings of home only¹. Not just because individuals and households in heterogeneous settings differ greatly when it comes to normative ideas of what a good home is, but also because such interventions carry the danger of excluding those who do not apply to dominant normative ideas of home. The danger of enhancing feelings of home from the top-down, is that a moral category for belonging and citizenship can be created. When emphasizing the importance of feelings of home, exclusive ideas of home are unwittingly and wittingly transmitted. Since such dominant notions are embedded in national and local policies, as well as social institutions such as law and education, a very specific type of morality to which all citizens should adhere is imposed top-down. It becomes very likely that certain groups and populations will not be able to fit this category of belonging to the local and/or national community.

1. See also: Duyvendak, J.W. (2011). *The Politics of Home*. New York: Palgrave McMillan.



CONCLUSION

The aim of policy-makers, municipalities and social organizations to enhance feelings of home among city dwellers and create inclusive cities, is not easy to achieve. While their intentions are to improve social cohesion and include all citizens despite their differences, building a local home involves processes of exclusion. No one can feel, or be coerced to feel at home everywhere, with everyone. Based on early and sensory memories, unique and specific normative ideas of home become a second nature for individuals. In their current social and physical environment, residents try to re-produce and establish such homey spaces and normative ideas.

In dense, heterogeneous urban settings, dwellers occasionally experience moments of moral breakdown, in which they become (sometimes painfully) aware of the fact that home is something deeply personal and therefore hard to share with all fellow residents. I suggest, instead of trying to change urban dwellers' feelings and normative ideas of home, it might be more effective to enhance the acceptance of a simple urban fact of life: no group or individual can fully claim a street, neighbourhood or city to be their home, since it always has to be shared with 'others'. Dealing with moral boundaries that are breached by the lifestyles and normative ideas of those others, is part and parcel of city life. Learning not to feel fully at home in urban settings, therefore, might contribute more to the emergence of inclusive cities, than being encouraged to do the opposite.



THE INTIMACY OF EXCLUSION. AN EMBODIED UNDERSTANDING

ESSAY

Philippa Collin

The beginning of this book has opened the discussion on the importance of nurturing inclusive cities in which inhabitants and visitors can feel at home. An inclusive city, where everyone feels a sense of belonging and connection is, by its very nature safer, more innovative and healthier.

In the social sciences there is a long tradition of studying the benefits of interpersonal encounters in creating more convivial cities. Classic urbanists such as Jacobs (1961), Lofland (1993), Sandercock (2003) & Vertovec (2007) are mainly in favour whilst more contemporary writers such as Amin (2013) argue that conviviality is too fragile to ensure genuine acceptance of 'the other' and what is needed is an explicit policy of equal belonging supported by robust legislation. I would argue that both are necessary. Placemaking alone may not solve the structural inequality caused by global capital or the commodification of social housing but grassroots experiences of inclusion can be a powerful place from which change can emerge.

Based on anthropological research carried out in Amsterdam, this article explores an embodied experience of exclusion. After all, how can we design for inclusion without a sense of what exclusion might feel like? Is it visible, who might experience it, what does it actually feel like, and is it also perhaps the case that, despite best intentions, interventions actually cause feelings of exclusion?

This essay follows my own dawning awareness of how a sense of constant exclusion in one's own city might feel and ends with practical recommendations for creating inclusion.

WAKING UP TO EXCLUSION

It began one day when my partner, who is Turkish, came home looking a bit dejected. “I have just done something silly”, he said. “I have just bought a USB stick that I do not need.” I was surprised, since he often teases me for using something as old-fashioned as a USB stick, so I asked him why. “I was in the shop and the security guard kept looking at me so suspiciously, that I felt the need to prove I was an honest customer.”

What upset me most about this incident is that it was, apart from the two people involved, invisible. No words were exchanged, no other customer was asked to act as a witness and yet it dug deep into my partner’s feelings of ease and integrity. I became aware of a subtle responsibility he carried to legitimate himself as ‘safe and law-abiding’. Yet this must be a common experience for so many people. What does it feel like to be ‘othered’ in this way? I set off to look for more stories and since knowing is not the same as actually experiencing, I also used my own body as a research instrument (Pink, 2008), by putting myself in situations where I felt awkward and then noting my responses.

One of the first things I learnt when alone at a techno festival (I am on average 30 years older than most visitors!) was that having no legitimate activity whilst others are happily socialising, dancing, eating, drinking or taking drugs is very uncomfortable. I felt socially clumsy, insecure and self-conscious. This experience led in turn to awareness of the relationship between poverty and public space. Since so much of it is commercialised, if I can’t buy things, then how can I have a legitimate role in public space?



GENTRIFICATION

This stimulated further exploration of exclusion in gentrified Amsterdam neighbourhoods. One inhabitant talked about new shops replacing his old familiar ones and selling things he did not want and certainly could not afford. As a local social worker put it: “Being poor means being fat and lonely...if you do not have any money, you can’t join in.” She described how her group of overweight women, who were dependent on the food bank, felt about the new inhabitants in their rapidly gentrifying neighbourhood: “Most of my group have a low sense of self-esteem; ‘whoever is born a dime, will never be a quarter’ and they feel uncomfortable with the new inhabitants.”

Then I asked a new inhabitant how she felt about living in a mixed neighbourhood: “I enjoy living in a place with such a social mix of rich and poor...you’d be amazed what you see for example in the supermarket (laughs), you’d be amazed....They are all chav families but I do not mind, it is funny.”

This was a painful observation. If this exchange illustrates social undercurrents, then placemaking interventions which aim to mix inhabitants will need to be highly sensitive to what makes a safe environment. For example, a bookcase which invites visitors to lend and borrow books at a community centre, is a cheerful symbol of domesticity

for some. If however you are illiterate, it can be experienced as a statement that you do not belong and will feel out of your depth. Thus creating a genuinely inclusive space is a challenge; professionals may often fill tangible and intangible space with their own ideas and aesthetic preferences without realising the effects. As a volunteer at a community event pointed out: "It is hard to create an inviting space without taking it over yourself." Perhaps creating shared space requires a constant commitment to questioning how fairly space is actually shared.

FEELING LEGITIMATE

At a focus interview with a diverse group of Amsterdammers, the theme of feeling uncomfortable in public space arose again. Dewi, an Indonesian woman who had lived in the Netherlands most of her life explained: "I really do have the need just to feel relaxed somewhere and to feel that at last I can be somewhere where I do not have to justify my presence."

As the conversation continued, more respondents picked up and embroidered Dewi's experience of feeling like they constantly have to justify their presence. In urban public space this often results in a vicious cycle of feeling self-conscious and clumsy and so becoming more self-conscious and thus attracting more judgemental attention and so on. However, they agreed that the more diversity there was, the more relaxed they felt. Aya, a Moroccan-Dutch mother described her experiences in public space. She explained how hurt she feels when she has the impression people shrink away from her body; people do not trust her, they avoid sitting next to her on the bus, draw their handbags closer and answer her greetings with a cold look. She said it makes her feel dirty.

I am shocked by her story. It is not her behavior which gives offence to others and which she could adapt, but her very physical presence. My flirtation with exclusion feels shallow; how must it feel for daily life to be such a minefield? A simple aspect of daily life such as social greetings, which are an essential feature of contact, can also be tricky. There are accepted conventions for greetings but these require practice and familiarity. I myself blundered through exuberant and friendly greeting rituals with young Moroccan men during the fieldwork, misjudging the force of the hand-clap or the timing of a hand grip and was usually left with a feeling of having bungled what might have been a warm moment. The understanding that feeling legitimate, respected and acknowledged in public space is not a given, strikes me as being an essential awareness in placemaking. In light of these insights into how vulnerable some people feel in public space, the following example of a well-intentioned intervention at an outdoor summer show in a gentrifying neighbourhood takes on a different taste.





One of the methods for audience participation is that on arrival, members of the audience are invited to sit at tables and chairs in front of the stalls and close to the stage. They settle in and get drinks, snacks and a folder. However, in scene one they are loudly chased away as part of the exuberant action on stage and sent off to the stalls instead. What a disastrous thing to do to people who are perhaps coming to the theatre for the first time. People who plucked up courage to come to this event, unsure if they knew the codes of behaviour. This must be a nightmare

come true, they are publicly chased away; having thought they were safe, anonymous spectators, suddenly they become a laughing stock.

Whilst this intervention would work well with a socially confident theatre-going audience, the public humiliation is painful for those who feel less robust. Throughout my research I became increasingly aware of the body as a sensitive antenna which registers approval or disapproval. One respondent described his feeling of exclusion in the following way: "It is like a feeling of stress, as if something weird is going to happen, like if you are afraid or have nerves." I also developed a conviction that feeling welcome and included in public space without question is a basic human right. A feeling of profound sadness and tenderness mixed with a deep sense of wrong grew as people shared their stories of what amounted to a series of daily microaggressions. I became aware of a low-level violence in public space experienced by people who do not fit into the ever-narrowing frame of 'you're ok'. This led me to examine the literature on structural violence. Scheper-Hughes & Bourgois (2004) discuss many dramatic forms of wartime violence but insist that there is a direct continuum between these and the structural and everyday forms of peacetime violence such as poverty, dehumanisation and structural social exclusion.

INVITATION TO YOU

It is clear that there is no tick-off formula for creating inclusivity; it is less a state than a multi-layered, reflective process requiring engaged social awareness and a commitment to both legislation and interventions. The following suggestions however offer some concrete and direct actions.

-  Try to experience exclusion yourself by putting yourself into awkward positions where you are a minority, then sit with it and reflect.
-  Engage closely with locals and do some 'deep hanging out'. Walk in their shoes, listen closely, understand how power affects their lives and know what it is like not to be you. Remember that the experience of exclusion is often invisible, so create explicit and visible commitments to inclusion.
-  Create an inviting space, then step back and make sure you do not fill it yourself. Observe what happens. And how that is different from what you would have made of it or expected. Make sure your team reflects the context and that all voices are heard. Keep integrating diverse voices and knowledge at all levels of the organisation to guard against blind spots.
-  Add activities which are completely unrelated to having money. Test your intervention with an empty wallet. Is it still accessible? Is there enough to do? Plan cross-over programmes so different people meet each other, avoiding monocultures as far as

possible but simultaneously being realistic that it is human nature to flow back and forth from the safety and familiarity of one's own group to a mixed group.

- Be aware of the power of symbolic representations such as images and names and consult with locals. Be actively aware of the intangible and symbolic processes of exclusion and inherent violence involved. Look for the language to discuss this, however awkward.

In short, understand yourself, your position in society, your motivations and the complex socio-political context in which you are working.

Meanwhile at the Inholland University of Applied Sciences, we are developing an Inclusive Design Toolbox for Creative Professionals both for our students and professional partners. It aims to raise awareness on the relevance of inclusive design and provide accessible tools for use in a complex urban environment (www.tourismlab.nl/toolbox).

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RESTORING THE LINK BETWEEN HOME AND NEIGHBOURHOOD

HOW HOME-MAKING IN COLLECTIVELY SHARED SPACES CONTRIBUTES TO BETTER SOCIAL CONTACTS, SAFETY AND TRUST

LOCAL
STORY

Sander van der Ham

Collectively shared spaces are possibly the most underrated spaces when it comes to inclusive neighbourhoods. Think of the potential of all the stairways, porticos, shared entrances, courtyards and elevators. They are chronically underused, mainly because of their design and layout. In general, they are places where neighbourhood residents do not feel at home. They usually do not even consider these places to be part of their neighbourhood. This article shows how such attitudes can be turned around. It also explores the role collectively shared spaces can play in creating inclusive networks in neighbourhoods and stimulating residents to become more active in their community.

CHANGING NEIGHBOURHOOD

It started about ten years ago in a neighbourhood in Zaandam, called Poelenburg. During a conversation about feeling at home with a resident living in one of the apartment buildings, she mentioned that in the last five years or so, she had become more and more reluctant to leave her home. She basically had two choices left. The first was to go out to the supermarket, ignore everyone on the street, and return home as soon as possible. The second choice was to take her car to visit family or friends outside of the neighbourhood. This meant going straight from the front door to the car and back. As soon as she slammed her front door shut, she felt completely safe again.

Neither of the two choices did any good to how she felt at home in her own neighbourhood. She went from being a real neighbourhood person to someone avoiding the neighbourhood. The reason for that was plain. The composition of residents in Poelenburg had changed. A fast-growing group of residents with a different background and a different mother

tongue had moved in. Now, when she walked the streets of Poelenburg she could not understand what people said. It made her feel less and less accepted in the local social networks. She did not belong anymore.

When she felt she could no longer connect to her new neighbours, her response was to pull back into her home and redecorate it together with her husband. From the inside they turned it into a palace. From the outside her home became a fortress. The portico or collectively shared stairway played an important role in this. The changes in the neighbourhood had first become visible there. The portico connected eight homes to a shared stairway. It was not considered a place to meet neighbours, let alone chat with them. Most of the time when neighbours met there, they shyly said 'hi' and kept walking in a steady pace.

This is a pity, because these collectively shared spaces can be a buffer to the outside world. A safe haven for neighbours to meet, get to know each other and get familiar with other people's habits, beliefs and values. These places provide the opportunity for casual social interaction and through that the development of public familiarity. This means people get a chance to see neighbours who are different from them, to possibly chat and to adjust their views and expectations of the other (Blokland, 2008).



BECOMING FRIENDS

A great example of how this can work is the story of a friendship between two neighbours. Both of them lived in the same apartment building in a neighbourhood in the south of Rotterdam. One of them had lived there for about ten years and knew everything there was to know about the neighbourhood. The other had just moved in a year ago. Her apartment was still a bit bare and empty. She did not have a carpet on the floor, she was clearly missing closets and cupboards and had an improvised table in the living room. There was some decoration, but not much. Nevertheless, it felt homely.

To her this home represented a new beginning. After an ugly break-up she was forced to move out in a rush, together with her daughter. While she was moving the little stuff she had, into her new home, she met her neighbour. This neighbour was refurnishing her home and moving out an old couch. While taking the couch down the shared stairway the two women met and there was an immediate spark. Together they ended up moving the couch and some other furniture into the apartment of the 'new neighbour'. This accidental meeting in the portico was the start of their friendship and defined how they both felt at home in their neighbourhood.

A NETWORK OF HOME PLACES

These examples teach two lessons. First, that collectively shared spaces are important for social networks in neighbourhoods. They mainly contribute to casual and accidental meetings between neighbours, which can be an important stepping stone to building inclusive communities. Unfortunately, this quality is usually underestimated, which means housing corporations and residents rarely invest in improving collectively shared spaces. Going back to the two neighbours in Rotterdam, neither of them felt comfortable enough to take ownership of the portico. One of the neighbours actually said she did not put out her Christmas decorations because she was afraid it would get stolen. The housing corporation actively prevented ownership due to fire-department regulations. All of this keeps porticos from fulfilling their social function.

The second lesson says that porticos are the linking pin between home and neighbourhood. They are part of a network of 'home places' – places where people experience a sense of home. Important to this network are the sense of trust and control. When the trust in others decreases, it becomes more likely that a place will fail to evoke a feeling of home and is removed from the network. The other way around is that, through interaction with others, a sense of trust is created and a place is added to the network. The bigger the network, the stronger people's feeling of home. Equally important is the sense of control. The more control, the more a person feels he or she can define a place. People feel more at home in places where they experience control and thus ownership. Some places evoke more control than others, of course. A distinction can be made between a 'heaven' and a 'haven' (Duyvendak, 2011). The first are places where people experience a great sense of control, which provides safety and comfort. In the latter, people experience less control. They

might still take ownership and feel safe, but these places are also used by others and therefore defined by social interaction with others.

The portico can be a 'haven'. It forms a link between the home and the neighbourhood, between heaven and haven. The fact that many porticos do not function this way has everything to do with their design. When a Dutch housing corporation asked Stipo and Thuismakers Collectief to work with residents on their porticos, it provided a great opportunity to explore how porticos can increase residents' feeling at home.



HOME-MAKING WITH RESIDENTS

As a multidisciplinary team¹ we were eager to learn more about the social potential of porticos. So, besides from working with residents, we also tried to measure the impact of our interventions. We ended up doing research in twenty porticos, of which sixteen were the control group where residents only filled in a questionnaire. In the remaining four porticos we extensively worked with residents, starting with interviews about each resident's feeling of home. In the end we talked to nearly all thirty-two residents. Our analyses showed that the porticos were made up of four different zones, each with its own sense of comfort and safety. Starting with the zone at one's front door, which was the most private area suitable for taking ownership, and ending with the front door of the portico itself, which was the most public zone suitable for casual social interaction and collective ownership. The zones in the middle were transition places between the private and the more public zones.

1. The team consisted of two sociologists, a psychologist and a designer. They worked together with a strategic team and the 'wijkteam' (neighbourhood team) from the housing corporation.

The idea behind our work was to create the conditions for residents to take ownership of the portico, both individually and collectively. This included providing places to discuss design options, such as color, material, and other spatial interventions. It also included a temporary living room in the portico where people could sit, meet, eat and talk. In the living room we made strawberry-rhubarb jam. We gave a jar of jam to each resident and asked them to name what's most important for them to feel at home in the portico. After we heard the community's preferences, a designer worked out a first design for the portico and presented it to the residents in the portico living room. What followed were many great discussions with residents on how to improve the existing design. Based on these discussions, the designer made a second proposal and presented it once again to the residents. This iterative process continued until the neighbours were satisfied.

To our team the design process was an excuse to bring people together, not once, but multiple times. The result was a more connected group of neighbours. Sometimes they would meet outside of the scheduled sessions and welcome new residents. When the portico was finished they started to use the space differently. For example, one of the residents started collecting clothes for donating to neighbours who could not afford to buy new ones. She stored these clothes in the portico, something that was unthinkable before the design process took place. It was not surprising that the analysis of the research data showed a great improvement in many aspects compared to the control group. People felt significantly more at home in the portico, knew more neighbours and felt they could rely on them more. They also felt safer, they had become more

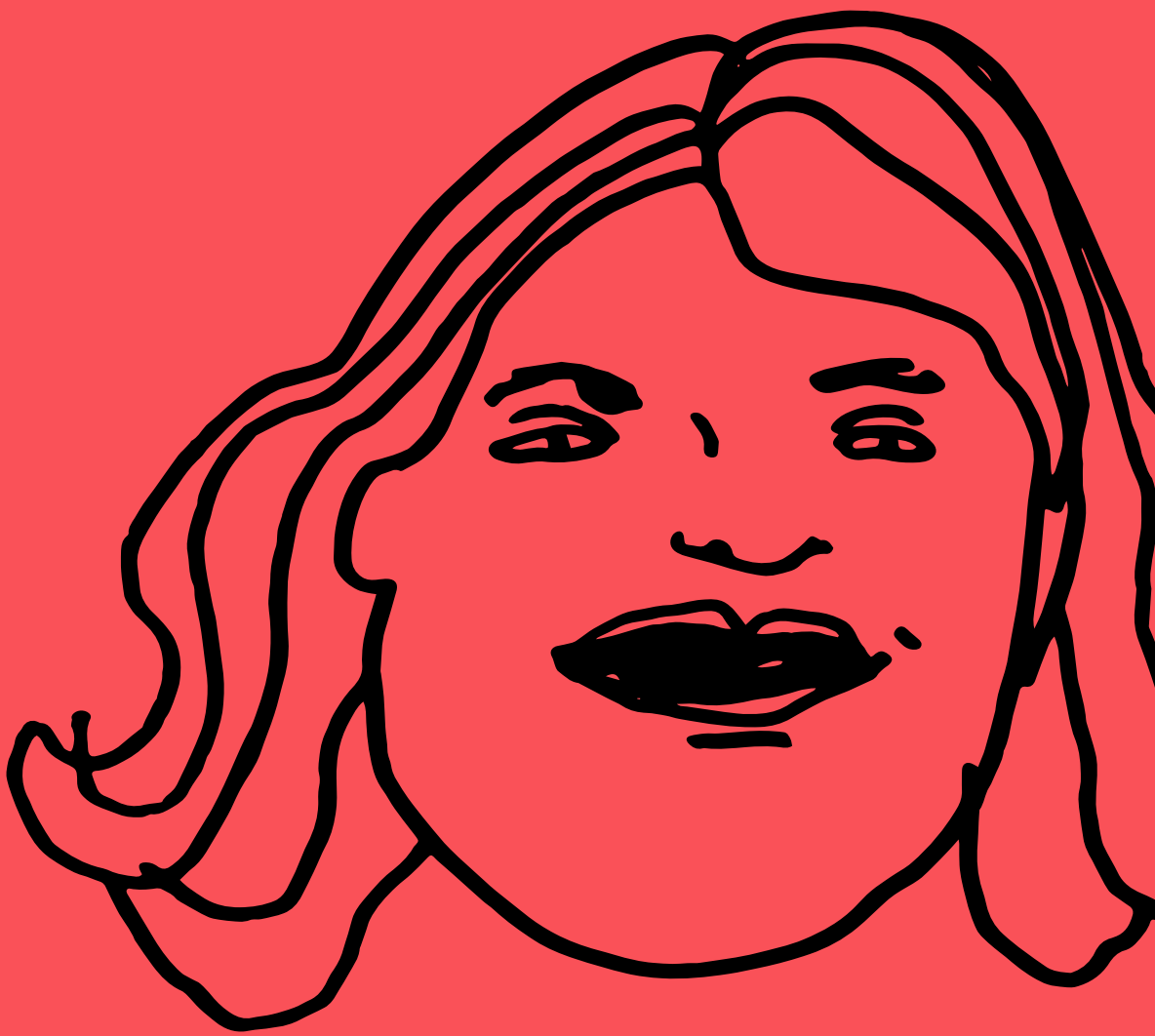
active in the neighbourhood, they were more trusting towards others, and had a more favorable view of institutions, such as the municipality and the housing corporation. Most importantly, it showed that investing in collectively shared spaces with residents restores the link between home and neighbourhood, which leads to greater involvement and more inclusive behavior.

In this project we worked hard to go beyond participation. This was difficult at times, because people felt distrustful and were convinced things could not change for the better. During the project the mindset shifted from mere participation to active engagement with fresh ideas. The conversations between residents in the temporary living room inspired renewed energy and taking collective ownership of the shared space. This required small steps, that became bigger and bigger over time. In the end, the biggest win was that the portico had become part of the network of home places again, where people felt at home, together.

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WHY REFUGEES SHOULD BE WELCOME IN PARKS

VOICES
FROM
WITHIN

**An interview with Clare Rishbeth by
Minouche Besters and Konstantinos
Gournianakis**

Refugee integration is a topic of frequent debate in urban discourses especially after the migration crisis of 2015. The European Union has established new policies within its borders to better facilitate and regulate inflows of people seeking sanctuary to ensure basic rights and accommodation. But what happens when asylum seekers and refugees find a city or town where they can settle? Are their problems finally over? Or is it just the beginning of a new journey for them to become members of a new society? We spoke with Clare Rishbeth, who is the lead of the “#RefugeesWelcome in parks” project, to provide us with some insight on the current situation of refugees, and how her project links use of urban greenspaces with integration and provides some guidance for good practice.

PARKS FOR EVERYONE

It is important to consider that the existence of parks doesn't necessarily mean that they are always equally accessible for all. More positively, could these public spaces be more instrumental in promoting inclusivity? This was the central question of the research project #RefugeesWelcome in Parks, which interviewed refugees and asylum seekers in three different cities, (Sheffield and London, UK and Berlin, Germany) and also many organisations across two sectors: greenspace management and refugee integration. The focus was on urban parks used for recreation, not on parks potentially appropriated for temporary migrant accommodation in tents.

To locals, visiting a park is an activity that is usually of minimal risk. They know what is usual to do in these spaces, at what times, and what they enjoy. But for a refugee or asylum seeker, it is not so simple, and the research found that there were a number of barriers for them in using parks.

To visit a public space and to become part of the activity requires a level of confidence: You need a certain boldness to venture out' observed Mercy, a Kenyan woman seeking asylum in London. This can be shaped by their own experience of harassment, or confusion about cultural norms in unfamiliar types of parks, and a worry about getting it wrong or not fitting in.

CURATED SOCIABILITY

One way that the unfamiliar can be made easier is if you 'go with a friend'. In many of the home countries of asylum seekers and refugees spending time outside is a very sociable kind of activity. But many people caught up in forced migration have extremely fractured social networks and are

often very isolated. So the project explored how providing an easy-to-access social context could be one way to improve use and the wellbeing benefits of using greenspace.

“Sociability is really an important way to experience public space and it’s not necessarily about being in a big group of people all the time but thinking about social context and cultures of how people want to join in.”

We developed the term ‘curated sociability’ to describe activities that do this. This can mean different things in different contexts and appealing to different interests, but usually does involve some aspect of ‘curation’ – of some low key facilitation by peers, organisations, or people willing to share their own enthusiasm. Examples included sports, walking groups, gardening projects, informal orientation, or even just taking activities outside when the weather is good. Social connections and networking play a crucial role in the well-being of refugees. Feeling a vital part of any community, even a sports team, can prove beneficial to their sense of belonging and personal wellbeing. Taking part can help refugees and asylum seekers feel positive about their identity and skills (not just as a number in a system) and give them a weekly event to look forward to amidst difficult life situations.

The experiences of refugees with the low-entry open air language classes that were organised in Paris on the stairs of a building provide good insights. The interviewed refugees shared that:

- ◆ They provide extremely easy access to drop-in French classes that are not hidden away in a building.
- ◆ Sitting outdoors with the sensory qualities of trees and sky has additional health benefits, potentially reducing stress levels.
- ◆ People passing by can see for themselves refugees’ willingness and commitment to learn the language. The visibility of the classes provides a counter-narrative to fearful perceptions of asylum seekers as a burden, and of this neighbourhood as a place for drug dealing and rough sleeping.
- ◆ Asylum seekers are themselves less vulnerable to abuse because they find themselves in a group context.
- ◆ Within a 10-minute walk from this square there are two high-quality public parks, so there are opportunities to continue socialising in a more relaxed way.



According to Clare, participation is key:

“As soon as you’re in a group it’s a very different situation. That can give confidence and an informal way of sharing support”.

Potential interactions with locals sharing a common interest can help destigmatizing asylum seekers and refugees. There is the added benefit that by doing activities outside they are visible in the community and this has the potential more broadly to challenge local misconceptions.

THREE GOOD REASONS WHY

1. INCREASED AUTONOMY

Refugees and asylum seekers often find themselves constrained; they have little opportunity to make their own choices and pursue their personal goals. Initiatives similar to that of Clare and her team can increase refugees’ confidence by allowing them to make well-informed choices about where to go in a city.

2. SUPPORT RESPITE

Many refugees and asylum seekers struggle with poor mental health, and all of them are trying to find their feet and their own sense of being and belonging in a new cultural context. Respite (as potentially provided by outdoor places and activities) can be about peaceful relaxation, the enjoyment of taking part in familiar activities, or the pleasure of doing something you are good at.

3. USING AND BUILDING ON SOCIAL NETWORKS

Most initiatives are supported by (and in turn support) social relationships. The human to human element is important: both between organisations and refugees or asylum seekers, and within the friendship networks of the newly arrived.

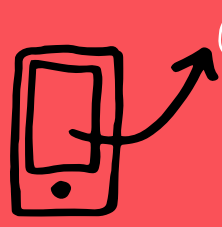
WELLBEING BENEFITS OF BEING OUTDOORS

There is wide-ranging research on the positive impact of spending time outdoors in natural places as beneficial for wellbeing. This was also emphasised by many of the participants who took part in the project. Being outdoors can help them feel calmer and gives a sense of relief from some of the pressures and boredom of being in a legal limbo. Well maintained parks can provide a more pleasurable location to look after their kids or spend time with friends than poor quality housing or institutionalised support settings. When hanging out in a park it is possible (even temporarily) to feel ‘normal’, evoking a feeling of being at home. ‘When we sit in the park we say hello to people. When we see someone with an Arabic face we talk to them, but we talk to anyone if they can understand our English’. (Khalid, m, London/Syria)

7 BRILLIANT IDEAS ABOUT PARKS FOR PEOPLE WORKING TO INCREASE WELLBEING AND INTEGRATION FOR REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS



① INCLUDE LOCAL PARKS AND GREENSPACES IN ORIENTATION PROGRAMMES
ESPECIALLY THINKING ABOUT THE RANGE OF ACTIVITIES AND TIMES OF THE DAY/WEEK/YEAR.



② WITH REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS, CO-CREATE INFORMATION ON LOCAL FACILITIES, EVENTS, OUTDOOR VOLUNTEERING AND ACTIVITIES. FIND METHODS WITH WHICH TO UPDATE AND SHARE THESE.



③ CONNECT THE INDOORS AND OUTDOORS. WHEN THE SUN IS SHINING, TAKE ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE
OR SUGGEST NEARBY PLACES TO CONTINUE CONVERSATIONS AFTERWARDS.



⑤ HELP REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS TO FEEL MORE CONFIDENT ABOUT EXPLORING THE OUTDOORS BY 'GOING WITH A FRIEND'
ESPECIALLY IF TRYING OUT A NEW ACTIVITY OR FINDING A NEW PLACE. ENCOURAGE THE MORE SETTLED TO ACT AS TOUR GUIDES FOR NEW ARRIVALS.



④ ENCOURAGE 'CONVERSATION CLUBS' TO TALK ABOUT PARKS, DIFFERENT TYPES AND KINDS OF OPEN SPACE, FACILITIES, WHAT IS OK TO DO THERE (AND WHAT IS NOT), AND BEING HONEST ABOUT PROBLEMS.



⑥ THINK ABOUT HOW YOU AND YOUR ORGANISATION 'CAN BE FOUND' BY SPORTS AND GREENSPACE ORGANISATIONS LOOKING TO PROMOTE EVENTS AND IMPROVE INCLUSION.



⑦ SET UP A 'HEALTH & PARKS' KIT. LEND FRISBEES, BADMINTON SETS, FOOTBALLS, BBQ SETS, PICNIC RUGS, TRAINERS, SKATEBOARDS.

THE 'FIND-CHAT-JOIN-FEEL BETTER' FORMULA

Clare and her team found that activities should involve a combination of the following elements:

FIND:

How refugees and asylum seekers understand the culture and diversity of parks, and research what information they need before visiting.

CHAT:

How your confidence to visit parks increases when you are accompanied by friend(s) or a facilitated group.

JOIN IN:

The potential of parks and open spaces to offer a range of (mostly free) activities so as to help provide entertainment for visitors and give a sense of purpose.

FEEL BETTER:

The ways in which spending time in parks and other natural environments can improve mental health.

IMPACT

Parks and other kinds of urban greenspaces can make a positive contribution to refugee integration and wellbeing. The findings and the case studies give a good sense of small initiatives that can help counter barriers and ensure that experiences of parks are welcoming. And though targeted particularly at the experience of asylum seekers and refugees, there are important points here about how an intentional considered inclusivity can guide those involved with urban placemaking into shaping a more humanitarian society.

Learn more about the project here www.refugeeswelcomeinparks.com



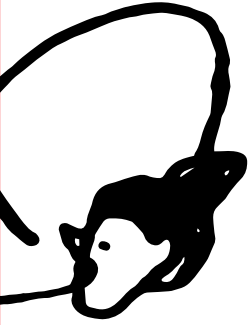
THE REAPPROPRIATION OF AN ABANDONED OPEN COMMON SPACE LEARNINGS FROM A 3-YEAR EXPERIMENT IN THE SUBURBS OF PARIS.

LOCAL
STORY

Julie Heyde

With the collaboration of Eulalie Blanc, UpUpUp CEO, and Zélia Bobillier-Chaumont Community Manager

The key partners in this project are: Julie Heyde, Ingrid (La Semeuse), Christian Bernhardt, Céline Dupont, Tristan Lindeperg (OPH Aubervilliers), Léonard Nguyen Van Thé, Aderezak Belkebla (Aubervilliers City), Nathalie Incorvaia (Aubervilliers City), Eulalie Blanc, Zélia Bobillier Chaumont, Alain, Melaz, Les scoots permaculteurs, Arianna, Caroline, Mikel, Slim, all the inhabitants and users.



In 2015, an underused common space of approximately 1 000 m² between two social housing buildings in Aubervilliers, in the North East suburbs of Paris, caught our attention. Located above a semi-underground parking, the space was composed of 4 grass areas and a small playground for kids. It was also an entry point for accessing one of the buildings. The area was privately owned by the local social housing authority (OPH d'Aubervilliers), but had the role of a public space as it was completely open. For us, this large piece of land was the perfect opportunity to launch a community-led initiative with one main goal: helping the community rally around a common locally-based project while creating social links, stories of love and engagement.

After this first encounter with the space, we met the social housing authorities, the regional council, local associations and the city coordinator for local democracy in the neighborhood. We shared with them our vision of a space that could be transformed by the action of local inhabitants and they gave us full support.

We began meeting residents in the winter of 2015, and in March 2016 we organized the first group event. We created a non-profit organisation (UpUpUp) with the purpose of engaging the community and helping the people take over that space and transform it.



THE FIRST GROUP
EVENT
Source: UpUpUp



THE COLLECTIVE
ART PROJECT
Source: UpUpUp



THE COMMUNITY
GARDEN
Source: UpUpUp

After this first event, our two main issues were: how to find a way to bring about a desire for participation in this appropriation process and how to maintain the residents' commitment in the long run. In a society where people are used to complaining or asking for what they need rather than being the engine of change, we had to be creative, present on site and outstanding in order to bring about real change.

The first lesson we learned was the need to set an example and be visible. We organised our action through a weekly presence on site and through a monthly community event. During the first year, we guided strictly the operations to make things happen, but one event after the other and year after year, we moved from the position of a leader to that of an advisor.

We had one guideline that we shared with all actors in total transparency since day one: we were just present on site for a temporary period of time and our goal was to pass the dynamic on to the local community. We were to be a trigger and a tool for action.

This premise helped us inspire the community's commitment to the project and build a solid background for a sustainable process.

For three years, we worked side by side with this community, helping, encouraging, stimulating uses and creativity to transform the area and to turn it into a lovable place where everyone can feel at ease, and free to propose a project. Starting from a tiny piece of land where some seeds were planted, the project evolved to host a 70 m² open community garden where the first free compost of the region can be found, and where artists' collaborations, outdoor-cinema, and community dinners take place.

The entire process has been facilitated by public and private financial support. A professional gardener was present on site one day per week to help maintain the community garden and to share his knowledge. A community manager was also on site one day per week to bring structural support that gives life to community projects, and to help them become organised and structured so that inhabitants can reach autonomy. Three young people in civic service have been trained to help the community with everyday tasks of space governance and maintenance.

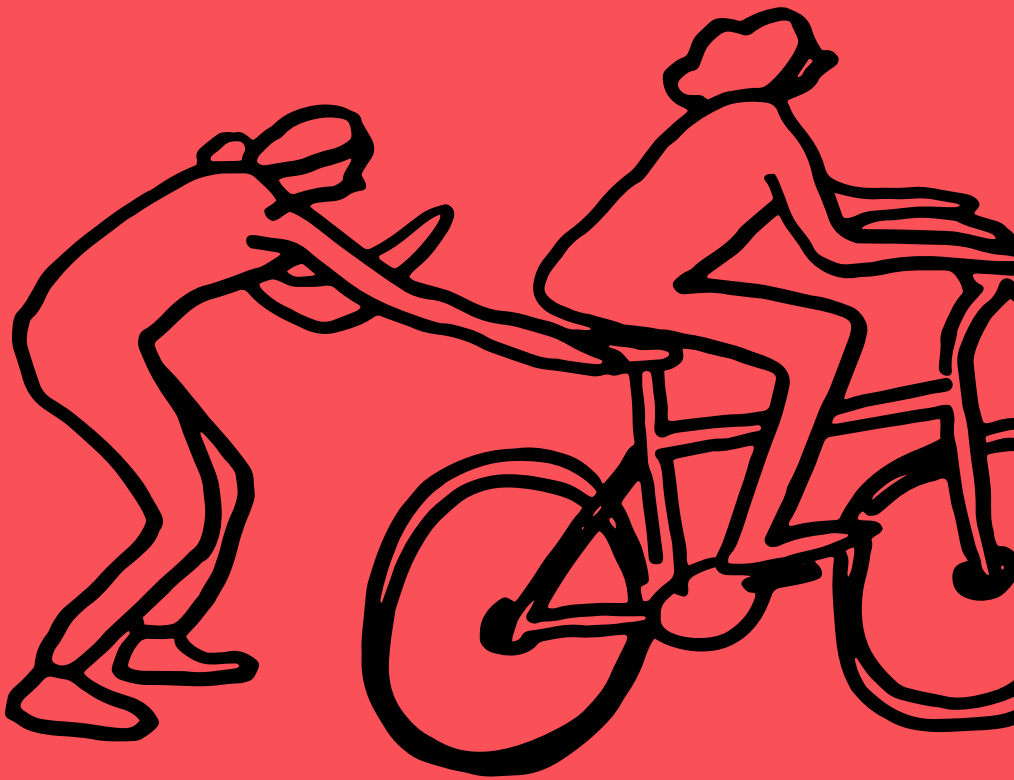
After two years, we started to look at the governance model and the group of persons that could potentially lead the process after we leave. It took us a year to finally find a group of individuals and associations that were ready to take our spot. We spent six months defining the conditions of the transition with them. Since January 2019, the non-profit organisation that led the development of the area has been placed in the hands of the local community.

Transforming people into 'actors' was the first challenge we faced in this project. The second challenge was keeping them as 'actors' in the long term. We believe that getting the local community to evolve from the role of 'enthusiastic actor' to that of a 'leader' is key to ensuring that the dynamic is kept in the area after the placemaking facilitators are gone. The involvement of local institutions, such as the social housing authorities and local politicians is a starting point for reaching a level of autonomy that allows a place to keep thriving. It also takes a lot of persistence and a group of placemakers to set the example and support the establishment of a grown up community that is able to act by itself in transforming a place.

What we take away from this experience is that, first of all, building a local desire for involvement in claiming a common space takes time. Second, that it requires a lot of love for others and a big shot of teaching skills, fun and recognition. We also know that this adventure has been possible thanks to public investments and we are still looking for a balanced business model for this type of project. This is our next challenge, because once you generate a desire for change, you need some resources to make it possible year after year.







MOVING PEOPLE BEYOND A TO B PROMOTING CYCLING ON ROTTERDAM'S SOUTH BANK AS A MEANS FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

LOCAL
STORY

**Lior Steinberg, Jorn Wemmenhove
& Chris Roorda**

INTRODUCTION

The Netherlands is known around the world as a cycling heaven. Every tourist arriving in the country for the first time encounters a scene they have probably never witnessed before: countless cyclists rushing through dense cities, using state-of-the-art bike infrastructure to get from point A to point B. Cycling in the Netherlands is indeed part of people's daily life, and therefore a core part of the Dutch identity and culture.

But that is not the case everywhere. In the southern part of Rotterdam, the second largest city in the Netherlands, the story is different. In some of the districts located below the Nieuwe Maas river, including IJsselmonde, Charlois, and Feijenoord, cycling figures are gloomy by Dutch standards (City of Rotterdam, 2018).

In a country built for the bicycle, less cycling means limited cultural and occupational opportunities, higher transport costs, possible barriers to meeting with friends and family, lower rates of physical activity and a higher chance of obesity.

Some of the reasons for the low bicycle use in this area include car-oriented infrastructure, a negative social perception of bike riding, lack of bicycle ownership, and people – particularly from a migrant background – simply not knowing how to cycle. The area is also home to some of the poorest communities in the Netherlands (City of Rotterdam, 2017).

FIETSEN OP ZUID

To tackle these challenges, we launched the 'Fietsen op Zuid' ('Cycling in the South') programme. It was initiated in 2016 by DRIFT (Dutch Research Institute for Transitions), Humankind (a Rotterdam-based agency for urban change) and the Dutch Cyclists' Union, and it was funded by and in collaboration with the municipality of Rotterdam.

The goal of the programme is to promote cycling as a means for socio-economic development in Rotterdam South. Its holistic approach addresses four aspects for successful promotion of biking: lifestyle, education, access to bikes, infrastructure and public space.

Over the years, we have implemented numerous programmes and pilot projects to promote these elements: from urban interventions, through social programmes, to meetups between residents. In order to truly create a sustainable change, 'Fietsen op Zuid' brings together local organizations and networks: the municipality's public health department, schools, a mosque, an organization for women's empowerment, local media, and businesses.

Below we describe two of our projects. We believe they can inspire other cities to promote cycling in an inclusive way.

CYCLE ALONG ('FIETS MEE')

Developed together with the local organization 'Sezer voor Diversiteit', Cycle Along promotes bicycle use among women in Rotterdam, especially among women with a bicultural background. The programme includes cycling lessons for hundreds of women and the establishment of a special ambassadors network.

The network of ambassadors and trainers is especially important as it allows female participants to become teachers for other fellow women in the area. This was the key to building an expansive network of women who are all learning to cycle. It also lowers the barrier to entry for prospective participants.

Cycle Along stimulates women and their families to use bikes instead of cars or public transport. The programme not only empowers participants, but it also enables them to live a healthier lifestyle and to extend their social and economic networks.

BIKE-FRIENDLY SCHOOLS

Children – and their parents – need to get to school on a daily basis. Unfortunately, many of them choose to go by car even when the distance between home and school is fairly short.

In order to make cycling more appealing, we have worked on creating bike – and pedestrian – friendly school areas. We provide school classes, refurbish bicycles for kids whose families cannot afford to buy one, and we also redesign the schoolyard and the public space around schools using tactical urbanism.

Hence, we not only upgrade the physical elements around schools, but we also raise awareness on the importance of a healthy lifestyle. The solution is not to patronize, but to establish a dialogue with the children and their parents in order to understand why they choose the car over



the bicycle. In the end, if we create a habit of cycling to school, we are essentially promoting cycling for generations to come. If we can create better schools, we can create better neighbourhoods.

REPLACING CAR PARKING SPACES WITH SEATING AND GREENERY AROUND SCHOOLS. USING PRKLT, A MODULAR PARKLET, WE APPLIED TACTICAL URBANISM TO TRANSFORM SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS

Source: Humankind

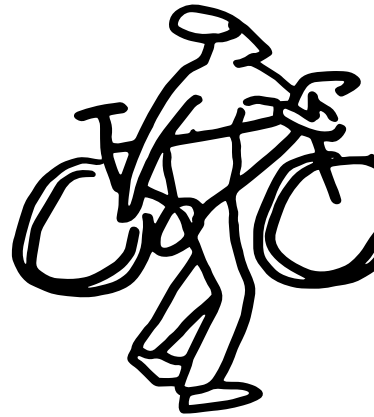


CONCLUSION

One key lesson from this project is that complex challenges require holistic solutions. Promoting cycling is not merely an issue for mobility departments. We need to bring on board a wide range of actors and focus seriously on the social and economic benefits of cycling if we want to see more people opt for the bike.

'Fietsen op Zuid' shows cities that working together with local actors is the right path to success. The existing local networks create the bridges needed for sustainable change.

We hope that this project will inspire cities to focus on mobility as an empowering force. When we realize that cycling is not only a means to get from A to B, but a tool for promoting the health, economy, and social values of the community, we can create better cities together.





TEACHING CHILDREN TO USE AND REPAIR A BICYCLE

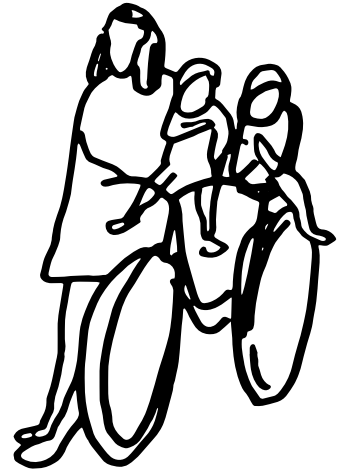
Source: Jorn
Wemmenhove,
Humankind



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The fresh air in my face and the feeling of independence! There are no words that can describe how I felt when I biked with my baby boy for the first time. After several months of transporting myself and Rikke on foot, by public transport, or by car, I was happy to mount my bike again. Had I ever felt so happy on my bike? In the child seat in front me, Rikke would point and talk about things along the way. We saw neighbours, beautiful flowers, trees, dogs and, oh, Rikke also liked to point out the biggest cars. In this first period, in the front seat, he had a great view of what was going on in the streets. He helped me push the button for cyclists at the traffic lights and learned that a red light means stop. He absorbed it all!

1. A training bicycle without pedals or chain which helps young children learn to balance and steer.

We're talking about the Netherlands in the 1990s, before the boom of cargo-bikes and balance-bikes¹.

As with most Dutch children, Rikke received his first bike as soon as he could walk. It was a colorful wooden velocipede on four little wheels with a shelf as a seat. Our boy criss-crossed through the house and the garden, but it soon became obvious he needed something more adventurous. This 'something' was a purple-white trike. He would ride in the garden, on the sidewalk in front of the house and in the nearby park. The trike had a box on the back, ideal for toting sand, stones, branches and other treasures that young ones encounter in the neighbourhood.



*HOLIDAY TOURING
WITH RIKKE AND
SOFIAN ON THE
BICYCLE*

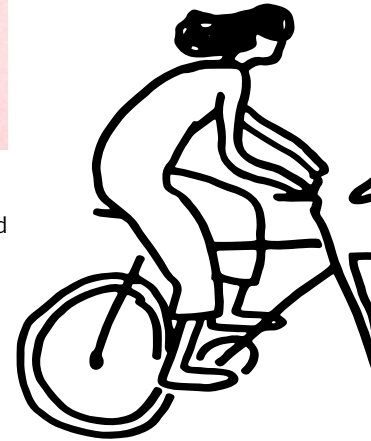
*Source: author's
personal archive*

When my second child, Sofian, could sit properly, the three of us mounted my trusty bicycle; now with Rikke at the rear child's seat. Even though Rikke could see less, he continued engaging in a conversation about the surroundings and other important toddler topics. The neighbourhood streets were calm, which facilitated our relaxed riding style, and arterial streets had protected cycling lanes. Even though I lowered my seat for more security, I felt on top of the world when riding my upright bike, sandwiched between my children.

Then, before I knew it, it was time for my oldest to start riding a conventional bicycle with training wheels². Rikke rode on the sidewalks while my husband or I pushed the stroller – sometimes several meters ahead, or somewhat behind; depending on the mood.

Before the age four, Rikke was ready to have the training wheels removed and he started to practice balancing, steering, and stopping on the sidewalk of quiet streets and parks. Once he could handle the bicycle a bit better – especially making a complete stop – we started to go on Sunday ventures, riding side-by-side on quiet streets.

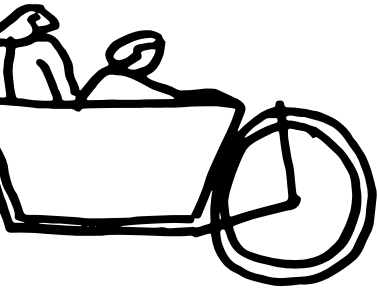
Until Rikke turned six, we would ride side-by-side for the 3 km journey to school. We would take a longer route through neighbourhood streets because there was less traffic, vehicles were moving at a lower speed and the one dangerous intersection to cross was signalled. This daily trip along the same route allowed our son to develop his cycling skills, his knowledge and understanding of traffic, and, gradually, his literal and figurative space apart from us. He was allowed to go further ahead and learn to deal with situations while we were still close by to intervene whenever needed. We also cycled the streets together to after-school activities, the supermarket, and to a friend's place. When with friends, the children played outside, cycling and scootering on the sidewalks along low traffic streets and in the park. Nothing special, just roaming around and cops-and-robbers style role playing, yet without our constant supervision. I am not saying that giving your child this trust is easy. It is essential for your child and yourself to build it step-by-step, so that trust can be given and gained. Seeing how this gained trust and raised level of independence makes your child grow and prosper is a fabulous reward.



*2. Had the balance
bike existed, we could
have skipped the
training wheels!*

By the age of ten, Rikke was allowed to cycle to school on his own. I would leave the house a few minutes later with Sofian riding next to me. Sofian, by the way, as an independent bicycle rider, was a totally different case from his brother. Finding his balance on the two-wheeled bike was difficult, so we used to take him on a trailer-bike for our daily travels until he felt comfortable enough to ride on his own.

At this age, Rikke was also allowed to bike home from the houses of our neighborhood friends. Their parents would phone us, “Rikke is on his way home”, so that we could estimate when to expect him. Allowing him to gradually grow his world – from close-by environments, to more challenging circumstances – empowered him to eventually cycle independently to and from secondary school by the age of 12. Benefits? The freedom of reduced chauffeuring responsibilities, and a confident, active child who grew up to be the student that he is today, continuing his daily cycling habit.



THE COMPLEXITY OF INCLUSION FOR THE PHYSICALLY DISABLED

VOICES
FROM
WITHIN

Jiska Stad-Ogier,
in an interview with Nienke Sluimer

“We all profit from increased physical accessibility. Everybody knows someone who pushes a stroller, a grandmother with a walker, someone with limited sight. Somewhere in life, everyone has to deal with it.”

Jiska Stad-Ogier

Inclusive cities are not defined by the accessibility of the physical realm alone, it is rather a complex interaction of physical characteristics, policy regulations, established assumptions and probably numerous other aspects. Urban residents with a physical disability find themselves in this web of norms, standards, and rules that makes their inclusion in society a debatable topic. Measures that we take for granted can turn the simplest activities like daily routes to school, work, or other events into a challenging endeavour. This essay will try to unravel a number of aspects that play a huge role in the experience of inclusiveness for individuals with a physical disability, consulting the knowledge and experiences of Jiska Stad-Ogier. Jiska is an expert striving for an inclusive society for physically disabled people, both from personal and professional perspective. Jiska has cerebral palsy, which induces chronic fatigue and means she has to use a wheelchair when moving outside. Despite her physical challenges, she studies notarial right, has a part-time side job, practices several hobbies, and is active in multiple volunteer initiatives. She is a co-founder of ‘Wij Staan Op!’ (‘We Stand Up!’) – a foundation that strives to increase societal inclusion from the perspective of young adults with a physical disability.



JISKA AND HER
WHEELCHAIR

Source: author's
personal archive

2 MILLION DUTCH CITIZENS ARE PHYSICALLY DISABLED

People with any kind of physical disability form a group of more than 2 million individuals¹ – and that is only in the Netherlands. Furthermore, the group of people with limited mobility level is increasing due to an aging population. This suggests that there is enough reason to consider the physically disabled in the design and management of our cities, especially since such amendments usually benefit other groups in society as well: think of parents with strollers and people temporarily using crutches, a wheelchair, or a walker. On the other hand, recognising the inclusion of people with a physical disability leaves us with an endless range of needs and desires that can have a highly contrasting character. Jiska considers this as one of the largest challenges when it comes to the inclusion of people with a physical disability: the notion of inclusion is so extensive, that it is almost impossible to grasp. Hence, Jiska does not believe in full inclusion.

“It is not a very popular statement, but I believe it is correct. We are not able to achieve 100% inclusion. Creating spaces where everyone feels fully at ease is not a realistic goal. However, we can make great steps forward.” In short, the complexity of inclusion is not an excuse for designing a public realm that serves only its largest group of users.

Jiska is convinced that the intentions of politicians, urban planners, municipalities, and local institutions are often right, but that there are a number of established norms that prevent inclusion.

1. *Factsheet Mensen met lichamelijke of verstandelijke beperkingen*, Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau, 2012. www.scp.nl/Publicaties/Alle_publicaties/Publicaties_2012/Factsheet_Mensen_met_lichamelijke_of_verstandelijke_beperkingen/Factsheet_Mensen_met_een_beperking.org

DO NOT DESIGN BASED ON YOUR UNDERSTANDING: CO-DESIGN

First, measures intended to serve people with a physical disability are generally designed behind a desk. According to Jiska, building standards are rarely based on the actual experience of permanently disabled individuals and if they are, the standards are usually tested with a small group of people and barely updated over time. She calls for a much more co-creative process: “you cannot ask me to design an accessible city, because what is accessible to me is inaccessible to others. You have to do it together. I think that inclusion requires the involvement of the intended users already from the beginning of the process. If not, you cannot expect to develop an inclusive space.” Furthermore, the few times that people with disability are consulted, the expectation is that they will receive no financial compensation. Jiska says “this is based on the idea that such trials are for one’s own good, and that you should be happy that your wishes are taken into account.” – a highly counterproductive practice, Jiska believes, especially when considering the multitude of undesired expenses disabled people usually have.

BE REALISTIC ABOUT PARTICIPATION: SOME PEOPLE JUST NEED HELP

Second, policies seem to focus more and more on maximising participation of people with a physical disability in society. “The authorities increasingly proclaim that everybody has to participate. That is demanded from various institutions. However, society is not designed for such levels of responsibility. We are requiring people that have never had the possibility to enjoy fitting education to handle their own affairs and secure their financial situation”, Jiska says. It is not uncommon that educational institutions are unable to offer the right support for students with a disability and it happens too often that their buildings turn out to be inaccessible after all.

INVESTMENT IN AN ADJUSTMENT IS SO MUCH MORE: FRIENDS, SELF-ESTEEM, INDEPENDENCE

And finally there is the issue of money. Making adjustments for a relatively small group of people is often simply too expensive. The focus is typically on the direct financial benefit from an investment. What is not considered is the stress experienced when one’s outdated wheelchair breaks down for the umpteenth time, which has a negative effect on a person’s energy level, well-being and also spending. “When we are able to take an active role in society it needs to be realised that we are paying consumers. If the goal is to maximise inclusion, investments *need* to be made.” Furthermore, since the market for people with a physical disability is rather unattractive, there is a limited level of technology innovation. Jiska believes that there is much to gain from more advanced technology in wheelchairs or lifts, for example. Such innovations have the potential to increase one’s level of independency and facilitate inclusion.

There is much to win if we look beyond money and investments. Jiska very much encourages us to consider the amount of joy, happiness, and calm that is offered when one can fully take part in society, and the societal benefits resulting from this. She names five practical steps that help us move forward in the process of including people with a physical disability.

1. Increased availability of accessible toilets

A pressing frustration for people with a physical disability is the lack of accessible toilets in public areas. The need for a toilet is human, but it can be very challenging to find a public restroom that has sufficient adjustments. It is argued that more than half of the wheelchair-accessible toilets in public space are in practice not accessible at all.² This is for example due to thresholds that are too high, doors that are too small, or toilets located on floors only accessible by stairs. Another pressing example Jiska comes across regularly, is when sinks have adjusted height and a long and easy handle but the water tap is way too small for anyone (even people without any disability) to put their hands under.

At the same time, you cannot expect to have an accessible toilet in all public properties, restaurants, or bars. It is not only increased availability of accessible toilets, but perhaps also better indications of where to find them elsewhere that can take away a great deal of stress. Formal institutions and municipalities have to take responsibility for this, as we explain below.

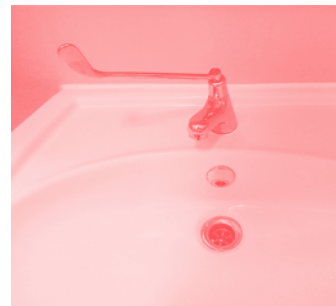
2. Simplified laws based on trust

In the Netherlands there are so many rules and regulations that people with a disability have to deal with: the participation act, accessibility rules, health insurance, the social support act, and many more. Jiska names the complicated regulations around designated disabled parking spots. While car parking is nowadays often regulated through mobile applications, this does not yet exist for special parking spots. Municipalities can individually decide on their policy for disabled parking spots, affecting the rules and availability of such parking spots as well as the prices for licences. The multitude of laws and regulations to look into can take a lot of energy from people that usually already struggle with their energy management. Unfortunately, mistrust has become a ruling factor, requiring proof for all sorts of care demands. Jiska advocates for mutual trust, to be treated as an individual agent that has the power to make decisions based on individual needs. Furthermore, Jiska would like to see officials at different levels in society take a leading role in safeguarding the rights of people with any kind of disability and decreasing the complexity in laws and regulations.

3. Treat people as individual agents

Jiska's wish to be treated as an individual agent can be practically translated to the information provision of services and institutions. Daily life would be a lot easier if restaurants, shops, museums, and other

2. nederlands-instituut-voor-toegankelijkheid.nl/2014/08/12/66-procent-van-indervalidentoiletten-ontoeankelijk-en-onbruikbaar/



Source: author's personal archive

institutions clearly described the access to their venue on their website. Nowadays, this is often a matter of yes or no, while disabled individuals can very well decide for themselves if they are able to enter a building. Jiska says “I want to be the one making that choice”. She encourages the use of pictures and simple measurements to give a clear impression of a venue’s level of accessibility: the restrooms, the threshold.

4. Develop education about disability and wheelchair use

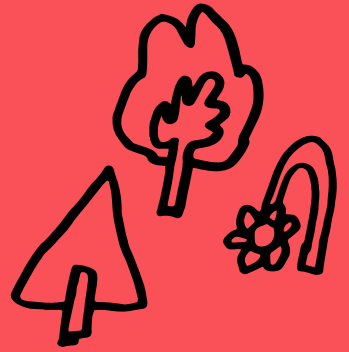
Established assumptions impede participation of people with a physical disability in society because of wrong images and prejudice. People with a physical disability are often put in boxes: they are either old or highly active youngsters and athletes. Jiska believes that education about disabilities from an early age would be highly advantageous in terms of the way people with a disability are approached. Educational institutions can take a great role in this by offering children the chance to experience how it feels to use a wheelchair or a walking cane, thus improving understanding from an early age.

5. Municipalities and the government have to take responsibility

The government and municipalities have to take greater responsibility in facilitating accessibility levels for physically disabled residents. People cannot be forced into making physical adjustments, but it can be supported from above. “At the moment you give out a permit, you can enforce people to meet certain accessibility measures and organise trials with experience experts” says Jiska. Small entrepreneurs should be supported in their efforts to increase the accessibility level of their property: “you cannot expect a small entrepreneur to raise the street level that leads to their property, for that one wheelchair user that visits weekly.” Too often the responsibility of such measures is passed back-and-forth, resulting in no progress at all.

Finally, inclusion requires openness. It requires laws to be more flexible, based on individual needs. It requires institutions, large and small, to make an effort towards increasing mental and physical accessibility. In essence, apart from financial investments, it requires all parties to be open and clear about their needs, wishes, and expectations.



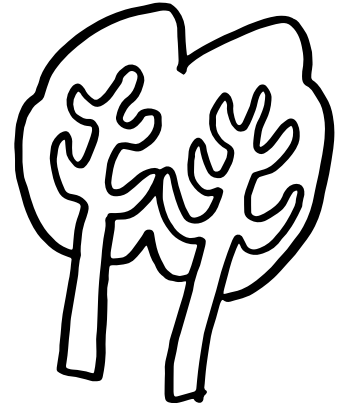


THE LIMITS TO URBAN GREEN SPACE FOR WHEELCHAIR USERS.

BALANCING WILDERNESS AND ACCESSIBILITY IN STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN

LOCAL
STORY

Nienke Sluimer



Acknowledging the multiple mental and physical benefits that come with exposure to green space, “it is important to explore how those considered out of place find ways of engaging and interacting with nature” (Kafer, 2017, p. 203). This case highlights the particular experiences of wheelchair users in Sweden’s capital city, Stockholm, and how they struggle to balance between their desire to experience high quality green spaces, especially wilderness areas, and the recognition that their particular needs may restrict them from doing so. The findings described below originate from a master’s thesis research in Urban and Regional Planning at Stockholm University and are based on disability discourse and environmental justice theory.¹

1. The research followed a qualitative approach using the unestablished photo elicitation method. Interviews with six individuals took the form of casual conversations about these people’s whereabouts in green space, guided by self-produced images taken on their walks outside.

DEALING WITH INACCESSIBLE GREEN SPACE

Generally speaking, the accessibility of residential green spaces in Stockholm is acceptable. The city takes care of ramps and pavements that allow wheelchair users and other people with physical limitations to move relatively independently. Still, there are a number of factors that consistently restrict wheelchair users from going outdoors in nature: think of the outdoor climate, road quality and perceived safety, but also social pressure and information provision. Among those, the socio-environmental circumstances are the most important. In particular, the quality of infrastructure and the weather conditions appear to play a huge role in Sweden, especially during the winter months. Even though clearing the pavement from snow is typically prioritized over clearing the road, winter conditions leave surfaces slippery for a long portion of the year, which in turn makes natural paths inaccessible for wheelchair users, the elderly, and strollers alike.



DURING THE
WINTER MONTHS
SLIPPERY PATHS
CREATE SERIOUS
CHALLENGES.

Source: author's
personal archive



ACCESSIBLE
RESIDENTIAL GREEN
SPACE IS MUCH
APPRECIATED.

Source: author's
personal archive

As a first step, to access green space, people with disabilities would often seek assistance from family, friends, or a professional caretaker who can support them in navigating the forest, park or field. Another way of dealing with inaccessible green space is to refrain from going anywhere unfamiliar where one might encounter unexpected problems in mobility. As a result, people with disabilities confine themselves to familiar areas close to their home. This narrows down the number of residential green spaces they can visit throughout the year to only a couple of small parks and fields. Wild nature, like forests and mountains is usually out of reach and avoided.

Since wheelchair users and people with other physical challenges require a certain level of accessibility and services, many of them rarely deviate from the familiar green spaces, often found in one's residential environment. This is rather unfortunate, since it appears that while regular visits to accessible green spaces are much appreciated, it is often those less accessible, wild places that carry the biggest value for one's emotional state, evoking feelings of nostalgia and a sense of freedom. Such feelings are often generated by childhood memories: when one was able to pick flowers, berries and mushrooms at the family's summerhouse. Furthermore, the ability to visit wilderness areas evokes adventurous feelings that wheelchair users are not very used to experiencing in daily life. These findings correspond to research on Scandinavian outdoor life by Gelter (2000), among others, which explains how the outdoor experience increases when moving away from the urban lifestyle.

*THE RARE MOMENTS
WHEN WILDER GREEN
SPACES ARE VISITED
ARE OF EXCEPTIONAL
VALUE.*

*Source: author's
personal archive*



MORE INCLUSIVE GREEN SPACE: A PARADOX

Residential green spaces, like parks for instance, are the preferred and most frequently visited type of green space for wheelchair users. Yet, some users express regret about the fact that wild types of green space are usually out of reach, precisely because of the special value and meaning attached to such places. Hence, it appears that green spaces are caught between the need for accessibility on the one hand, and the importance of wilderness on the other. For wheelchair users the dilemma is between what is known and familiar, and what is unexpected and probably more challenging (and possibly rewarding).

Interestingly enough, the wheelchair users in this study accepted the inaccessibility of wilder types of green space, such as forested and mountainous areas. Some even mentioned the need to actively conserve such kind of green spaces in their original state. They feel that not all green space can be and should be made accessible for everyone: there are limits to the extent to which spatial design should be facilitating green space use. Using Kafer's words: "there simply are hills too steep, creeks too rocky, soil too sandy for a wheelchair; or, rather, ensuring access to some locations would mean so drastically altering those locations that the aesthetic and environmental damage to the area would be profound" (2017, p. 220).

Most importantly, decisions aimed to increase the accessibility of green spaces should be made in agreement with wheelchair users and other intended users. As a result of both socio-environmental and personal factors, individuals have different needs that cannot be captured in general measurements, especially when it comes to wilder environments. Such needs vary from better snow shovelling of paths and pavements, to more regular availability of a personal assistant. Furthermore, the perceived accessibility of green space could already be improved greatly by providing better information on accessibility levels and available services. After all, people with any kind of disability are individual agents that can very well decide for themselves if an area is easily accessible or not.

CONCLUSION

In order to conserve the unique value of different green spaces, we need to balance carefully between their accessibility and their 'wilderness'. It is crucial to reflect on the necessary adjustments mentioned above as they can allow wheelchair users and others with physical limitations to access green spaces, while at the same time safeguarding nature's value as a wilderness haven. This is especially important since efforts to make green space more accessible are frequently greeted with suspicion from the public (Seeland & Nicolè, 2006). Nevertheless, the inaccessibility of wilder types of green space should not be taken for granted but rather critically assessed. When contemplating the accessibility of green spaces for wheelchair users and others with physical limitations, one should carefully consider that wilderness and accessibility are inevitably strongly associated.

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GIRLS' ROOM IN PUBLIC SPACE – PLANNING FOR EQUITY WITH A GIRL'S PERSPECTIVE

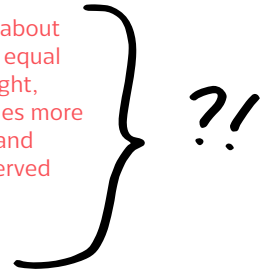
VOICES
FROM
WITHIN

Malin Zimm

This article originates from a research project by White Research Lab in 2016, executed by Moa Lindunger, Rebecca Rubin, Anna Ågren and Angelica Åkerman. Original report title: Flickrum i det offentliga.

In collaboration with teenage girls from Skarpnäck municipality, pedagogues from Skarpnäck municipality, theatre group UngaTur and Skarpnäcks ungdomsråd.

Decades of research studies have revealed some interesting facts about childhood experience. Until the age of seven, boys and girls make equal use of public facilities such as playgrounds. But from the age of eight, statistics show that 80% of the users are boys, as girls feel ten times more insecure in public places. If we aim to create inclusive, innovative and socially sustainable cities, this has to change. Once you have observed the inequalities, you can never go back to spatial blindness.



THE PROJECT

The project Girls' Room (Flickrum in Swedish) proposes solutions to a problem of inequality that urban planners have been struggling with for decades. The knowledge gap in how to design public places in ways that correspond to young girls' needs and preferences is partly explained by the absence of children, not just girls, in the planning process. A more inclusive process would result in a more equal and multifaceted urban environment. The project group included architects and social sustainability specialists from White, the theatre company UngaTur, teenage girls from Skarpnäck youth council, the local municipality in Skarpnäck, and local teachers. In this project group, girls were the experts, and they took the lead in guiding the other participants.

UNDERSTANDING THROUGH THEATRE AND EMBODIED EXPERIENCE

The process, first piloted by the architects, unfolded in eight steps, starting with an "act out" where the case was presented in the form of a theatre play, illustrating the problem, the needs and the experience of the girls in public space. In the theatre performance, two actors play

the roles of teenage girls interacting within an urban environment that is both constricting and liberating. Bringing this to the audience was the next stage: “affect”, where the spectators become involved in the project. Local politicians, planners and other stakeholders were invited to the performance and to participate afterwards in a discussion about public places from girls’ perspective. The next step was to take the audience to experience the places themselves, to walk around, see and understand the local conditions. The platform was a physical meeting place for the teenage girls’ work group, where they set the agenda and where the decision-makers come to listen. The girls are the hosts of the gatherings where new perspectives emerge. The next step of the process was to create the desired spaces together, bringing all the knowledge from the dialogue phase into a creative workshop, where the learning experience goes both ways for the teenagers and the architects working together.

A SPACE THAT FEELS LIKE A BIG HUG

Moving from dialogue to creation took place in White’s office, where the teenagers – in their expert roles – participated in a workshop supported by architects. Together they constructed 1:50 models to represent a public space by and for girls. The public places chosen as locations were places that the girls knew well but seldom used. Both project and process revealed their preference for public places with strong character, spaces for interacting in groups of varying size, and places for sitting together face to face while protected from wind and weather. They also expressed a preference for places that integrate information with the public design elements – for example, art installations, viewing screens and mood lighting. The activation of urban surfaces makes it possible for the girls to leave an imprint on their city. In all the workshop models, there was a strong sense of surrounding perspectives and equal attention to walls, floors and ceilings, including their texture and other qualities. According to the girls, the ideal spatial sensation would be like ‘entering a big hug’. The models also featured facilities for interactivity and co-creation and communicated a desire for a stronger presence of art, colour, tactility and aesthetic features. These last steps of the project progressed from representation of the ideas as architectural models, followed by implementation and evaluation.

EYE OPENER FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN PUBLIC SPACE

Flickrum explores the urban world from the perspective of a teenage girl. The aim of the project was to raise awareness regarding norms and exclusion in public space and to develop practical ways of creating ‘equal opportunity’ architecture by setting up a process that allowed the girls to design their ideal public space. The outcome was revealing. Experienced city planners taking part in the project admitted to never having considered the needs of young girls before. While the performance exposed them to the negative experiences of young girls in public spaces, the planners were also provided with many constructive ideas that would improve these spaces for everyone, not just girls.

HOW CAN WE DESIGN FOR DIVERSITY?

Flickrum was a testbed for identifying essential process tools that foster urban inclusion. The key factors in the process were:

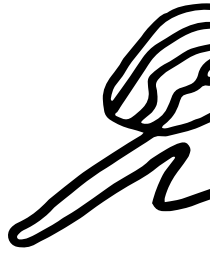
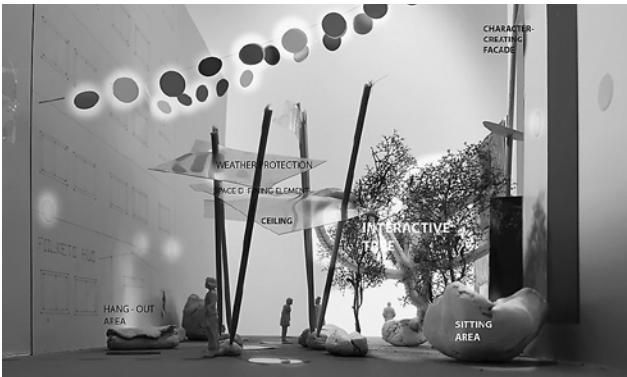
- Forming of a multidisciplinary team
- Incorporating relevant perspectives that might not usually be part of an urban planning session
- Attracting and engaging professionals emotionally, in this case in the form of a theatre play
- Presenting the girls as the experts
- Building relationships and trust
- Consistently identifying excluding norms, while working to facilitate inclusion

GIRLS AS EXPERTS.
Source: Sofia Palmer



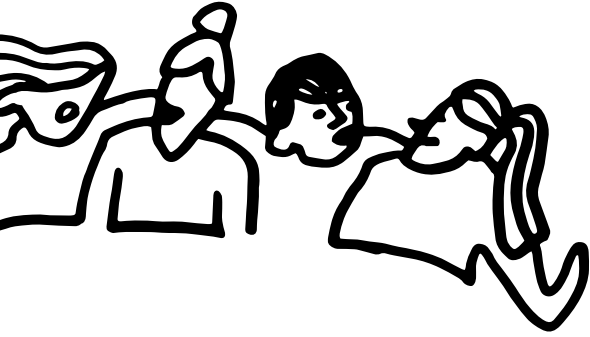


MODELS
REPRESENTING
PUBLIC SPACE
Source: Places for Girls



The project presents the key qualities we found in this process, including a variation of scale, places offering the opportunity to see without being seen, and spaces providing a sense of intimacy without being constrictive. The aim of the project was to raise awareness regarding norms and exclusion in public space, and then to reach further and offer inclusive alternatives, in the form of tangible spatial solutions. White's collaboration with the girls and Unga Tur resulted in a set of references and solutions to urban process and design that were novel in the field of urban planning.





CAN CONFLICTING CLAIMS BE RECONCILED? EXPLORING MECHANISMS FOR INCLUSIVE PLANNING

LOCAL
STORY

Frans Werter

Police on horses dispersed a crowd of demonstrators on the square in front of the Ulu mosque at Kanaalstraat in Utrecht on October 4, 2018. The Dutch Pegida, a far-right anti-Islam movement originating from Germany, staged a demonstration in front of the mosque. Anti-demonstrators started to shout slogans and throw eggs, tomatoes and fireworks at the small group of Pegida followers. Tensions escalated and the police stopped the demonstration (RTV Utrecht, 2018). Why did Pegida choose this location?

KANAALSTRAAT
WITH ULU MOSQUE

Source: author's
personal archive



INTRODUCTION

Different users of public space with different lifestyles have different ideas about how public space should look like or how one should behave in the public domain. This may lead to severe conflicts and stand-offs in the planning and design of public space. In this chapter we explore mechanisms to overcome these conflicting situations using the case of Kanaalstraat (Utrecht, the Netherlands) as an example.

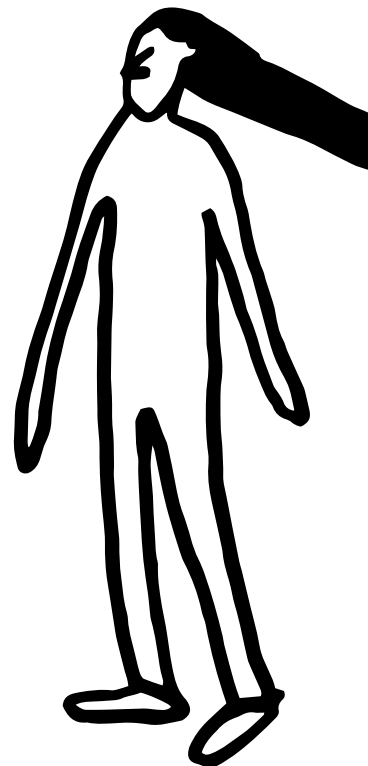
Kanaalstraat is a relatively small street, just over 700 meters long and about 18 meters wide, in a neighbourhood with 7 550 inhabitants (Werkgroep Visie Kanaalstraat/Damstraat, 2017, p. 15). At first sight, Kanaalstraat is a street like any other in the Netherlands or elsewhere in Europe. However, over the last 40 years it has acquired national fame and become a symbol of the changes taking place in Dutch society.

THE ISSUE

Neighbourhoods continuously change over time and change implies frictions. New groups of people flock in with different perspectives on the design, use and behaviour expected in public space (Cilliers & Timmermans, 2014). But does this imply that one group 'owns' the public space, imposes its requirements and pushes out others? Can the two meet without continuous disputes?

The Lombok neighbourhood close to the inner city of Utrecht has two faces. On the one hand, it is seen as a success story. People from all kinds of social and ethnic background live and meet together in its main street, Kanaalstraat. In the media it is often cited as a good example of a multicultural society. On the other hand, the neighbourhood is full of friction and conflict between different users of public space. Political groups from left to right use the neighbourhood to narrate their views on the state of Dutch society.¹

1. In 2017 the PvdA, the Dutch labour party, even started its national election campaign here.





KANAALSTRAAT

Source: Nina
Slagmolen

Conflicts sometimes become grim. Different social groups hardly communicate with each other. Users of Kanaalstraat have very strong feelings about the area; it is part of their identity. They see others as 'enemies' who take away their definition and meaning of what the place should look like and what behaviour fits. Drug dealers muck about and cause nuisance and a feeling of social insecurity. In 2016 people from all over the city signed a massive petition to the city government demanding security for bikers in Kanaalstraat. Both shopkeepers and shop customers, typically from migrant background, tend to come by car putting pressure on the limited space for cars, bikers and pedestrians.² In Lombok customers feel a bit like 'home'.³ Youngsters, often born and raised in the Netherlands from parents who migrated to the country, cling together in public space and like to show off their cars and motorbikes without caring too much about traffic rules. Speed driving goes on until late at night when other people tend to sleep.⁴ In Kanaalstraat they feel like they can be themselves without discrimination.

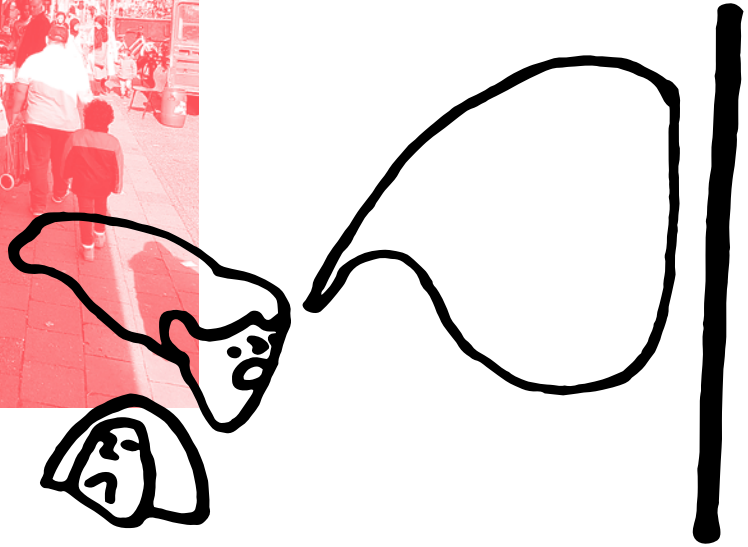
Lombok was known as a working class neighbourhood and a safe-haven for migrants in the 80s and 90s. Now a process of gentrification is taking place.⁵ Although the neighbourhood has a multicultural, especially North African and Turkish appearance, only 23% of the inhabitants have a non-western background, similar to the city average (Werkgroep Visie Kanaalstraat/Damstraat, 2017, p. 15). The types of shops in Kanaalstraat and their customers determine the international, non-western sphere and appearance of the neighbourhood. Yet, these shops are no longer congruent with the wishes of the current residents who call for new types of business concepts such as hip coffee shops and terraces, and another use of the public space.

2. In a sample of 145 customers, 70 (48%) came by car and 65 customers (44%) came from outside Utrecht. (Werkgroep Visie Kanaalstraat/Damstraat, 2017, p.15).

3. See for example interview with Mr. Faris Alqubati from Yemen (Van Heesbeen, 2018).

4. In 2016 approximately 2 300 fines were issued for wrong or double parking, in 2017 – 1 923 fines and 109 warnings (Gerling, 2018).

5. Prices of houses in Utrecht increased almost 11% in the 4th quarter of 2017 according to the NVM, the Dutch association of real estate agents (Van Asseldonk, 2018).



THE REACTION

The municipality has been trying to reduce tensions and improve the situation through ad hoc measures for years. However, many users consider the local government part of the problem. In their view, it is doing too little, too late. Some were calling for more enforcement of laws and regulations, others – on the contrary – for more flexibility and understanding of the local situation. Project managers of the local government failed to come out of the standoff between interest groups. In 2016 the responsible alderman wanted to find a break-through and initiated a project for the development of a more consistent vision on Kanaalstraat.

THE VISION OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD BY THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

The municipality appointed me as an independent process manager to get an inclusive dialogue going on the future of Kanaalstraat. After one year representatives of the neighbourhood presented a new vision to the municipality, which was broadly supported by the local community. The city council accepted the vision and agreed to reserve € 6 million for the re-design of the public space.

THE DESIGN OF AN INCLUSIVE PLANNING PROCESS

The main success factor responsible for getting to a shared vision was the design and implementation of an inclusive planning process. Some critical principles and elements of the process are discussed below.

GOVERNMENT VERSUS GOVERNANCE

Citizens often react negatively to decisions taken by governments out of a feeling that they are not included in the decision-making process (see for example Oostveen, 2018). In public policy-making there is a call for a change from top-down 'government' to inclusive 'governance' (Jordan, Wurzel & Zito, 2005). 'Governance' is seen as a process in which policy decisions are prepared in consultation and in cooperation with networks of stakeholders and partnerships. It is not easy to act in line with this concept. It questions the primacy of governments in decision-making. It may also create social unrest and frustration among citizens if their proposals are not accepted. Yet, in conflicting situations like the one in Kanaalstraat, a process designed along this principle is the only way out.

MANAGEMENT OF PROCESS VERSUS MANAGEMENT OF CONTENTS

One mechanism for ensuring that interest groups are part of the planning process is to create a joint management platform. In the case of Vision Kanaalstraat a 'process group' was formed with residents, shopkeepers and city administration representatives. Government was seen as just one of multiple stakeholders. The process group ensured transparency and flexibility in the process. Its task was not discussing the contents of the vision, but outlining, facilitating and safeguarding the quality of the dialogue. The dialogue itself took place in the neighbourhood in which all individuals and groups could equally participate. The process group, however, indicated that not all stakeholders were sufficiently involved. Therefore, additional activities were organized such as sessions for women of migrant background. On the request of the process group, a debate was organized on the consequences and possible instruments to control gentrification. At the end of the project the process group issued a letter for the city government on the quality of the process, thus ensuring that the government would be more accepting of the outcome.



*DIALOGUE
ON SAFETY IN
KANAALSTRAAT*

*Source: author's
personal archive*

POSITIONS VERSUS INTERESTS

An important concept when looking for common ground is the distinction between the position of a stakeholder and his or her interests (Mutual Gains Approach see Susskind & Cruikshank, 1987; Wesselink, 2010). A 'position' is a stance you take on a certain issue, an 'interest' is a core need or want that underlies that position. Usually there are more ways to meet a particular interest than the position one stakeholder might be defending. Sharing and respecting interests is a more productive way of reaching agreement, even unexpected shared interests may be found.

In Kanaalstraat groups of residents and shopkeepers were opposing each other vehemently over the space given to cars. Shopkeepers contended that they need two-way car traffic to accommodate their customers. Residents wanted less cars and more space for pedestrians. In a dialogue session the participants analysed positions and interests. They concluded that most interests were common, but that disagreement existed on the ways to satisfy those interests. The real interest of shopkeepers was accessibility for their customers and not two-way car traffic. Common ground was found in rearranging the accessibility and parking spots for cars and in creating more quality space for pedestrians.



*DIALOGUE ON
FUTURE DESIGN OF
KANAALSTRAAT*

Source: Suzy Koot

ROLE OF CITY GOVERNMENT AND COUNCILLORS

In traditional project design the city government defines a project, citizens are invited to participate with some degree of influence, and the council takes a decision.⁶ In a process organized along the lines of 'governance and inclusiveness' it is not so much a question of 'citizen' participation, but rather of 'government' participation (Van den Broek, Steenbekkers, Van Houwelingen & Putters, 2016). City councillors were invited during the process of vision development on Kanaalstraat. This was a new role for them. As a result of their involvement they felt committed to the outcome. In fact, councillors even wanted to push for a decision and take initiative before the city government had a chance to make its own judgement on the vision.

6. An instrument often used to determine the level of participation is the participation ladder. It has been adjusted many times. Original: Arnstein, 1969.

ROLE OF PROFESSIONALS WITHIN THE CITY ADMINISTRATION

Professionals within a city administration, such as urban planners and traffic experts, are key in the realisation of a vision on public space. In the Vision Kanaalstraat a group of experts from the city administration was involved. They had to accept a more modest role in the development of the vision, using their expertise to advise stakeholders instead of determining the content of the vision.

ROLE OF THE PROCESS MANAGER

A complex inclusive planning process in the public realm needs a skilled process manager (Bekkering et al., 2001). In order to keep all different interest groups with conflicting points of view on board and build trust among them, the process manager has to be impartial and invest in personal relationships. Participants need to feel heard and taken seriously. Continuous communication and easy access to the project management is contributing to a successful process.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

People with different lifestyles and different ideas about accepted design and behaviour in public space can be brought together in a dialogue and agree upon a vision. Through a genuine dialogue, relationships become personalized and a common understanding is created among stakeholders. Dialogue leads to a feeling of shared ownership of the public space. In the case of Kanaalstraat the association of shopkeepers defended the vision with one-way traffic in a meeting with the city council (January 18, 2018). They certainly could not imagine that they would defend such a vision at the start of the process. What made this possible is a carefully organized and managed inclusive planning process in which no stakeholders were left behind. Public space can only become a publicly shared, meaningful place through a genuine and inclusive planning process.

This, however, does not mean that all individuals will accept the vision on Kanaalstraat equally. Some feel that their personal opinion deserves to be given more weight. Still, they were part of the process and their comments were noted even though they did not dominate the result. In the end, a foundation has been laid for a next step, a joint design process based on the shared vision. The city administration is taking up this challenge now.

Again Pegida tried to organize a meeting in front of the mosque. The city administration prohibited a new demonstration on this spot and proposed another. Pegida refused the new location (DUIC, 2018). Also, for Pegida, Kanaalstraat provides identity, a counter-identity to the one being attributed to it by other stakeholders. These other stakeholders managed in spite of their differences to have a dialogue and come up with a shared vision in which the interests of others were respected. Pegida obviously is not interested in a dialogue, exploring the difference between positions and interests, and sharing public space. It wants to monopolize the public domain and impose its reading of it. Fortunately this was not the attitude of most stakeholders.

One of the newcomers in Lombok, who used to avoid spending his free time in Kanaalstraat, sometimes has dinner in a Turkish restaurant now. At the start of the dialogue he and the restaurant owner were at loggerheads. Now, at least these two have met.

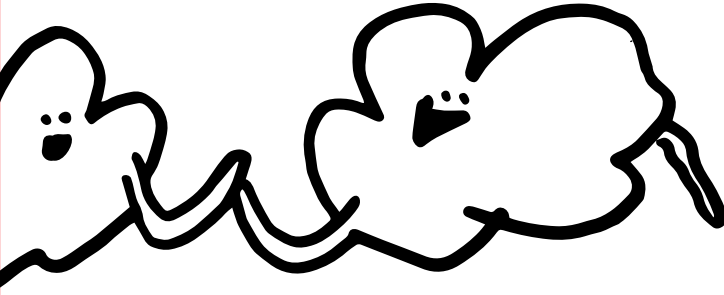


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Tariq Nassar



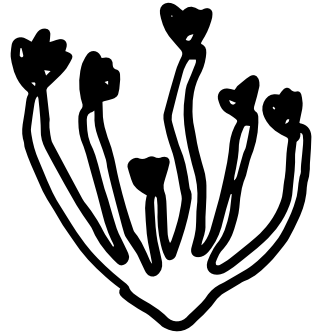
Many East Jerusalem neighbourhoods lack open public spaces, mostly due to the absence of a general urban master plan. A couple of years ago, placemaking initiatives started taking place in the Eastern part of the city where most of the population is Palestinian. It was the first experiment with the concept of placemaking in the entire area. Our challenge was identifying the areas in East Jerusalem that were lacking a master plan and then implementing projects that would turn those spaces into places full of life. The first couple of placemaking projects ended up adding new physical elements to the public space, such as benches, plants, tables, or information boards with text in different languages. It was this issue of calligraphy and languages that proved rather challenging and which prompted us to rethink and refine our methodology for creating inclusive and sustainable places in East Jerusalem.

CALLIGRAPHIES IN PLACEMAKING

In 2016, the urban clinic at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem led a city-wide placemaking initiative in partnership with the city municipality and the NGO Eden. Guided by a local architect and urban designer, the residents from the area created a special place with corner seating in front of the municipal library of East Jerusalem as well as a series of information points. Participants also designed and installed covered bus stops featuring snippets of Palestinian history in Jerusalem.

SEATING CORNER
LIBRARY IN WASI
JOOZ, JERUSALEM

Source: [en.urbanclinic.
huji.ac.il/placemaking](http://en.urbanclinic.huji.ac.il/placemaking)





In their original design, the projects described above, included some text in English and some in Arabic. After a while, however, one of the information points was vandalized by a group of Israelis living within a Palestinian neighbourhood in East Jerusalem, so the city municipality decided to add another element to the original design, but this time in Hebrew. Shortly afterwards, the info-point was vandalized again most likely because of the new addition. It became clear that we had to change our methodology and create new tools to address the issue.

INCLUSIVE, APPLICABLE AND SUSTAINABLE PLACEMAKING

In order to document our approach to implementing inclusive, sustainable and applicable placemaking projects in the city of Jerusalem, we created a toolbox that helps placemakers assess a community's satisfaction and sensitivity toward the proposed interventions. We had to take a closer look at past projects to draw some key lessons and conclusions. Ultimately, the goal of our toolbox is to minimize the risk of vandalism on the one hand, and on the other – to maximize community's satisfaction with the project, while ensuring its long-term sustainability. Since its creation, the toolbox has been embedded in the whole process of defining, designing and implementing placemaking project with local communities and the main advantage of using it is that it helps prevent political, cultural or religious vandalism to almost 100%.

TOOLBOX FOR MEASURING A COMMUNITY'S SATISFACTION WITH PLACEMAKING

In the case of East Jerusalem, where our projects were implemented, it was clear that written text in various languages would jeopardize the long-term sustainability of our initiatives. In addition, logos of international organizations, local authorities and NGOs could also put the project at risk of vandalism. The elements of artistic murals would have to be evaluated in terms of community approval and overall satisfaction. For example, in one of our projects we used international artistic patterns and in another we combined painted pictures of the old city without adding any text.

In East Jerusalem we found that flags, languages, text, and mural portrait are putting projects in high risk. Similarly, we noticed that logos and artistic patterns could be either a high or a medium risk depending on the neighbourhood. We also found that one way to ensure the long-term sustainability of a placemaking project is by linking it to existing small and medium size enterprises such as cafes, restaurants or kiosks or to other initiatives involving young people, students, or elderly citizens, which are already taking place in the neighbourhood.

CONCLUSION

Each city is unique. In the case of East Jerusalem the toolbox helped us identify which elements were favored by the local community and which were likely to cause tension or vandalism. But creating a toolbox that measures a community's satisfaction with a given project can be helpful in many different urban contexts, especially in the early stages of a design process.



PICTURES OF THE
OLD CITY, RAS AL-
AMOUD, JERUSALEM

Source: author's
personal archive



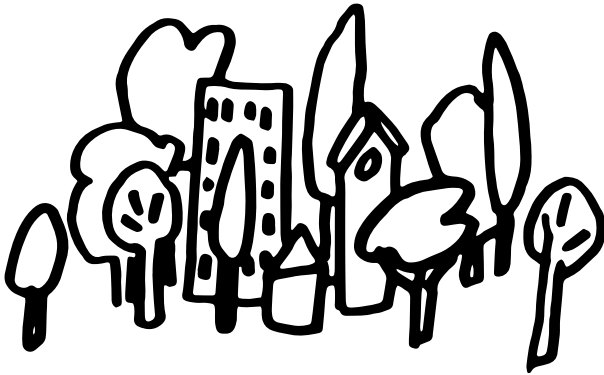
SIDEWALK RAMP,
WADI JOOZ,
JERUSALEM

Source: author's
personal archive

CREATING SPACE FOR NATURE IN THE CITY: INCLUSIVE ECOLOGY

ESSAY

Jerod Myers



There is nothing more human than cities. Nature and the city have historically been two opposing concepts. As a society, we have typically viewed humanity and our creations as separate from nature. The Cambridge and Oxford dictionaries state that nature exists “independently of people” and includes the physical world collectively “as opposed to humans or human creations.” This is particularly evident when one looks at the development patterns of cities throughout history, with many having eliminated, compartmentalized, or tamed nature and its processes.

In the past several decades, there has been a shift in perspective, with much debate across disciplines as to why society views humans as separate from nature, when our species so heavily depends upon, and is greatly impacted by, nature and its cycles. Renowned conservationist M. Sanjayan in an interview about humans and nature stated: “Let’s change the debate and make it that humans are part of nature, and then you start realizing the reason for saving nature is about saving ourselves” (Hawkes, 2015). In light of this idea, more and more cities are actively seeking to reconcile and integrate the human city and nature. This article advocates for more nature in the city by encouraging readers to look at public space from an ecological perspective, while providing a few examples of how cities have taken steps to integrate human and natural systems.

Existing literature and practice suggest that inclusive public spaces are open, accessible, and comfortable for all (Nadimpalli et al., 2018). Traditional dialogue about inclusion has been centered around humans. However, it is important to recognize that a diversity of organisms inhabit the city. Therefore, a truly inclusive public space must include nature in its planning, design, and maintenance.

Inclusive public space fosters relationships and interactions. These two terms form the foundation of ecology, a branch of biology that deals with how organisms relate to one another and their physical surroundings. Integrating principles of ecology into the planning and design of urban public space creates opportunities to enhance biodiversity and its ecosystem services.



According to the United Nations, cities are some of the biggest beneficiaries of biodiversity and ecosystem services (Puppim De Oliveira et al., 2010). Biodiversity refers to all the different kinds of living organisms within a given area, which includes plants, animals, fungi, and other living things. Biodiversity ensures a resilient and functional ecosystem and provides natural resources. One way of representing the benefits of biodiversity is the concept of ecosystem services, which are the benefits people derive from the environment. These benefits range from physical goods such as food, forest products, and other raw materials to services such as clean air, water purification, pollination, climate control and urban noise reduction. It is important to recognize that nature in the city can also enhance the physical, psychological, and social well-being of urbanites (IUCN, 2018; Calvo, 2010; Shanahan et al., 2015; Forest Service, 2018).

A major issue of our time is that ecosystem services and biodiversity are being degraded and lost at an unprecedented scale, due in part to rapid urbanization (Muller et al., 2010). When the places where animals, plants, fungi and a variety of other organisms live are repurposed for other uses, conditions change and they typically either adapt, migrate or die. Whereas much focus has been placed on the impact of the city on nature and its functions, recent debates have shifted towards questioning how cities can support biodiversity and ecosystem services. In an increasingly urbanized world, the city must become part of the solution by creating space for nature within its boundaries.

A basic understanding of a few ecological concepts will help stakeholders learn how to better support biodiversity and ecosystem services in the city's public spaces. Looking at the city from this perspective introduces a key challenge: how to integrate specialized knowledge and management practices to maintain or enhance more natural areas and promote urban ecosystem services (Ziter et al., 2018). Armed with some knowledge, the chances of a citizen, urban planner, designer or public official advocating for more nature in their city increases.

CONCEPTS

HABITAT. Animals, plants, and insects must live somewhere. The planning, conservation and management of urban green space is critical to providing habitat and maintaining biodiversity (Aronson et al., 2017). These vegetated spaces present the greatest opportunities for intervention, yet they are also at the highest risk of being developed. Cities typically grow in two ways: they either expand, consuming green space as they grow outwards, or they densify, putting pressure on the remaining green space as they grow inwards and up.

There are many types of green space in the city, from formal parks to informal spaces such as overgrown vacant lots and highway medians (Rupprecht & Byrne, 2014). Understanding where and what type of green spaces are present in and around the city is the first step in understanding habitat distribution and potential. Viewing aerial images on Google Earth allows anyone to quickly identify green spaces in the city, large and small.

SIZE (PROBABLY) MATTERS. Research tells us that the amount of urban green space is an important factor in achieving greater biodiversity (Reyes & Figueroa, 2010). Experience tells us that urban green spaces are typically small and scattered throughout the city. More research is needed to determine how large an individual green space should be to support nature in the city. Regardless, larger spaces should be prioritized and smaller spaces should be connected to make larger systems (Puppim De Oliveira et al., 2010).

QUALITY. Evidence suggests that the size and quality of urban green spaces are important factors that support plant and animal populations in urban areas (Lepczyk et al., 2017). Since creating or preserving large green spaces can be difficult to achieve, particularly in denser cities, emphasis should be placed on enhancing the quality of existing green space. Stockholm's 2018 City Plan advocates for a dense and connected city while also recognizing that "green land will sometimes have to be used for new development" but that "at the same time, it is important to reinforce any assets so that the perceived access to good parks and natural areas is assured."

Quality is difficult to define and hard to measure. However, there are many methods and tools available to assess the quality of a green space, from complex scientific studies to simplified checklists that can be used by citizen volunteers. Diversity, structure, and composition (further explained below) can offer a quick approximation of green space quality.

BIODIVERSITY. Diversity maintains a functional and resilient environment and is responsible for environmental services. One does not need to know all the species of trees, plants and animals to determine if a particular space is diverse. Look around: do all trees have the same structure, leaves and bark? Is the entire area landscaped with just grass? How many different colored birds do you see? Can you hear insects? There are visible and audible cues that allow us to assess diversity, also known as species richness.

STRUCTURE AND COMPOSITION. The ecological function of an urban green space is heavily influenced by its composition and structure. Composition refers to the species that comprise the space while structure refers to the presence of multiple vegetation layers. Threlfall et al. (2016) examined the impacts of increasing the number of native species and understory vegetation on biodiversity. Understory vegetation includes all of the plants below the canopies of taller trees such as: small trees, shrubs, herbs, grasses, mosses and lichens. The study “found 30–120% higher occupancy for bats, native birds, beetles and bugs with an increase in understory volume from 10 to 30%. They also found 10–140% higher occupancy across all native taxa [group of one or more populations of an organism] with an increase in the proportion of native vegetation from 10 to 30%.” This means that by simply adding layers of vegetation and planting native species, biodiversity was improved.

CONNECTIVITY. Animals, plants and insects are mobile. Like people, they need ‘pathways’ to move from point A to point B. Urban habitats, or green spaces, are typically very fragmented. We must think in terms of connectivity and ensure that networks of green spaces weave throughout the city, facilitating movement. Even small patches of green space within the city can connect mobile populations, such as butterflies and birds, with larger habitat on the outskirts of the city (Lepczyk et al., 2017).

Urban ecology is a growing field that elicits a lot of conversation and debate (Nature of Cities, 2018). The scientific basis for the concepts described above is growing; however, taking action without significant evidence that the intervention will bring the desired outcome can be a real challenge. Many academic studies provide evidence, but they are specific to a particular species or urban context. There will be success and failure in applying ecological concepts to planning and design decisions in the urban environment. Do not let this be an excuse for inaction, we must learn by doing. This next section provides several examples of how cities have translated the above concepts into reality through better management, design and planning.

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT IN EXISTING GREEN SPACE

Simple changes in the management of vegetation in existing green space can have positive impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services. Successful vegetation management requires careful planning, strategic implementation, continuing maintenance, and evaluation of ecological outcomes.

BREAK UP THE GRASS WITH OTHER VEGETATION

According to Aronson et al. (2017) “Common management practices – such as maintenance of turf grass lawns, tree and shrub pruning, pesticide and herbicide applications, and introduction of non-native plant species – threaten the biodiversity of cities.” Typical urban parks, especially in the United States, include large swaths of green grass speckled with trees. When traveling from city to city, one begins to notice that globalization has influenced green space design, with the same landscape patterns and plants repeating. Some have even coined this phenomenon as ‘blandscaping’ (Connop & Nash, 2018). Therefore, it is not surprising that cities host only 25% of the plant species predicted to

grow based on their overall urban and non-urban ranges (Aronson et al., 2014). Simply breaking up endless lawns with other vegetation, favoring more structure (different sized trees and bushes), and variety (diverse vegetation) can enhance habitat and function (Threlfall et al., 2016; Aronson et al., 2014). Given the difficult growing conditions that some species require, vegetation choice should be based on factors such as ability to survive and low input requirements (water, fertilizer, pesticide, etc.). When possible, native plants should be used. An excellent example of an urban park with a variety of vegetation and structure is Lurie Garden in Chicago, Illinois.



LURIE GARDENS, CHICAGO. ACCORDING TO THEIR WEBSITE, THIS GREEN SPACE CONTAINS 20 TYPES OF GRASSES, 26 TYPES OF TREES AND SHRUBS, 34 TYPES OF BULBS, AND 142 TYPES OF PERENNIAL HERBACEOUS PLANTS. 41% OF THE PLANTS ARE NATIVE TO NORTH AMERICA AND 26% ARE NATIVE TO ILLINOIS

Source: author's personal archive



REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF MOWING

Choosing to mow urban parkland less often, perhaps every few weeks, as opposed to once or twice a week, increases the number of pollinators (Connif, 2014). Many cities have taken reduced mowing schedules one step further by creating 'no mow zones' or 'urban grow zones.' These are designated areas left to re-naturalize, which means that maintenance staff allows for natural plant growth. Some cities take a completely hands-off approach, while others might monitor the area for changes and apply management techniques to promote native seeding/planting and remove invasive species. This has become a common practice along creeks and rivers, as the vegetation is able to filter urban runoff before entering the stream, provide habitat, and reduce evaporation, among other benefits. This practice was successfully implemented by the city of Austin, Texas.

EDUCATE CITIZENS ON THE BENEFITS OF MORE VARIETY AND LESS MAINTENANCE

Areas of reduced maintenance may need to come with an educational component as well, with some users requiring a little more convincing. A key challenge to green space design and management is balancing human perception, needs and use with ecological requirements for biodiversity (Aronson et al., 2017). A park user who is used to manicured turf and neatly trimmed hedges might be caught off guard when they walk by and see weeds and other 'unsightly' vegetation growing tall. This opens the door for curious phone calls and complaints, but these conversations always present opportunities for staff to educate citizens on the environmental benefits these improved spaces are providing and the cost savings to the taxpayer.

RETROFITTING EXISTING PUBLIC SPACE TO INCLUDE MORE GREEN

Get creative by retrofitting existing built elements and spaces in between. In dense cities, simply finding a space to establish a sizeable park is difficult. Hence, cities around the world have found innovative solutions to add more green to the built environment. Possible interventions include green roofs, utilization of abandoned transportation infrastructure, "pocket" or mini parks, green walls, or vacant lots. Essentially, cities must rethink how particular features of the built environment can support vegetation and associated habitat. Since this article does not go into detail about how to implement these retrofits in the urban environment, readers are encouraged to take inspiration from the photos below and research further potential solutions. A brief description of each photo follows.



Source: Conservation
Design Forum
(CC BY-SA 4.0)

1. Green Roof: City Hall in Chicago, Illinois

This 1 886 square meter green roof was installed in 2001. It provides numerous ecosystem services, such as reducing stormwater runoff, decreasing heating and cooling costs, providing habitat, and mitigating the urban heat island effect. Heat islands are caused by paved surfaces and buildings absorbing heat from the sun and boosting the air temperature around them.



Source: David Berkowitz (CC BY- SA 2.0)

2. High Line Park: Manhattan, New York City

The abandoned railroad track located on the west side of Manhattan was turned into a public green space. The native vegetation and the long linear structure of the park contributes to the biodiversity of the area.



Source: left- author's personal archive right – Edmund Gall

3. Pollinator Friendly Alleyway: Fincastle, Virginia

'Pockets' of empty space left between buildings, such as alleyways, are typically overlooked in the city. In this example, the alleyway was planted with coneflowers (Echinacea) and butterfly bush (Buddleja) which are loved by pollinators.

4. Caixa Forum Green Wall: Madrid, Spain

The capital of Spain is hot and dry. Since vegetation helps reduce ambient temperature, one of Madrid's strategies to keep cool in the face of climate change is to envelop buildings in vegetation (Arup, 2016).



5. Urban Meadow Project: Brooklyn, New York City

This vacant lot was owned by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation since 2003. After years of neglect and expensive proposals, a modest proposal for a temporary urban meadow was accepted in 2008. The project was so successful it became a permanent park space (Architectural League, 2014).

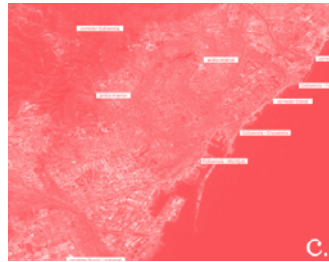
CREATING NETWORKS OF GREEN SPACE

LOOK FOR LINEAR ELEMENTS IN THE CITY

As urbanization continues to create more fragmented habitat, it becomes increasingly important to maintain and create connectivity between natural areas. If you look at a map of a city, you can begin to identify linear elements, such as streets and waterways. These manmade and natural features create opportunities to add vegetation and create connected green spaces, which, theoretically, allow for higher mobility of plants and animals.

GREENING THE ROADWAY

In the United States, there are over 10 million acres (4 046 856 hectares) of land within the road right-of-way. Public agencies are often responsible for the maintenance of these spaces. Planting them with native grasses and wildflowers, while modifying the frequency of mowing and the use of herbicides, can enhance roadside habitat for pollinators and other species. The Xerces Society states, “in landscapes denuded of natural areas by large scale agriculture or urbanization, roadsides are an increasingly important component of regional habitat networks.” The Society has numerous resources for roadside habitat management on their website. This concept can be implemented on the sides of large highways (photo B) and along the small medians and curbside planting strips of city streets (photo A). In Seattle, Washington, the ‘Pollinator Pathway’ was a citizen-led initiative that created a series of pollinator-friendly planting strips along Seattle’s Columbia Street for 1.6 kilometers. The vegetation used was primarily native and selected based on its “pollinator appeal, human enjoyment, city requirements, drought tolerance and ease of care” (Pollinator Pathway).



A. POLLINATOR
PATHWAYS
B. WASHINGTON
STATE DEPARTMENT
OF TRANSPORTATION
C. BARCELONA CITY
COUNCIL

PUBLIC POLICY FOR CONNECTIVITY

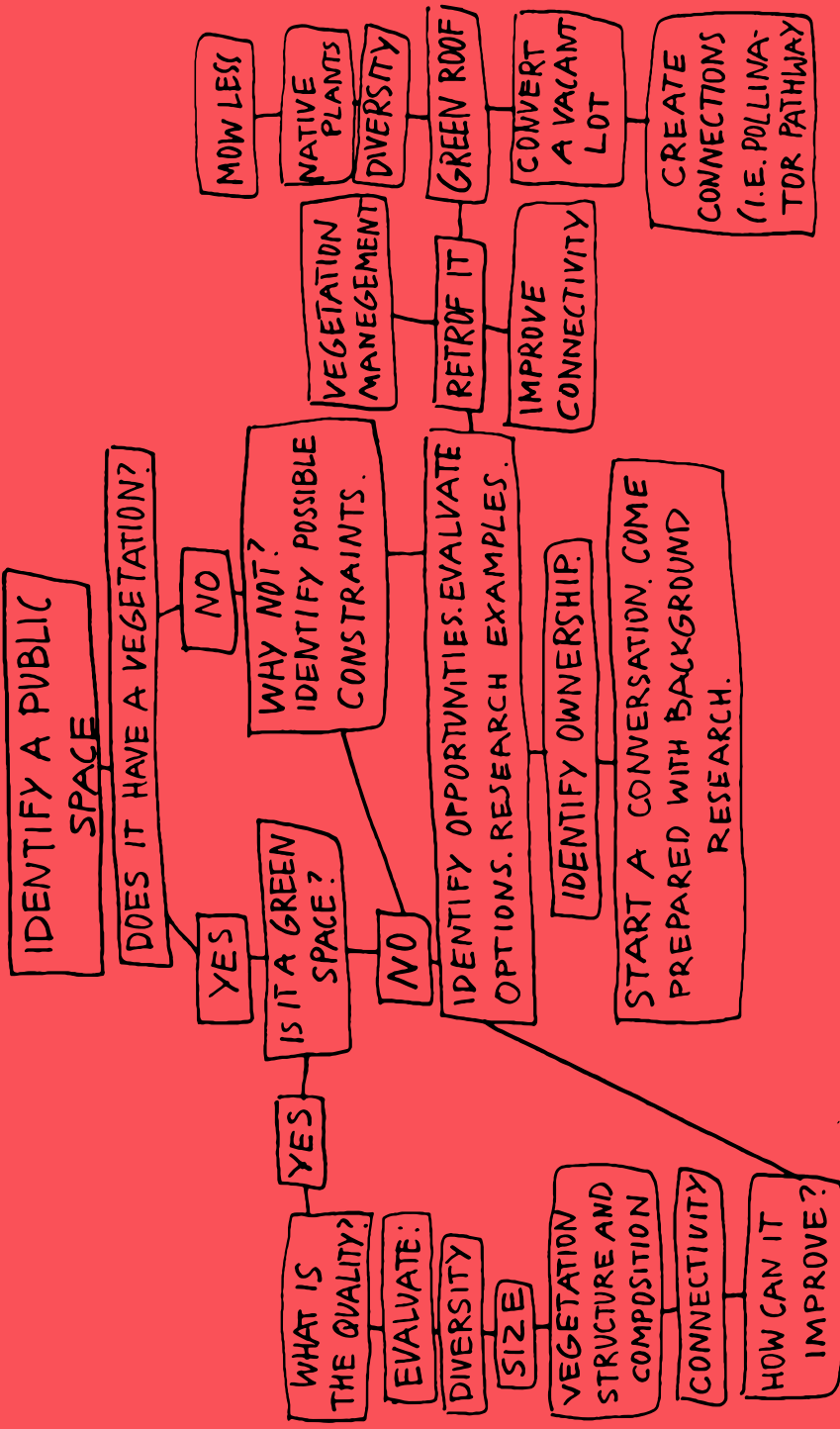
In terms of planning for connectivity on a citywide scale, Barcelona's 'Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity Plan' is likely the most notable example (Barcelona City Council, 2013). It calls for the creation of green corridors that connect the city's green space with natural areas outside the city limits. The plan creates a framework for deploying a network of urban green corridors that link the natural spaces of Collserola and the shoreline with the existing green spaces of the city (photo C).

FROM CONCEPT TO ACTION

The diagram below attempts to link the themes discussed above with concrete points of action. It greatly oversimplifies urban ecology and green space creation and management, but it helps to establish a framework for evaluating public space in new ways. Look at the city around you: Where are the existing green spaces? If a space does not have vegetation, why do you think that is? Can it support a little more green? What are the opportunities to improve them? Who owns them?

CONCLUSION

With 66% of the world living in cities by 2050, the battle for global biodiversity may be won or lost in the city (Calvo, 2010). Cities around the globe are recognizing nature and its contribution to their economies, human health and well-being. The process for including more nature in the city must be inclusive. Empowering stakeholders, such as citizens, with basic knowledge of ecology, biodiversity and its services will allow them to better advocate for nature, assess the quality and effectiveness of current policies and initiatives, and voice their preferences moving forward.



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SUSTAINABLE FOR WHOM? SMART GREEN HOUSES IN MALMÖ, SWEDEN

LOCAL
STORY

Suheyla Turk



LOCATION CASE
AREA IN MALMÖ

Source: author's
personal archive

Sustainable development projects in Sweden are meant to include different tenancy types, such as municipal and private rentals, along with owner-occupied homes. Yet, in the recent development of sustainable city projects affordable housing plans for low-income residents are often not considered. In the few instances when they are, only a limited number of housing units are actually produced. The Swedish welfare system aims to provide decent housing for everyone and, in general, municipal housing companies do produce affordable rental houses. However, in 2011, the European Union introduced a new competition law allowing municipal housing companies to make a profit. The decision ultimately led to rent increases (Holmqvist and Turner, 2014). As a result, the Swedish Association of Municipal Housing Companies decided to offer an alternative – modular homes, commonly referred to as Kombohus. They are less expensive to produce than the traditional municipal homes.

This article examines the affordability of municipal homes for low and median-income citizens in Kirseberg, Malmö, considering both rent rates and income of residents. The study was intended to draw important insights and lessons from Kirseberg to ensure that the newly drafted Sege Park sustainable development plans meet their goal of accommodating low-income residents. Taking into consideration household economy, this paper investigates whether socio-economic sustainability can truly be achieved. The key question of the study being: are the alternative modular homes implemented in Kirseberg and the planned Sege Park project in Malmö actually sustainable for low-income residents?

The rent data used in the study consists of municipal, private and modular housing rent levels. Affordability is considered as a 30% ratio of housing rent to household income (Leishman & Rowley, 2012).

AFFORDABLE HOMES IN KIRSEBERG

In the district of Kirseberg there are three generations of municipally-owned homes with rent rates that vary according to the year of production. The first affordable homes were produced in the 1960s; a second type came out after the 2000s; and a third – in 2015 – the modular Kombohus homes.



A MIX OF DIFFERENT TENURE TYPES IN KIRSEBERG, MALMÖ

Source: author's personal archive

SEGE PARK PROJECT

The Sege Park project, to be produced near the Kombohus modular homes, aims to include a diversity of homes (Malmöstad, 2015). Plans envision condominiums, collective, detached, municipal and private houses in order to achieve mixed-tenancy housing (Malmöstad, 2018). With support from the European Regional Development Fund, the neighbourhood is also supposed to be climate smart and reduce the carbon dioxide emission of the 700 homes planned for construction (Malmöstad, 2015).

KOMBOHUS MODULAR HOMES

Modular homes in Kirseberg have been in use since 2016 as affordable housing. This project consists of three buildings, each with 16 homes. To ensure that the homes are truly affordable for low-income people, the buildings have simply-designed balconies on the front facing facade and do not include basements or garage spaces (MKB, 2015).

MODULAR HOUSES IN KIRSEBERG

Source: MKB, 2015



AFFORDABLE HOUSES

To calculate affordability levels, we used the monthly income of a low-income couple which receives state rent aid and that of a middle-income couple. A low-income couple in Sweden earns an average of 18.614 SEK each month, while a median-income couple earns 38.416 SEK. Each housing type has a different affordability level. Municipal homes constructed after the 1960s have relatively low rents, 6.878 SEK, compared to the homes constructed in 2000 (BoplatsSyd, 2018c). The homes produced in 2000 are rented for 7.527 SEK, while the Kombohus (modular homes) are rented for 7.395 SEK.



As previously explained, the accepted affordability rate for housing is 30% income to rent rate. Of course, the ratio of income to rent rate of municipal housing in Kirseberg differs based on the income levels of tenants. For low-income couples the affordability rate of the houses provided by the municipality in the 1960s is 37%; while for median-income residents it is 18%. Houses produced in the 2000s have affordability level of 40% for low-income people, and 19% for middle-income households. Kombohus homes have 39% affordability rate for low-income residents, and 19% for median-income residents. Thus it becomes clear that municipal rental homes are affordable for middle-income people, but not for low-income people.

*TRADITIONAL
MUNICIPAL HOUSING*

*Source: author's
personal archive*

CONCLUSION

Despite initial plans and designs, our research shows that municipal rental homes are not affordable for low-income people. Although the Sege Park project proposes inclusive housing of different tenancy types and promotes sustainability in the neighbourhood, there is still little information regarding the exact number of affordable housing units which will be produced for low-income families, or what the rent rate will be. Thus the central research question for Sege Park remains: environmentally or financially sustainable for whom? One solution to increase the number of affordable homes in Sweden might be to expand the proposed modules consisting of 20 and 40 square meters to outside the Sege Park project to accommodate more low-income residents.

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PART 2

**OUR CITY.
HOW WE CAN
ACTIVELY DESIGN
AND DEVELOP
CITIES FOR ALL**

INTRODUCTION

Our great and inspirational cities and villages are overcome by centrifugal powers following the dictate of the market, plain tourist demand or rational decision making and smart technologies. The basic foundation underpinning the city, a place from the people and for the people, where we meet, work, love, share, discuss, which we call home, is challenged.

Proper placemaking offers alternatives to how cities are designed, developed, restructured and governed. Placemaking is not about yet another hipster coffee bar in a derelict area, drawing in new crowds and raising rental prices. It is a collective organic process that brings together people, spaces, heritage and opportunity to work together on real places, that have ownership, rhythm, surprise and offer a sense of belonging, of home. It is not an easy process, nor does it provide easy answers for every space or neighbourhood. It comes with frictions and quests for different ownership structures or business models. It challenges the status quo and many of the current legal frameworks governing our cities. But when done properly, and honestly, placemaking may just be the answer that will make our cities feel as home for all of us.

In Part II we demonstrate along three lines how you can work on cities for all, exploring the great width and variety placemaking can take. The first step is to design with the people. These chapters will engage you in the process design of collaborative city making, participatory methods, lessons on facilitation and good practices. Upon designing collectively, with all the new and varied stakeholders, one will come across unexpected questions and demands for new financial solutions or legal frameworks. As such, the second step is to think about different ways to accommodate these codesigned wishes. These chapters will guide you through proven yet new models to build long lasting coalitions backed by solid financial foundations enabling you to go from placemaking to place management. And then, even if you've everything right it might be necessary to pay extra attention to some underrepresented or disadvantaged groups in society. The last chapters of Part II provide approaches and cases studies on how to fully engage them.

But we start Part II with an essay on the Learning City, which both invites and challenges you to take on an attitude of curiosity, being open to anew, fresh insights from different stakeholders and to approach the city as a collective endeavor, constantly adapting to new needs and desires.

THE LEARNING CITY: COMMON KNOWLEDGE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIETAL VALUE

ESSAY

Thieu Besselink

This essay takes a learning and knowledge approach to societal co-development. It explores the question of how collective ownership needs new skills and institutions that enable urban communities to learn and develop resilient common values.¹

1. Special thanks to Indranil Bathacharya from Townmaking Institute for his inspiring contributions on knowledge engineering.

COLLABORATIVE CITY MAKING IN RESPONSE TO THE GLOBALIZING FORCE OF MARKETS AND GOVERNMENTS

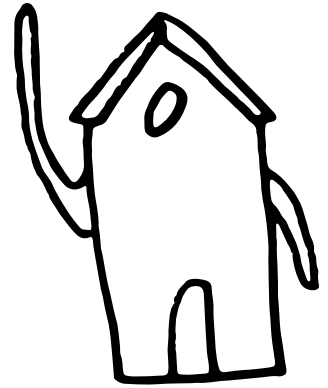
The vitality of our cities has become more fragile in the face of increasing pressures and complexities that result from market forces, the limits of unilateral planning, and subsequent social isolation. Collaborative city making may well offer an answer to our social, economic and ecological ills, but only if we are able to collectively learn to use it as communities and makers of our living environment. An open city, one that is not readily made and consumed for its convenience or exclusive nature, but rather one shaped by its citizens as a cultural expression, requires new institutions and new citizen capacities for what we call townmaking.²

2. Townmaking is a methodology of embodied knowledge creation and cooperative civic development.

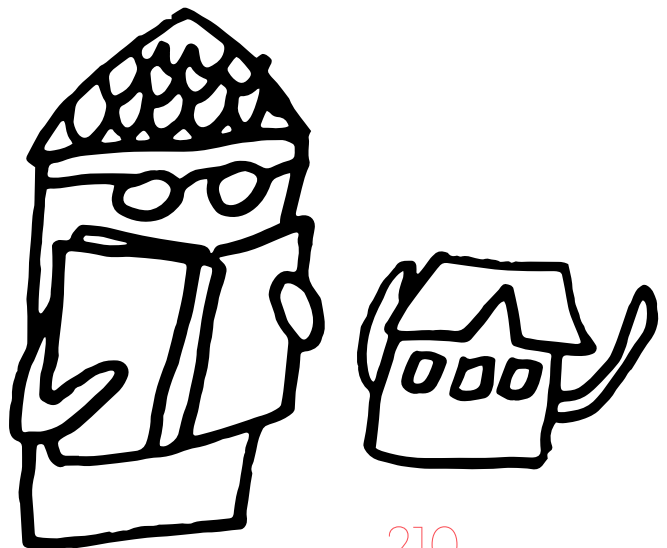
We see a rise in citizens taking matters in their own hands through cooperatives and citizen initiatives, while at the same time the political economy has globalised our cities and rendered them less governable by us than we might want to believe. As the economy is gaining more power than politics, the question for me has become: how can we maintain a sense of place that is not based on a shared illusion of isolation and simplicity, or the consumption of shared services, but that is supported and expressed by resilient civic institutions?

With jobs constantly changing, people no longer take their sense of belonging from their work; hence the importance of place increases. Unfortunately, belonging to a place, in the sense of playing part in its destiny, has become less common. Governments and markets provide the services we consume, from our homes to our food, to our health and our neighbourhoods. Without an intrinsic sense of belonging in a rich civic and economic life, places may not only continue to separate the haves from the have nots, but may easily become a defensive symbol for an ingroup excluding immigrants and other Others.

The answer, I believe, to inclusive cities is not a matter of simply giving people more say. Many municipalities in their attempt to legitimate themselves or reduce transaction costs ask citizens to 'participate' or propose ideas for common issues of planning and social infrastructure. It is usually a recipe for disappointment as a shared understanding of the situation is missing, and no process for collective imagination and realization is in place. I argue that participatory projects need collective institutions such as cooperative communities that better organise themselves. But in order to do so well, they need to organise their knowledge and wisdom too so that they are able to generate and maintain societal assets and the knowledge to develop them. The counterargument we hear often is that not everyone is willing or capable of dedicating time and skills to such endeavours. However, that assumption stems from the perspective of a government asking for involvement, rather than seeing our everyday work and life as integral part of city development. The most extraordinary cities like Sienna or even Amsterdam were not built by developers, but by people, over time whilst living in them.



What I argue is that we need a learning city. A city that learns from the ground up, from daily experience and the practice of people who have taken the time to understand their living environment and the craft of their vocation. A city that learns not in abstract, or from big data, but from deep meaning, and grounded, contextualised insight. A democracy in this light, is not a set of rules and procedures, but a practice and a pedagogy for making and living together.



TOWNMAKING

Townmaking is an approach to the development of societal assets, the curation and sharing of embodied knowledge to generate and maintain those assets, and a perspective on common urban development. It is a practice that needs ongoing refinement, but I believe it contains key building blocks to some of the major questions in building inclusive and resilient cities. As an urban pedagogy, it consists of learning to understand the dynamics of our living environment collectively and acquiring the skills to generate societal assets. These assets are societal goods that we hold in common, such as living public spaces, natural and community driven food production, shared mobility, or citizen controlled data. Instead of treating them as a service to be delivered by the market or the government, we should see these assets as commons, as part of public infrastructure, realising, of course, that such civic infrastructure goes well beyond the skill and knowledge required for community gardens. But when citizens are able to create and maintain – in cooperation with government and companies if needed – the goods and practices that meet their basic needs, we may retain a sense of purpose and place within the global economy, and create a realistic economy based on use and value rather than speculative profit.

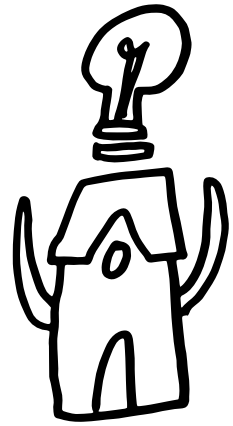
Developing this knowledge and skill requires effort, but so does everything. Knowledge and wisdom can be captured in good practice. If done senselessly, this makes for either stale and rigid protocols, or whimsy ideas. But developed well, good practice embodies deep understanding on all aspects of the complex domain of life. A good practice, meaning the embodied knowledge gained through well-lived practice, captures the interdependencies and tacit understandings that no theory can. How a certain tree grows and becomes suitable for a sidewalk, how a dialogue in circle contributes to a shared ownership of the conversation, or how a certain food stall makes a place worth hanging out. The issue usually is, that we hardly ever capture and share such knowledge in a way that is detailed and contextualised enough for deep understanding, and at the same time provides overview enough to see its connection to the wider whole. This is precisely the trick to useful civic knowledge. It bridges bottom up and operational knowledge with strategic and top down systems knowledge. It is this in-between space of the systems and life world. These kinds of knowledge used to be curated by guilds, and you will still find it with certain professional groups such as lawyers and surgeons, but in most other domains it has disappeared and is undervalued because most of the knowledge about how things work is outsourced and fragmented. Organisational priorities lie in managing processes and results.

MAKING CITIES PRACTICE-DRIVEN

The smart city narrative speaks of learning, but cities do not learn with big data, they are controlled by it. Learning is a transformational experience by which previously ambiguous circumstances start making sense. The smart city narrative makes us believe in the same convenience-based modern city that has dominated the functional city planning of CIAM since 1933.³ The image of the efficient and controllable city denies the necessary

3. Townmaking is a methodology of embodied knowledge creation and cooperative civic development.

unpredictable and organic nature of life in cities. Already some decades ago, the American pragmatist John Dewey started his laboratory school at the University of Chicago because he saw how the industrializing world was suffering from abstraction. Schools teach just-in-case knowledge, removed from its experiential value. He believed that a democracy needs people to ground their knowledge in practice, and to practice the development of civic culture. Dewey sought for people to become aware of their interdependence of one another in their origin and destiny through shared practice. Instead of this practice, the modern cities and policies of urban development, are mostly abstract solutions for abstract problems in the sense that they are based on abstract numbers serving abstract metrics of growth, crime, or poverty.



MOBILITY HUBS AS A SOCIETAL ASSET

Increasingly the complexities of the city are met with a cry for metrics and mechanisms that bring it under control, such as data-driven decisions and evidence-based policies. Or if not that, we are looking for futuristic visions from agencies, showing some variation on technopolis convenience. For instance, mobility hubs are a trendy topic. They seem neutral solutions for our congesting cities, but are in essence technologies looking for a problem, and avoiding the question of what kind of city we want to live in. What place do we have as citizens other than consumers of convenient and clean transport? All issues of public service has traditionally been seen in this light. The city provides a series of technical solutions to energy, housing, and poverty, but the question of human thriving is avoided altogether. Thus, cities have become rather disembodied. They are constructed to offer functions and services, but often lack attunement to the lived experience in a place.

As a societal asset, a mobility point may become something completely different. When communities have the tools and infrastructure to generate their own neighboured solutions, as the townmaking approach proposes, they can build their own mobility point by understanding the neighbourhood's local needs themselves, sourcing bikes and cars from local bike shops and mechanics, and assembling their own mobility software. This means cultivating far deeper relations with materiality than we are used to. But when something like a shared mobility point is developed in response to a higher possible collective future, we are no longer talking about merely outsourced lease constructions for a singular function. We are talking about strengthening the social fabric by fulfilling social and economic roles, keeping citizens' data in their own hands, sharing personal bikes and vehicles if they wish, skilling neighbourhood residents in maintenance, perhaps connecting local food or many other functions. It is not just the convenience, but also the way of linking multiple local cash flows that make a community resilient.

CONCLUSION

The way commons can govern themselves has become clear through the works of Elinor Ostrom and Tine de Moor. How they can generate societal value in a sustainable and scalable manner is a different matter. On the one hand, this involves the formation of new economic relationships not just between citizens. A strong commons that can provide an alternative to society undermining market forces requires cooperation between organised citizens, companies and government, with a focus on generating streams of societal value embedded in a local context. On the other hand, it needs kinds of knowledge that we have structurally undervalued and often lost as a society. This is the kind of knowledge of what makes something 'good'. When is something of integral societal value? Organisations only have a systems way of determining quality in terms of what service contract demands, for instance. Craftsmen understand the life world quality of things, and will be able to tell you when a bicycle is made with durable materials, honest work, and for a healthy life cycle. Missing are the practices and organised knowledge that connect the two. As a community, you can curate that knowledge too, in a sharable format.

With townmaking, citizens and professionals collectively make sense of their environment by capturing knowledge and wisdom in causes and good practices⁴, sourcing the knowledge, protocols, and network to realise these assets, and make them available for communities around the world. By organising the knowledge from stories of real experience from residents, professionals, civil servants, local entrepreneurs, and experienced domain experts, a community can express its needs in very strong and substantiated terms. It is this ability that turns the table from top-down servicing, planning, and solutions no one asked for, to grounded societal demand. This makes communities stronger in their ability to determine their own fate as it creates an equal standing point in cooperating with companies and institutions, and coordinates collective effort towards shared understanding and shared value.

4. "Sensemaking is the ability or attempt to make sense of an ambiguous situation. More precisely, sensemaking is the process of creating situational awareness and understanding in situations of high complexity or uncertainty in order to make decisions. It is "a motivated, continuous effort to understand connections (which can be among people, places, and events) in order to anticipate their trajectories and act effectively" Klein, G., Moon, B. and Hoffman, R.F. (2006b). Making sense of sensemaking II: a macrocognitive model. *IEEE Intelligent Systems*, 21(5), 88–92

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DESIGNING WITH PEOPLE



VALUING THE COMMUNITY AS AN EXPERT IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT REVITALISATION PROCESS

APPROACH

Jacqueline Bleicher

"THE UNAVAILABILITY OF PROPER RESTROOM FACILITIES."

"THERE IS NO OPEN SPACE OR PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY AREAS DOWNTOWN."
"NO GREEN SPACE, PARKS, PUBLIC SEATING AREAS TO LOOK OUT OVER THE HARBOUR."

"IT'S LIKE A GHOST TOWN AT NIGHT, EVERYTHING CLOSED."

"TOO DARK AT NIGHT AS NOT ENOUGH BRIGHT LIGHTS AROUND BUILDINGS AND ROADWAYS"

"NOT MUCH TO DO THERE FOR LOCALS" "OVERRIDEN WITH TACKY TOURIST SHOPS."

"SAFETY CONCERNS CROSSWALKS ARE IN A DANGEROUS PLACE"

500 COMMENTS FROM RESIDENTS ON GEORGETOWN CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

Source: author's personal archive

ISSUES

217

"BUSINESS SHOULD OPEN AT NIGHT TO SERVE THE LOCAL POPULATION."

"TURN THE WATERFRONT INTO A PEDESTRIAN AREA WITH BENCHES, SHADE, ETC. NATURE, A PARK. DEFINITELY NOT A CRUISE-SHIP DOCK"

"WE NEED A BETTER PUBLIC TRANSPORT SYSTEM SO THAT WE DON'T NEED ACRES OF PARKING."

"WE ALSO COULD DO WITH A MORE ORGANIZED TAXI DISPATCH IN TOWN."

"INJECT LIFE IN TO THE AREA AFTER THE CRUISE SHIPS LEAVE, (MIX COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL ACTIVITIES AND ATTRACTIONS FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN!"

IDEAS

"REINTRODUCE THE MULTI-CULTURAL HERITAGE FESTIVAL TO BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER."

DO NO HARM

If we value community members as experts, as key witnesses to the rise and decline of the place they call home and ask them what went wrong, someone will tell you. If you ask, someone will tell you how to fix what's been broken or lost. Often their ideas are better, more salient, comprehensive and viable than some of the ideas being imposed upon them.

First, 'do no harm' is not a principle espoused by the decision-makers shaping the built environment and it should be. The form of the built environment and its location are key determinants of the longevity, health and well-being of residents. Government officials, planning authorities, developers, planners, urban designers, architects, engineers, surveyors, contractors and other built environment professionals are as culpable as doctors and medical professionals in safeguarding the health and well-being of the populations they serve.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR

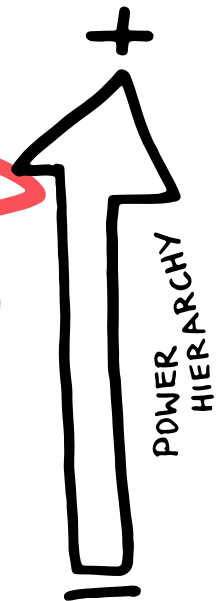
LOCAL AUTHORITIES, DEVELOPERS, COUNCILS, UTILITY SERVICE PROVIDERS, OTHER LANDOWNERSM DEVELOPMENT TRUSTS, HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS, COMMUNITY BUSINESSES

ACADEMICS & PROFESSIONALS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FACILITATORS, RESEARCHERS, PLANNERS, URBAN DESIGNERS, ARCHITECTS, ENGINEERS, SURVEYORS, DESIGNERS, CONTRACTORS

SOCIAL ENTERPRISES, CHARITIES, COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANIES, COMMUNITY GROUPS, NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUMS, RESIDENT ASSOCIATIONS

INDIVIDUALS, COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS,
THIRD SECTOR ORGANISATIONS



SHORT-SIGHTED INTERESTS

A government eager to attract investment to an area and subject it to political forces, will enact a planning policy that benefits some but not others. A developer looking to build the best and highest use and give investors the maximum return on their investment, is only interested in the buyer that can afford the product for sale. Both approaches are short-sighted, and invariably do not lead to vital, healthy places for all. However, these two stakeholders have the most power.

Communities have the most to lose when things go wrong and have the least power to influence and shape the places where they live, work and call home.

Communities can lobby their elected representatives for change or act to provide services and resources for themselves. This takes organisation and resources. Grassroots community organisations often lack the skills and means to truly engage with politicians, government agencies and developers which is why socially-conscious design professionals, academics and skilled community members are needed to engage with the community, the government and the developers, to bridge the gap and broker win-win, mutually beneficial scenarios.

COMMUNITY-LED DESIGN

In a scenario where there is a community-led or community co-designed master plan for development, the local authority can be a good steward and make decisions that support the global vision of inclusive, sustainable, healthy places and Cities for All. Developers can play a role in realising that vision within a framework. This way development is not left to chance and market forces, but deliberately focused to ensure complete neighbourhoods, compact mixed use, mixed-income and walkable developments, based on good urban design, inclusive and universal design principles.

ENGAGING AND CONSULTING WITH COMMUNITIES EFFECTIVELY TO BUILD TRUST AND RELATIONSHIPS

We need to convince planning authorities and developers that rushing the community engagement process or treating community consultation as a check box exercise, benefits no one. Taking the time to engage can lead to mutually beneficial suggestions that are actionable and profitable. Starving people of information or revealing a small portion of the impacts, amplifies fear and resistance. People can mobilise to oppose a project or proposal, costing a developer time and money, and requiring planning appeals.

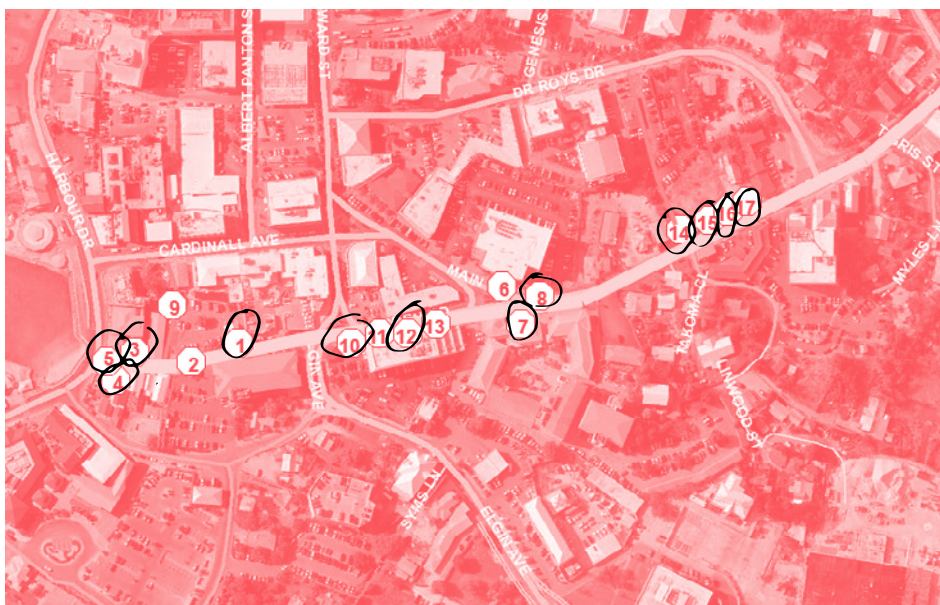
Even if the developer 'wins' at the community's expense, people vote with their feet and can boycott a development; they can refuse to patronise it, they can speak ill of it to visitors and impact the overall footfall. If a developer is aware of the social capital i.e. the reputation it has as a

development company, he or she would know it is easier to do business if the company has a reputation for quality, honesty, integrity, social consciousness and reinvesting in the communities where their projects are located. Developers who try to ensure everyone benefits from their presence will likely be welcomed by the next community they wish to do a project in because their reputation would have preceded them. Long-term building of reputation is simply good business sense.

We need to give developers options for community engagement apart from town hall meeting (public hearings) which can quickly devolve into a shouting match. Other options for engagement include: focus groups, design workshops and seminars, consultations with key demographics, round tables, discussion, as part of conducting a survey or census studies, consultations using electronic media, awareness campaigns and outreach, particularly to marginalised and vulnerable segments of society. Non-traditional methods like walking audits, engagement through art or games can also be employed. We also need to encourage engagement earlier in the development process before a master plan is drawn and finalised.

*WALKABILITY AUDIT
FINDINGS: SHEDDEN
ROAD ISSUES
LOCATOR MAP*

*Source: author's
personal archive*





① WALKABILITY
OBSTACLE/
ENCROACHMENT
ON SIDEWALK

RECOMMENDATION
REDEVELOP
BUILDING/REROUTE
SIDEWALK

WALKABILITY AUDIT
FINDINGS: SHEDDEN
ROAD ISSUES
LOCATOR MAP
Source: author's
personal archive



③ WALKABILITY
OBSTACLES

RECOMMENDATION
IF NON STRUCTURAL
DISCUSS REMOVAL



④ WALKABILITY
NARROW DAMAGED
SIDEWALK

RECOMMENDATION

REMEDiate SIDEWALK - WIDEN WHERE POSSIBLE

RECOMMENDATION
CONTINUE
SIDEWALK



⑤ WALKABILITY
RAISED
SURFACE

RECOMMENDATION

MITIGATE TRIP
HAZARD - LEVEL
BASE TO SIDEWALK



⑥ TRANSPORT
BUS STOP
REQUIRED

RECOMMENDATION

PUT IN LAY BY
FOR BUSES



⑦ WALKABILITY
SHADE

RECOMMENDATION

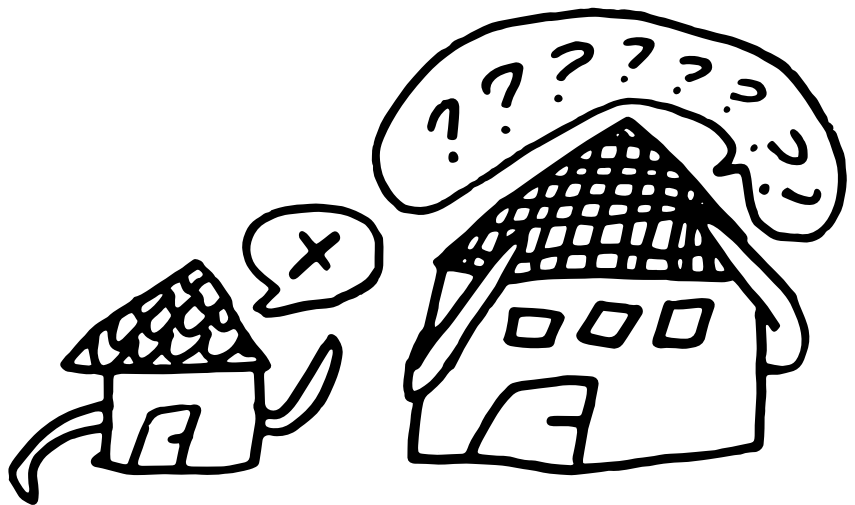
PUT IN SHADE TREES
AND SEATING



⑧ ACCESIBILITY
NO CROSSWALK

RECOMMENDATION

PUT IN CROSSWALK
WIDEN ENTRY PUT
IN CURB CUT/RELOCATE
POLES



Communities need to know that we have the power and authority to implement the changes and recommendations they are suggesting, or at least have access to and influence the person or people who do, so that real action, change and improvement will result. People need to see progress and be kept informed. We have to understand that communities with a history of having decisions imposed upon them without their consent are hurt, angry, damaged and frustrated. It will take time to heal that broken relationship and rebuild trust.

Stakeholders can try and meet people where they are and accept them as they are; see their humanity and empathise. What would you want if you lived there? What would you need? How would you feel if you had no control over decisions affecting your life? What would you do if roles were reversed and you were part of this community? How would you want to be approached and treated? Probably with respect as if you had value, as a person, a human being, not an inconvenience, annoyance or a stumbling block to be removed. Speak to community leaders, win their trust and these key influencers will grow your circle of influence within the community. Communicate, deliver and honour your word. Try to work around a problem, identify the end goal and provide options.

Where the relationships between the Council, the developer and the community are too damaged, it may be helpful and necessary to employ a neutral intermediary to provide honest feedback to all parties and make recommendations that result in win-win scenarios. Politicians, senior management and executives need to be prepared to act on recommendations, to show commitment to the community, rebuild bridges of trust and foster positive relationships. Sometimes it is important to accept that the damage done is irreparable. In those instances, Councils need to be able to move on from the current developer and engage a new one whose ethos is more in line with the aspirations of the community. If the latter is wary of anyone new coming in, the Council has a duty of care to work with community leaders and empower them, by providing land, built assets and access to resources, skills and services. The community may want and need to heal itself from its own Housing Association or Trust by running and managing its own Community Hubs and public gathering places.

ORGANISING AND MOBILISING THE COMMUNITY TO TRANSLATE THOSE IDEAS AND VISIONS INTO BUILT ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS

Group community input into themes. Rank strategies and recommendations into high, low and medium priority as well as long-term, short-term and intermediate. Determine values and timeframes for these priorities. Try to realise high priority quick wins, to build momentum and cement trust. If the time and investment required are too high in the short-term, the community may wish to build capacity or address another high or medium priority project they can execute with the resources available.

- PARKING
- HOUSING DENSITY
- TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT & PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY
- WAYFINDING & SIGNAGE
- ACCESSIBILITY / UNIVERSAL DESIGN
- CHARACTER / SENSE OF PLACE
- LANDSCAPING, PARKS & SQUARES
- WALKABILITY, PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY & PEDESTRIAN ACCESS TO WATERFRONT
- VENDING. AND PUBLIC AMENITIES
- LIGHTING & SAFETY
- PUBLIC TRANSPORT HUB

GEORGETOWN
AREAS TO ADDRESS:
KEY THEMES FROM
WALKING AUDIT
OBSERVATIONS

Source: author's
personal archive



To foster community engagement and buy-in, identify any recommendations that can be actioned by the community and organise people to be able to implement their own recommendation(s). This will empower them to help themselves by helping others. Simple actions that lead to tangible outputs can change mindsets, freeing people from victimhood and transforming them into leaders who can implement meaningful change in their own lives. This sense of accomplishment and empowerment can spill over into other areas of community life, and inspire other community-led projects that benefit everyone.

LEVERAGING POLITICAL AND BUSINESS BUY-IN TO FACILITATE COMMUNITY-LED PROJECTS

At the heart of it, Councils, developers and businesses are guided by self interest. They safeguard whatever resources they have control over and seek-cost saving recommendations as opposed to value-adding recommendations. To leverage political and business support, community organisations or their representatives need to understand the factors that motivate these potential partners and identify target stakeholder groups who would be willing to invest in the community because of alignment with their political mandate, Community Investment Strategy (CIS) or Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

Other considerations in pitching to a stakeholder include identifying key potential programme or project areas in which the stakeholder can invest. Communities and stakeholders will need to define roles and responsibilities, bearing in mind that stakeholder will likely set the budget, scope and timeline. It is important for the community to discuss with the stakeholder the exit strategy and handover, so the community has time to build capacity in preparation for the handover and get ready for the implementation and execution of any self-financing initiatives. It is also important that both parties monitor and communicate project results and advertise or promote successful projects to attract further community investment in addition to building stakeholder reputation and social license to operate.

A means of attracting investment and raising awareness is media coverage of community execution of smaller, quicker, cheaper projects. Those can be leveraged to attract investment for larger projects from community businesses and other investors. There needs to be some level of community self-organisation that can identify and communicate common or shared needs, come up with strategies and embark on a course of action to implement them through partnerships, collaboration and fundraising. It would be prudent for a community to embark on a multipronged strategy to generate investment, for short, medium and long-term projects and initiatives.



COMMUNITY ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOCIAL MOBILITY TO IMPROVE HEALTH AND STEM THE TIDE OF DISPLACEMENT AND DISENFRANCHISEMENT

Communities need to be aware of their legal rights to be able to effect whatever change is within their remit. To do this more effectively, they need to know the status of their assets. These assets, if properly developed and managed, and if made accessible and inclusive, can potentially improve health, well-being, economic productivity, spending power, and social cohesion.

Ways of doing this include:

- Checking who owns the land and other built community assets as a means of identifying stakeholders;
- Building collaboration and alliances – community organisations can work with other entities and institutions;
- Building capacity by developing skills, knowledge and accessing new ideas and methods to accomplish objectives;
- Leveraging company investment in the community, fostering skills exchange for capacity building, in addition to training and mentor programmes;
- Encouraging the Council to provide assets (land, buildings, underutilised public space) and using them to financially empower the community and improve health and well-being;
- Nurturing the establishment of Community Interest Companies or other forms of Social Enterprise with specific aims like training, employment, apprenticeship programmes or creative economy initiatives.

Where communities come together to support those in danger of displacement or disenfranchisement and mobilise to lobby for, to create or retain public spaces, housing and jobs for and within the community area, they can bring about change and preserve more of community and social networks. Policies like rent control can allow community members to remain in place, with affordable long-term leases.

MEASURING SUCCESS AND REPLICATING SUCCESSFUL ASPECTS OF THE PROCESS ELSEWHERE, ADAPTED TO PLACE-SPECIFIC CONTEXT, CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT CONSIDERATIONS

In closing, all parties involved in the community and in the development of the built environment should do some post-project evaluation and a 'lessons learned' exercise to discuss and debrief what worked and what was ineffective in the context of that place and its community. Key universal takeaways should be recorded by intermediaries to inform a toolkit or toolbox of strategies and techniques that can be applied in another context, making adjustments to consider for unique characteristics like climate, place, people and culture.

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Andreea Maier

WHY PLAN FOR DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

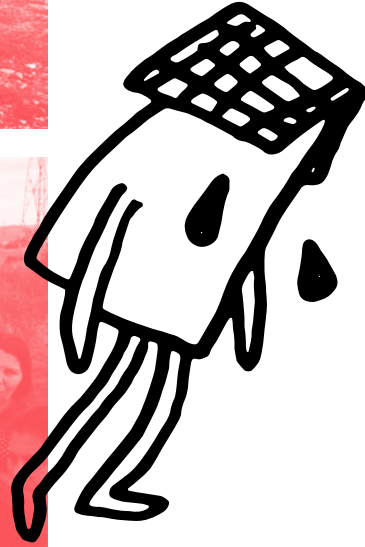
According to the European Commission, in 2016, 118 million people in the EU-28 were at risk of poverty or social exclusion (calculated using the AROPE indicator). This represents almost a quarter of the European population, even though the number has decreased by 1 million compared to 2015, due to actions taken under the Europe 2020 strategy, which has a key target of reducing this indicator. The states recording the highest number of people living in households at risk of poverty and social exclusion are Bulgaria (40,4%), Romania (38,8%) and Greece (35,6%).

Altogether in Romania, 1.139 census sectors fall within the criteria set for marginalized areas and they are located in the capital and another 264 cities. According to the Atlas of Marginalized Urban Areas, 342.933 people at risk of poverty and social exclusion live in these areas. However, the share of the population living in marginalized census sectors is more than ten times higher in very small towns (<10 000 inhabitants) compared to Bucharest. In 56 cities no marginalized zones are identified, but in five cities, over one third (up to 47%) of the population lives in such zones.

In Romania, I worked with areas which became marginalized over time due to several factors: poor and Roma people being “exiled” from other parts of the city, and residents refusing to fully accept them. Moreover, no development projects have been done in these neighbourhoods for 7 years prior to the implementation of our strategy, leaving some people without water, electricity or heat.

ROMANIAN
COMMUNITIES

Source: author's
personal archive



In my experience as an urban planner, there are still some cities, where little attention is given to marginalized communities, to the extent to which nobody from the public administration knows the real scale of the situation (number of people and households, socio-economic status, etc.), or is aware of the last time a project has been carried out there, either by public or private stakeholders. Nowadays, special European funding is available for the development of these areas, but the allocation of money is conditioned on the existence of an integrated local development strategy, like the European CLLD (Community Led Local Development) instrument for example. However, the guidelines provided are general, leaving most of the participatory action in the hands of local administrations.

Therefore, the challenge for us was to use strategic planning as a tool to involve citizens from marginalized neighbourhoods at every step of elaborating a local development strategy, from the project launch to the approval of the final document. People's opinions were always discussed along with administrative factors, thus creating an inclusive strategic planning process, not just a participatory approach. The process involved different actions which attracted citizens' interest to the subject: public meetings, games for prioritization of problems or projects, accountability actions within the community – involving both adults and children – and equal treatment workshops. These activities aimed at building trust between citizens and local administration in order to create the most suitable social programmes that ensured public services are relevant for all categories of users – children, youth, unemployed, people with disabilities, elderly citizens, etc.

WHY INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY IN THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Involving the disadvantaged community in the strategic planning process makes a big difference when it comes to finding the best possible solution to a problem. Moreover, it can help ensure equal opportunity and sustainable development, while generating social innovation through custom solutions. But for the community, there is one even greater benefit – building trust between them and the public administration and helping citizens learn how to represent themselves through bottom-up approaches.

The inclusive strategic planning for disadvantaged communities approach was developed within an existing mechanism created by the European Union, detailed at the national level and implemented by the local partnership.

The European Union provides funding for the CLLD mechanism. It also requires the establishment of a local partnership and imposes the collaborative method. Furthermore, national level actors set criteria for selecting funding strategies and financial allocation, and coordinate the process of submitting and selecting strategies. In some countries, the national public administrations take the responsibility of carrying out studies on employment, housing and social capital such as The Atlas of Marginalized Urban Areas in Romania. However, it is the responsibility of the local partnership to identify and validate the Marginalized Urban Areas, to establish a research methodology, to create a Local Action Group that would implement the strategy, and to find effective ways of involving citizens.

ADMINISTRATIVE LEVELS INVOLVED IN THE CLLD MECHANISM

Source: author's personal archive



Planning for communities that live in extreme poverty is a process that must be inclusive, given the complexity and specificity of problems that a marginalized urban area experiences. Yet, working with such communities to set development priorities for the next 5 years, for example, is a challenging process, since people's most burning needs are largely linked to day-to-day survival, and they do not have a general experience or trust in strategic documents, but rather a need for palpable interventions. Thus, the successful implementation of instruments like the CLLD Mechanism could be a good transferable practice that illustrates how local partnership should work to achieve the desired results, given the time, money and social constraints.



*WORKSHOP WITH
THE COMMUNITY TO
DRAFT THE LOCAL
DEVELOPMENT
STRATEGY*

*Source: author's
personal archive*

HOW TO PLAN FOR DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

Planning for disadvantaged communities means planning with them, because there is no other way to understand how their lives and personal challenges unfold in the specific urban space they inhabit. To ensure appropriate funding and a relevant outcome, a specific strategy for the neighbourhood or area is needed.

We tried to make citizens realize the importance of planning and setting priorities, help them take ownership of the implemented projects and secure their long-term durability. We worked with the classic strategic planning process, which we reshaped in order to be closer and more open to the community. We involved citizens at every step of elaborating a local development strategy, from gathering relevant local data to defining the main goals and the most important projects. We created a partnership for decision-making between local community, municipality, local employers and NGOs – a Local Action Group. By using this inclusive strategic planning process, we managed to get a document done with 80% help from the community.

Below is a structure of the inclusive strategic planning process. Part of it is required by the CLLD Mechanism, and another part is updated from personal experience:

INVOLVEMENT OF LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS

The project started with establishing the Local Action Group and its Directory Committee, which partake in a series of meetings on subjects regarding strategy development. At all times, they are informed about the progress of the process, and they take all decisions by voting, as none of the relevant stakeholder groups (public authorities, NGOs, citizen representatives, private companies) has more than 49% of the votes.

KNOWING THE COMMUNITY

Next step involved collecting and analyzing enough surveys (statistically representative) that would allow for the identification of marginalized communities as well as people at risk of poverty through AROPE indicator and other socio-economic features of the population.

- If poor people are located in enclaves, it helps to collect surveys through the census method in these areas and determine a statistical sample for the wider area (neighbourhood) in which they are located.
- To ensure honest responses, it is better if the surveys are collected with the help of local social service providers, which communities already recognize.

FAMILIARIZING CITIZENS WITH THE PROCESS

Organizing focus groups in different areas, half with people aged 15–29 and half with people aged 30 and over, helped promote the project among residents and identify specific problems within the area. With the assistance of a moderator and a facilitator, participants were working in teams of 5, listing the main problems on a specific topic, like infrastructure, mobility, public services, etc. Each team leader then presented their conclusions to the larger audience, prompting a broader discussion.

- In the initial meetings with members from disadvantaged communities and before getting to know the locals, it was important to provide food and warm beverages as they incentivised people to stay through the entire process.
- Building a database of participants with phone numbers (if they are willing to share those) helped maintain contact with them for further meetings.

BUILDING TRUST AND IDENTIFYING THE CATALYSTS FOR URBAN REGENERATION

This was done by organizing a series of events in the community aimed at building trust, among both children and adults: chalk drawings on the pavement, greening, little citizen questionnaire, photovoice activities, etc. Such events help identify local leaders, who can later on make valuable contributions to solving the problems of the community they live in.

It was also helpful to look for potential activities that the community has a special talent for, like sports, or music, or arts and crafts, since they can be leveraged to generate urban and social regeneration.

- Women have a very good understanding of the situation of children and mothers in the community, making it easy to mobilize them in actions aimed at improving children's well-being.
- Taking time to discuss with citizens in private, joining a football game with the kids or participating in other 'unofficial activities' helped identify local common goals that could push people to become active citizens.

This is how we learned that in one city, when kids could not afford to go to school, they were training in Greco-Roman wrestling, under the supervision of a local leader. They were motivated by the career they could make in sports. Two of the trainer's sons, young boys who live in the very same community, are currently European and world champions. Their success inspired the rest of the kids.





HELPING CITIZENS WORK TOGETHER AND REPRESENT THEMSELVES

One of the most important actions is getting citizens to work alongside experts in proposing projects that best respond to their needs, and helping them understand the benefits of the integrated approach.

Given the limited funding, another crucial action is getting citizens to prioritize the projects. This helps them understand that the municipality cannot solve all their problems at once and that the regeneration of their neighbourhood is a slow process which cannot happen without them. Moreover, they have a responsibility of following up and getting involved in the implementation.

- The people who went into the communities and helped build trust (the facilitators) were the most respected members at the meetings and they have a responsibility to intervene whenever people tend to get angry or nervous.
- For an ideal project proposal, experts should only offer support by asking the right questions and offering information about integrated approaches, thus stimulating an ideation process in which citizens take the lead.
- In order to have a successful project prioritization, experts should only draw attention to the limited funding, the eligibility conditions and, when too many projects are prioritized – help citizens find out what they need first.

INVOLVEMENT OF THE CITIZENS IN THE CREATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY

Conducting public debates on topics such as: strategy area delimitation, identifying problems, proposing solutions, prioritizing interventions and last but not least – agreeing on the final content of the strategy ensures a constant involvement of the citizens throughout the whole strategic planning process.

In order to get valuable input on the strategy content and help people understand the process prior to implementing projects, each meeting should engage citizens in a different game such as drawing on maps, writing strengths and weaknesses on colored papers and displaying them in front of the others, voting with stickers, engaging in discussions, etc.

- Organizing these debates in the neighbourhood, at a local interest point, no matter how modest it is, helped citizens feel comfortable to participate.
- In order to ensure representation and equal participation, meetings should consist of 50 people each, out of which a minimum of 40% women, 20% youth and 10% ethnic minorities.
- Calling all possible participants and personally inviting them at the meetings helped ensure full participation in relation to the target number set.

The inclusive strategic planning process was constantly supported by experts and facilitators who reminded the population that integrated interventions should also be designed to combat segregation, social exclusion and to ensure equal opportunity for all citizens. Special attention has been paid to interventions that ensure the participation of children in education such as combating the effects of social exclusion within the educational process.

CONCLUSIONS

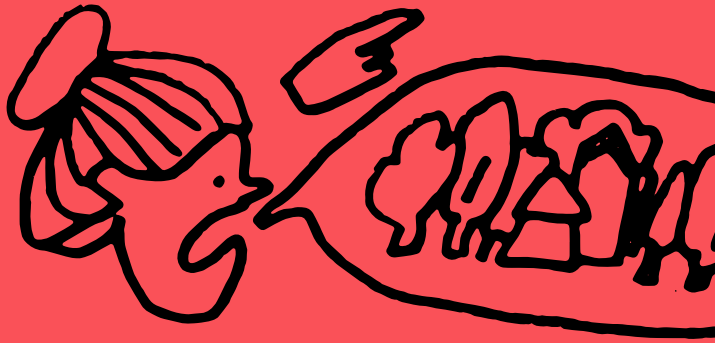
Being involved in the strategic planning of their neighbourhood shifted the perspective of the local community: while at first Roma and non-Roma people were unwilling to even share the same room, at the end, upon realizing their common struggles, most of them were working together for the betterment of their lives. Moreover, the local public administration was now fully aware of the problems that these neighbourhoods faced and felt proud to have developed such a project.

As a result, the Local Action Group laid down an integrated package of interventions, both soft and hard. It will receive 7 million euros of European funding to provide quality public services to all inhabitants of the selected territory and to establish social programmes that ensure the relevance of these services for all categories of users – children, youth, unemployed, persons with disabilities, elderly citizens, etc.

These projects will be implemented and monitored from 2019 to 2023 (the end of the current European funding period). Hopefully, in the next financing period (2021 – 2027), the European Commission will take into consideration the need to support the continuity of such projects.

Approach elaborated as part of the project "Developing the Integrated Local Development Strategy of the Disadvantaged Community in Bacau Municipality" based on the CLLD instrument Community Led Local Development).





‘CHANGING CHELMSFORD’: AN EXPERIMENT IN COLLABORATIVE URBANISM – RE-IMAGINING SPATIAL LEARNING, IDENTITY & INTERACTIONS

APPROACH

Nezhapi-Dellé Odeleye & Roger Estop



WHY CHELMSFORD?

Why should place shaping in Chelmsford be of more than local interest? How has Chelmsford shown that places are more than urban development? This chapter is about the citizen-based experiment called Changing Chelmsford, which used collaborative actions to energise a conservative town. We aimed to overcome complacency, to demonstrate that place is about belonging, small-scale creativity and connecting diverse people.

Chelmsford is a medium-sized cathedral town of 100 000 in the UK’s south-eastern region. Like other towns encircling London, it embodies a tension: on one hand, it is dominated by the metropolitan city, and its proximity (35 minutes by train) has meant it is perceived as a commuter town, lacking identity. On the other hand, it is at the centre of a sub-region with an affluent catchment of 500 000 across surrounding towns and villages, with potential for a dynamic civic identity.

Chelmsford’s 19th century growth was based on industrial innovation, being best known for Marconi’s radio factory in the early 20th century. It has evolved as a centre for civic administration, health, finance and shopping and more recently, a university town, derived from John Ruskin’s Cambridge School of Art (now with schools ranging from architecture and medicine, to zoology).

Being just outside London’s green belt, development pressures in Chelmsford persisted, despite the 2008 economic downturn, which stalled progress in key sites. Municipal authorities were focused on top-down inward investment, retail growth, and prudent civic management. Urban planning had embraced intensifying urban centres, but despite sustainable communities rhetoric, had not achieved local neighbourhood building or non-car transport.

'Place shaping' is a term within urbanism which refers to the process and importance of economic, community and cultural activity in creating happy neighbourhoods, alongside architecture and urban design. Consequently, Changing Chelmsford grew from an initial concern with engaging a wider range of local perspectives into a diverse network of motivated people generating community-based visions for its future, outside the formal planning structures.

PRACTICE CHALLENGES AND THEORETICAL IDEAS

Public engagement in UK spatial planning and urban design practice arises from specific site development proposals for planning permission, regeneration area proposals, or long-term strategy and policy requirements. These activities are led either by developers and their agents (architects, urban designers or development planners) – or by municipal planning authorities, who have a responsibility to consult local residents, civic interests and businesses on policy and proposals, to ensure fair, transparent decision-making. UK spatial planning is locked into these formal processes. As authors (an academic and a practitioner) we have been closely involved in the Changing Chelmsford initiative – Roger from 2009 and Nezhapi from 2010. We were aware that the structures for consultation were not allowing voices to be heard outside these highly regulated processes. Since then, neighbourhood plans have been introduced but still regulated through formal process.

In the academic context, a number of planning theorists have proposed new approaches in recent decades, such as 'collaborative planning' – also known as 'communicative planning' (Healey, 1996, 1997, 2003; Innes 1995; Innes & Boothe, 1999,). John Worthington, then a director of the UK's Academy of Urbanism (AoU) was an advocate of the collaborative approach, viewing non-adversarial collaboration between formal and informal interests as being important for urban place shaping and not just formal planning process compliance. Consultation exercises fall in the middle of Sherry Arnstein's (1969) 'ladder of participation', a model she used to describe a variety of approaches to community role in decision-making processes – ranging from exclusion (manipulation/therapy) at the lower end, through informing or consulting – to higher level placation, partnership and full participation.

In the past 40 years, a wide range of consultative and participatory methods have been developed – in urban design architecture, and urban planning – to address the issues raised by Arnstein. Many Councils no longer hold 'public meetings', a format now understood to encourage adversarial interactions with communities. Greater use is made of workshops, charrettes, 'planning-for-real', or multi-interest steering groups. However, despite the creativity and sophistication of many new techniques, they remain very goal-specific and time-limited to the duration of engagement events, project timetables of specific site projects or to the preparation of Plans. As a result, we've seen a proliferation in the number of such activities conducted for each new project or Plan – contributing to the consultation 'fatigue' and distrust experienced by local communities, who perceive these as self-serving, 'tick-box' exercises.

THE 'EXPERIMENT'

In 2009, Chelmsford resident Malcolm Noble, a retired head teacher, was stimulated by the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) call for regional citizen-led initiatives. He convened a Chelmsford 'forum' to open up alternative ways for residents to engage with change in the city centre, which lacked a resident representative body.

As he connected with diverse community leaders, education professionals, and urbanists, a conversation embracing a wider scope of local perspectives ensued – about community-based visions for the town's future, that could include hidden community groups, busy commuters, 'champions' of the town, more mobile or transient people, such as students, having looser attachments to the place. The RSA offered access to eminent practitioners, who came to Chelmsford and helped mobilize the group. We heard from John Worthington and Charles Landry¹ and used this to engage with academics from our two universities – Anglia Ruskin University and Writtle University College. This led to a partnership with the AoU.

The 'Chelmsford Forum' quickly evolved away from a convened forum, to a loose network, focused on resourcefulness, imagination, collaboration and action. This experiment in Chelmsford aimed to stimulate 'open-ended conversations' about the town's identity and future, founded on interactive practice and communication. Consequently, 'Changing Chelmsford' focused on developing an ongoing dialogue between its key local and national stakeholders (institutions), local resident, and business and academic communities.

This novel approach, responded to a wider political embrace of community-led placemaking, happening in other towns. The election of a new national Government in 2010 reflected this movement towards 'localism', introducing measures for locally devolved powers, and 'Big Society', promoting volunteering of local talent.

Our engagement with citizens was not based on any regeneration proposal nor development plan consultation – and so it was not controlled, time-limited, nor site-specific, having the whole of Chelmsford's urban area as its remit. There was another stimulus – the town's aspiration for recognition as a City (it filed its application in 2012²). Changing Chelmsford promoted the idea of living like a city to be recognised as a City.

Changing Chelmsford has involved exploratory action-research³ over the past nine years. This enabled the authors, as urbanism academic and planning practitioner respectively, to explore the benefits and limitations of applying collaborative theory to place shaping in practice. A summary of key examples of this practice follows, with evaluation of their impact.

1. Author of 'The Creative City', 2000; and 'The art of City Making', 2006 – concepts which drew on and further extended collaborative ideas.

2. In the UK, city status is now based on a competition between towns in the Queen's Jubilee years. It was Queen Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee year in 2012, and 26 UK towns applied for city status. Only three were successful, one in Scotland, one in Wales and Chelmsford in England – becoming the first city in Essex County.

3. 'Action-research' means we've not observed it as outsiders, and the goal was to change the situation being studied. It is important to acknowledge our own roles as 'insiders' – one of us an academic (also a local resident) and the other, a local practitioner – both active within this change-seeking process. Our role as volunteers alongside others within the initiative, operating with minimal funding meant there was no 'research assistant'. The only semi-employed participant was the festival director. Notes were made of meetings and summary reports were produced following key events. The Ideas Festivals 2011-17 produced annual evaluations, with the Ideas Hub carrying out periodic user-surveys. A more rigorous general survey, observations and interviews were conducted during summer 2017.

CHANGING CHELMSFORD: INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS

Once a steering group was established, a network of diverse individuals and organisations formed the basis of the project. The following shared intentions emerged:

- Engaging communities in leading change, from small scale to larger cultural shifts.
- Collaborating by linking residents to voluntary groups, university, municipalities and RSA.
- Looking beyond existing agendas to other ways of enabling urban change – beyond good work already done by the councils, seeking new opportunities and hidden issues.
- Exploring enriching links between community, creativity and the city's cultural identity.
- Generating 'ideas' as the raw material and energy that puts citizens into contact with each other, as well as land owners and politicians, to stimulate actions and influence decisions of those with power.

With these broad motivations, the driving force was to use voluntary expert support to expose citizens to ideas benefiting communities, culture and places and enable them to respond creatively. A selection of some Changing Chelmsford activities and their impact are described below.



1. HOW BOLD IS YOUR VISION 2009 – 2010

An 'umbrella' initiative, stimulating and supporting a range of ideas gave coherence and direction to the Changing Chelmsford mission, the growing network of participants and the diverse individual and stakeholder actions.

ACTIVITY

An initial series of 10 workshops challenged our understanding of Chelmsford's living, working, learning and cultural landscapes.

OUTCOME

Town Commons with all workshop participants in an intensive charrette. Effective pledges for action.

YouTube videos and a publication documented the outcome of the first year's generation of 100 ideas & project pledges.

2. CITIZEN INITIATIVES

A number of individual projects included:

ACTIVITY

Young Urban Explorers 2010-13: An architect engaged with pupils from 4 senior schools & YMCA.

Altogether Now: 2011-12 – a local impresario-led 'fringe festival' celebrated local art talent in town centre venues.

WikiHouse 2011 – collaborating with a research group, part of a downloadable house plan was constructed by students & staff of both universities. Anglia Ruskin paid for CNC routing, and a developer provided the timber.

OUTCOME

Explored urban places and actions for change with children.

Complemented the commercial, annual 'V' music festival outside town centre.

Exposed citizens to ideas through town centre 'live-assembly'. It is the 1st construction of this CAD design.

WIKIHOUSE LIVE-
ASSEMBLY IN
CHELMSFORD'S
MARKET SQUARE

Source: author's
personal archive



3. HERITAGE TRIANGLE 2011 – 2016

Focused citizen action on three neglected iconic heritage buildings, with surrounding development land – a former 1800s church opposite the rail station, the 1912 Marconi technical building, and the 1700s Shire Hall.

ACTIVITY

Changing Chelmsford led a programme of workshops, site visits and student projects, commissioned studies & a mural, and collaborated on possible new uses for them.

OUTCOME

Generated community awareness and engagement.

Influenced action on 2 of the 3 sites.

MARCONI'S 1912
ICONIC BUILDING,
EMPTY AND
UNSAFE – CHANGING
CHELMSFORD
COMMISSIONED
DESIGNER
NICK BROUGHTON'S
NEW WINDOW
DISPLAY, KEEPING
PUBLIC AWARENESS
OF THE BUILDING,
PROMOTING
INNOVATIVE
IDEAS IN FUTURE
CHELMSFORD

Source: author's
personal archive



4. CHELMSFORD IDEAS FESTIVAL 2011-2018

A community-led series of events celebrating the city, its arts, culture, heritage, community, academic research, and technology.

ACTIVITY

Unlike Cambridge, Bristol, etc. this has been a community-led festival. The number of events grew each year. Emphasis was on exploring ideas about the people and places that make the city.

OUTCOME

Most sustained aspect of Changing Chelmsford and how it involved communities effectively.

Inspired a new river festival (2014-18).



5. URBANISM EVENTS WITHIN THE FESTIVAL 2011 – 2017

An 'urbanism' stand in each Ideas festival was key to Changing Chelmsford's aim to stimulate un-programmed, creative engagement with place shaping.

ACTIVITY

Over 7 years we held a series of talks, walks, exhibitions, and workshops exploring place and meaning – learning from 'towns like ours', enriching the local economy, well-being and the 'happy city', 'young mayor for the day' debates, promoting creative enterprise.

OUTCOME

Engaged academics, students and practitioners, with local residents, creative businesses & politicians.

6. IDEAS HUB, CHELMSFORD 2012 – 2018

In 2012, the festival led to a permanent collective space – a city centre community café, event space and co-working hub occupying a 2-storey meanwhile space in the High Chelmer shopping centre.

ACTIVITY

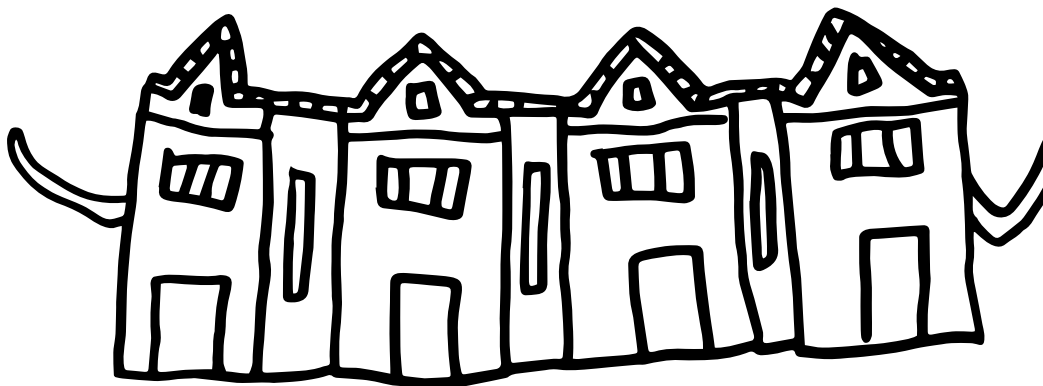
It began as a one month festival venue for community events, and evolved into an established community base for 5 years.

OUTCOME

Impact has been considerable, with many communities finding a home here.

Developed into a charitable company.

IDEAS FESTIVAL BROCHURES CONVEYING THE EXCITEMENT OF THE CHANGING CITY Source: author's personal archive



PROJECT EVALUATION

Beyond the initial planned workshops in 2010, subsequent programmes evolved from the initial ideas over time, with input from new participants. However, it was unclear at the outset, how long the experiment could be sustained. We needed to take a pragmatic, less formal approach⁴, which could adapt with the initiative. Interviews with 35 stakeholders and participants were carried out in the summer of 2017, with the following key themes emerging:

STRONGER CONNECTIONS WITH PEOPLE AND PLACE

A recurring theme centred on how participation (with any one of the events and projects under the Changing Chelmsford umbrella) helped even long-term residents to connect with people and organisations outside their normal circle.

“It is very profound, it is much bigger than I thought it would be. Being networked and involved in Chelmsford ...before was far less, through my children...

I have become more engaged with the Festival and I have joined the Chelmsford Civic Society and through this organisation I've been involved with the Chelmsford Cycling Action Group.

So, there are other things ...happening and you feel a lot more connection and better understanding of the fabric, the social, there are very interesting people that are here and the University that I was only vaguely aware of before.

And my friends that are not so locally networked ...they do not see this side of Chelmsford which is really nice. “

Interviewee Quote 1, Mary, local resident & practitioner

4. Action-research is about practitioners researching their own practices (McNiff, 2017) – as designers and stakeholders, we worked with other participants to help the initiative enhance participatory practices for shaping urban change.

PLATFORMS FOR LOCAL, BOTTOM-UP ACTIONS

Another theme shows how the initiative and its spin-offs provided community-based platforms for people to not only engage, but also initiate their own events and projects.

“So my Ideas Festival event, Chelmsford 21, really got people thinking what we’re doing with Chelmsford in terms of lifestyle, cars, the future. It did not achieve much but I made some really good connection which involved the Tour de France going through Chelmsford. ...that was a platform I got and I am really proud to have achieved that...”

Interviewee Quote 2, Steve, local resident & event organizer

A SAFE SPACE FOR ‘FEELING AT HOME’ IN THE CITY

This theme reveals the Ideas Hub’s social value as a welcoming space in the city centre.

“The best way to look at that is go onto the facebook page. When we were told it had to move, which is one of the great things about the Hub, there are many stories there, ‘its actually is the only place I can go and feed my baby’, or ‘where I meet people like me’. They are just heart-warming stories... And all the Hub has done is provide a space for that to happen.

I think that is a model for other public programmes in the future, you do not need to commission a service, because that service is always time bound, but to provide those social links, ...meet up here, ..., you are creating that support structure that will last far more longer, beyond financially possible. Good gym is another good example, that is 34/35 locations across the country, and the Chelmsford one runs out of the Ideas Hub, it uses that as a starting point...”

Interviewee Quote 3, Paul, local resident & Hub charity trustee

“...And the second thing is, even though I was only involved with running the Hub on Saturdays, I am really proud of what people said when coming into the Hub, they felt safe, comfortable, somewhere where they would not be embarrassed, or left out, that they did not have to buy a coffee or anything they could come down for a chat, and I am really proud they feel it is a space for them and welcoming...”

Interviewee Quote 4, Steve, local resident & event organizer

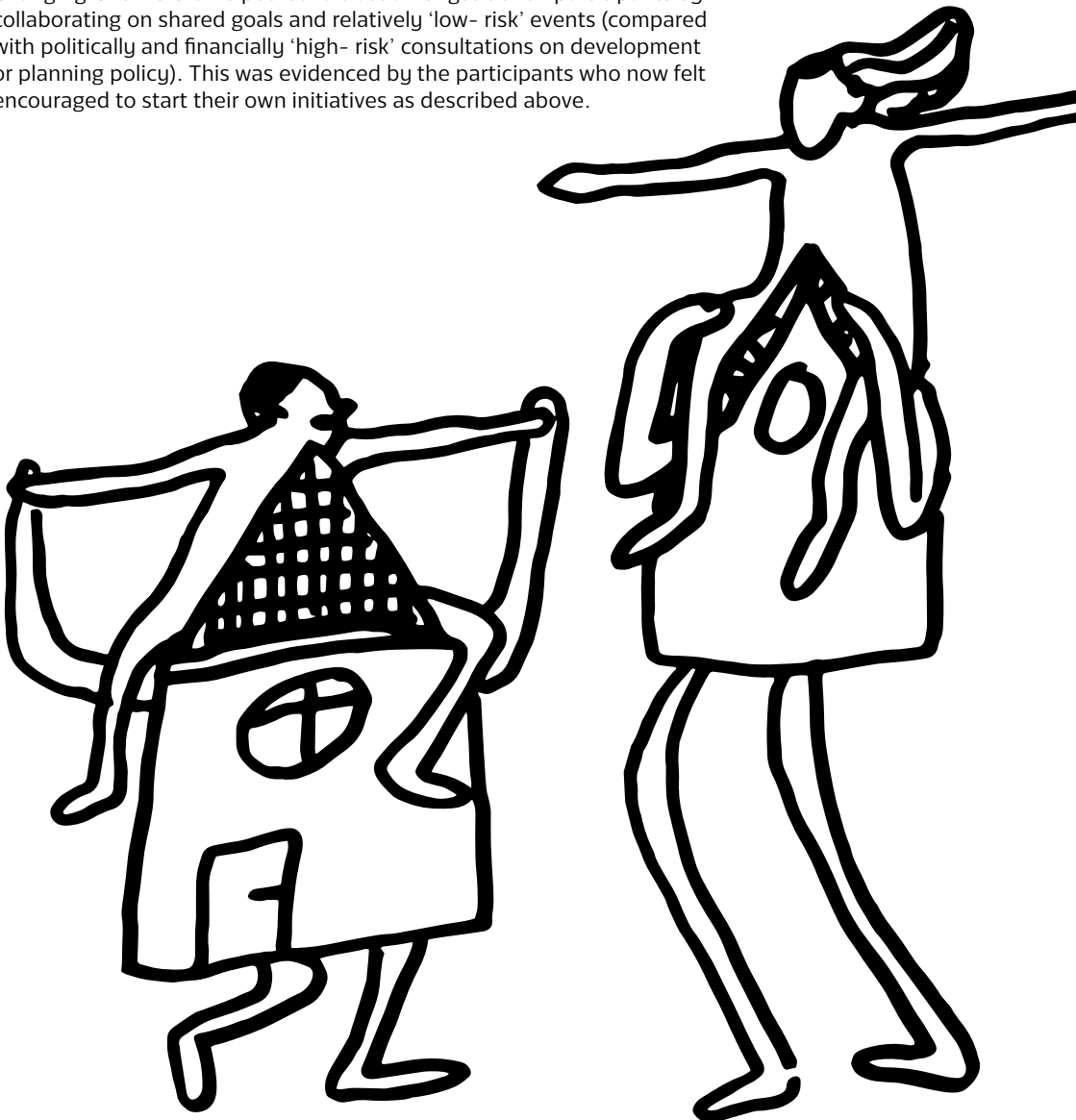
DISCUSSION – WAS IT WORTHWHILE AND COULD IT BE ADOPTED ELSEWHERE?

LESSONS: TRUST, CONFIDENCE AND CAPACITY

Our findings indicate that this approach to 'collaborative urbanism' can stimulate cross-sector conversations for generating creative ideas, and nurture emergent social actions, which can help transform perceptions and relationships between urban stakeholders, the community organisations and public-minded citizens.

The risks of this informal approach are low levels of public involvement, no funding and less than hoped-for impacts on politicians and future public programmes.

Changing Chelmsford helped build trust amongst citizen participants by collaborating on shared goals and relatively 'low- risk' events (compared with politically and financially 'high- risk' consultations on development or planning policy). This was evidenced by the participants who now felt encouraged to start their own initiatives as described above.



“...just from being a tutor here, and working with Changing Chelmsford on various initiatives. I have certainly got more of a social outlook than previously.

So for example, I have set up, in my home town of Leigh-on-sea in Essex, a community group ...to save a historic landmark which... has been closed for 9 years... So I have become much more engaged with the community, and we've run a student project, with the town council which saved the community centre from being demolished.

We've worked with the YMCA in Chelmsford and with Chelmsford gymnastic club, South Woodham Ferrers girl guides, and..., all these organisation have gone on to greatly benefit from that involvement between the University and key stakeholders...”

Interviewee Quote 5, Ron, University Tutor

LESSONS: CREATING A 'SENSE OF COMMUNITY' AND IDENTITY

This was a more diffuse approach, but it achieved deeper, personal levels of social engagement amongst some students, event participants, volunteers, their organisations and networks. Several interviewees remarked that prior to their involvement in either Changing Chelmsford, the Ideas Festivals, or the Ideas Hub, they knew very few people in Chelmsford.

“I think both have had a significant impact in that there was no sense of community in Chelmsford, I mean Chelmsford is a strange place in that you've got a really high ..income form a commuting population,... and it means that... the people not employed do not get a look-in with funding and there is very few resources for people with mental health issues and mums with kids, even..., long term unemployed, pensioners... all the people who are not working really.

So I think it has brought a place, I think it has made people much more aware of the importance of community, made community visible. I think it has been a place for many, many relationships and initiatives to start.”

Interviewee Quote 6, Louise, former Hub volunteer

The interactions facilitated by the initiative and spin-offs over 9 years, helped them 'feel at home' in the city, with a calendar of events, wider network of friends, professional peers and contacts, generating a 'sense of being part of a community'.

LESSONS: SOCIALLY-BASED, SPATIAL INTERACTIONS AND LEARNING

The spatial learning gained from involvement in a wider range of local events and spin-offs, has benefits over the medium-term. It highlights the value of place shaping continuity over time, enabling community hubs for collaborative activities and participative models.

“I think it has been productive to get students involved... And getting feedback..., they loved hearing from the Dean of the cathedral and from Matthew Taylor on the role of economics and change, all relevant to planning. Then in the afternoon ..was a walking tour of Chelmsford..., a few architecture students dropped off but all planning students went and you had this group of 70-80 people following Roger around Chelmsford telling the story of {new} buildings, ‘oh the developer said this... and eventually that was built’, and for many local people, it was the first time someone had explained the place in planning terms...”

Interviewee Quote 7, Nelia, University Tutor

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS – GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES TO SUSTAIN COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

Changing Chelmsford was by necessity a loose organisation reliant on individual commitment and energy. A formal leadership group helped steer and organize key events. More could have been done to strengthen the network structure, providing clearer roles and responsibilities, which could have aided volunteer retention.

There was a need for a motivated politician to embrace the approach and help translate the spirit of Changing Chelmsford and some projects into political programmes.

The lack of sustained and higher level funding through sponsorship and donations led to the Changing Chelmsford initiative losing momentum, volunteers dwindling, and fatigue for those remaining. The loose structure did not meet grant funding criteria. However, its main spin-off – the Ideas Hub, and indirect new ones still continue: a revitalized City pressure group, campaigns for a Marconi science centre, and new Chelmsford Festival, 2018.

Addressing the lessons above through stronger political support and business sponsorship, this experimental citizen initiative complements formal consultation with collaborative urbanism, giving people a stronger understanding of place and ownership of change.

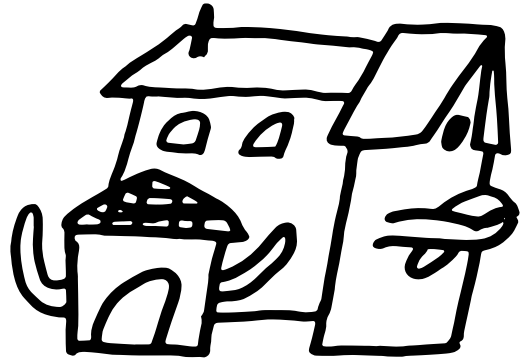
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VIANEN URBAN LAB: THE CITIZEN AS CITY-MAKER

LOCAL
CASE

Leninn Hernandez



This case describes the development and the results of Vianen Urban LAB, which started off as a thesis project to discover how an urban designer can create a better city through small amendments. I wanted to fix all those little problems I saw as a citizen. The initial idea was to do this project in Santa Marta, Colombia, but eventually the project had to take place in the Netherlands. Logically, I took my hometown as a research case: I have been living in Vianen since 2012 and the city really needed new energy. So I took matters in my own hands and started a one-year project to build the city using a bottom-up approach.

First, there was a need to research the challenges at hand in Vianen. I had personally encountered certain problems, but now I was going to find out if there were other citizens struggling with the same concerns. The next step was to find out if the municipality wanted to tackle these matters and if not, look for citizens willing to help address them. Alternatively, I could maybe do it myself.

Hence, I bought a caravan and travelled each week to a different neighbourhood. The first week the caravan was placed at the main shopping street, where about 20 people shared their concerns and ideas about their city. Most of them were adults (between 40 and 70 years old) highly educated, some retired, some entrepreneurs. They were excited and wanted to know what a caravan was doing on the shopping street. Most of them indicated a desire for more cultural activities on the street, and to fill up the empty shops.

The second week the caravan was placed at a high school, where teenagers expressed their ideas. They wanted better sport facilities, improved bike lanes and a place to party or chill out.

The third week the caravan travelled to a predominantly social housing neighbourhood, where most people live in apartment buildings and a large part of the population has a migrant background. People there were asking for more spaces to meet each other, more space to park their scooters, but also for advice on how to find a job or how to fill in tax forms. Some kids suggested building a skatepark or creating a soccer field.

On the final week the caravan was parked outside a shopping centre. It was rainy and not many people were out on the streets, but those who came were asking for more outdoor social activities, a walking route, a pop-up store.

The caravan tour finished in front of the old city wall, where most people were tourists and elderly citizens, who suggested placing more information boards, touristic routes and places to meet people and engage in cultural activities.

After a month of traveling around Vianen, 90 small yet important challenges were collected, more than 120 people spoke up, and a number of walks were undertaken to find out more about these places.



THE RESULT OF TOURING THROUGH VIANEN WITH THE URBAN LAB CARAVAN, 90 IDEAS TO MAKE THE CITY MORE ATTRACTIVE FOR EVERYONE

Source: author's personal archive





THE URBAN LAB
CARAVAN IN THE
MAIN SHOPPING
STREET IN VIANEN

Source: author's
personal archive

Afterwards, a group of about 30 city makers was contacted. They were enthusiastic about their city and not afraid to get their hands dirty when necessary. A poll including 12 projects in 4 categories was published online. As a result, 4 project plans were developed. Since the municipality did not have funding available, a crowdfunding campaign was launched and it raised € 2 000.

The projects were highly diverse, incorporating different products and activities.

One of them was a podium for local talents where an event named 'Cultural Sunday' was hosted. It received more than 750 visitors and 50 participants. Then we had a football tournament on a laser projected football field and organised an event to experience the historic city from the water with kayaks – about 50 people attended. More tactically, we opened a pop-up store to display local products and services, installed 3 picnic tables in a park, and opened a do-it-yourself workshop where people can come to build and fix things using the tools and knowledge from local experts. Another great initiative is Casa Hispanica Vianen, created to share the hispanic culture with other residents of Vianen. The club currently has more than 50 members. Lastly, we supported local skaters through a co-creation session to ask the municipality to fix up the old skatepark. The old skatepark is now being renovated and is expected to open in December of 2019. Currently we are working on creating a walking route with benches where people can take a break and get to know the neighbourhood. In 2019 we hope to start an urban garden, for which we already have a piece of land, wood and a sea ship container.



YOUNG SKATERS
BRAINSTORMING
ABOUT THEIR
WISHES FOR A NEW
SKATEPARK

Source: author's
personal archive

VISITORS OF THE
FIRST CULTURAL
SUNDAY IN VIANEN

Source: Nico van
Ganzewinkel



Because of the experimental approach of this project people had more realistic expectations and were willing to help when they could and in the way they could. Moreover, the solutions were not permanent which made them cheaper and faster to realise. At the same time, looking for funding and other resources was a very slow process, and took many hours of lobbying. If the initiative were to be repeated, I would probably use the same experimental approach but I would give myself more time to find the resources and to arrange funding.

Overall, the result was very fulfilling. We saw how everyone contributed to the results of the projects we started. Still, at the end of the day it is up to the citizens to judge if these project were worthy of our efforts. The city-maker mentality is about creating solutions and not about merely complaining while keeping your arms crossed. That is what I wanted to show.

THE VIANEN URBAN LAB PHILOSOPHY:

CONNECT: FIND AN ENTHUSIASTIC GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE IN THEIR CITY.

DESIGN: QUICK, CHEAP AND MAKE IT LOOK COOL.

EXPERIMENT: LOWER YOUR EXPECTATIONS AND KEEP TRYING NEW THINGS. ONE WILL WORK!

CREATE: JUST DO IT.





LUDOBARRIO: MAKING PLACES BY A PARTICIPATORY PLAYFUL PROCESS

APPROACH

José Miguel Gómez
& Carolina Carrasco Pizarro



INTRODUCTION

Tradition has betrayed us. Cities have left their fate to city experts for too long. This practice was firmly established during the 1920s, and eloquently synthesized in Le Corbusier's idea that says the design of cities was too important to be left to the citizens (Hall 1988). Since then, cities have been designed without the concern and participation of their inhabitants. The result – huge gaps of social content in the city, streets abandoned by people and conquered by cars, all of which contributes to the breakdown of urban social life and communities.

However, it seems like a paradigm shift is underway. Cities are developing and implementing new methods that involve citizens in the creation of urban spaces, but more radically, emphasis has been put on participation throughout the entire process: from the generation of ideas, through design all the way to implementation. Yet, the city's government institutions are still not flexible enough to deliver this task to the neighbours, so participation remains exclusive in some aspects. Moreover, in this logic of urban development, dictated by expertise over experience, people's right to participation seems forgotten or neglected.

The methodology presented in this article highlights tactics and strategies of Playful Actions that allow people to make decisions about their cities, while also inspiring greater interest through inclusive recreational actions in the public space.

Playful Neighbourhood is a socio-territorial intervention programme based on a collaborative urban design approach. It is structured in five intervention phases (1 per month) in 3 impact dimensions (social, territorial and network community). During this process, playful participatory and community-based actions are carried out to engage the neighbours in the use of tactical methods for urban planning, ending with the execution of a shared community project.

This process of collaborative urban design is facilitated by urbanists and sociologists, but ultimately design decisions are taken by the community¹, which is seen as the main connoisseur and beneficiary of its territory (Sanoff, 2000). This approach compels the facilitating team to use operational methods with neighbours. Such methods are designed to provide a deep understanding of local social and territorial dynamics and to identify difficulties, problems and desires. Hence, the facilitating team can evaluate the neighbourhood potential from the perspective of its inhabitants and engage them dynamically and actively in the process.

The construction of neighbourhood projects move from the conception of space to 'place' (Augé, 2001) through the active participation of the people linked to this space "making" (PPS. (s.f.)). The process of becoming a 'place' represents a deep resignifying of the territory as much as a spatial transformation, with multiple positive consequences for its beneficiaries. The responsibilities and rights, political, social and civil, of individuals are emphasized throughout the entire project in a given territory (Velasco, 2005), specifying the need for active participation from the local community.

The focus on collaboration plays an important role in the reconstruction of 'place'. The sum of concrete actions to transform the shared space of a neighbourhood builds in the collective imagination of the community a kind of symbolic resignifying, which stimulates new affective relationships between people and place (Berroeta & Rodriguez, 2010; Sen 2000). Furthermore, the physical transformation associated with the aesthetic image of a space has a transforming effect on individuals' perception of the city (Lynch, 1960). This is why short-term intervention initiatives, popularly called today tactical urbanism (Lydon & García, 2015), can turn into significant transformations in the long term.

In this context, playfulness as a strategy becomes relevant. Its characteristics allow us to promote the active and unprejudiced participation of the community in the place, stimulating their creativity and drawing ideas from their local experience (Brown, 2009). Moreover, humor can also transform the collective conception of place; it can be used as an effective urban tactic in placemaking.

1. Richard Sennet describes the benefits of community living in conditions of vulnerability from his own experience, identifying cooperation as an end in itself that filling the people who live and work in the community. (Sennet R in Rosa, M & Weiland, U; 2013) Richard Sennet describes the benefits of community living in conditions of vulnerability from his own experience, identifying cooperation as an end in itself that filling the people who live and work in the community. (Sennet R in Rosa, M & Weiland, U; 2013)

PLAYING AS A SOCIO TERRITORIAL TRANSFORMATION METHOD

Play has been present in societies, both human and animal, since forever. In fact, it could be considered an intrinsic element. Johan Huizinga (1949), in his book “Homo Ludenz”, studies the elements of game and its effect on culture. He demonstrates that playing is natural for people, extending the concept to various acts that have to do with recreation and dispersion, and that play is transversal to different age groups.

In addition, game has always been practiced, as a way to use imagination and emotions to face the daily challenges and reality without the limits of common logic. Thus, game allows those who participate to leave the common canons and create places outside of the box. Games allow things to be arranged in a different way, to generate new meanings, converting the ordinary into extraordinary.

Game also allows people to transmit positive ideas to those who share the playful action and toward the place where the action is carried out, thus supporting the process of resignifying in highly stigmatized spaces.

As Dr. Stuart Brown says, “Play is more than just fun”.



PLAYFUL NEIGHBOURHOOD IN PRACTICE

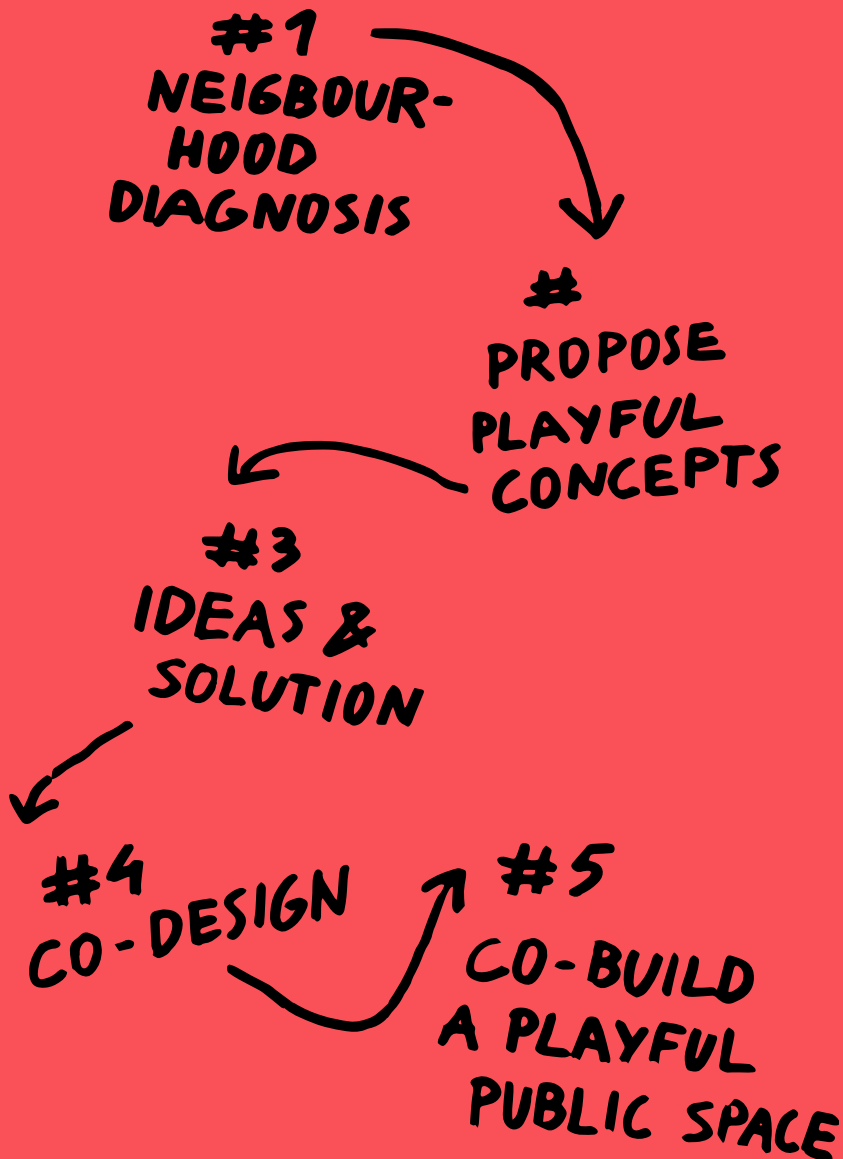
The Playful Neighbourhood Programme is based on a scalable and progressive process. It will be explained through two cases: one developed in Valparaiso in 2017 and an ongoing one happening in Montevideo, Uruguay. Both cases were designed based on the same methodology, even though they show tactical variations due to differences in contexts and objectives.

HOW WE GET A PLAYFUL NEIGHBOURHOOD?

BY A PARTICIPATORY CITIZEN PLAYFUL ACTION PROCESS

PLAYFUL NEIGHBOURHOOD PROCESS METHODOLOGY, BASED ON 5 PLAYFUL ACTIONS BY ESPACIO LÚDICO

Source: Espacio Lúdico





PLAYFUL ACTION DIAGNOSIS: OVERALL. MEMBERS OF ESPACIO LÚDICO WALK THROUGH THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AS A BLANK CANVAS, ASKING PEOPLE "WHAT IS MISSING IN CERRO CÁRCEL?" THE PERFORMANCE ATTRACTS PEOPLE, INVITING THEM TO BE PART OF THE PROCESS.

Source: Espacio Lúdico

PLAYFUL ACTION #1: NEIGHBOURHOOD DIAGNOSIS

Its objective is to understand the collective sense of the neighbourhood, trying to comprehend the territory using the neighbours' knowledge. The results should indicate relevant themes and concerns of the community. The action should, thus, serve as an orientation point that helps us adjust the process towards addressing those issues.

- Involve a wide range of citizens by asking them about their territory in a playful way.
- Recognize the main issues affecting the territory.
- Identify the needs of the territory by listening to local experiences.

PLAYFUL ACTION #2: PROJECTION

This action captures different possibilities and dreams of transformation and improvement that the inhabitants envision for their neighbourhood. The expectation is that this stage will inspire broad imaginative ideas and dreams that can indicate new possible urban situations without placing any limits.

- Gather creative ideas through the game.
- Engage a broad sample of citizens – all ages and genders – in the creative process.
- Build a social space for conversation about the possibilities.



169 NEIGHBOURS
GET INVOLVED IN
THE PLAYFUL ACTION
#2 DESPITE THE
COLD AND RAINY
DAY. THEY RESPOND
TO THE QUESTION
"WHAT ARE YOUR
DREAMS FOR YOUR
NEIGHBOUR?"

Source: *Espacio Lúdico*





PLAYFUL ACTION #3: TEST OF CONCEPTS AND IDEAS

This stage attempts to transform a top-down design into a bottom-up process. It allows residents to review existing design concepts and ideas and modify them if necessary.

- Explain clearly, creatively and spatially the transformation proposals planned for the neighbourhood.
- Test the main transformation idea, and experience it through setting up a playful space.
- Build an atmosphere that encourages discussion and debate about the ideas provided, and fosters their evaluation.

YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADOLESCENTS GET INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS AS A RESULT OF THE PLAYFUL ACTIONS. PLAYFUL ACTION 3 MONTEVIDEO.

Source: Espacio Lúdico

PLAYFUL ACTION #4: CO-DESIGN AND PROTOTYPING

In order to put into practice the dreams and ideas for the territory gathered in action #1 and #2, the 4th action calls on the neighbours to participate in a workshop and create specific design possibilities for a particular space in the neighbourhood. This action is expected to promote collective planning and design, introducing specific interventions in the chosen area, in common agreement among neighbours.

- Gather neighbours around a common project.
- Apply local ideas to the space and evaluate their real possibilities. Experience possibilities of change.
- Promote teamwork through play, with common welfare results.
- Strengthen social ties and commitment to the common project.

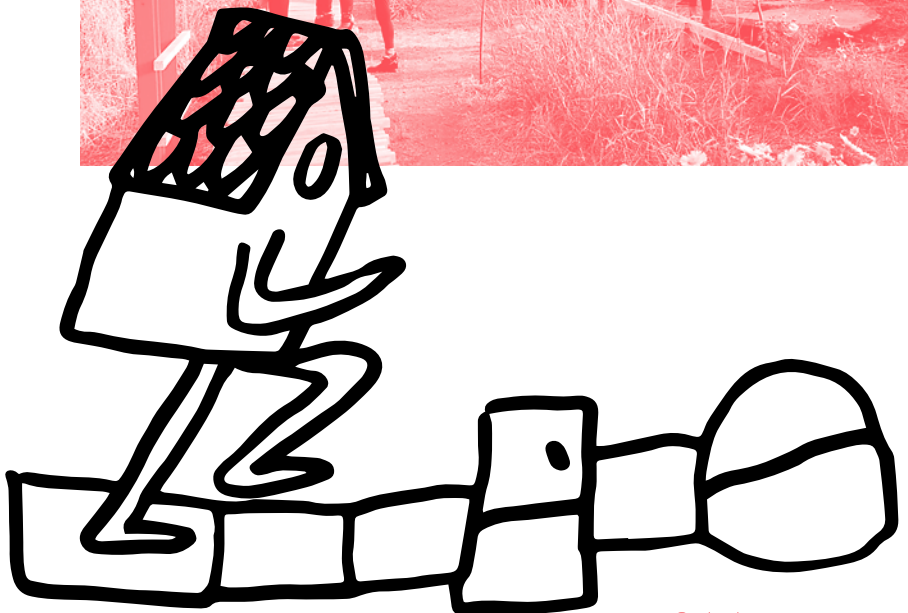
PLAYFUL ACTION #5: IMPLEMENTATION

This action encompasses the construction of the collective space. It is the final part in which all neighbourhoods take part in building the collective project. The main idea is to create places with local identity, which have a deep significance for the residents of the neighbourhoods.

- The site is transformed through physical transformations based on collective creativity.
- Uplift community engagement and further responsibility over their common place.
- Setting up a new concept of place which allows for both generic and specific interpretations.

*PLAYFUL ACTION 5
IN VALPARAISO WAS
DELIVERED WITH
WOOD DONATION
FROM SOCIAL
HOUSING AND
COLLECTIVE WORK
FROM NEIGHBOURS.
THE RESULT –
CONQUEST OF A
VACANT SPACE IN
VALPARAISO*

Source: Espacio Lúdico



FINDINGS

The Playful method allowed active and equal citizen participation on a collective project, showing a significant trend towards citizen involvement in public space, as well on collective issues that are affecting the neighbourhood, mainly happening after the implementation of Ludobarrio. This change of behaviour can be assumed to be the result of the engagement process between neighbours and local government, that Ludobarrio enhance through the playful actions.

The community is more empowered, active and linked as a result of methods or tactics designed to engage an important number of people through a construction process by stages. Moreover, playful actions establish trust between different local actors, forming strong groups to achieve the final spatial transformation project as well as subsequent negotiations in the territory. Therefore, territories where Playful Neighbourhood has been implemented, have demonstrated strong appropriations of the space in question, giving the place a new meaning, and where a strong group of participants are involved in its maintenance and sustainability applying for additional funds to improve the place now from their own and collective motivation.

Reinforcing participation might be the most relevant result of this methodology, in which the physical transformation of a public space is accompanied by strong capacity-building for the entire community. It is clear that playful actions enhance and accelerate the collective spirit.

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THE PLAYFUL CITY: A TOOL TO DEVELOP MORE INCLUSIVE, SAFE AND VIBRANT INTERGENERATIONAL URBAN COMMUNITIES

TOOL

Niamh Moore-Cherry¹, Aaron Copeland, Marisa Denker, Naomi Murphy and Neasa Ni Bhriain

1. Corresponding author

Ironically, planning for the future has traditionally silenced the voices of those who have inhabited the city the longest – ageing populations – and those who will be inhabiting cities in the decades to come – children and young people. Cities, as the domain of the adult, rarely focus on the role or agency of children in shaping and prioritizing city planning. The domain of the child (and by default, of its family and caretakers) generally lies on the urban edge, often times in fenced-off playgrounds at the corners of parks.

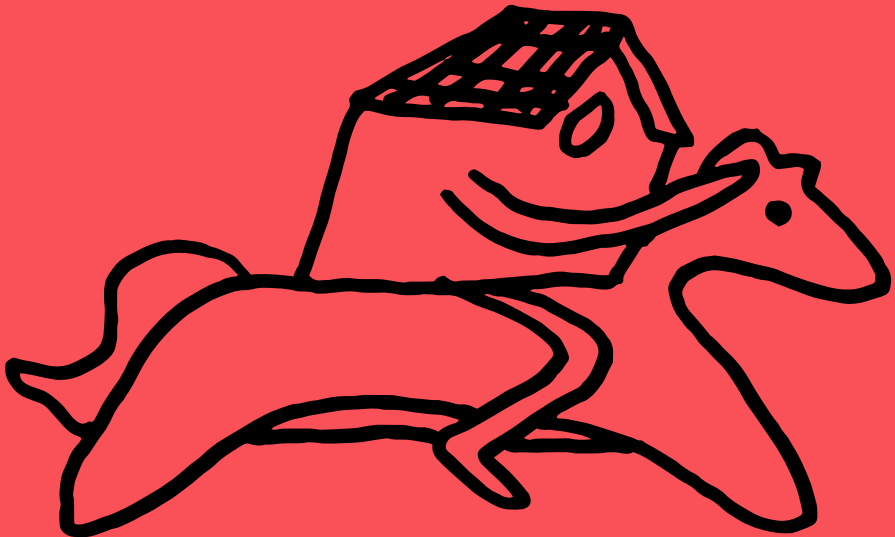
This essay focuses on the importance and potential of meaningful consultation with children and their communities to achieve better cities for all. Through outlining the approach adopted by *A Playful City*, the essay highlights the potential of communities to re-humanise the city from the street upwards by designing playful spaces for all ages to enjoy, and by using playful techniques to build engagement. Creating the conditions for healthier and happier urban environments contributes toward increased safety and sustainability and can help counteract some of the exclusion and polarisation that many urban dwellers feel.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) was a turning point in creating an impetus for more inclusive approaches to planning. Yet, children's participation and agency in shaping their home and school environments has been relatively limited in practice (Russell & Moore-Cherry, 2014) mirroring wider limitations in how and to what extent people participate in planning. Where development is taking place, genuine meaningful consultation is often limited and simply tokenistic (Arnstein, 2015). Urban development policies and practice remain largely pre-determined by urban planners with narrow parameters defined by the state and dominant, often corporate, actors (Cardullo & Kitchin, 2018). Participation that does occur is limited or based on choices already pre-defined by particular, powerful actors through formal planning channels.

Previous research shows that those with higher levels of social capital can be effective even within these constraints, but those who are already marginalized – such as disadvantaged communities, children or elderly people – find it much harder to have their voices heard and acted upon (Russell et al., 2017).

By 2030, 60% of all urban dwellers will be under 18 years old and this demands the greater inclusion and meaningful consultation of children and their families in the design and planning processes for the whole city. A Playful City advocates for the inclusion of this perspective across the policy cycle and the urban environment, not just for those places such as playgrounds that are formally designated and conceptualised as ‘children’s spaces’.

A Playful City is a multidisciplinary team formed by people with background in architecture, design, urban studies, co-creation, law, marketing and teaching who have been drawn together by their shared passion for making a difference in the city of Dublin through meaningful consultation and playful design. An alternative approach to building inclusion has been trialled to establish common ground between the traditional policy-makers and those who feel the impact of their decisions, and to collaborate on playful urban development that works for all. The goal of the organisation has been to develop spaces where people of all ages, cultures and abilities can freely mix and develop ties that have traditionally been the bond within our cities beginning with how children and young people’s views are mainstreamed in urban design.



“The corridor led to a stairway and below was the inexhaustible adventure of a gravelled yard”

(Patrick Kavanagh, *The Hospital*)

Drawing on the importance of play as a form of learning and engagement (Bento & Dias, 2017), A Playful City set out to reawaken awareness of the beauty and adventure hidden in the banal everyday streetscapes of the city and reimagine them with the surrounding communities as intergenerational playful spaces. Through a people-first approach, both young and old citizens within communities are brought together to articulate how they view their local area, how they would like to see public spaces designed, and to support a sense of community ownership of public space. Harnessing the potential of children and young people as a key resource, working in concert with their own communities and outside stakeholders, is critical to the sustainable development of future cities.

Working with a range of cross-sectoral partners including local schools and community workers, universities, well-recognised charities, architect and design firms, and public and private sponsors, A Playful City has focused its attention on a particular part of inner-city Dublin. The docklands is an area where radical physical transformation has occurred in recent years and there is significant social polarisation between new ‘gentrifiers’ – both residential and commercial – and the more disadvantaged communities that have been engulfed in this change. A design charrette in March 2016 began the process by drawing together over 100 stakeholders from across the city to consider what play means and how it could be meaningfully used to connect and engage with communities. This event gave rise to the idea of designing a mobile device to engage children and adults, and playfully gather local perspectives and views.

The design brief highlighted the need for a device that was:

- **easily stored and easily transported;**
- **eye-catching in order to draw attention;**
- **adaptable to urban spaces;**
- **tailored to consult with people of different ages and abilities.**

The tool was designed by Sean Harrington Architects with support from Bank of Ireland and is known as the Spiel Mobile. It is a playful and engaging mobile, pop-up consultation device that attracts and engages people of all ages and abilities in a community to come together, and share their insights. Unlike other forms of consultation, A Playful City adopts a people-first approach. One of its main goals is to involve and respond to as much of the wider community as possible. For example, to inform a design hackathon in spring 2018, a set of adult and child personas was produced, based on consultations with real people, to

ensure that children and their communities are understood in all their diversity. Samples include Luka – “a five year old who loves football and all he wants to do is play and talk about it all day long” and Karen, who “is 12 and isn’t a big fan of the outdoor play spaces due to the weather. There is no fear of the unknown in a frequently visited play cafe”. Projects support imaginative play and playful imaginings of what the city ought to be. The ideas generated are used to create particular playful spaces, some long-term, some short-term. Since 2017, such consultations have led to a mural project with the Office of the Children’s Ombudsman highlighting the right to play, as well as the Zig-Zag and Playful Street projects described below.

THE SPIEL MOBILE
Source: A Playful City



A PLAYFUL CITY PROJECTS

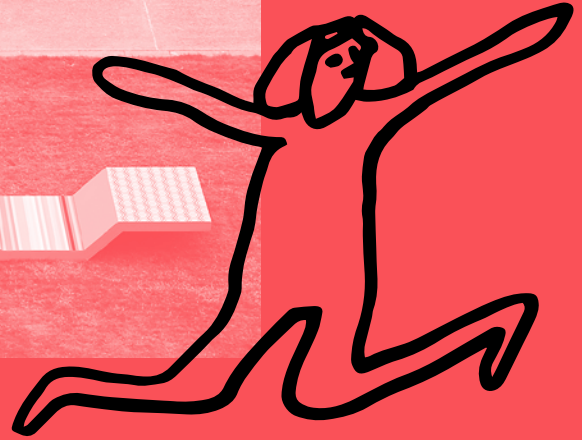
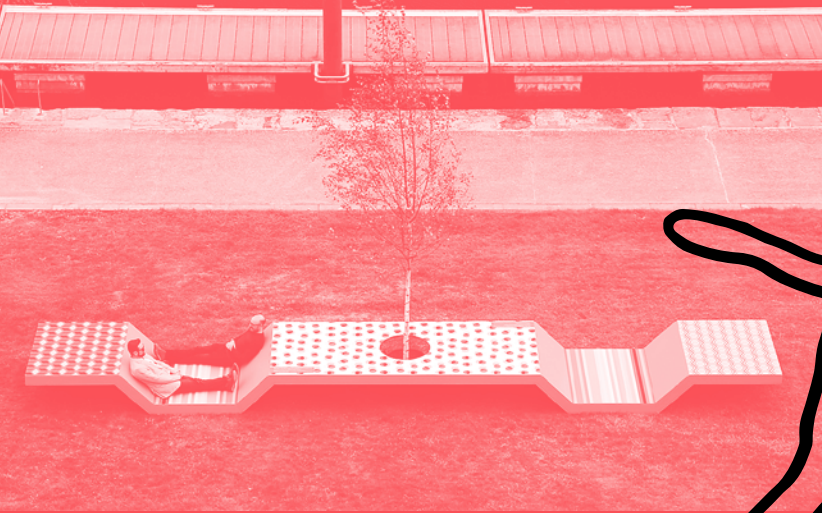
A Playful Street is one of the most dynamic projects which emerged from the consultation processes described above. Working with communities and the local police, this temporary road closure provides a safe environment for children to play outdoors on an inner-city street for a few hours on a given day. While the focus is on supporting children’s right to play, the project also reclaims the street from the car-based traffic and encourages people of all ages and abilities to come out of their homes and use the streets they live on for social interaction. The Playful City team encourages grandparents and older residents to teach old street games to younger people, building ties within the community and fostering an inter-generational sense of urban belonging. If residents wish to leave or enter their street by car, they can do so at walking speed in order to cause minimal disruption.

By enabling children to do what they do best at no cost and with the support of older members of their families and communities, The Playful City re-activates urban space and fosters community cohesion. A key element in making this work has been the handing over of control to the community themselves and identifying key people that can help at the outset and provide stewardship for the event. Reminding people of how they played when they were young is rather important. People love to reminisce and it also helps them understand and appreciate play as a basic right for children. Another benefit that can be highlighted is the opportunity older people get to demonstrate the games they once played – thus, elderly citizens have a purpose to participate and it is fun for them too! At the end of the two-hour event, A Playful City leaves the street toys behind (footballs, kites) to encourage the community to keep going with their street play.



A PLAYFUL STREET
Source: A Playful City

At the Playful Street events, the Spiel Mobile has been strategically placed and actively used to consult on other possible local initiatives. One suggestion was to animate an underused grass strip (euphemistically termed a linear park) adjacent to Spencer Dock on the Royal Canal. Following community consultations and a hackathon in Spring 2018, the Zig-Zag was designed and installed as a playful public seating area. It responded to a demand among the young people of the area for a colourful, welcoming and interesting space to hang out in a part of the city that has become dominated by commercial buildings in recent years. It is multi-functional: people can sit, read, eat, climb, chat at their own pace and leisure. It has encouraged residents and workers at lunchtime to linger and enjoy a part of the city generally characterized by constant mobility. Although it was installed on a temporary basis, Dublin City Council has now offered to find a more permanent home for the installation.



MOVING A PLAYFUL CITY FORWARD

The projects described in this essay highlight the potential of bringing a more grassroots-led approach to urban development and community-building. The communities that have engaged with the process have remarked on its transformative effect in building capacity and inter-generational connections. Since initiating a Playful Street and engaging directly through school children and other youth members and community services, A Playful City has been invited by the community to volunteer at other local events. Children are actively looking for playful street ‘toys’ like hoops and balls and the community around the north-east inner city want to work on more playful streets. The Spiel Mobile has been critical in enabling children and their communities to articulate their desires and participate meaningfully in shaping their own neighbourhoods.

Bridging the connection to policy-makers has been key to effectively advocating for more playful and child-friendly urban spaces. Stakeholders such as the local authority have their own parameters and regulations that they must work with and they usually have very limited, if any, budget for such initiatives. Gaining trust is critical to the implementation of the community vision and this takes time and experience. Through constructive engagement with the local authority, A Playful City has built productive working relationships to ensure that ideas emerging from residents themselves can become reality.

Responding to the need to build more inclusive cities for all, the Playful City process is intended to support the emergence of a more progressive and thoughtful city. This type of city is defined by its people and asks its citizens – of whatever age – what it needs. The Playful City encourages design for children, the elderly, and all generations in between to enhance the quality and attractiveness of the urban environment. It is inspired by the philosophy of Jane Jacobs that “cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody” (1961).



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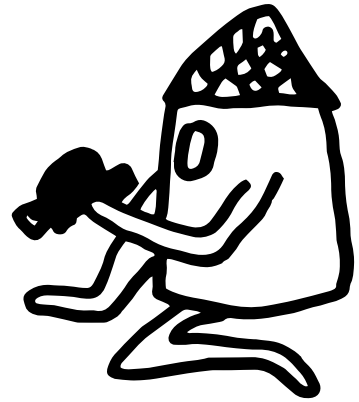
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CREATING SPATIAL JUSTICE FROM THE START: AT THE CHILD'S LEVEL

APPROACH

Renet Korthals Altes



It is mentioned before in this book and in this chapter, children represent the future of a city. The quote of Enrique Peñalosa, Mayor of Bogotá “children are indicators, a city which is successful for children, is successful for all its inhabitants” (Laker, 2019) is strengthened by research. The ability of children to roam independently, the amount of time they spend playing outdoors and their level of contact with nature indicate how a city is experienced by its inhabitants, in terms of health and well-being, sustainability, resilience and safety.

Several movements focus on ways to make cities more child-friendly. At the same time research shows a worrying decline in children’s use of public spaces near their homes for play. Only 21% of children play near their houses (outside in the street or in the area) every day, compared to 71% of their parents (ICM opinion poll).

In this article I will explore the following: what do urban children really need? And how do we work towards those needs?

21ST CENTURY CHILDREN

In a more and more institutionalized society, where time to play freely is becoming scarce, the importance of free play is increasingly more evident. It is exciting to see how the world is rapidly changing – an exponential increase in our technical abilities, artificial intelligence, robotization, and growing access to worldwide knowledge. Educators, leading businessmen and politicians agree that our children will need a distinguished set of skills to be able to profit from these improvements as adults. They will still need to build up their domain knowledge but at the same time learn different skills, ‘21st century skills’, like problem solving, innovative and

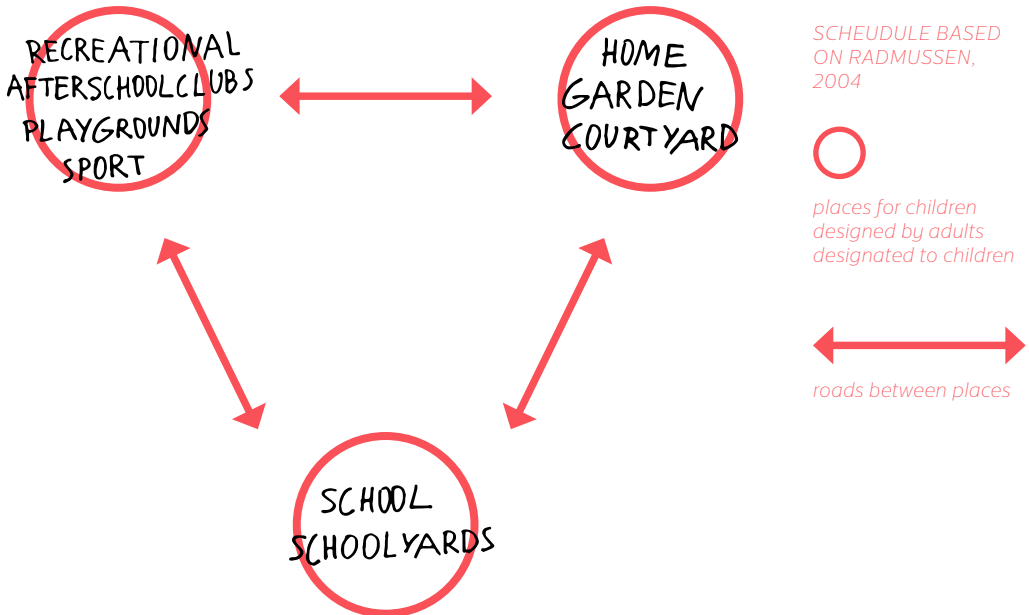
creative thinking. And 'soft skills' will distinguish us as well; think of teamwork, empathy, understanding and persistence.

Research shows that – besides education – children develop these specific distinguishing skills mostly during play and specifically during free play. Outdoor free play provides many opportunities for social learning. The social abilities that children acquire while playing in public space unaccompanied by parents are particularly valuable (Daschütz, 2006).

CHILDREN'S NEIGHBOURHOODS

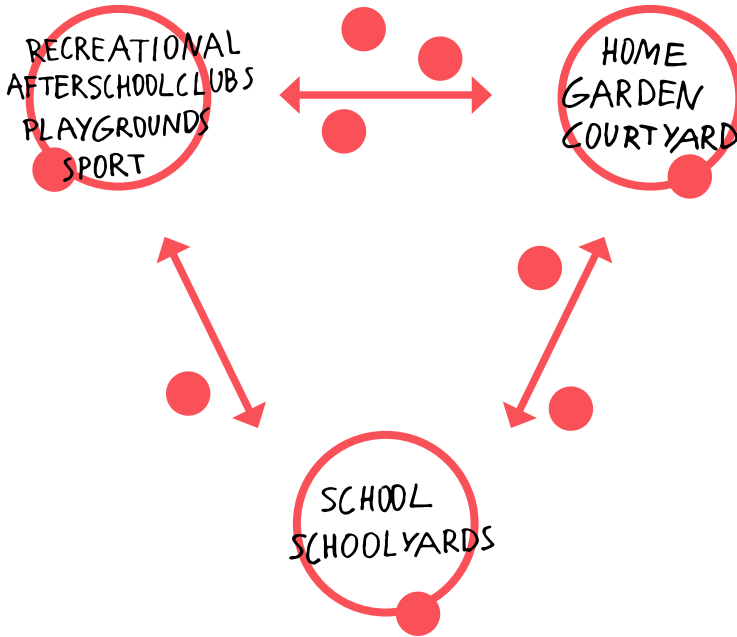
Children do not feel as if they live in a city, their reference is the neighbourhood. According to Tim Gill ("An interview with... Tim Gill", 2019), we should aim to expand children's everyday freedoms, including their freedom to play within their neighbourhood.

The everyday life of an average European child happens within an institutionalized triangle (Rasmussen, 2004), where the corners are (1) the home area (indoor & outdoor), (2) the school & schoolyard, and (3) recreation (after school clubs, playground, sports). These places for children are designed by adults. The legs are the routes between these places.



But if you ask a child to take you around its favourite places, it will probably point you to some new areas that are different from the formally designated ones. Kids' favourite places are not the intended 'places for children', but 'children's places' like neglected, informal or natural spots (see Valentine, 2004, 74-76/ Armitage, 2004). Children create their own emotional connection to these places, their own sense of belonging and even ownership.

RASMUSSEN TRIANGLE WITH PLACES FOR CHILDREN



SCHEDULE BASED ON RASMUSSEN, 2004



places for children designed by adults designated to children



roads between places



children's places

The research of Baldo Blinkert (2004) stresses the importance of such 'functionally unspecific' places, undefined spaces, which will be filled in by children themselves.

As adults, we cannot design children's places. But by asking children and teenagers to give us a guided tour, to tell us about these places, and to map those which are important to them, policy-makers and designers can receive great insight. By adding these (their) places, plus the routes they take, into this extended triangle of Rasmussen, the starting points of a child-friendly neighbourhood can be set.

Let us look at opportunities for free play through the triangle.

- ① along the routes
- ② at designated areas to play: places for children
- ③ at places which children themselves claim: children's places

1. ROUTES: STREETS AND PATHWAYS

The safer a neighbourhood is and the better adapted it is for pedestrians and cyclists, the more freedom we can give our children to move safely in between the ends of the triangle and find their own places in between. The sentiment of freedom has a lot to do with the attitude of adults. Differences in mobility behavior are in many cases linked to rules imposed by parents. For instance, many girls are allowed to move around freely only at an older age, for shorter periods and less frequently than boys. Vienna, for instance, is promoting transport by foot, bicycle and public transport, and focusing on safe atmospheric streetscapes to contribute to equitable mobility and increase the freedom of children and adolescents to move independently.

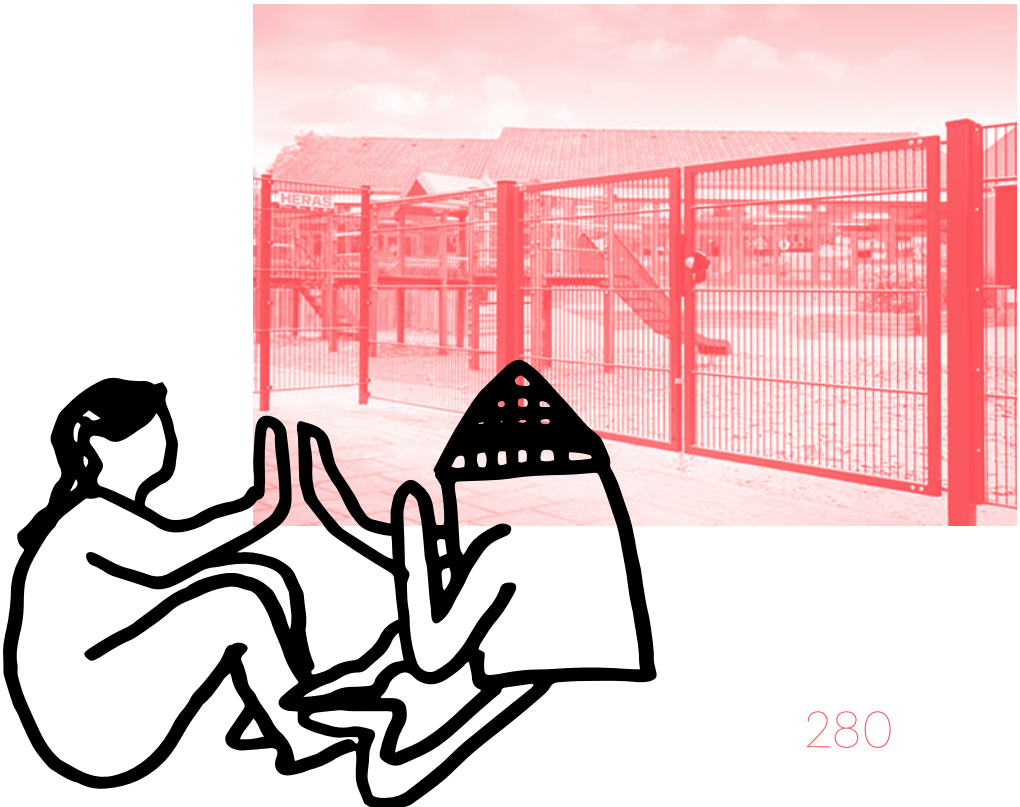
This is a fundamental precondition if we want to enable all children to play freely.

2. INCLUSIVE 'PLACES FOR CHILDREN'

To decrease inequality between different communities, these 'places for children' should be inclusive to the public without entrance fees ("Cities Alive: Designing for Urban Childhoods", 2019). The tendency to take these designated play areas out of the public realm, by fencing them part of the day (schoolyards), or placing them in 'privately owned public spaces' (POPS) – housing compounds, coastal hotels and restaurants, parks with entrance fees, indoor playgrounds, outdoor play elements with fees – is threatening equitable access to play for all children regardless of their socio-economic backgrounds. If we want to design a city for all, we should defend our public space.

*WE SHOULD DEFEND
OUR PUBLIC SPACES:
PLACES TO PLAY
WITHOUT FENCE OR
FEE*

Source: unknown.





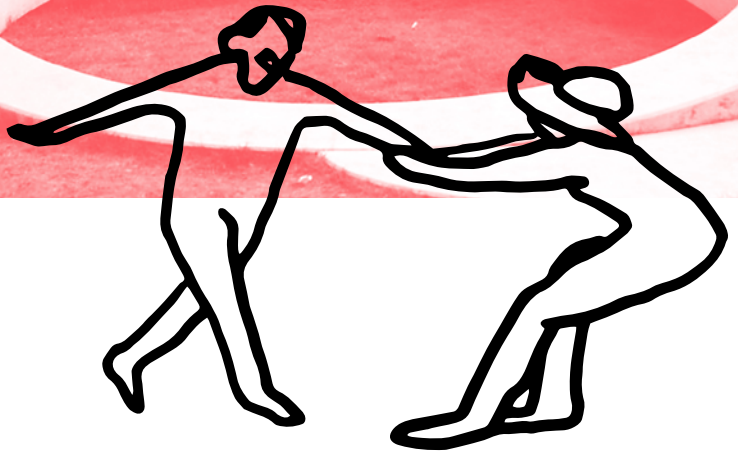
HOW SHOULD THESE 'PLACES FOR CHILDREN' BE DESIGNED?

Neither the size, nor the amount of equipment make playgrounds better places for children (Kangling, 2015). Adults talking about playgrounds, mention the division of space and its elements (sandbox, swings, slide). Children talk about the physical use of the places, their special meaning (best bushes for hiding), and the feelings that place evokes ("we are alone, nobody can watch us") (Graue et al., 1998).

Children play longer, are less bored and come more often if the area to play offers a variety of opportunities (Kingery-Page & Melvin, 2013; Stagnitti, 2004). Places to play should invite different types of play, not necessarily in terms of equipment, but by creating a landscape of diverse surfaces (sand, pavement, earth, shredded wood, grass, rubber), with simple minimal elements inviting children to create their own types of play:



These 7 types of play ensure that all children with their own favourite play – depending on personality, gender, age, culture, background – can find their own place within the area to play.



*SIMPLE, NON-
DEFINED, NATURAL
ELEMENTS INVITING
FOR DIVERSE TYPES
OF PLAY*

*Sources: Earthscape
and unknown*

DESIGN FOR ABILITIES

Discussions on inclusiveness often focus on children in wheelchairs, but there are numerous disabilities that designers should account for when designing play areas. The key is to differentiate and to design for abilities. Children with disabilities, just like all other children, want to learn new things ('neophilic'), to discover and improve their abilities.

Ensuring a diverse spectrum of play types, and various level of difficulty (e.g. platforms at differing heights, with different ways to climb up these platforms: from stairs with railings, to ladders, steep ropes, monkey bars or climbing grips), and also differentiating the size of the elements, enables children of different ages to enjoy the space, according to their own emotional preferences, and individual physical or intellectual abilities.

Inclusive playgrounds should stimulate kids to play together on the same undefined places and with the same elements, which are accessible for children with all their unique (dis)abilities.

DESIGN FOR BOYS AND GIRLS ...?

Yet, inclusion goes further. Research still focuses on differences in play between boys and girls. For instance, boys are seen as being more physical, active, competitive and involved in rough and tumble games, while girls participate more in sedentary play, verbal play and in socializing activities. But in the current day and age, we should look at it as a unique play preference based on personality, not gender (boyish or girlish). Enabling diverse types of play gives children of all sexes equal chance to engage in the type of play they favour at the moment.

Gender segregation appears to be much sharper at school playgrounds than in street play. In school playgrounds, boys often dominate most of the (play) space and use large areas for games like football, whereas girls tend to occupy walled areas and seating areas which give them a sense of privacy (Thomson, 2005, p. 74).

The cause of 'boys overtaking the playground' is often in the lack of diverse play opportunities. Even small spaces can invite for a wider variety of different play types. If children can play more different types of play, then boys will engage in more diverse play and the space will be less taken over by football.

According to Karsten, the public playgrounds in Amsterdam host more boys than girls, especially in older age groups, and even more so among Moroccan and Turkish kids. Girls' status as a minority on the playground is reinforced by the fact they go in smaller groups, less frequently and for shorter periods of time. Boys, on the other hand, enjoy more freedom and can roam around in the neighbourhood more freely than girls, who are restricted by the care for younger siblings and by domestic chores. (Van Gils, 2007, several perspectives on children's play, garant). Creating spaces for older girls to play and socialize, next to the toddler areas might be one way to increase their freedom to play.

DESIGN FOR ALL AGES, ADOLESCENTS ‘THEY DO NOT WANT US ANYWHERE’

Children and teenagers who like to spend outdoor time with their friends in groups feel that they are often discriminated against because of their age. Within cities there is a negative attitude (intolerant adults) towards older children and teenagers, sometimes enforced by legal sanctions such as dispersal orders, which restrict young people’s freedom to spend time in the streets and areas around their homes. Their freedom in public space is limited, decreasing their opportunities for informal recreation which they need and have a right to.

Conflicts of ownership around play spaces between younger children and teenagers, is often caused by a lack of opportunities for adolescents to gather, play sports or socialize. Sufficient opportunities would enable both groups to find their own places to play and socialize. Think of undefined places for gathering, differently shaped sitting and hangout spaces, more nearby sporting or shopping facilities, multifunctional street sports elements combined with seat or table-like elements. Including the adolescents in the design of children’s places, asking them what obstacles they face, what observations they have, what type of activities and places they would prefer, will give designers and policy-makers valuable insight for creating a truly inclusive neighbourhood for people of all ages.

3. CHILDREN’S PLACES: ROUGH EDGES ALONG ROUTES AND DESIGNATED AREAS

Most important are the diamonds within the triangle, the pieces of ‘free’ land, undefined open spots, where kids can create their own space like empty terrains, small plots of various nature. When these ‘rough edges’ are along the routes – the three orange legs of the triangle – more children will be naturally passing by and the possibility of being attracted to use these spots will increase.

As these places are not specifically designated for children, there is less opportunity for supervision. There are more loose surfaces and natural elements, which increases uncertainty. Do these kind of places attract all children? And if so, are all children across cultures, boys and girls, equally allowed to go there?

The areas designated as places for children give parents a stronger sense of safety and security, because they allow for more natural supervision from parents, teachers, neighbours, or (volunteering) playground professionals. Hence, these places might attract children with less freedom of move. Further research is needed to examine the different use of ‘places for children’ vs ‘children’s places’.

CONCLUSION

Neighbourhoods with sufficient visibility, well accessible and safe routes for pedestrians/ cyclists offer children more opportunities to play independently in order to develop well socially, physically and emotionally. Routes with some rough edges, undefined spaces, give children and teenagers the chance to create their own children’s places.

*CHILDREN’S PLACES!
OPEN SPACES TAKEN
OVER BY CHILDREN
AND YOUTH*



Places for children (schoolyards and playgrounds) should offer diverse play opportunities at differentiated level, and rough edges (undefined, natural areas with loose materials).

In order to create a child inclusive neighbourhood, children must be included in the policy, in the planning and the design. The planners and designers should aim for deep understanding of children's needs, obstacles and desires. Together with children they can plan and design a neighbourhood which is safe and challenging enough to stimulate free play, at places for children and at children's own 'children's Places'.

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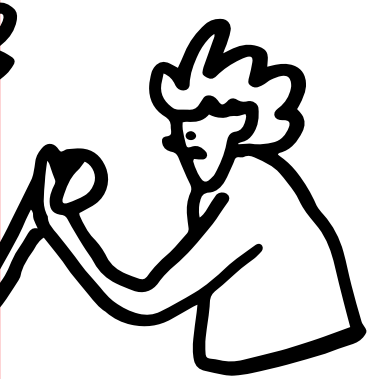
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MERI-RASTILA, HELSINKI: FROM A TROUBLED SQUARE TO A GREEN AND PLAYFUL HANGOUT FOR ALL

LOCAL
CASE

Päivi Raivio



Meri-Rastilamme (“Our Meri-Rastila”) was a placemaking initiative that Daniel Bumann and I designed and it ran from 2016 to 2017. It was commissioned by the Neighbourhood Project, run by the Helsinki City Planning Office.

The Meri-Rastila district will undergo major redevelopment in the upcoming decade with the goal of increasing density and the number of residents by 4 200 people. One of the measures for improving public services includes replacing a small shopping centre with a new one featuring integrated housing. The planners want to direct specific attention to the quality of public spaces which is how this placemaking project was born.

Together with the city planners, Bumann and I outlined what kind of design process could best express the district’s future visions. Some outreach work had been done in the past to engage residents in a dialogue, but it had mostly reached resident associations, so the question of how to involve a more variable group of people was still unsolved. Our goal was also to create a more positive identity for Meri-Rastila, which had suffered from poor reputation.

THE SQUARE

One of the key elements we identified was the Meri-Rastila Square – a central public space with a notably negative image and a poor sense of safety. The square was mostly used by alcoholics, which polarised many social issues associated with the negative connotation of the suburb, adding to the unfavourable image of the entire district.

For most people the square was just a route to the grocery store, and since people were only transiting the area there was a lack of mixed user groups. The absence of children was particularly notable, even though the square is neighboured by a school and a youth centre. It was clear that the square's public life had a negative impact on the whole area and we recognized the urgency to turn it into a welcoming space for all.

INTERVENTIONS

We concluded that the right strategy would be to balance the mix of users, rather than exclude 'undesirable' groups, by introducing activities which attract new users. We decided to design an urban garden with integrated seating and place it strategically along the most popular route – creating a 'friendly obstacle'. The plan mirrored residents' hopes for greener public spaces and addressed the shared worry over the state of the square. The idea also raised some doubts. Some members of the community and the city maintenance department were concerned that adding seating would simply worsen the problem. Others feared that the constructed elements would be vandalised, contributing to the negative cycle.

Enlivening the square was part of a wider urban design process in the district. We also designed a marked route from the metro station to the seaside with playfully illustrated flags and maps highlighting local features and assets. A popular community garden was also set up in a seaside park.

SUCCESFACTOR: WORKING ON SITE

Looking back, working on site was a very important phase of the process: during the building period we met many residents, discussed their ideas, confronted their doubts and introduced the project to the regular users of the square – most of whom valued the efforts and even offered to help. At times the square felt uneasy, but the process went smoothly and the unfinished structures and piles of wood remained untouched during construction. People also reacted with a positive disbelief that such an initiative could actually occur in the district. This highlights the importance of providing equal quality maintenance of the public sphere in all districts.



DURING THE SECOND SUMMER, A WOODEN PLATFORM WITH LARGE NATURAL STONES WAS ADDED TO THE SITE TO STRENGTHEN IMPACT AND INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF SPACE AVAILABLE FOR ACTIVITIES

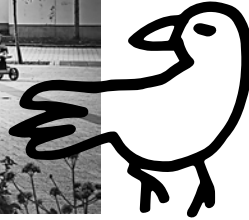
Source: author's personal archive

SMALL EVENTS WERE ALSO ORGANISED AND THEY ATTRACTED A VERY DIVERSE AUDIENCE. THE CITY PLANNERS USED THIS OPPORTUNITY TO REACH OUT TO RESIDENTS, WHO DO NOT NORMALLY ATTEND OFFICIAL EVENTS

Source: author's personal archive

The garden was tended by Lähiöpuutarha (Suburban Gardens), a programme that employs youth to take care of parks and gardens in the summer. The planting of edible greens was done in events open for all to join in and help out. The garden and seating was mostly used as a hangout and a rest stop, but small events were also organised. The vegetables were handed out to the residents in the autumn, which added to the friendly atmosphere around the initiative.

SUCCESSOR: ENGAGING WITH KIDS AND YOUTH



THE GARDEN WAS SITUATED ALONG THE MOST POPULAR ROUTE ACROSS THE SQUARE CREATING A "FRIENDLY OBSTACLE"

Source: Jalmari Sarla

THE PRESENCE OF CHILDREN ON THE SQUARE VISIBLY INCREASED DURING THE PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND HELPED TO REBRAND THE SQUARE AS A WELCOMING SPACE FOR ALL

Source: author's personal archive



Visible community involvement had a major role in the success of the project. An open dialogue on site and concrete collaboration with different actors were vital. We believe that meeting people spontaneously on site was key to reaching the community beyond organisational structures and official participatory processes.

The presence of children and youth on the square was essential in shifting the dynamics of the place. They brought along the act of play, which helped to give a new feel to the place and make it visually alive.

THE GARDEN WAS PLANTED BY CHILDREN WITH THE HELP OF GARDENERS FROM SUBURBAN GARDENS PROJECT. TOGETHER THEY MAINTAINED IT THROUGH THE SUMMER

Source: author's personal archive



Improvements took place not just in the physical environment. There was also a shift in people's mindset that Meri-Rastila could actually accommodate public spaces with a healthy mix of people and activities. Welcoming versatile public spaces plays a critical role in districts like Meri-Rastila, which is one of the most multicultural areas of Helsinki.

The Meri-Rastilamme project lasted over two summers in 2016-2017. We shared the findings and feedback with the planners and proposed placemaking guidelines for the new square, which will be built over the next ten years.

THE YOUNG URBAN PLANNERS INITIATIVE – RECLAIMING PUBLIC SPACE FOR TEENAGERS IN ROMANIA

APPROACH

Reinhold Stadler

*Acknowledgements:
Many thanks to the
Yplan implementation
team and especially
M. Cochechi,
M. Drăghia, S. Leopa
and A. Lipan.*

Even though we may argue that there are many factors that come together to define inclusiveness, age relation is a dimension that has to be considered in every public space design process (Gehl, 2018). However, when analysing most of today's public spaces in Romania, and even though Colin Ward, Kevin Lynch and Roger Hart started raising awareness in the 70s about the importance of opening public space for teenagers (Travlou, 2003, p. 2), not enough has been done in this regard. This is where Yplan (Young Planners Initiative) jumps in. The project started in 2015 and was led by the Romanian Urban 2020 Association. Yplan focused on involving young people in the placemaking process to: (1) raise awareness on the importance of public space, (2) empower youth to be active citizens and reclaim Bucharest's abandoned places and, last but not least, (3) establish the basis for a dedicated public policy. In the context of the project, four public spaces were rehabilitated with the help of high school students and young volunteers, practitioners and local community representatives.

THE YOUNG URBAN PLANNERS INITIATIVE

The Yplan project included three phases: awareness, training and implementation.

The awareness phase consisted of multiple micro-workshops in 12 high schools with a total of over 7 000 students. The workshops aimed to provide basic information about the characteristics and importance of public space, while also collecting information about the teenagers' needs and expectations regarding this essential component of our cities. The main tool used for this assessment was a processed (simplified) photo of an abandoned public space, over which small teams (of 3-4 members) had to draw or write proposals. The most frequent proposals were charging spots for smartphones, cycling lanes, relaxing areas, artistic decorations or installations for various sports. The students were also engaged in the discovery of abandoned public spaces in Bucharest. An online map and a mobile application were used to crowdsource the abandoned public spaces.

TRAINING THE YOUTH

The training phase included a series of short planning and design workshops, where 30 high school students formed teams with university students and planning professionals. The teams had to generate proposals for 8 abandoned public spaces selected from the database built in the first phase. To this end, the project team organized 3 urban walks, 2 analysis workshops, a treasure hunt, 3 idea generation and design studios, an experience exchange meeting with Swiss partners and a negotiation with the representatives of the local administration on the preliminary results. The most successful tools used during this process were the "idea box" and the treasure hunt.

IDEA BOX

The "idea box" is a simple coloured box used to store ideas for public spaces, developed and collected during the multiple workshops. After the analysis phase was finished, the "idea box" was opened and the most suitable ideas were incorporated in the proposals.

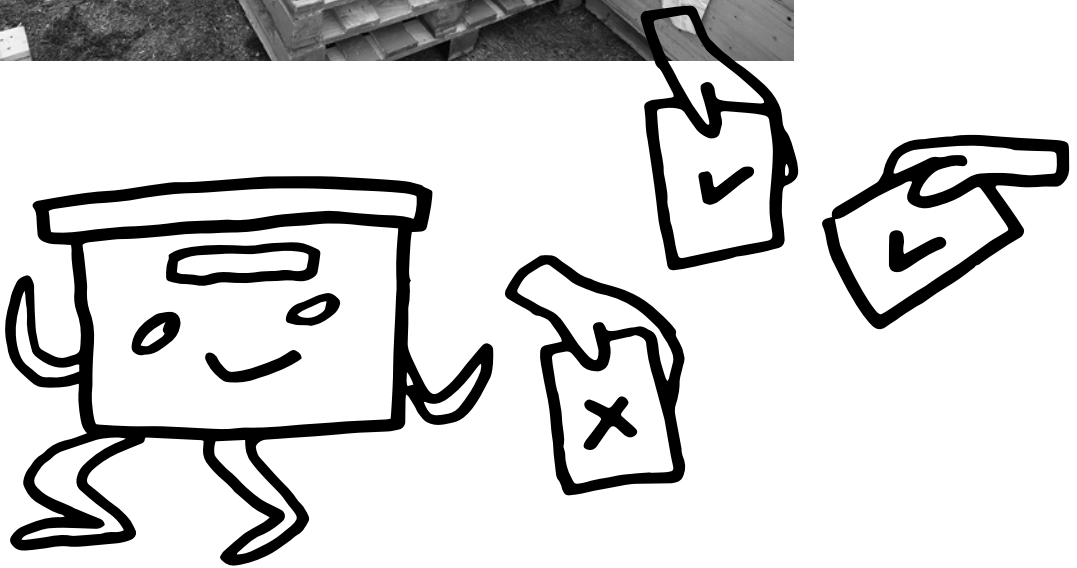
TREASURE HUNT

The treasure hunt was used as an alternative teaching method. Sometimes it may be harder for teenagers to observe features that professionals discover with ease. Therefore, a list of essential features of the study areas (for instance architectural details, potential places to be recovered from traffic or parking, etc.) formed the base of the treasure hunt. Since community is essential in placemaking, the treasure hunt included multiple tasks that relied on communication with locals. In this case Candy Chang's "I wish this was" printed on a cardboard cloud proved to be extremely useful to kickstart the dialog.



IMPLEMENTATION
WEEK 1

Source: Urban2020
Association



IMPLEMENTATION
WEEK 2

Source: Urban2020
Association



IMPLEMENTATION

The last and most difficult part of the project was the implementation phase, during which 4 public spaces were brought to life.

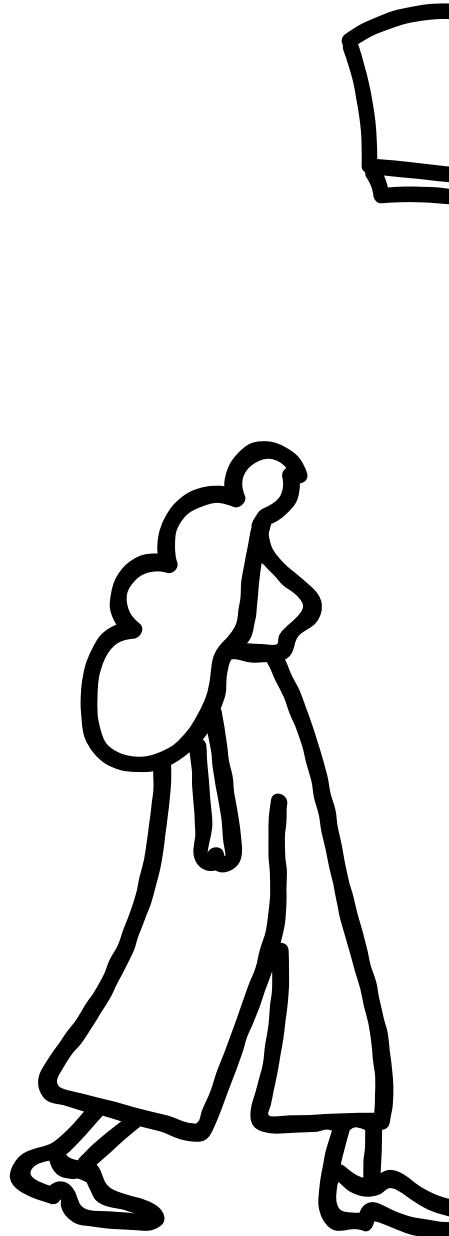
This is also the phase that provided the most important lessons:

- “Lighter quicker cheaper” works, but not for everyone, as in many cases locals expect permanent and high-quality interventions. You still need good product design skills to get great quality if you work with waste materials as resource. In this case, a strong collaboration with a makerspace can do wonders.
- Always find a local hero(es), he or she shall be the main link to the community and an important supporter to ensure the sustainability of the intervention.
- You can never invest too much in community analysis and dialog. Speak to locals and observe them on different days and at different hours. Find out their habits, good and bad, related to the place they use.

Last but not least, to further continue the reconquest of public space (Espuche, 1999) and increase inclusivity, it is not enough to adapt design solutions to the needs of young people. They should be an active part of the process, as empowering them to be active citizens is essential to the well-being of our cities.

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JANE'S WALK: ORGANISE A CITIZEN – LED WALK TO ENGAGE LOCALS IN CREATING BETTER NEIGHBOURHOODS

TOOL

Andreas Lindinger

Learn about Jane's Walk in Vienna at janeswalk.at and connect with City Organiser Andreas Lindinger: andreas@janeswalk.at (email) or [@lindinger](https://twitter.com/lindinger) (Twitter, LinkedIn). Become a City Organiser at www.janeswalk.org/add-a-city and join the Facebook Group for City Organisers at www.facebook.com/groups/aneswalkcityorganizers.



“Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.”

Jacobs (1961)

Jane's Walk is a global movement of free, citizen-led walking conversations that encourage residents to share stories and hidden aspects of their neighbourhoods as a way to connect with their neighbours and foster social inclusion. Everyone's story is seen as valuable.



DISCUSSING A HIGH-RISE PROJECT IN VIENNA'S ALTHANGRUND NEIGHBOURHOOD DURING A JANE'S WALK

Source: Jane's Walk Vienna



LEARNING ABOUT HOMELESSNESS ON A WALK LED BY A FORMER HOMELESS PERSON FROM THE VIENNESE NGO SUPERTRAMPS

Source: Jane's Walk Vienna

A COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACH TO CITY BUILDING

Local Walk Leaders also encourage the participants to observe and re-imagine their cities. Walks are as diverse as the participants, which results in a wide variety of topics such as urban renewal, homelessness, privacy and housing policies. Since 2014 more than 2 000 people have taken part in 80 Viennese walks.

In Vienna, we also encourage not only residents but also experts and activists to become Walk Leaders. We collaborate with civic groups and NGOs to enable them to use walks as a platform to promote their causes and invite politicians, urban planners and other decision-makers to join.

In addition to improving relations between neighbours, Jane's Walk encourages people to build sustainable connections and initiate a dialogue with decision-makers, the media or the public after the walk.

JANE'S WALK IN YOUR CITY

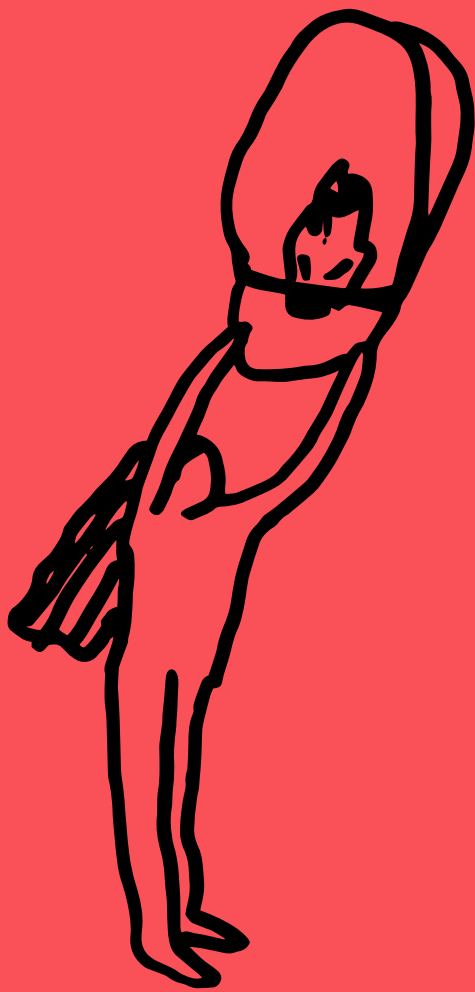
Jane's Walks are organized and led by volunteers around the world. Anyone can lead or join a walk and it is easy to start Jane's Walk in your city: Visit janeswalk.org to join Jane's Walk in your city or to kick-start a Jane's Walk movement yourself using the resources and inspiration available from the global, self-organised community of City Organisers.



EXPLORING VIENNA'S
NORDBAHNHOF
AREA, A FORMER
RAILWAY AREA
THAT IS BEING
TRANSFORMED
INTO A MIXED-USE
NEIGHBOURHOOD
Source: *Jane's Walk
Vienna*

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ILLUMINATING DARKNESS: THE CASE STUDY OF THE SYNOIKIA PITTAKI PARTICIPATORY LIGHT INSTALLATION IN ATHENS

LOCAL
CASE

Stephania Xydia

MICRO-EXPERIMENT

This case study focuses on the SynOikia Pittaki project, created in 2012 in Athens, during times of economic crisis, urban decline and social turmoil. The project constituted a participatory light installation and artistic interventions aiming to, literally and symbolically, 'illuminate' an abandoned street through citizens' engagement. SynOikia Pittaki was a micro-experiment of urban revival that tested cross-sector collaboration, open co-creation processes and the power of light to transform degraded public spaces. It tackled inclusivity in terms of including creative groups in the placemaking process and engaging citizens to co-create a homely public space where everybody could feel at home. The project was initiated by Imagine the City¹, an informal network of citizens focusing on urban regeneration, and was developed in partnership with Beforelight², a creative group focusing on light design. It was initially sponsored by the 'Reasons to believe in a better world' campaign of Coca-Cola and supported by the Municipality of Athens in terms of permits and technical support.

1. www.imaginethecity.gr now established as Place Identity Clusters NGO www.placeidentity.gr

2. www.beforelight.gr

BRINGING LIGHT TO PITTAKI STREET

Pittaki street was selected as a micro-paradigm of Athenian urban decline: a gloomy industrial alley, lined with warehouses and empty shops, which marked a dead zone during the day and served as a public urinary after dusk. Yet it is direct access to Ermou, Athens' main shopping street, it is historical links to antique dealers selling light fixtures and its proximity to the required electricity infrastructure, provided an appropriate framework to host the SynOikia³ installation. In Autumn 2012, through door-to-door campaigning, social media and press announcements, inhabitants of Psyrri and wider central Athens were invited to donate old light fixtures in order to co-create a bright example of urban revival. For a period of two months, an abandoned shop on Pittaki Street was converted into an open workshop where the light fixtures were collected, weatherproofed, wired, and strung together. Over 150 chandeliers, lanterns, metal lamps, bell shades, glass bowls, colourful light fixtures were gathered, resulting in a colourful bright canopy that covered Pittaki street. Parallel to the light installation, murals with pastel colours were painted along the walls of Pittaki street, transferring homey images of private spaces to the public space. On the night of the installation inauguration, a street party under the rain marked the transition of Pittaki Street to a brighter future.

3. The project branding constituted a wordplay on the Greek word *synoikia* (quarter/district), separating its suffixes *syn* (co-) and *oikia* (home) to create a "CoHome" for Pittaki street.

ATHENIANS WERE
INVITED TO DONATE
OLD LIGHT FIXTURES
TO TRANSFORM
PITTAKI STREET.

Source: Chris Dimolikas



IMPACT: LOCAL PRIDE, SAFETY, NEW BUSINESS, SENSE OF COMMUNITY

The gloomy alley was thus transformed into a popular promenade, attracting curious bypassers who faced the urban surprise with their heads up and smiles of amazement. The restoration of the foot traffic made the life of residents safer, significantly reducing disorderly behaviours in the area. A sense of local pride and ownership of this 'common' artwork was generated within the local community. Soon, SynOikia Pittaki was covered by international media, recommended by travel guides as a contemporary cultural sight and became one of the most beloved and photographed spots of Athens. It sparked the flourish of new businesses in empty stores and the return of inhabitants to the neighbourhood; it mobilised community activities such as mural painting, urban dinners and street parties and served as a source of inspiration for new urban interventions and artistic works in the city.

SIX MONTHS TURNED INTO SIX YEARS

Though initially planned to remain on Pittaki Street for six months, the installation ended up surviving six years, thanks to the community component and maintenance work that were covered by production companies using Pittaki Street as an urban filming set. However, despite community pressure on the Municipality of Athens to officially 'adopt' the installation (through regular requests, gathering of signatures, positive votes in the local council etc.) the Municipality did not provide the resources to support further maintenance work and was unable to take responsibility for the electrical maintenance and civic liability of the installation in the long run. At the same time, Pittaki street was being taken over by a private concept cafe which rented multiple empty properties and started hijacking the installation with extravagant seasonal decorations, undisturbed by the municipal authorities.

LACK OF LONG-TERM PERSPECTIVE ENDED THE INSTALLATION

The abuse of the project symbolic value for private gain upset the local community and the lack of resources for technical restoration led to the malfunctioning of the light installation, raising safety concerns. In order to avoid phenomena of further aesthetic disintegration and political instrumentalization of the project, an open discussion was organised on Pittaki street in June of 2018, inviting stakeholders and inhabitants to discuss the deadlocks faced. Despite extensive media coverage of the issue, this final public call did not result in a practical solution for the long-term sustainability of the installation. In August 2018, the people that had created SynOikia Pittaki back in 2012 took the responsibility to switch off the Pittaki lights forever and deinstall the colourful canopy.

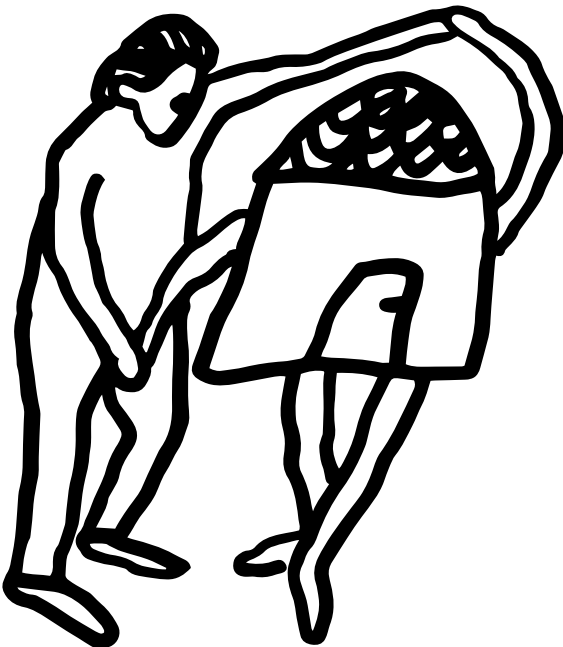


*BETWEEN 2012
AND 2018, THE
PROJECT BECAME
A LANDMARK OF
CONTEMPORARY
CULTURE BENEATH
THE ACROPOLIS OF
ATHENS*

*Source: Adam
Alexopoulos*

*MURALS WITH
PASTEL COLOURS
WERE PAINTED
ALONG THE WALLS
OF PITTAKI STREET,
TRANSFERRING
HOMEY IMAGES OF
PRIVATE SPACES TO
THE PUBLIC SPACE*

Source: Beforelight



Having successfully demonstrated both the possibilities and the limitations of bottom-up urban interventions in the Athenian framework, the SynOikia Pittaki experiment came to an end, once again capturing the local Zeitgeist: if in 2012 it symbolised the creative resistance of bottom-up movements, in 2018 it marked the end of an era of missed opportunities for the Greek capital, which now faces the risk of exchanging inclusivity and civic participation for the lure of touristic investments and gentrification.

TAKEAWAY

The legacy of SynOikia Pittaki lies in the ‘precedent’ it created for Athenian civic initiatives, in the knowledge it generated and in the synergies that it sparked, which are already bearing fruits in different contexts, cities and projects.



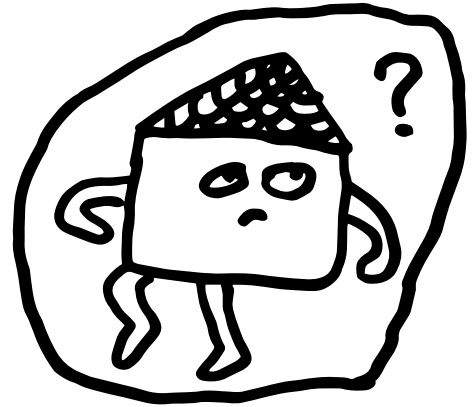
*PITTAKI STREET HAS
BECOME A POPULAR
24/7 PROMENADE
FOR ATHENIANS AND
TOURISTS ALIKE*

Source: Nikos Libertas

TOWARDS AN ACTIVE AND INCLUSIVE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

LOCAL
CASE

Roya Shokoohi



Universities with a big campus operate much like miniature cities – they have their own rules, potentials and complexities. Zernike Campus in Groningen has more than 35 000 students, 4 000 academics, educators and supporting staff of two universities, plus the employees of 150 companies.

A PLACE FOR ALL, YET EACH IN ITS OWN BUBBLE

The expectation is that companies and facilities should add value to the campus, with a certain degree of control, and that the campus should cater to everyone. However, to date, the campus has been surprisingly successful at separating different population groups. Communication channels are the most important reason for this. Each university can only book rooms in their own buildings. Information about well-being or sports activities is communicated via each university's individual website separately and it is only accessible to the respective staff and students. Furthermore, most of the information available is not bilingual, which makes it difficult for international students and staff members to be properly informed. Neither company employees nor residents of the nearby neighbourhoods are allowed to use the sports facilities on campus. Although Zernike is part of the city, neighbourhood residents do not feel comfortable walking on campus ground during working hours.



THE ZERNIKE CAMPUS, ON THE NORTHERN RING ROAD OF GRONINGEN, ACCOMMODATES THE EXPANSION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GRONINGEN AND THE HANZE HOGESCHOOL

Source: West 8

UNINVITING PUBLIC SPACES

Although open spaces on campus have lots of greenery and water areas that could potentially create a rich setting for exercising, relaxing or social mixing, they are typically not facilitated for such activities and they are not used efficiently. For instance, the lack of coherent pedestrian network on campus makes walking unpleasant and confusing, while the insufficient lighting of open spaces complicates their use after dark. As a result, the campus is not very lively in the evenings and on weekends, as many members of the community (even students) would rather spend their free time off campus.

PLAN FOR ACTIVE AGEING CAMPUS

There is a growing interest worldwide in creating active, healthy and inclusive communities, and it is also the main theme in Groningen. The planned vision for Zernike Campus is to connect the southern and northern part of the campus. The Active Ageing Campus project (September 2018 – July 2019) is part of this vision and aims to create an active campus for the entire community, including the residents of nearby neighbourhoods.

COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

Based on a human-centred approach, the project initiated several public meetings which provided a great opportunity for everyone to contribute, building a sense of belonging and responding to the needs and wishes of the greater community. Collaboration between the two universities on campus (Hanze and RUG) helped reveal a deeper understanding of the situation by using the knowledge and skills of staff and students from both universities and sharing available resources. The project also raised greater awareness on the importance of making changes on campus and made it easier to reach out to people.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

All on-campus organizations were invited to public meetings and individual interviews from the early stages to share their goals and visions, as well as their programmes – related to health and sport. This approach also created opportunities for them to collaborate with each other in order to optimize the current use of sport facilities on campus. A separate workshop was organized in the community centre of the neighbourhoods to understand the specific needs and wishes of the residents.

SPORT

In this project, sport was used as a tool for connecting people and creating an active campus. Considering the needs and wishes of all, ideas to redevelop the open spaces on campus were introduced and discussed in public meetings with all campus communities before being finalized. Several different athletic events and activities were organized throughout the year, in which everyone could participate, including residents of nearby neighbourhoods who could finally get to know the campus. To optimize the use of these spaces, a pilot programme was planned, in collaboration with campus management, to let the staff of companies use the facilities in the School of Sport Studies, including the swimming pool, the gym and others.

Athletic events were categorized based on difficulty (from 'light' to 'challenging') to accommodate the particular needs and wishes of all, and were further combined with free preliminary training sessions, where participants could receive advice on diet and suitable gears. To break down the barriers for low-income people and students, participation in the activities was either free-of-charge or very cheap and all information provided was bilingual.

IMPACT

The project was very successful in bringing academics, non-academics, students (from both universities), company employees, and neighbourhood residents together for sports events and training sessions. It also prompted these groups to develop collective ideas for changing the open spaces on campus in order to make them more attractive for everyone who wants to exercise or practice some physical activity.

Involving all communities on campus from the very beginning of the project increased interaction and communication between different groups and fostered social inclusion. It helped participants expand their network, engaging them in co-creation processes for the development of new innovative and multidisciplinary projects on campus. It also contributed directly to creating a healthy, sustainable and inclusive environment for all.

DOING DEVELOPMENT DIFFERENTLY





GENTRIFICATION WITHOUT THE SHARP EDGES. IS THERE SUCH THING AS GENTLYFICATION?

Theo Stauttner & Chantal Robbe

Can we use market developments to create a more inclusive society? Bend-the-flow as opposed to go-with-the-flow, in a direction where social and communal gains play a part in determining the result of area development. Examining a number of good examples in relation to each other reveals that there is also room for gentrification with a soft edge.

DOES GENTRIFICATION ACTUALLY PROMOTE INCLUSIVENESS?

People migrating to cities, a growing economy, and higher land and property prices – that is good news for a lot of people, because it means more houses are being built, and it is giving people without jobs a chance to find work and increase their income. The economy is running full steam ahead. Higher property prices can create opportunities for redevelopment in inner city areas, and given the demand for housing in cities, this means less attractive districts stand to be upgraded as well. An economy that is doing its job in a conservative-liberal market also means exclusion through disimprovement. Disimprovement as a result of the cappuccinofication of streets, which are livened up by new businesses, but at the expense of familiar local enterprises that vanish without fanfare. The universally recognisable couleur locale is thus under threat, even though it is precisely the movement of value during economic growth that can make good things happen. So, is the process of gentrification in itself not exactly an opportunity for the city?

Ultimately – in a completely free market – gentrification is more likely to promote exclusiveness than inclusiveness. Inclusiveness gives everyone a chance to succeed by providing them with opportunities, and it is based on equality: everyone participates and shares. In this article we define inclusiveness as a situation in which everyone has a place to reside and

to live in, and in which people have room to come into their own. The inclusive city, then, is a place where everyone can reside, live and come into their own. That puts tremendous pressure on the city. It requires districts or neighbourhoods with sufficient economic activity and facilities where there is also space to live and where residents can interact. It also requires authorities to have the ability to allow everyone to participate.

DEVELOPING SMART POLICIES

What would it be like if, during a time of growth, adjustments were introduced or prices curbed so that stores and workshops (work/business spaces) remained affordable for, say, first and second-generation businesses and residents? Or that they too evolved and eventually moved, but that there were still opportunities for others to start up somewhere or to carry out activities that do not necessarily yield immediate financial gain but are nonetheless of added value to the district or neighbourhood as a whole?

Developing policy without trying to understand the market often misfires. In the US, the rent ceiling did not cause the market to level off but instead minimised costs for property owners, who stopped investing in maintenance. These kinds of policies push market developments in the wrong direction. In the Netherlands, many households do not have suitable housing, based on their incomes, and the social housing sector is in a gridlock because there is no flexibility. For decades, the housing policy has been trying to find the right types of affordable housing that will not continuously create a housing imbalance. Indeed, the question is whether a type of housing can be found in the context of market developments that can reallocate value creation differently or hold on to it. Holding on to it could contribute to a different form of allocation, so that residential and work spaces, for example, remain accessible in the long term for a large diversity of target groups and the residents of the city.

USING MARKET FORCES POSITIVELY

In this essay we would like to address a number of examples that promote inclusiveness and essentially approach market forces from a different vantage point, attempting to diminish, eliminate or make adjustments to them at the policy level. It is not an overall analysis or a plea to build an inclusive society based on these types of projects or policies; rather, it is about increasing our knowledge on how to use positive market forces for other purposes than merely financial value creation.

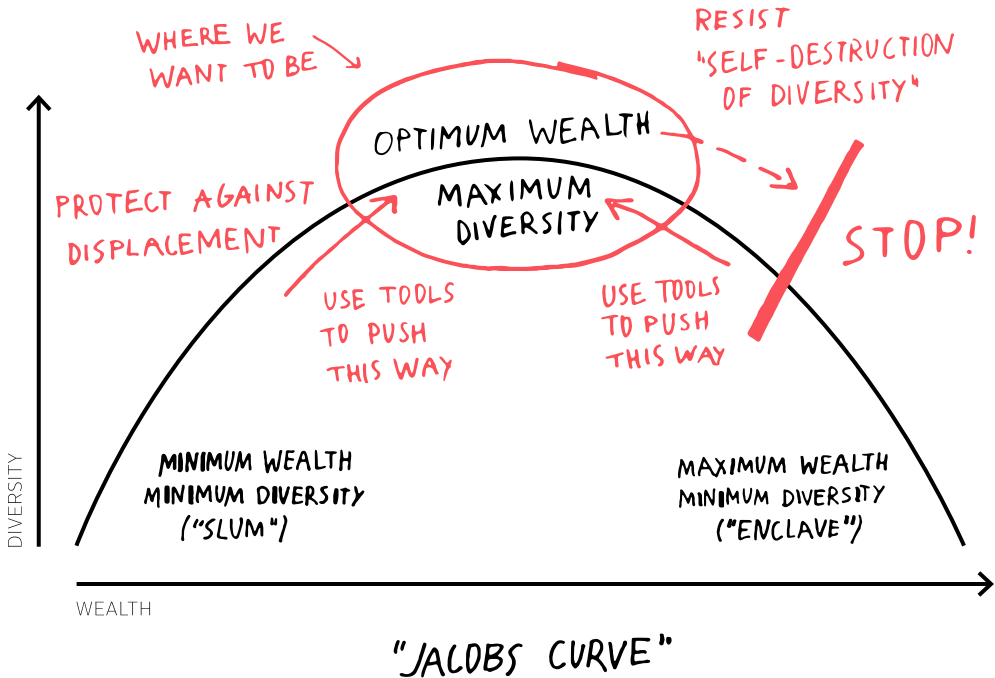
It is vital that we invest in land and real estate: not only more from a spatial consideration but also in order to make the right adjustments that correspond to our changing living and working requirements. This has to be an efficient process, and it (often) requires professionals to make it run smoothly. We strongly believe that making optimal and diverse use of our cities and space generates value creation on many fronts: social, communal, cultural and ultimately often financial as well, in terms of land and property value.

THE HARD FACTS OF THE REAL ESTATE MARKET: TRUST IS THE FOUNDATION OF VALUE CREATION

The crisis in the land and property market has taught us important lessons. The devaluation of land and property value was the consequence of a system in deadlock, but also of a loss of trust. That created widespread vacancy, falling returns, a deteriorating image of the areas, which set a downward spiral into motion. The striking thing about this development is that it can be turned into a positive. Giving meaning to areas increases trust among residents, businesses and investors, which galvanises a process of increased investment, less vacancy and an improved image. This is also reflected by the fact that these areas increase their output. More than anything else, this increased output is creating added value for the areas' economy, society and local financial sector.

In his article in this book, Michael Mehaffy describes (as he did at the Cities for All conference in Stockholm in April 2018) how Jane Jacobs analysed gentrification as an upward and downward movement. Viewed from a market and financial management perspective there are a number of interesting developments taking place that provide opportunities for where we want to be.

THE JACOB'S CURVE
OPTIMUM WEALTH
MAXIMUM DIVERSITY
Source: Michael Mehaffy



NEW DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES THROUGH PLACEMAKING

City makers and placemakers have proven themselves adept at driving value creation. Now that the economic situation has improved and is enhancing growth and redevelopment, the question is whether they can become a permanent fixture in area development. There is a great opportunity for new area developers and the more traditional parties (who focus on construction) to forge partnerships. The question isn't whether we should opt for old or new area development, it is about

which combination we decide to go for. In that sense, every task will be specifically defined and require a tailored approach. The programming needs both placemaking, and social and communal value creation, as well as a healthy business case for area transformation. The absence of this combination of types of area development with placemakers and city makers often leads to the disappearance of new interesting activities in the area.

It is therefore of crucial importance that we develop a business case for placemaking. Not only does it have to include financial and economic aspects, but also the added value for society and the community. That will make the concept of 'value creation' real. And consequently the added value of placemaking will become visible so that it can be adequately acknowledged. The inclusiveness will become visible and space will have been created for anyone who wants to join in.

GOOD RESIDENTIAL-WORK AREAS REQUIRE ADEQUATE AREA MANAGEMENT: THE PLINTH LTD

Increasingly we're trying to develop urban areas that have a good mix of residential and work space. Many areas have set aside a role for new economic activities, either aimed at manufacturing in the city or on innovation.

In the Netherlands, creating sufficient housing in the coming years is viewed as our main challenge (at the moment). The Dutch government's aim is to accomplish this in a healthy sustainable environment. Perhaps the biggest challenge in this is to find sufficient (physical) space for new workplaces. That means being extremely aware of the role that work is going to take on in new transformation areas.

Once that is clear, the activities in the initial phase of the transformation can be launched. The business case for placemaking could then be tailored to coincide with the area's future function in the overall context of the city. Placemaking is transient by nature. Placemaking does not focus on transience, but transience can be used to reinforce a more balanced process aimed at the growth of certain types of activity in an area. To achieve that, you need room to experiment, especially during the initial phase. But a balanced supply of business space is also needed in the long term. That requires coordinated programming and area management.

An example is a conceptual experiment called The Plinth Ltd. People working in area development are increasingly turning to this concept. The Plinth Ltd is about connecting activities in a street or district. It could involve coordinated branding and shared rentals or sales, as well as the long-term programming, managing and operating of spaces in an area. In addition to the programming, it evolves into a form of financial organisation that manages the share of affordable workplaces in such a way that there is place for innovation, starters and more social and cultural activities. And it provides space (literally) for residents in the neighbourhood to reach their full potential.

WORKING TOGETHER TO MAKE AND KEEP WORKPLACES AFFORDABLE

Working together to make and keep workplaces affordable is possible by evenly distributing the immediate revenue from real estate (rentals) with the aim of creating a more liveable and manageable area. Another aim is

to retain the *couleur locale*, which often increases an area's output. The government can assist as well. It has yet to be seen, however, whether a targeted government policy aimed at a certain percentage of (financially) affordable workplaces is the ideal response. In the Netherlands, this corresponds to a segmentation, for example, that amounts to 30% social housing.

But it is precisely when an area defines the preconditions itself (rental restrictions, duration of contracts, target groups) that this appears to be most effective. Especially when the parties that benefit first, perhaps end up paying a little more later. Evenly sharing revenue is therefore a management tool in a broader context: the development of the economy in an area, for example. Senior businesses help junior businesses because once upon a time they were also given an affordable workplace when they were getting started.

OTHER FORMS OF ORGANISATION IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

How can we secure pre-financing? Pre-financing gives an idea of the chances of succeeding and is thus essential for many forms of value creation. District management and the management of (private) public space is especially popular in Anglo-Saxon countries, often with successful and positive results. The United States uses a Business Improvement District (BID) structure for that purpose. In a BID structure, all owners contribute a little extra, which is 'collected' by the municipality in the form of a premium on real estate tax. This is used to fund the maintenance and programming of an area. The investments are used to make areas more attractive, but also to hold programming/events, for example. In inner city areas, the programming acts as a 'catalyst' for new business models. At a later stage, the contribution from property owners in the area can be adjusted.

The Netherlands has the Business Investment Zone (BIZ), which is only valid and deployed in industrial estates. If we were to link this model to the transformation of urban areas, then that would generate a financial organisational model that is better suited to our transformation task and which could simultaneously provide placemaking with the necessary pre-investment. This BIZ would have to be extended to transformation areas, however. It would then offer a new financial organisational structure.



PRIVATE FINANCING AIMED AT HIGH SOCIAL RETURNS

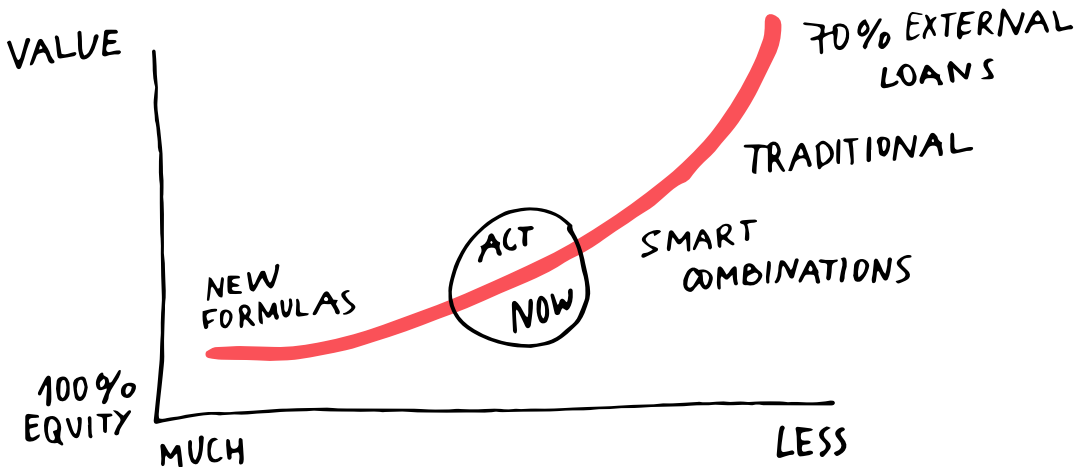
The need to also highlight communal and social value in value creation is an incentive for private financing that focuses more on achieving social than financial returns. This is already the case with monumental real estate or the financing of real estate concerned with art and culture, which is popular with private investors. This is not happening to the same extent in area development, though there are excellent examples in Germany and Switzerland. In Berlin the Tris Foundation and the Edith Marion Foundation, among others, are financing the redevelopment of Holzmarkt and the ExRotaPrintFactory. The financing is meant for long-term involvement by funding land or property with private money combined with funds from banks (social banks). The portfolio management focuses on safeguarding and monitoring the social and communal contribution these projects make in addition to the question of whether the interest and debt payments will be paid back. The impact of these funds on the surrounding area is usually what's most visible. That is why it makes sense to approach investors situated 'around the corner' when raising funds. Couleur locale, but then of a different variety.

In the Netherlands, there are an increasing number of initiatives using social impact funds for financing. These projects (e.g. De Wasserij in Rotterdam) have agreed to permanently rent out half of the work studios at low rent, while another portion is rented at market value. The Stadmakersfonds (City Makers Fund) was founded in March 2019 in Utrecht based on German and Swiss examples.

Using own funds makes it possible to finance projects that otherwise would not see the light of day. Making long-term 'financial agreements' situate the projects, so to speak, in a different market segment.

*HOLD THE GRIP
AND ATTRACT NEW
CAPITAL*

*Source: author's
personal archive*



COLLECTIVE BUILDING AND LIVING

New forms of collaboration in area and property development can help to create new structures that mitigate market forces or channel value creation in another way.

But there is more going on. The trend in society is to do more collectively. Expressions of this include: the sharing economy (cars and bicycles), more communal living (cooperatives) and communal building (collectives). Collective building means working together on a design, but also doing part of the project development yourself, including contracting a construction company. The real collective private commissioning (Collectief Particulier Opdrachtgeverschap – CPO) as we know it in the Netherlands in its purest form is most commonly used for projects with single-family homes or unoccupied plots.

Increasingly, groups or collectives are building apartment complexes in inner city areas. It often concerns co-commissioning, in which future residents form a collective and contribute to the draft, make decisions together about the architecture and completely design the dwelling (type, plan, etc.) themselves. Professional parties (advisors, builders or developers) take the construction part off their hands and thus also eliminate a number of key risks. As a result, the financial management varies in each project. Often a cooperative is established in which future owners unite, thus defining the commissioning group. The cooperative also provides an adequate organisation for the operation and management of a building. This collective way of developing provides (more) control over the product, and for owner-occupied houses there is essentially collective financing as well. All future buyers contribute part of the money needed to finance the land, construction etc. through their mortgages.

COLLECTIVE LIVING

When collective building turns into collective living, it creates the opportunity to manage property in a different way. Of course, freehold tenure of a unit can be acquired in an owned building that can be freely sold on the market. With rental cooperatives there is the option of limiting rent through mutual agreement, as the group determines the collective's financial policy. There are many Miethaussyndicaten (rented property syndicates) in Germany and Switzerland, which buy land to build social housing and housing for the mid-priced rental segment. The collective finances part of it with its own money and part of it through banks. In time, the loan is paid back and value is created through the property. The Miethaussyndicaten use these assets to set up new collectives and to build their own capital. There are even rental cooperatives that pay a small premium on the rent ('solidarity interest'), which are used to save up for other (new) cooperatives.

What makes this construction so special? First of all, these buildings are simply developed in a commercial land and property market where land is bought to build these rented properties. Once completed, part of the value creation is used for rental policy, which allows the rent to be adjusted and the cooperative to prevent exorbitant rent increases by implementing its own policy. And the rental cooperatives can use their

own money to guarantee part of the financing, as a result of which the rental cooperatives are also able to secure good financial conditions from banks for loan capital. In the Netherlands, this kind of collective living is viewed as an interesting option in which residents have more control over their property, even when it concerns rental properties. Lack of own capital (banks often require an input of at least 30%) is the bottleneck for initiatives in the feasibility phase.

Collective building makes collective living possible. This creates opportunities for collective management and developing your own rent policy, which can limit the degree to which you rely on the commercial market. With control comes risk: in that sense, the German and Swiss examples point to potential ways of mitigating this risk, namely scale up, work together and develop policy for value creation.

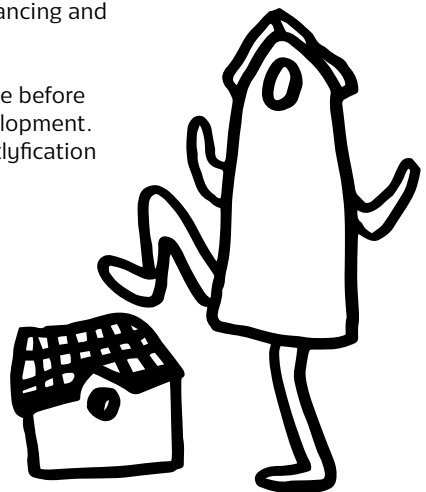
A FINAL WORD

The six developments discussed here and their accompanying examples all have a number of aspects in common.

First of all, there is the assumption that choices can be made within the workings of the market forces and the land and property markets regarding the organisation of process, management, use and ownership. In addition, it is also a question of working in phases or looking at finances from a broader perspective: for example, limiting the immediate gains in order to achieve higher indirect returns. Tools aimed at collectivity, such as the BID, help in that respect. So do private funds, however, which pursue other objectives than merely achieving returns. Indeed, it is also about how you define return and your ability to view it as an amalgamation of financial, social and communal gains.

But it starts with area development that focuses on creating a balance which leads to inclusiveness. The scale (building, district, area) and the context in which space is provided for growth and development are important for the ultimate shape that alternative funding, financing and organisation subsequently will take.

Many of these matters are relatively new, so it will take a while before they will manage to become a permanent fixture in area development. It comes down to a different way of focusing on returns: Gentlyfication makes more possible.

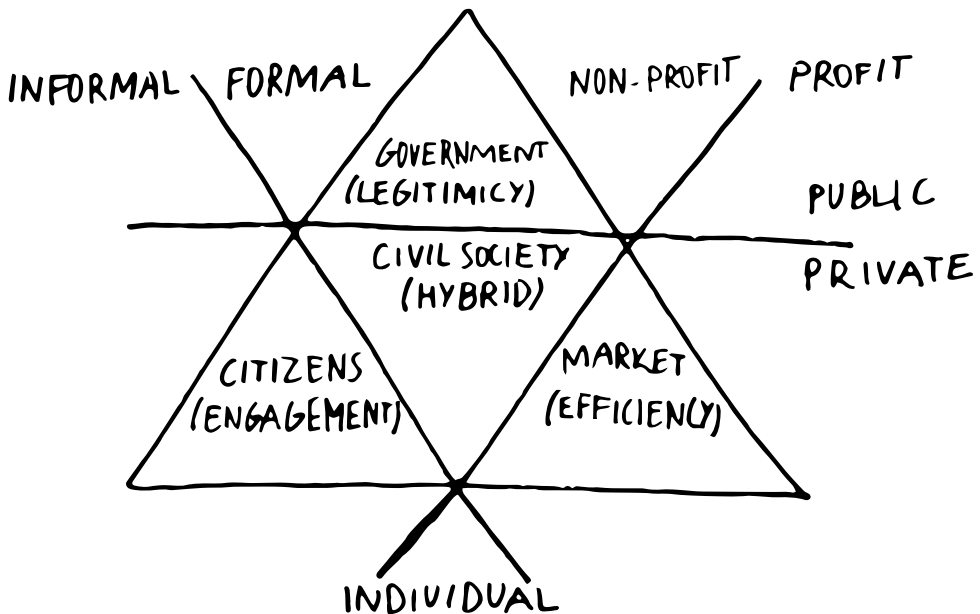


THE WAY TO GO?

Bottom-up initiatives give area development strength and identity. Top-down is needed for continuity and direction. Collaboration begins somewhere in between. It is important to connect the public, the private and citizenry. The triangle in the middle of Pestoff's pyramid would seem a good position from which to work: there is room here for co-production, co-creation but also co-buying, co-financing, and so on. There is the risk, however, that ownership falls by the wayside, as a result of which this triangle turns into a Bermuda triangle (W.J. Verheul 2019). So, as discussed, for a solid foundation we need new forms of organisation (impact financing), tools (BIDs) and partnerships (area cooperatives). And ownership: not only of land or property, but rather of the task and the ambition.

CIVIL SOCIETY TRIANGLE

Source: Pestoff by W.J. Verheul (Placemaking lecture Sept. 2018)



By prioritising the task and ambition, and taking into account new forms of collaboration and organisation, the 'way to go' should be an easy path to traverse. Gentlyfication instead of gentrification then leads to inclusiveness.

ORGANIC DEVELOPMENT: THE MEDIEVAL PORTICI OF BOLOGNA

LOCAL
CASE

Giulia Gualtieri

The Portici of Bologna represent an inclusive time machine, where the development of the urban hardware among centuries adapts to the social and economic demand.

Cities have grown by following the development of public life quality. One of the oldest examples of this phenomenon is the city of Bologna, where the medieval urbanisation process embraced the concept of inclusivity and revealed how organic growth can truly adapt to the needs of the time.

Since 2006, Portici of Bologna, which extend some 38 km along the city streets, have been considered UNESCO heritage, not only for their architectural value but also for their social and inclusive meaning. They represent the identity of the city, as semi-open and semi-public spaces where cultural, material and immaterial heritage is embedded (Cineteca, n.d.).

BIRTH OF UNIVERSITY STIMULATES THE GROWTH OF THE CITY

The birth of Portici dates back to the 11th century and their development has undergone a number of phases, in relation to their physical structure as well as their land use. The most relevant historical fact that is concurrent with the growth of this architectural typology is the birth of Bologna University in 1088. Considered the oldest university in Europe, this new institution attracted a consistent number of students, professors, researchers and academics from Italy and Europe. Meanwhile, the phenomenon of migration from the countryside to urban areas became more and more frequent.

URGENT NEED FOR BIGGER HOUSES

While the economy of the city was growing incredibly fast, the municipality of Bologna had to cope with a real housing emergency; the need to invent a new urban space became essential (In Italia, n.d.). The citizens of the city understood the financial value of migration and started adapting their houses to the urban trend. In a spontaneous and informal way, the upper floors of houses were enlarged, by building wooden beam extension. As time went by, the bulks developed into more jutting shapes hanging over the public streets and the need for supporting columns from the ground up became vital. This is how Portici were born and became the representative architecture of the plinths of Bologna's city centre.

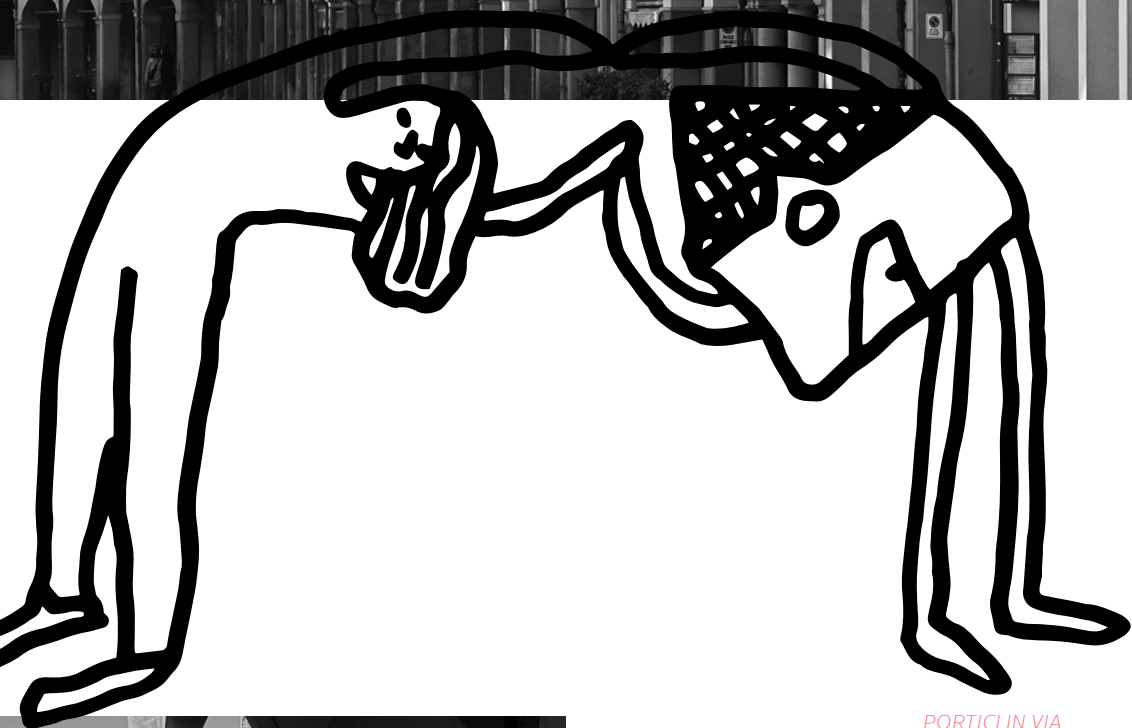
PORTICI CREATED NEW PUBLIC SPACES

With the birth of a new type of urban area, diverse activities took place too, all in the same time and space: students and professors found homes and at the same time a gathering area, where commercial and daily activities were also taking place (Informa Giovani Italia, n.d.). The semi-public/semi-private characteristic of Portici allowed people to create a network and to be spontaneously included in it. Nevertheless, the semi-open structure solved into the ideal zone to move through the streets, protected from the sun during the hot season and from the cold rain and snow during the winter.

MUNICIPAL SUPPORT

As this urban phenomenon happened in diverse cities, not all the municipalities of the region reacted in the same way. Many majors conceived this new architecture as informal, not legally approvable and decided to demolish them for a new urban reconstruction. On the other hand, the city of Bologna perceived the recent development of the urban fabric as an advantage to preserve and improve. In 1288 a municipal ban established that each household had the responsibility as the owner to build and maintain the arcade adjacent of their houses. The land ownership shifted from public to private, although the function of the space itself remained as public, in other words as a pedestrian public path. Nowadays, Portici of Bologna still represents the inclusive identity of the city, as a space of sharing and connecting (In Italia, n.d.).





*PORTICI IN VIA
SARAGOZZA WITHIN
THE WALLS*

Source: Francobraso

PIAZZA VERDI

*Source: Alessandro
Siani*



MEDIEVAL LESSONS

The unique case of Bologna development during medieval times shows how back in history we can travel to understand what a fundamental effect public services and amenities have on our cities' expansion. The first explanation is related to the connection between city growth and human interaction. As a wealthier public life attracts financial initiatives and their entrepreneurs, in the same way, the University of Bologna has welcomed a great number of students and professors. Whose result arises in the positive adaptability of the local community and the collaboration of the municipality to accept the change and embrace it as advantageous. Nonetheless, the dynamic and effective face-to-face interaction between different people took place in the today called mixed urban areas, whose outcome is a dynamic network of experts, their sharing of knowledge and innovation. Portici represented one of the most effective adaptation and inclusive processes to answer to the social and economic demand of cities.

How back in history an this time machine travel? I recommend you to look back through the past of your own cities and discover for yourself.

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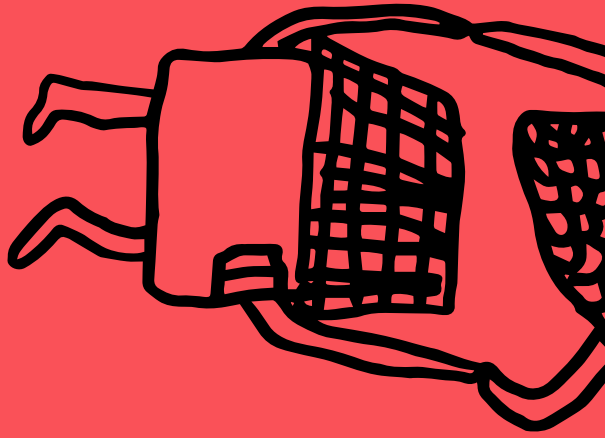
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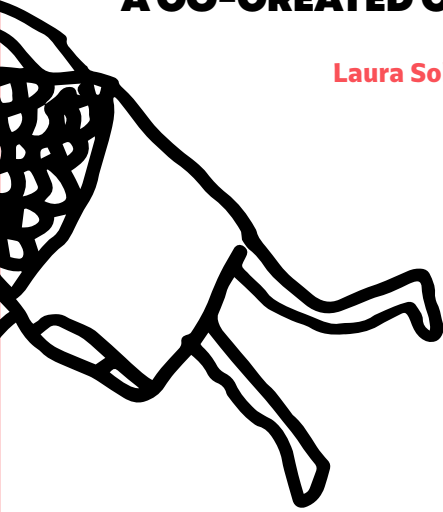


DOING TOGETHER: FROM TEMPORARY USE OF PUBLIC SPACES TOWARDS A CO-CREATED CITY

APPROACH

Laura Sobral

*With many thanks to
Nathalie Badaoui*



Urban scholars and policy-makers are still searching for innovative models that can allow symmetrical cooperation and partnerships between citizens, institutions and public authorities. In this book one can find several approaches as how to grow coalitions, sometimes not more than first steps in the right direction, others are more structured processes backed with financial structures. This article explores possible models that allow for that active civic cooperation to be transformed into sustainable collaborations.

DESIGNING TOGETHER

The creation and management of public spaces should go beyond consultation: people should not only be heard but also be allowed to co-create urban spaces. But how can citizens identify themselves with their city if they are alienated from its development and management? As previous chapters showed, an inclusive city starts with designing and developing from diversity. Including citizens in the city development process fosters a sense of belonging and a sense of ownership. Belongingness is key if we want citizens to care for their city the way they care for what they find important in their daily lives.

LACK OF SPATIAL LITERACY

However, being a proactive citizen is easier said than done since there is no systematized and easily accessible knowledge on how to be a proactive citizen. Indeed, citizens lack knowledge even on how to use their city, meaning, they find difficulty in accessing information on what they are or are not allowed to do in public space.

City use is often limited by laws that were defined long time ago for control purposes. Those laws reflect outdated power relations and are usually distant from the actual culture of city use. Additionally, they are typically unknown to citizens. Urban regulation is generally applied whenever the context suits powerful people, and when it makes overall control easier.

THE PROS AND CONS OF TEMPORARY USES

Temporary uses of city spaces can help 'hack' this system in a positive way. Labelled as 'events', 'culture' or 'art', temporary uses are seen as 'exceptions' to the rule. They can transform public spaces into experimental areas, where city dwellers can potentially test ideas in a self-organised way. Some temporary uses happen simply as people take a chance, when opportunities present themselves to use a specific place in a different way. A well-known example in this case is the city of Berlin. When the Wall was demolished, while the government was reorganizing itself, citizen initiatives occupied many vacant lots in different parts of the city and land plots along the river Spree with an array of activities, such as clubbing, gardening, and even an 'urban beach'. Such activities refresh the urban landscape and can transform a city's culture of public space use.

Yet, much time and effort are needed to enable those experiences to develop and evolve to the point where they can influence the way in which a city is used and governed. That is not an easy task for many reasons. First, the patterns of use resulting from the interventions described above are frequently not supported by the existing legal frameworks and could be interpreted as illegal. That means organisers have to struggle with permits to keep on doing their activities. In addition, the organizational setups are often unsustainable in the long run. These voluntary activities, interventions and occupations are usually funded with scarce resources and fail to transform from temporary to long-term new use of urban spaces. Even worse: they are usually not financially profitable and thus often endangered by commercial initiatives that enter the field after the activating of the area was successful (estate developments, for instance).

Nevertheless, we can agree that if cities were to be developed in a more sustainable manner, alternative uses in urban space should be put in practice. This brings me to the question 'how can small-scale co-governance experiments be integrated into the urban management as innovative tools that promote the common good?'

While urban development is based on the co-production of urban spaces by a multitude of stakeholders, bureaucratic structures in most countries are traditionally rigid and less participative. Whenever initiatives are designed and implemented in a dialogue with public administrations, or even in effective collaboration, they often rely on informal mechanisms. That can become an issue when initiatives are too dependent on public agents' goodwill and their existence is linked to political context.

Creating legal frameworks for cooperation between citizens and city administration on the co-governance of public spaces could solve some of these issues. Such collaboration will result in the use of public spaces as a platform for spontaneity and gathering. Furthermore, as a political process, the co-production and co-governance of the city can help redistribute power and strengthen democracy.

Many European cities, particularly in Spain, Italy and Portugal, are adopting various urban tools for cooperation between city administration and citizens with the goal of facilitating the shared management of public space. Some cities have been doing this for several years now, and the achievements are noticeable.

LISBON

The BIP/ZIP strategy ('priority intervention neighbourhoods and zones) has been actively applied in Lisbon since 2010. The strategy consists of a set of tools aimed at promoting local development, active citizenship, the capacity for self-organization and the collective search for solutions through the participation of the population, while improving residents' living conditions. The goal is to effectively improve, through technical collaboration and financial support, disenfranchised territories and communities in order to allow for or, in some cases, reinforce their integration in the urban fabric without discrimination (particularly in terms of access to public goods and services). Through BIP/ZIP, the Municipality and its population work together in cooperation to boost quality of life and to promote social cohesion in the city. The projects advocates for supporting and promoting local projects and partnerships, creating networks and establishing links between dwellers' real problems and decision-makers.

BOLOGNA

The city of Bologna, in Italy, approved the Regulation for the Care and Regeneration of Urban Commons in 2014. It is a regulatory framework that invites ordinary citizens and neighbourhoods to protect and improve their own urban commons with the active support of government. The framework considers the city a collaborative social ecosystem where residents are resourceful, imaginative agents. Hence, individual citizens – or groups of citizens, organized formally or informally – can propose to take care of their city's common goods; the benefit being that citizens

will no longer seek the Municipality just to complain, but that they will see themselves as being part of the solution to their problems, thus, collaborating with the public administration. Through collaborative contracts the city administration and citizens agree on interventions to conserve and regenerate the urban commons (green spaces, abandoned buildings, squares) whenever the citizens' intervention requires collaboration or responds to a need identified by the Municipality. These collaborations can take many forms – technical advice, training, improvements in spaces, and, in a few cases, funding.

MEXICO CITY

In Latin America, similar discussions have emerged in the last few years, and some cities have also started developing their own urban instruments for cooperation. Mexico City, for example, developed 'Programa de Mejoramiento Barrial' (Neighbourhood and Community Improvement Programme) in 2007. The Programme serves as a social development policy instrument of the Government of Mexico City and its purpose is to promote the fulfilment of social rights granted in the Political Constitution of Mexico, such as the right to use and enjoy public spaces. The Programme strengthens citizenship, recognizing residents' ability to organize and exercise direct influence on public decisions that improve their quality of life.

Acknowledging the right to the city as inalienable for the entire population, the Programme seeks to strengthen, rescue, preserve, improve and sustain the physical and material conditions of public spaces, while reinforcing the cultural identity of the inhabitants.

BRASILIA

Recently, 'Programa Nosso Quadrado' (Our Block Programme) was launched in Brasília. The programme functions as a cooperation agreement between the city and the citizens for collective maintenance and upgrading of urban furniture and public places. It seeks to promote urban, cultural, social, technological, leisure, environmental and landscape improvements. The programme is still based on a rather limited legal instrument known as 'Term of Cooperation', but it is nonetheless a step forward in the cooperation between citizens and city administration.



A GROWING MOVEMENT IN SÃO PAULO

Most of these instruments were developed fairly recently in just a handful of cities and even fewer of those cities are implementing them. Unfortunately, my city São Paulo is not one of them. Although there are some specific instruments of cooperation and collaboration with civil society, such as 'Redes e Ruas' (Networks and Streets) – a public call for projects and other cultural initiatives. During Mayor Fernando Haddad's administration (2013-2016), the city of São Paulo saw a multiplication of citizen collectives and social movements reclaiming their right to the city. They were occupying vacant land, reclaiming squares and parks as common spaces, organizing community gardens and free open-air activities. I think all of this happened to be linked to what David Harvey describe in his book *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution* (2012). Simultaneously, other cities also went through convergent processes, like the Occupy movement, in New York, London and others, or Istanbul's demonstrations against Gezi Park urban development plan. Movements in those and other cities demanded the reorganisation of urban spaces in a more socially just and ecologically sustainable ways – therefore also becoming the focus of anti-capitalist resistance.

The movement *A Batata Precisa de Você* (The 'Potato Square' needs you), which took place in São Paulo, was inspired by both the local and global context. *A Batata Precisa de Você* promoted the regular occupation of Largo da Batata, a 29 000 m² square in the Pinheiros neighbourhood. Largo da Batata was redeveloped over the past 10 years incurring very high financial costs for the municipal administration. When the square was finally open to the public, it resembled a desert, without any trees nor street furniture. The goal of the movement was to strengthen the population's emotional relationship with Largo da Batata; highlighting its potential as a place of coexistence, testing possibilities for its permanent occupation and prototyping infrastructure that improves the quality of Largo da Batata as a meaningful public space.

During the whole year of 2014 and in the first half of 2015, various cultural and leisure activities were hosted on the square on Friday afternoons, including performances of musical groups and conversations about urban issues. Every Friday from 6 p.m., the square was occupied by mobile furniture – such as beach chairs, umbrellas and hammocks – making sure people felt comfortable during the activities. On some Fridays, there were also workshops to build temporary furniture as well as gardening activities. It was an exercise of democracy at a local level, a citizenship movement. It offered an alternative in which people could stand up for better urban conditions and collaborate to introduce immediate improvements in the city. The record of successful events and the systematic occupation of the square inspired other groups to occupy public spaces of their cities.

The project was developed in an informal collaboration with the municipal public administration, which understood the relevance of the project despite some occasional conflicts.

With the end of Fernando Haddad's administration approaching, people from *A Batata Precisa de Você* and other occupy and reclaim-the-city



movements asked the Mayor for a formal agreement that could protect the advances made by their initiatives. As one of the initiators of 'A Batata Precisa de Você', I felt that the sustainability of the movement could be compromised. Unfortunately, no formal agreement for shared management was possible. The Municipality's lawyers were running to finalize all other urban procedures that were already in process before leaving the administration.

Once the new mayor – João Doria, from the opposition party – took the oath of office, we faced many setbacks, mostly due to the absence of an empowered civil society, the structural impermeability of the public administration and the few opportunities for participation. The lack of formal cooperation compacts between the city and its citizens proved to be a serious issue.

As a consequence, in 2017 the city of São Paulo had a very progressive micro-urbanism and micro-politics network which emerged in a context of super-privatization, macro-urbanism and macro-politics without any spatial understanding of justice in the city. The micro and the macro context clashed.

THE CITY NEEDS YOU INSTITUTE

Since 2015 some people from 'A Batata Precisa de Você' have reunited in an association called 'A Cidade Precisa de Você' (The City Needs You institute). This was done in response to numerous invitations to share their 'Batata' experience in different places and in recognition of the urgent need to research possible legal frameworks for the cooperation between the city and the citizens in the shared use and co-governance of public spaces.

Legal pre-conditions and limitations shape the socio-spatial relations but the opposite is also true: socio-spatial relations shape the regulations that enable an exchange between macro and micro contexts. And that interdependency was exactly what led us to create A Cidade Precisa de Voce and, ultimately, to share this story and some of our recent research findings.

Currently, there are several interesting and inspiring models of legal frameworks that can foster dialogue and cooperation between municipal administrations and civil society – especially in cities where grassroots movements formally take part in decision-making. Drawing from their example while also respecting the local context, the way forward is to develop more cooperation tools and instruments which respond to local demands. It is possible, and our cities need it!



HOF VAN CARTESIUS: OUR AFFORDABLE PLACE WHERE SMALL BUSINESSES AND CREATIVE LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS THRIVE

LOCAL
CASE

Simone Tenda

What happens to a city when there are no stable or affordable spaces for small creative entrepreneurs? With many community workspaces increasingly at risk of eviction, we began transforming a destitute plot of land into a vibrant co-creative space – Hof van Cartesius (Cartesian Court), a project located on the outskirts of Utrecht, the Netherlands. Creating this pioneering space, an oasis of creativity within Utrecht's urban jungle, took four years of bureaucratic battles. In 2014, we began conceptualising a plan aimed at empowering particularly creative makers with lower level incomes. This case study highlights the need to build upon these lessons and sheds light on the vital importance that new and sustainable bottom-up communities like Hof van Cartesius have on the local population.



OPEN CALL BY THE MUNICIPALITY

It started when an urban planner named Charlotte Ernst reacted to an ‘Open Call’, from the Municipality of Utrecht, to design an “affordable, modular working space for creative entrepreneurs in Utrecht” (Gemeente Utrecht, Ontwikkelingsvisie Werkspookkwartier, 2012). With its four core principles – a) a bottom-up community, b) immersed in a regenerative garden, c) based on circular and material-driven design and d) serving as a catalyst for the redevelopment of the neighbourhood – Hof van Cartesius won this ‘Open Call’. At that point, there was a shortage of affordable workspaces in Utrecht, as makers would temporarily reside in (previously) abandoned buildings with short-term contracts. This problem has its roots in high land and construction costs which increasingly price out civil society. The industrial ‘waste land’ in the Werkspookkwartier neighbourhood presented itself as the opportunity to create a safe space for a community of creative minds who have been isolated by the growth of residential urbanisation. The plan tackled the lack of affordable workspace while simultaneously offering a sustainable solution to the problem of growing urbanism.

GROWING THE CIVIC INITIATIVE

We were eager and inspired to develop this project and we identified three important stakeholders in the community: the municipality, inventors, and entrepreneurs and creative makers. We took matters into our own hands and initiated this cooperative association to unite all the entrepreneurs and makers, creating a financially viable grassroots organisation. We also found an investor who was willing to buy the property from the municipality.

Architecturally, the construction of Hof van Cartesius was based on a circular and material-driven design where the makers would build their own workspace from waste or second-hand materials. On the one hand, this decision meant that the workspaces would be constructed in the most financially viable way based on each individual’s (tight) budget. On the other hand, the makers had the freedom to custom design both the exterior and interior of their space and tailor it completely to their own wishes, which greatly improved their sense of ownership over the building. In addition, various members all joined the cooperative association which enables the community to collectively determine its path. This process is enforced through collective decision-making and joint missions, like for instance, the beautiful courtyard garden which was completely constructed by volunteer energy alone.



GETTING CREATIVE
WITH WASTE
MATERIALS DURING
THE UPCYCLING
WORKSHOP

*Source: author's
personal archive*

JUST DO IT

The secret to the success of this particular case is an empowered community just doing it: against all odds and despite the doubts of the municipalities – this is a bottom-up community of pioneers, passersby, refugees, retirees and neighbours who all came together and worked hard, often voluntarily, to make the Hof the magical place it is today. As for inclusiveness, we strive to maintain an open and public attitude. This is reflected in the architecture of the workspace, with a central, publicly accessible courtyard and transparent facades.

RECOGNITION

One year after its inauguration, Hof van Cartesius is a thriving community that attracts a variety of people to a once desolate industrial terrain. It has become a case study for the neighbourhood, as more and more workspaces are being built adopting similar circular principles. Nationally and regionally, we are profiled as the testing ground for Utrecht's circular economy, DIY architecture and sustainable community-building. The EU Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs & Fisheries who officially opened the Hof during the EU Green Week, said that the space "really is a perfect example of economically viable circular economy in action" and then added "I strongly recommend visiting if you are in Utrecht" (KarmenuVella, 2018).

THE COMMUNAL
GARDEN OF THE HOF.

Source: Robert
Oostenbroek

A VARIETY OF WASTE
MATERIALS ARE USED
BY THE MEMBERS TO
FINISH THE FACADES.

Source: Rob Wetzer



OPEN DOORS

Although the Hof does not actively reaches out to special target groups, like retirees and refugees, we are approached on a regular basis with requests for collaboration. We work with former refugees, retirees and neighbours, giving them space to develop their talents and interests. Most of them have become intensely involved in the Hof on a long-term basis. We strive to have open doors by encouraging individuals and organisations (from all backgrounds and ages) to use this public space in organising social and cultural events. In the near future, we will actively focus on programming more public events to widen our range.

*BIRD EYE VIEW OF
HOF VAN CARTESIUS,
LOCATED IN
UTRECHT, THE
NETHERLANDS*

*Source: Hof van
Cartesius*



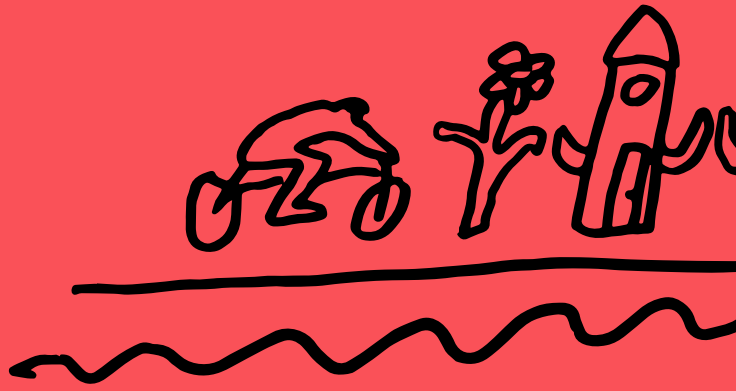
FUTURE PLANS

As the demand for affordable and green workspace in Utrecht is still on the rise, we expect to grow and continue building in the following years. We are already talking to 40 new potential parties who wish to join in the next phase of the building process. We believe that the bottom-up creation of a mixed community and the circular-style building of your own workspace is a perfect tool for inspiring agency and ownership among a wide group of people.

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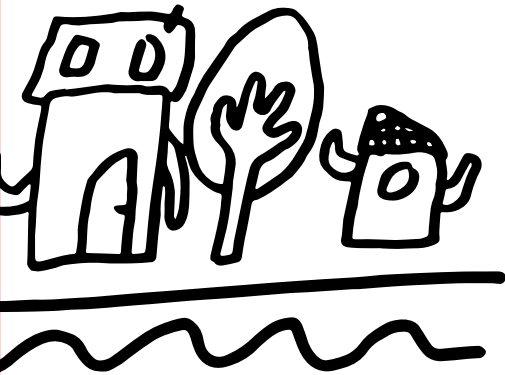
KarmenuVella (2018, May 22). "The @hofvancartesius which I officially opened as part of #EUGreenWeek #Utrecht really is a perfect example of economically viable #circulareconomy in action – I strongly recommend visiting if you are in #Utrecht" [Twitter post]. Retrieved on October 14th, 2018



LA MARINA DE VALENCIA: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND ECONOMIC ACTIVATION OF THE VALENCIAN WATERFRONT

LOCAL
CASE

Ramon Marrades & Dima Yankova



This case describes the transformation of Valencia's obsolete and underused waterfront into an inclusive public space open to everyone. Despite being historically connected to the Mediterranean, Valencia was originally founded about 6 km away from the water. It grew and established itself inland; hence the famous phrase among locals claiming that 'the city has turned its back on the sea'. In reality, the historic expansion of Valencia's port facilitated the consolidation of a strong fishermen quarter – an urban nucleus of maritime activity which formed an important, but often overlooked part of the city. This dream of connecting Valencia to the sea persisted in the minds of technocrats for decades. It was a myopic approach which failed to recognize that there already was a community facing the sea. In the early 2000s, this same desire to open up to the waterfront prompted the local government to propose the harbor as a hosting site for grandiose events, such as America's Cup and the Formula 1 Race. These white elephants brought about rapid infrastructure and real-estate growth but they left behind a legacy of exclusion, division, and gross strategic and economic mismanagement.

MOVING FORWARD DURING THE CRISIS

With the arrival of the economic crisis in Spain, the decade of glamorous large-scale projects came to an end. Between 2012 and 2015, the historic harbor of Valencia faded into obsolescence. Most facilities were locked up and left to serve no purpose. Port infrastructure from the early 1990s together with modern buildings constructed to accommodate the big events all laid idle. The lavish spending which had come to characterize the past decade alienated the local community. Many residents felt disenchanted with the new image of the waterfront as an exclusive space

for fancy events and saw hardly any reason to visit it. The traditional fishermen community was pushed to the margins and the only ones who felt comfortable in this space were the yacht owners and occasional restaurant clients.

A PLAN FOR ACTION

At the end of 2015, Consorcio Valencia 2007 (CV07) – the public institution managing the harbor – launched a new plan for action based on three fundamental pillars:

- ◆ First, productive activation of an under-utilized space of high historic, cultural and real-estate value: taking advantage of the existing infrastructure to attract innovative economic activity which generates wealth and long-term benefit for the local community, rather than immediate short-term profits for a handful of investors.
- Next, civic engagement and active participation: opening up to the city and inviting people from the traditional fishermen neighbourhoods and the rest of Valencia to once again reconnect with the space, both physically and emotionally.
- Finally, efficient management: opting for economically sustainable projects which allow the harbor to cover its spending, generate sufficient profit and become economically independent.

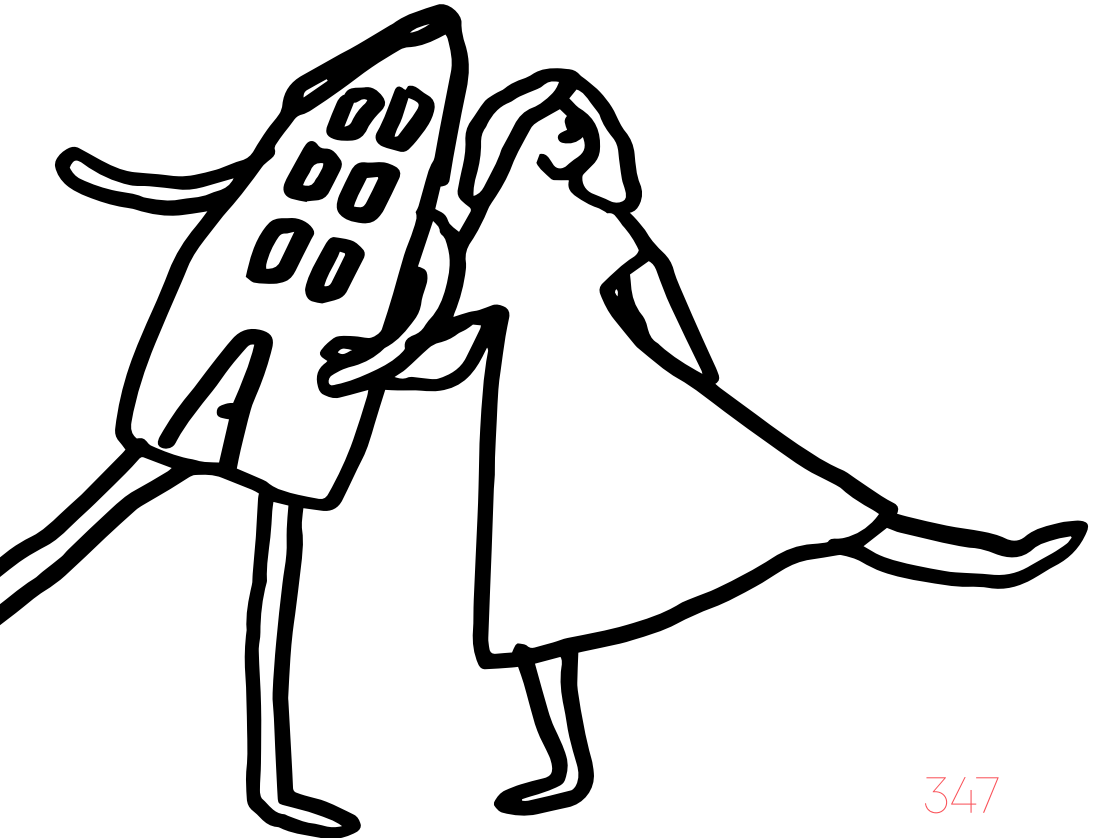
FORMING PARTNERSHIPS

The plan gave rise to many and diverse cross-sector partnerships, each one appealing to a previously excluded segment of the population. In 2017 for example, a modest investment helped restore La Pèrgola – a small concert venue, which gave stage to the traditional music societies of the fishermen quarter before America’s Cup took place. Following the restoration, CV07 invited back the original performers for a fresh cycle of public concerts, which continues to draw more and more spectators every Sunday. In 2017, CV07 also initiated a participative process of renaming key streets and squares of the waterfront. Using round tables, surveys and focus groups, the organizers involved the neighbouring communities and co-created a new toponymy for the harbor which reflected more closely the historic and cultural identity of the space. Another positive transformation occurred in Alinghi – a former sailing base, in which quick effective fixes were implemented to welcome a month-long civic factory festival in 2016. Today, that same building is a hubspot for social innovators and entrepreneurs, whose creative ideas drive the revitalization of the public space. The most recent initiative of CV07 features a partnership with a local educational association which empowers children at risk of exclusion. The joint programme involved 50 teenagers who were asked to generate ideas for the potential

transformation of the waterfront through creative and educational exercises. The initiative helped open a route of communication with a specific sector of the population, whose input was rarely sourced and whose presence in the harbor was poorly understood.

TURNING THE TIDE

The revitalization of the iconic Valencian harbor represents the physical and emotional reconciliation between a city and its waterfront. It illustrates vividly the importance of including a wide range of partners in the rebuilding of an obsolete and exclusive public space and it can serve as a guidebook for many cities faced with the same challenges. While complete inclusion remains an objectively unattainable goal, reaching out and fostering a dialogue with one social group at a time can often make all the difference.



WORKING SIDE BY SIDE WITH PRIVATE PARTNERS: HOW CAN PLACEMAKERS CONFRONT THE CHALLENGES OF SUCCESSFULLY INTEGRATING PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTOR INTEREST IN CREATING GREAT PLACES?

APPROACH

Peter Williams



“Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.”

Jane Jacobs

INTRODUCTION

Accounts of city making can sometimes read as a kings and queens' version of history. There are the well documented contributions of Robert Moses, Georges-Eugène Haussmann, Ebenezer Howard, the architects et al. Examples such as these continue to inspire civic leaders, philanthropists, mayors and developers to pursue their visions and grand projects. All of course have merits and achieved good outcomes. But it is hardly consistent to argue on one hand, that it takes single-mindedness and strong leadership to push things through, and on the other, that inclusivity and participation in the process are the hallmarks of good placemaking.

That good placemaking is essentially a democratic undertaking is increasingly unchallenged. Whilst this may be acknowledged in practice, it does not always flow through to result in personal and professional behaviours which exhibit the practical commitment to deal with all interests equitably.

Much of the regulation around urban planning is aimed at ensuring that no single interest can run roughshod over other views. It attempts to redress the imbalance between those with power and influence over

land, and those others who are impacted by change. But striking that balance has proved elusive, and the intrinsically adversarial nature of the development process results in partisanship.

Even what appears as a level playing field of participation can be misleading, serving to mask disparities in resource, power, technical capability and influence. Some have sought to benefit from this obfuscation, peddling the notion that all that is required is an increased level of understanding, that can be achieved through better communication (comms). The dark arts of the place spinners.

All too often though it is actors' pursuit of one-dimensional outcomes, that bedevil placemaking success; those that serve narrow, technical, social or financial goals, and ignore the broader user perspective. For example, transport prescriptions, over engineered for the needs of vehicles, architects' visions of streets in the sky, and other technocrat follies all happen when the focus on the user's human needs is lost.

Similarly, development economics can result in speculative and successive waves of resi-led, retail-led, or leisure-led development. These may stack up for the short-term bean counter but make no sense for the longer term at a community level. Sustainability demands a more nuanced evaluation of development needs than can be achieved by simply relying on the market value model. While societies have struggled to find a more efficient allocator of capital investment than the market, the market's deficiencies are highlighted in the field of placemaking where a complex range of considerations needs to be ordered. It is not acceptable that poor investment decisions are simply punished by financial failure as communities are faced with the legacy of unsold property, boarded up units and barren public squares.

The evolution of the placemaking philosophy brings the user of place closer to the centre of the debate. It respects the imperatives of the different disciplines – urban design, architecture, mobility, sustainability even, dare I say, accountancy, but it understands that solutions which favour a single perspective are unlikely to deliver common benefits.

Thankfully the march of the placemakers over the last generation has won a voice for the previously under-represented, those that live and work and are the users of place. And this has initiated the development of more holistic approaches. But the battle was not about removing one set of dominant interests and replacing them with another. The aim is to harness all interests, what Jane Jacobs describes succinctly in our opening quote as everybody. This would include those who invest in an area, create employment and wealth, and run commercial, cultural and social enterprises.

What is required to successfully integrate these interests into the placemaking endeavour?

THREE ACTIONS FOR PLACEMAKERS

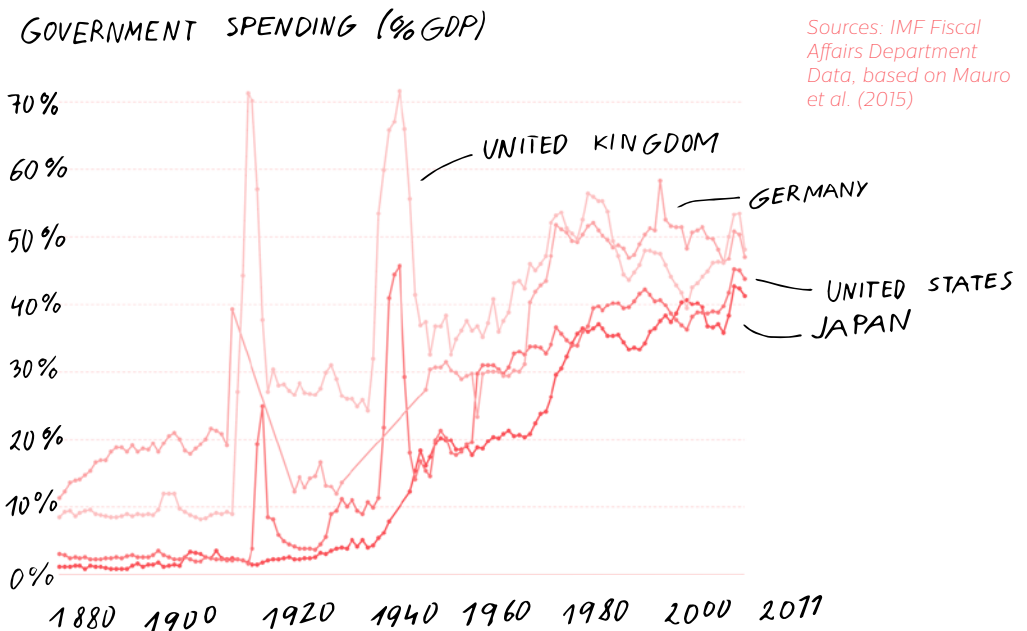
In attempting to answer this question three very different factors must be considered. The first is cultural and can be referred to as partisanship – the inability to rise above the ideological divide that separates the private and public sectors. The others are more practical and concern the mechanisms that are available, and the framework for their application. The tools and their box if you like.

FIRST, KEEP AN OPEN MIND TOWARDS PRIVATE PARTNERS

Placemakers need to be sector neutral, and impartial in their intent to foster an inclusive dialogue with private and public interests. Not least because the advent of globalisation has reversed a longstanding trend where government commanded more and more of countries' GDP. In recent years the need for nations to compete in world markets entails a shift in the balance of resources away from the public sector and there is little evidence to suggest that the limits imposed on government spending across the globe will be lifted any time soon.

But it is not only for resources that the private sector should be embraced. It should also be tapped into for its energy, enthusiasm and expertise.

Some working in the field have found it difficult to stretch their definition



of 'everybody' as far as to embrace the private sector. There is an ideological hesitation here, manifested as public sector good – private sector bad. This has no place in inclusive placemaking. Or perhaps it implies a lack of confidence, a fear that any hard-won concessions in advancing community interests in the placemaking arena would be

threatened by relaxing the guard. Given the disproportionate balance of power this is an understandable, but ultimately self-defeating stance.

Ideology should be banished to the realm of the political. Genuine fears however should be taken seriously and approached through a series of confidence building measures, some of which are explored below.

SECOND, UNDERSTAND THE BUSINESS MODELS AND BE AWARE OF PLACE SPINNERS

Whilst placemakers need to be sector neutral, they can't be sector blind. The tools and techniques of community engagement are not the most appropriate implements for engaging with the private sector, and fresh approaches are called for.

Similarly, if the best place outcomes are to be achieved, the private sector will need to continue adjusting its stance and its models. It has begun to embrace the language of placemaking (the letter but not the spirit, cynics would say). Placemakers must be the ones interpreting and enriching this language, growing the dialogue and helping convert words into deeds.

In this context it is important to distinguish between the placemakers and the place spinners. What defines the difference is that the former have a real and active interest in achieving place outcomes, and in co-creating the narrative of place, whilst the latter have narrower objectives, serve a partial interest and simply seek to convey a pre-ordained narrative as a way to secure selfish goals.

This analysis positions placemakers as brokers between competing interests, a role that demands independence in order to win the trust of different stakeholders. And as facilitators, process managers that can frame dialogue, and reach consensus.

One of the remedies to the imbalance of power during large-scale housing renewal in the UK was the appointment of so-called Tenants Friends. They provided support to residents and commercial leaseholders through the planning and development process. Crucially, independently funded, they were empowered to represent the interests of these ultimate end-users. Perhaps there is a hint here to a potential role for Place Champions, a role independent of the developers and the regulators. It is not difficult to envisage how these might operate. They could be funded through a very modest percentage of total development costs, or simply through dispensing with the costs of the place spinners.

THIRD, MOVE BEYOND THE PLAN TOWARDS LONG-TERM PLACE MANAGEMENT

Of course, placemaking is much broader than development, it is an open-ended process that needs to be continually reviewed and replenished. Reaching agreement is a necessary but insufficient stage. The next steps of recording accord and acting thereafter present different challenges. Stipulating a set of agreed placemaking objectives is one thing, difficult in itself but achievable, as has been regularly evidenced. However, setting those objectives out with precision and clarity, and in a manner that remains relevant and current over time is more problematic.

The current English experiment in neighbourhood planning illustrates some of the dilemmas. The process has often been productive, bringing



together a range, if not the full range, of different stakeholders. But the final outputs are often underwhelming.

Neighbourhood Plans are essentially land use based. Broadening their scope into what could be referred to as Whole Place Plans could encourage wider analysis and prescription, bringing social, economic and cultural considerations into play. Getting the private and public sector to jointly work on the production of Whole Place Plans and commit to their implementation would be a means of formalising co-operation. To date there has been too little exploration of how this might work in practice.

For the private sector to engage meaningfully with the placemaking agenda will take time and effort and this will require new frameworks if it is to be sustained. The private sector can see the merits of mutual action beyond the narrow pursuit of profit. Enlightened self interest it may be, but the collateral impact can be wholly positive. There is often the 'will' but not always the 'way'. What is lacking is the superstructure to support joint action. History has thrown up numerous formulations such as the trade guilds, chambers of commerce, professional associations and the like. What should the equivalent of these look like in the digital era.

CALL FOR A PLACEMAKING BID APPROACH

Around much of the English speaking world Business Improvement Districts (BID) provide part of the answer, and a growing body of successful placemaking outcomes. The legislative framework required to support their establishment has also been developed in Germany, Albania, the Netherlands and Sweden. Where they exist they should feature in the placemakers armoury.

Although the flexibility of the enabling legislation for BIDs is commendable, it does mean that interpretation of their role is multi-fold and placemaking performance patchy.

A full and impartial analysis of their record in engaging the private sector in placemaking is overdue. An understanding of which of their features are critical to their contribution would allow that learning to be transferred to other scenarios where they do not yet operate. A key role for the emerging European placemaking network should be the capture and dissemination of that learning.



LONG-TERM COLLECTIVE FINANCIAL STABILITY: THE CASE OF CLUB RHIJNHUIZEN

TOOL

Hans Karssenbergh, in an interview with Konstantinos Gournianakis

During the economic crisis of 2015 the municipality of Nieuwegein in the Netherlands set off to revive and develop Rhijnhuizen – a business district with a hidden historical part, a plethora of vacant buildings and some one hundred building owners. But what do you do with an area full of mostly vacant spaces and offices that look straight out of George Orwell's '1984'? 'You get rid of the offices', most would answer, but that was not what Hans Karssenbergh and Emilie Vlieger had in mind when they took on the challenge of developing the abandoned area and started the Club Rhijnhuizen.

The Club builds the network, is active in matchmaking between owners of vacant buildings and new initiatives and developers, co-creates the quality of the area, sets up placemaking to transform spaces into places, programs events and looks after area promotion and information. In three years time, the network grew from 10 to over 400 participants. One of the leading ideas is that placemaking should not be a one time intervention, but a long term and repeated investment: from place making to place management. The network supports this, but can only be sustained with enough structural funding. So what is the financial model?

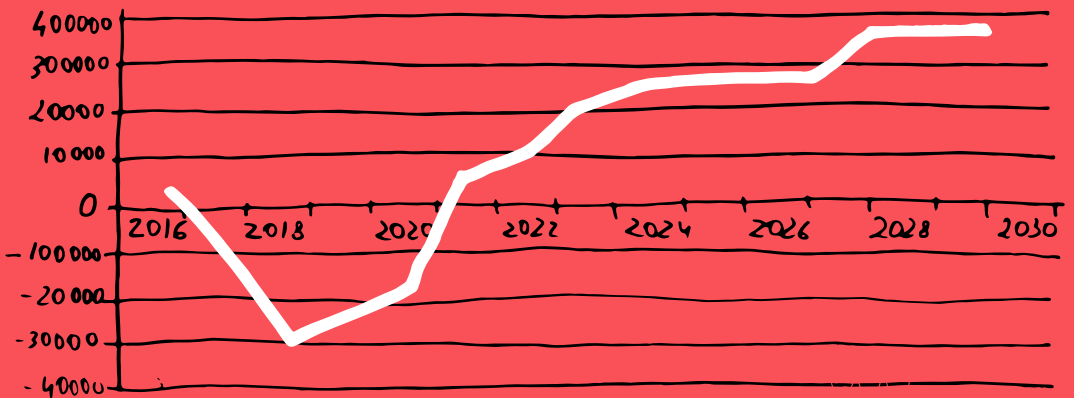
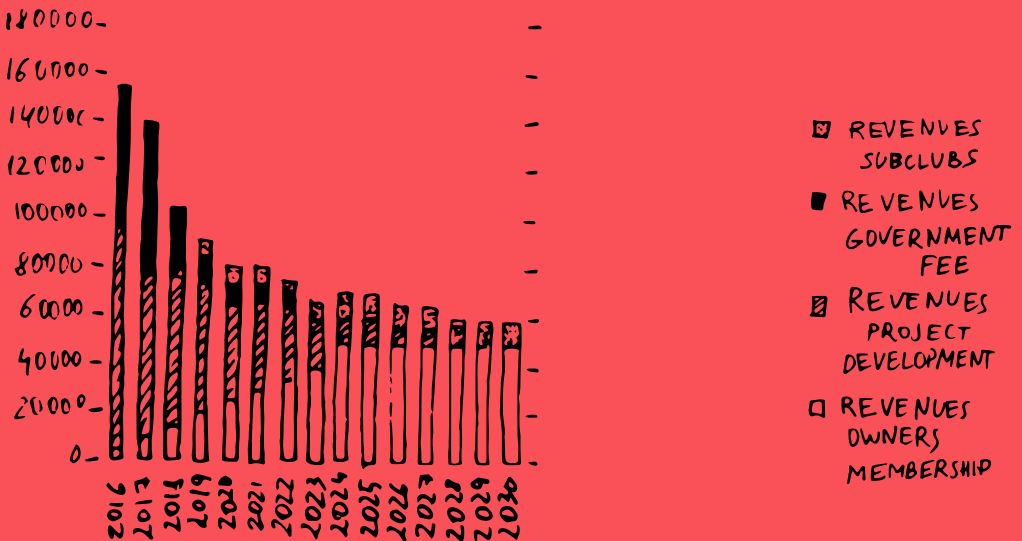
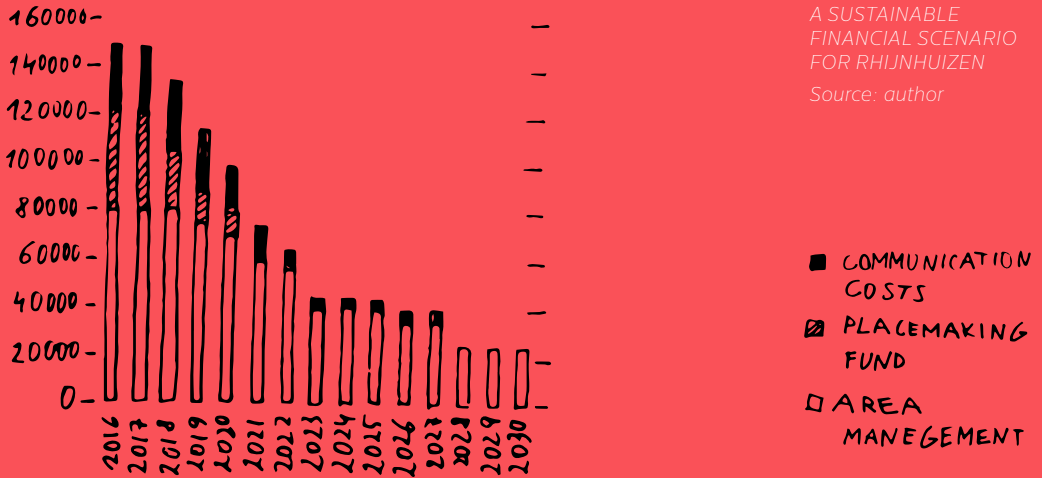
BUILDING THE COALITION FOR AREA TRANSFORMATION

Hans explains that Club Rhijnhuizen was born out of numerous meetings with local stakeholders in which they brainstormed together how to tackle the issue and create a town for everyone. To transform an area, he says, you need three things: a vision, a network and a business case.

The owners should have a business case for their own buildings and collectively, the municipality and the community, should have a business case for the entire area. To turn a district full of vacant offices into a residential area where people want to live, ride a bike or simply walk around, the infrastructure of the entire space needs to change. You need to introduce public transport, basic facilities like playgrounds and benches, as well as some nice urban vegetation.

A SUSTAINABLE
FINANCIAL SCENARIO
FOR RHIJNHUIZEN

Source: author



DESIGNING A STRUCTURAL FINANCIAL MODEL FOR PLACE MANAGEMENT

The most interesting aspect of Club Rhijnhuizen is not even the successful transformation of the area itself, or the collective process adopted by a group of co-creators, but rather the underlying financial model.

Club Rhijnhuizen was set up as a cooperative, of which building owners, residents, companies and social and cultural initiatives can become a member. All members of the Club pay an annual fee. At the same time, and this is the hybrid part of the financial model, it is compulsory for real estate developers to pay an area fee for investments into public space and common amenities. 10% of that area fee goes into the Club Rhijnhuizen. In the first six months municipal funds helped kickstart the investments, based on the mutual agreement that the support was temporary and would only be provided in the initial period. After that the Club was expected to be economically self-sustainable.

The graph below indicates how the business case was formed, and how reliance on government funds decreased while revenues went up. The model, which differs substantially from other legal and financial structures, was approved by the municipality, offering a sustainable financial scenario for Rhijnhuizen.

The fund covers the costs associated with the area management, communication and placemaking. At Club Rhijnhuizen decisions about the yearly strategy for investment are taken collectively.

IMPACT

With the creation of a sustainable financial model, Club Rhijnhuizen can continue to be the driving force behind the area development for many years to come. It is the collective effort of the building owners, partners, new residents and an innovative local government that made this partnership possible. And, of course, the persistent, sometimes stubborn support by outside facilitators Hans and Emilie who continued to look for creative solutions and sustainable answers.

In a nutshell, this case sets a precedent of how a solid business case can promote and sustain truly collective development. Most importantly for this book, it acknowledges that re-developing an area leads to a degree of gentrification. It also acknowledges that placemaking may increase property value by bringing more life to the area. However, it taps into the financial merits of the ones profiting the most: building owners and real estate developers. With the Club as a hybrid cooperative, they are required to reinvest a part of their profits back into the community and sustainable placemaking.

Transformation of an area has the risk of gentrification, yet with a mechanism to reinvest part of the profits back into the community we limit that possibility. This is what we like to call gentlyfication (for further reference see also the article by Theo Stauttener & Chantal Robbe). The Club Rhijnhuizen is one of its kind in The Netherlands, still, but hopefully more examples will follow.

www.clubrhijnhuizen.nl



SMART CITIES REQUIRE SMART CITIZENS: CROWDSOURCING, CO-CREATION, SELF-ORGANISATION

Maurits Kreijveld



Two years ago, the Caribbean were hit by a number of extremely powerful hurricanes. Hurricane Irma hit the island of Sint Maarten, a former Dutch colony. Immediately people in the Netherlands started initiatives in Facebook groups to collect food, clothing and flash lights to send to the people on Sint Maarten that lost their houses and lacked clean water. On national television people were encouraged to donate, but for a large group of citizens this was not enough. They wanted to do more. Facebook groups facilitated them to organize communities and call others to join in.

By empowering citizens and communities through digital technologies, governments can not only respond to crisis better or deliver better services in our cities, they also make citizens feel more engaged, more responsible and more in control. Best practices in this area cover a whole spectrum of ways for citizens to participate in and contribute to their cities: from a more passive involvement by simply installing a mobile app, by playing a simple game or by voting for a given option, to actively sharing information, measuring or investigating something or evaluating a government policy.

People often feel more at home in their cities when they can help or contribute. Governments are challenged to leverage this willingness and to channel the energy of their inhabitants into constructive and productive activities.

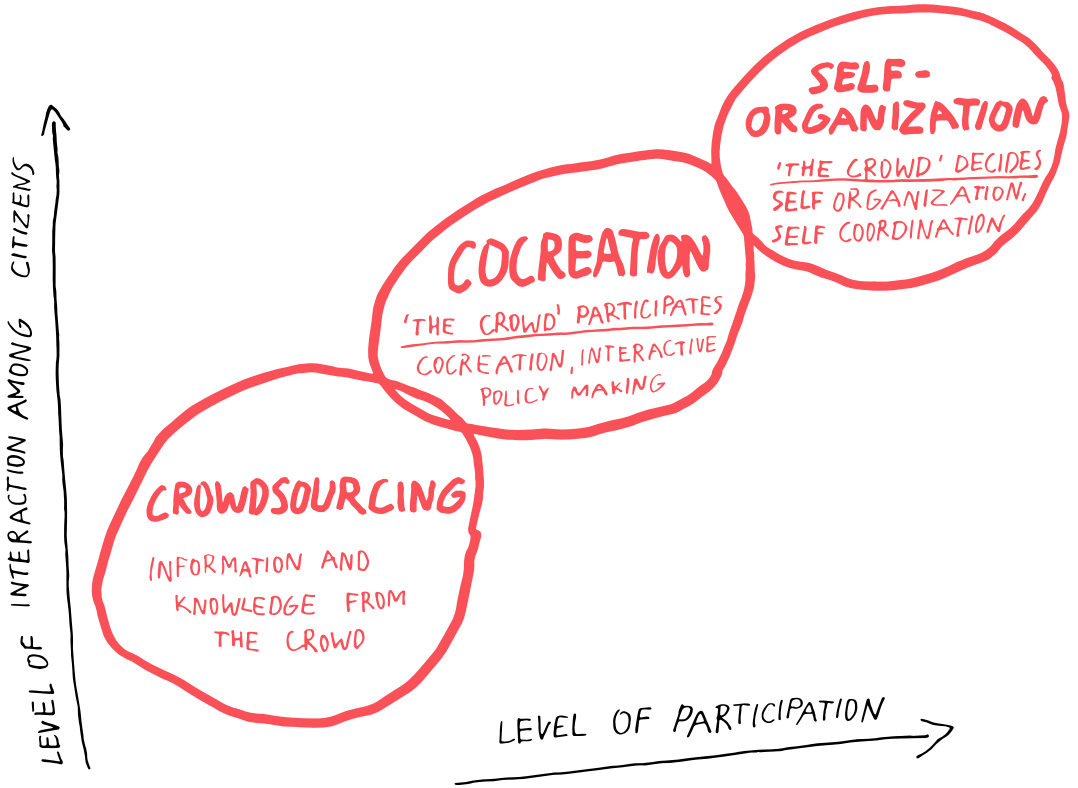
Digital information, data and communication tools together with blockchain and artificial intelligence allow for this collective intelligence to be collected. Many tools are already available that create collective intelligence by collecting and synthesizing individual contributions or by dividing large projects into smaller tasks and distributing these among a network of citizens. Unfortunately we see that most attention nowadays goes to smart city infrastructure projects, built and owned by tech

companies. Instead of supporting or empowering citizens the distance between them and their environment is widened. Citizens are monitored instead of engaged.

CROWDSOURCING,
CO-CREATION AND
SELF-ORGANIZATION

Source: author's
personal archive

Next to the very important 'offline' placemaking digital technology offers great ways to engage people, give them control and help citizens organise themselves. In this article I will demonstrate how empowering these technologies can be and how cities can truly benefit from focussing on these, often simple and existing digitale technologies. Hereby I distinguish between three stages of participation: crowdsourcing, co-creation and self-organization.



FIRST STAGE: CITIZENS AS THE SENSORS OF THE CITY

CROWDSOURCING AND CROWDMAPPING

One of the most important elements of crowdsourcing is that it enables to gather a lot of data on relatively low cost, or now cost at all. Instead of having inspectors check the air quality, the potholes in the streets, dangerous crossroads or broken lights it can now be done by ordinary citizens on their own phones. Where normally the frequency and width of inspections was a matter of financial and thereby often political priorities, with digital technology it is a low cost and potentially very efficient practice highly increasing the quality and service levels of the civic administration, with the help of its citizens. Citizens can measure everything that happens in the city by simply installing an app on a smartphone, by searching something on the web, by using a hashtag, by sharing the steps of their fitness tracker and by liking posts on social media. This type of technology a lot of communication and coordination among the citizens. Through the apps, websites of social media data is gathered, analysed and processed. www.google.org/flutrends/about

Examples of how crowdsourcing and mapping empowers citizens and local authorities:

MEASURING EARTH VIBRATIONS IN A MINING AREA

People living nearby the gas extraction sites in Groningen, the Netherlands, installed a smartphone app that measures vibrations by using the smartphone's sensors. The collective measurements provide an accurate insight in the number and scale of the earthquakes, which they then could use in discussions with government officials. Their data was as accurate as the official measurements, giving them equal footing at the discussion table. [bullet] measuring noise levels around the airport

Similarly, citizens living around Schiphol installed sensors (microphones) on their rooftops to measure the noise of airplanes when the airport announced new plans for growth. Through Sensornet, they could measure the noise levels constantly and 24 hours a day. The combined measurements of hundreds of sensors provide a detailed 3D map of the noise levels far more accurate than the measurements of the government and airport officials. This put an end to an ongoing debate between national government, local authorities and citizens who did not feel taken serious in the debate. www.sensornet.nl

MEASURING AIR QUALITY IN THE STREET

The open source sensor on air quality, developed in the Smart Citizen project funded by the European Commission, allowed citizens to measure the air quality in their neighbourhood. This led to constructive and informed discussions between the citizens and the municipalities on fine dust concentrations from traffic and industries and policies to curb the emissions in all the neighbourhoods participating in this project. The measurements also made the citizens more aware about their own behavior and how they themselves contribute to the emissions in their neighbourhood. www.smartcitizen.me

SECOND STAGE: CITIZENS REPORTING AND SOLVING PUZZLES

CO-CREATION

Citizens can do more than take (passive) measurements. We see more and more examples of platforms enabling citizens to witness and report. In this way they are actively contributing and collaborating with NGOs, aid organisations and governments. Some of the platforms were developed in response to crisis situations, but have proven equally instrumental in more regular city activities. Examples of citizen reporting:

USHAHIDI, MAPPING IN AREAS LACKING BASIC OR TRUSTWORTHY INFRASTRUCTURES

The open source platform Ushahidi has been used for mapping many large disasters such as the earthquakes in Haiti and Chili and fires in Russia, and also used to map the spread of diseases in certain areas. It was developed by local activists to monitor the elections in Kenya and report about the subsequent spread violence throughout the country. After Japan's tsunami in 2010 the platform helped to map the spread of radioactive radiation from the nuclear power plants that were damaged and leaking radiation. People were given sensors to measure the radiation and this was collected and visualized by Ushahidi on the map. Not only people living in the area or country where the disaster took place participated, people worldwide contributed. This provides a rich crisis mapping of an area that is hit by a disaster, such as a hurricane or earthquake.

Ushahidi combines low tech like sms, telephone calls, emails with smartphones, sensor data and data from official bodies such as governments, firemen, police and aid organizations (Red Cross). The maps give a real time situational awareness, enabling professionals to direct their aid or assistance to the most needed areas, and provide citizens with practical insights as where to find fresh water, shelter or medical assistance. The platform also gives leverage to citizens posting eye witness reports on local injustice, thereby also enabling them to built their cases and provide international organisations with the proper information to address the national authorities.

TOMNOD, IDENTIFYING AND CATEGORISING OBJECTS MASSIVE AMOUNTS OF IMAGES

Similarly, people can also been asked to help out. Over the years people have helped to identify tumor tissue in large database samples, search for deforestation in jungle areas on googlemaps, or in the case of the missing Malaysian Airlines plane people all over the world were asked to help searchfor the plane on satellite images. The website Tomnod provides people with the satellite images and let's them indicate pictures with a possible wreckage part or ligt raft. More than thousand people participated in this endeavor. Unfortunately the plane still hasn't been found.

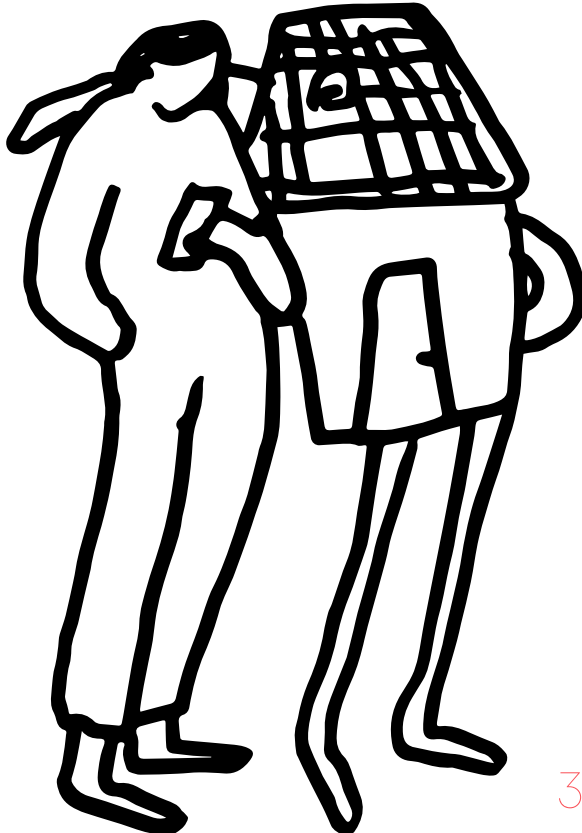
MYSOCIETY, ENABLING LOCAL CITY TOOLS

Ofcourse, also without crisis situations, tools like the ones mentioned can prove very valuable in daily urban life. The last ten years the organization mySociety has developed a set of tools that allow people to be active citizens. The tools cover the social values transparency, community and democracy.

- Alaveteli makes it easy to run a freedom of information website.
- Fixmystreet is a tool that makes it easy to set up a website where citizens can report street issues to the authorities.
- EveryPolitician facilitates websites or apps that monitor elected representatives.

The open source platform is used by governments in many countries.
www.mysociety.org/

There is a tremendous amount of experience with the use of these types of apps and data gathering sites throughout Europe, especially in the Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands and front runner cities like Barcelona. The technology is out there. It is just a matter of using it.



THIRD STAGE: CITIZENS IN THE LEAD

Instead of contributing to activities initiated by companies, governments or scientists, citizens can also take the initiative themselves: they create tools, develop products and provide services to each other. We refer to this third stage as self-organization.

DEVELOPING NEW IDEAS AND COLLECTIVE DECISION MAKING

There are many tools available that let people work in groups and help them brainstorm for new ideas, selecting and evaluating them and making collective decisions. The city of Barcelona has built Decidim Barcelona (= 'We Decide' Barcelona) a website where citizens can participate and decide in topics related to the city.

Along these, digital platforms that facilitate collaboration among citizens, have fueled the rise of the so-called sharing economy. These platforms provide a marketplace where people can provide services, goods or money to each other. Many cities like Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin and Copenhagen have car and bike sharing and energy sharing initiatives that stimulate innovative mobility and make citizens more resilient.

In the agricultural field, there is an active communities of citizens and ProAms (professional amateurs) that work on biology, robotics and Internet of things for farming applications. It is makers movement around farming. This movement has helped to develop open source tools and affordable techniques that benefit scientists and farmers.
www.farmhack.org/tools

CONCLUSION

Instead of striving for a smart city it might be better to built towards smart citizenship. Smart citizens can make smart decisions, resolve conflicts and take impactful actions. As we have seen they do not even have to actively participate, their smart phones can do the job for them and provide data that can lead to valuable insights.

1. www.citysdk.eu

The challenge for administrators is to facilitate citizens to contribute in different ways and with different intensities. It is not a matter of simply outsourcing tasks to citizens.

Projects like The City SDK¹ project have shown that it is possible to create a fully-fledged platform with which citizens and businesses can develop applications and services for the city. The platform ensures that the various technologies and data, such as mobility, energy and buildings, are integrated with each other. This is an alternative to the offerings of commercial providers but its principles could also be incorporated more into the commercial smart cities using more open source software and applications.

By working together with citizens, citizens are not only much more activated, they feel involved, their knowledge is used, their energy and willingness to help deployed positively. Moreover, by giving back information they become wiser.

Active committed citizens are desperately needed in times of major transitions, such as the energy transition. This transition that can only succeed if citizens play an active role and change their behavior. The growing popularity of solar panels on the roofs of houses is a good example of small contributions that citizens make on an ever-increasing scale. Collective street buys and other community initiatives contributed to the fact that now 1 in 8 houses in the Netherlands is equipped with solar panels.

So, let us not complain about the increasing power of tech companies such as Google, Facebook, Microsoft and Amazon, but ensure that the operating systems of the cities of the future are in the hands of citizens and administrators. Let's have smart citizens make our cities smart.

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HUSH CITY

FROM CROWDSOURCED DATA TO OPEN SOURCE PLANNING OF QUIETER AND HEALTHIER CITIES

TOOL

Antonella Radicchi



INTRODUCTION

Is a noisy city liveable? How can we make cities quieter and healthier using digital technology?

Hush City tackles these questions by taking inspiration from citizen science and soundscape research to involve people in the identification and evaluation of quiet urban areas.

The project looks at this issue from European policy level: in 2002 the European Environmental Noise Directive (49/2002) was adopted with the aim of reducing noise pollution and preserving quiet areas; yet it failed to provide an effective methodology for identifying such areas.

Hush City addresses this gap of knowledge by reclaiming quietness as an “urban commons” and empowering people to identify and evaluate everyday quiet spaces in their neighbourhoods, thus contributing to their protection by municipalities.



THE HUSH CITY APP

Hush City is a citizen science and soundscape free mobile app for iOS and Android, launched on the market in April of 2017. It allows users to:

- 1 crowdsource quiet spots and share them with the Hush City community;
- 2 identify and access quiet areas in their city or in other cities worldwide, shared by the Hush City users;
- 3 filter the quiet areas according to: sound levels; descriptors used to tag the quiet areas; perceived quietness, visual quality and accessibility; time of the day when the quiet areas were crowdsourced;
- 4 review and delete their own surveys, if necessary.



HUSH CITY APP'S
ICON

*source: author's
personal archive*

The innovative aspects of the Hush City app are related to data collection and consultation.

Hush City allows the in-situ chained collection of mixed data, for instance: audio recordings and related sound pressure levels measured by the app, as well as pictures of the place where the sounds are recorded. User feedback is also collected through a predefined questionnaire composed of twenty questions that seek to evaluate the respondent's environmental experience. Reply options consist of: multiple choice answers, 5-point linear scales, and free text.

EXPLOITATION

The crowdsourcing process was initiated within the context of a pilot study in a Berlin neighbourhood, but has scaled up rapidly since the launch of the app in 2017.

As of January 31, 2019, 300+ users from all around the world have crowdsourced 1400+ everyday quiet areas. In Berlin, as of September 27, 2018, 169 quiet areas were crowdsourced. As a result, the Municipality of Berlin requested to use the data collected through the Hush City app for the development of the Berlin Noise Action Plan (2018-2023).

Hush City is an open and continuous citizen-driven project: everyone can join the Hush City community at any time, by downloading the app and crowdsourcing their favourite quiet areas. The areas designated as quiet are now open source and anyone can view them online through the Hush City Map.

IMPACT AND LESSONS LEARNED

So far, the implementation of the Hush City app has had a positive impact on:

SCIENCE:

by favoring the collection of people's preferences and therefore contributing to fill a gap in the existing literature on quiet urban spaces.

SOCIETY:

by promoting participation, public debate on the topic of public health and quality of life; by training local residents on soundscape action research; by inducing both self-reflection and community reflection on the subject of quietness, eventually leading to behavioral modifications.

POLICY PLANNING AND HEALTH AND WELL-BEING:

by assisting authorities in complying with their duties under the Environmental Noise Directive EC 49/2002, thus increasing overall quality of life and advocating for ecosystems protection.

ECONOMY:

by highlighting the economic values of small quiet area networks compared to the value of a single larger quiet area.

On the other hand, our main challenges are “acceptance” and participation. According to Königstorfer, innovation in and of itself is not necessarily sufficient for technology to be accepted in society. Technology needs to be negotiated and it needs to undergo complex decision-making processes led by different actors. Furthermore, to retain and improve participation, motivational factors need to be present. Luna et al. suggest that a good participant-centered design process should feature a variety of stimuli, which integrate one or more of the “six key motivational categories”. Among them, “reward-based motivations” are the most common ones, usually based on symbolic and not-symbolic reward systems, like visibility, gaming features and/or awarding prizes.

The Hush City project has been envisioned and managed by Dr. Arch. Antonella Radicchi (TU Berlin).

Hush City app's development: QUERTEX GmbH, with EdgeWorks Software, Ltd. following an initial mockup provided by Dr. A. Radicchi.

The Hush City project received funding from TU Berlin IPODI-Marie Curie Program (2016-2018) and from the HEAD-Genuit Foundation (2018-2020).

FAIRBNB: TURNING THE INFLUX OF TOURISTS INTO A (MORE) SUSTAINABLE PRESENCE

TOOL

Roos Gerritsma, Miranda Kamp,
Sito Veracruz



Amsterdam is known worldwide for its historical beauty, liberal lifestyle and tolerant atmosphere. However, it risks becoming a victim of its own popularity. With fewer than one million residents, of whom less than 90 000 inhabit the inner city, Amsterdam received 8.3 million hotel guests in 2017 and is urgently searching for ways to better manage its immense popularity. In this article we will point to a different approach to sharing houses, namely FairBNB.

RAPID TOURISM GROWTH

After 2013, the number of visitors to Amsterdam increased rapidly. Amsterdam grew, in terms of its local population, numbers of businesses and overall visitation. In 2014, the total number of hotel stays amounted to 12.5 million, compared with fewer than 8 million in 2000 (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2015). There was a rise of 11,3% in hotel stays as compared to 2013, and in 2015 the increase continued (+3,6 % over the first eight months) (Amsterdam Marketing, 2015). Peer-to-peer platforms like AirBnB and Booking.com obviously created unprecedented dynamics and lead to new complex dilemmas (Gerritsma, 2019).

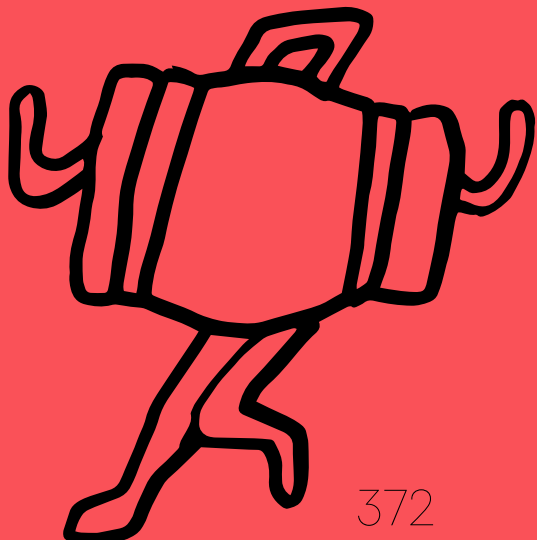
ALTERNATIVE SHARING PLATFORM: FAIRBNB

Partly in response to the disruption caused by AirBnB, a new market entry in Amsterdam is Fairbnb. It aims to create a smart and fair solution for community-powered tourism. In their Manifesto (Fairbnb, 2018) they declare that: “Fairbnb is first and foremost a community of activists, coders, researchers and designers that aims to address this challenge by putting the ‘share’ back into the sharing economy. We want to offer a community-centred alternative that prioritizes people over profit and facilitates authentic, sustainable and intimate travel experiences.”

SUPPORTING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Unlike other booking platforms, Fairbnb ensures that a part of its profit flows directly into the (hyper) local community. Hosts and visitors can choose to which social and/or sustainable project their contribution will be donated. Another striking difference is the form of co-ownership and co-governance of the project due to its cooperative structure and the support on local ‘nodes’.

Local Fairbnb nodes have been in existence since 2018, however official pilots will start in May 2019 in Amsterdam, Barcelona, Valencia, Bologna and Venice. The first hosts have already signed up and will start forming local nodes. In Amsterdam, the Urban Leisure & Tourism Lab is part of the local network and research team, currently co-designing a fair code of conduct for hosts. It covers, for example, what role hosts can play in creating a meaningful travel experience. Have a look at the first prototype on www.fairbnb.coop and/or www.tourismlab.nl

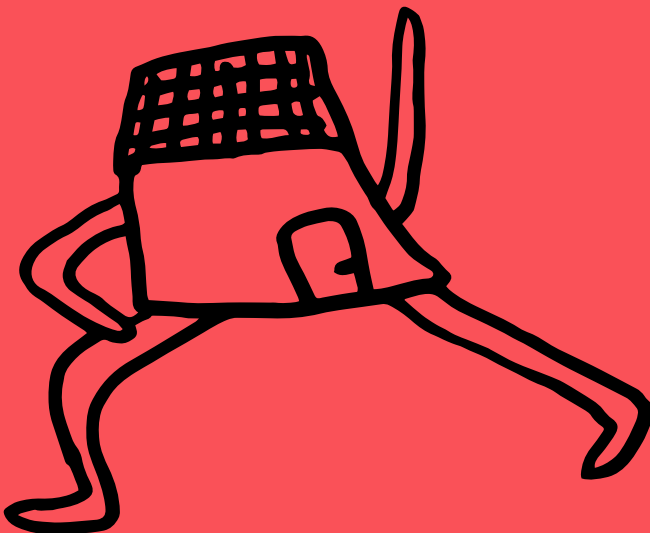


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TENSIONS BETWEEN CITYWIDE REGENERATION AND MAINTAINING LOCALITY: THE CASE OF FOUR CENTRAL SQUARES IN ATHENS

LOCAL
STORY

Kalisteni Avdelidi

INCLUDING RICH PERSPECTIVES

In the redevelopment of an open urban public space, we look to include not only its general functional and symbolic significance for the city, but also its integration into the local urban fabric. In the context of urban design, this involves the demarcation of the area surrounding a public space by identifying it as the area of its local integration. Depending on successive stages of urban design, the mode of identification and demarcation of such an area may differ. For example, when it is about: (a) identifying the site's surroundings through social considerations of local inhabitants' characteristics, (b) dealing with land use changes in areas adjacent to the site under development, considering various types of stakeholders, users and activities, or (c) addressing the adaptation to the reality of the public space through the activities of a wide range of users and actors related to the specific site. Furthermore, different perceptions may be associated with a multitude of representations, meanings and processes related to urbanity and social mix.

The significance of a redeveloped open space in the urban fabric is visible in the essential characteristics of its local social mix and of its surroundings with regard to urbanity and heterogeneity, as seen by Wirth (1964/1938). Consequently, the urban development process has to take into account the variations between different cities as well as between different urban areas of the same city. With this view in mind, when approaching the city as a place where everyone feels at home, it is important to explore the daily rhythms of collective life in the city and in the specific area. This aspect is primarily related to the inclusiveness of people and the activities of various user groups (daily users, customers, occasional visitors, or potential users and non-users). Likewise, inclusiveness related to everyday life implies investigations during various seasons and times when the structure of the population and the habits of local residents harmonize with the rhythms of the city's daily routines.

The work presented here explores how people, having a strong tie with a public space, identify and demarcate its surrounding area of integration in the urban environment. This was one of the goals of a field survey carried out in four squares in central Athens. The exploration showed that the four squares have a common area of local integration, which is distinct inside central Athens.¹

THE NEED TO LOOK WIDER AT ATHENS' STRATEGIC GENERATION PROGRAMMES

This result differs significantly from the views expressed in the current strategic regeneration programmes and plans for the city of Athens. Therefore, it is proposed here to connect concrete spatiality with representations based on perceptions, experiences and views of users, active actors and residents. In the wider context of urban design and development, the concrete spatiality is associated with topics such as centrality, attractiveness, influence, scale, configuration, concentration, and connectivity as well as high density, variety of economic activities, amenities and facilities, daily life, urbanity and lifestyles. These topics have been extensively discussed and experimented with in the urban design (and previously in the architecture or city planning) literature and praxis, with a focus on open public spaces (streets, squares, railway stations, gardens, monument front places, etc.) as well as in the social and human studies as multifaceted issues linked to the population of the city and of specific urban areas.

SURVEYING DAILY RHYTHMS, USER GROUPS

The sites selected for the field survey were the squares Omonia, Kotzia, Varvaki and Monastiraki in the central area of Athens, which were redeveloped from the 1980s to the 2000s. The four squares are adjacent to each other and follow one another along the axis of Athena Street in the direction of the old town. These squares represent one of the five case studies in the broader project and they are a key case in applied urban design in Athens.

1. This field survey was carried out as an independent work package under the research project "Social Impact of Urban Design and Sustainable Development of Cities", conducted during the period 2015-17 at the Institute of Social Research of the National Centre for Social Research (EKKE) by a seven-member multidisciplinary research team, lead by the author of this article. The aim of the field survey was to explore a broader set of issues pertaining to public space, by studying the relationships between the target user groups and the new urban design of the selected spaces, as well as their current uses and functions, in order to link the findings to other results of the project in question and to the social impact of urban design. The objectives of the field survey focused on issues concerned with the development of commercial and service activities of the squares, their integration into the current local social tissue, their current uses, the main problems in relation to their redevelopment and the attitude of respondents regarding their participation in the urban design process.



INTERVIEWING THE PEOPLE WORKING IN THE PLINTHS

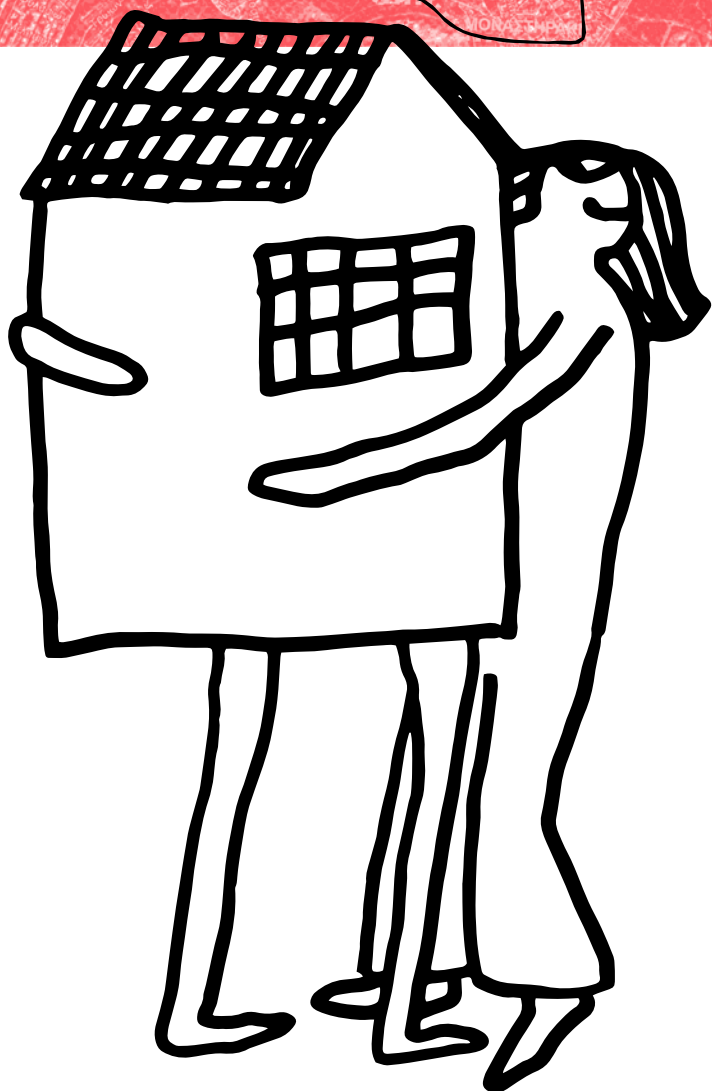
The field survey has been based on a structured questionnaire that was administered to people working on the ground floors, around and across the squares. The idea was to capture the interviewees' perceptions of the squares during everyday life after their redevelopment, as well as of general issues concerning public space. Completion of the questionnaire was achieved in 53% of the existing premises that were recorded during the survey preparation phase in 2016.

REVEALING INTIMATE CITY KNOWLEDGE

In order to identify the areas of integration of the four squares into the local urban fabric in relation to daily life of squares, a special three-part open question was included in the questionnaire. Interviewees were asked to characterize and describe, according to their opinions, the surrounding area to which each one of the four squares belonged as well as the important roads of this area and, finally, to use the map included in the questionnaire to demarcate the area based on their knowledge and experiences. The respondents appeared to have a privileged perception and knowledge of the changes the squares have undergone.

RICH AND DIVERSE MERCHANTS WITH STRONG TIES TO THE SQUARES

As group of actors, they have had a strong link with the squares over time and have contributed significantly to maintaining the human scale in the densely built urban environment with the kind of business they are associated with. The vast majority run small or micro businesses (80%) and only a few of them large or even medium-sized ones. Most of them are commercial establishments of various kinds: more than half are shops, restaurants, cafes, professional workshops, hotels, offices, banks, night clubs, religious establishments, public transport, public administration and a research institution. Furthermore, some of the establishments have been there since the 1900s. The operational structure of these businesses, whose owners form the majority of questionnaire respondents, reinforces the link between the target group and the public space of the squares. The owners are present on a daily basis in their workplaces, which are also places of professional responsibility and creativity. Personal communication, exchange and the interaction of their clientele with the broader users of the public space and the immediate physical proximity contribute to the personal experience of the challenges and functions of the public space (Avdelidi, 2018 upcoming).



AREAS OF LOCAL URBAN INTEGRATION FOR THE CENTRAL ATHENS SQUARES OMONIA-KOTZIA-VARVAKI-MONASTIRAKI, AS INFERRED FROM THE FUSION ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONDENTS' ANSWERS. THE WHITE AND BLACK COLORS REPRESENT THE CORE AREA AND THE WIDER ONE, RESPECTIVELY

Source: author's personal archive



IMPORTANT ROADS AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE SQUARE SURROUNDING AREA WITH REGARDS TO LOCAL INTEGRATION IN THE URBAN TISSUE. IT IS BASED ON THE RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION, AND A FUSION REPRESENTATION OF ANSWERS BY SQUARE
Source: author's personal archive

FINDINGS

For their development, in the context of applied urban design interventions and current planning strategies, the four squares are attached to various urban areas, which mostly do not overlap. More specifically, on a city scale, the design of two of the four squares (Omonia and Monastiraki) was part of the broader project for the unification of archaeological sites in Athens by means of architectural competitions.

The aim was to contribute to the recovery of the historical, architectural and urban physiognomy of the city by showcasing archaeological and cultural reserves, i.e. open public spaces, and by creating a grid of pedestrian roads within an open-air museum matrix connected to the contemporary fabric and daily city life. These squares were also part of

the Attiko Metro project for redesigning traffic flows at metro and electric railway terminals and feeders. Kotzia and Varvaki squares were designed and refurbished as punctual interventions under the initiative of the City of Athens primarily in order to resolve parking problems in the city centre and to control the organization and functioning of the squares. This was part of a wider and ongoing process (since 1980) to regenerate the historic centre.

The development of the four squares involved radical spatial and morphological changes to their scale and limits, through architectural design and pedestrianization, in order to maximize the opportunities for collective activities and the contribution to community life at the neighbourhood level. On the other hand, based on data and spatial demarcations of the Statistical Service, at the scale of the local social fabric, the four squares are part of a single area, whose primary characteristic is the large population of self-employed citizens.

However, based on the internal socio-demographic similarities of the population, the area seems to be divided in two sub-areas, marked by both common and different characteristics.

OMONIA AND KOTZIA SQUARES

First sub-area, with the allowable land uses being the supra-local centre and general housing. Its population has a very strong male representation and a clearly globalized composition, with a very large share of poorly educated, single, blue-collar workers, economically active, members of large households, living in the poorly-maintained blocks of flats built in the period 1960-80.

VARVAKI AND MONASTIRAKI SQUARES

The second sub-area, with the allowable land uses being general housing, urban green or free spaces and the supra-local centre. Its population does have a male-gendered, globalized composition (though clearly much less so), the same degree of single and economically active individuals, while the composition is mixed in terms of educational level, with the presence of both highly and poorly qualified people. In the whole of the area, there is a very large proportion of young people, and people of active labour force ages (aged 15-24 for the first sub-area and 25-64 for the second one), whilst there are very low percentages of children (aged 0-14 for both sub-areas).

The analysis methodology involved the graphic synthesis of all answers, which led to the maps in Figure 1. It should be noted that the mapping corresponds to the respondents' knowledge of the public space and its everyday uses, acquired through being present there every day, at the same space as the users, on ground level. Thus, the cartographic analysis of Figures 1 and 2 reflects the perceptive and active evaluation of reality. The findings clearly show the demarcation of the four central squares and their surrounding areas as a distinct unit in the centre of the city of Athens. This unit has to be taken into account by urban design research and practice precisely as a 'locality identity' within the central area of Athens, a wider area than the squares' delimited public space, unifying them and distinguishing them from the commercial centre and the old town.

CONCLUSION

The integration of a public space in the urban fabric requires engagement with its surroundings and development of local ties. From a general point of view, the consideration of daily life and urbanity raises the issue of *quotidianity* in the sense of Lefebvre (1968), of routine, and of the ordinary as seen by Habraken (1998) as a set of “minor” activities confronted or intertwined with the extraordinary, which touches upon the historical, the philosophical. The generation or redevelopment of a public space is part of larger scale interventions in the city; however, every public space is organically related to its surrounding area on a constant, on-going basis.

From a more concrete point of view, in the case of the specific central squares in Athens, the punctual urban development interventions did not strengthen the local ties. From the field survey results the degradation of squares and of their surrounding area was largely associated with the lack of local square integration. Thus arose the necessity to ask users, entrepreneurs, active actors and residents to directly identify and demarcate, through their perceptions, the local integration of a public space before and after its use and function changes as a result of an urban design intervention.

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ACTIVELY REACHING OUT



INTRODUCTION

At some point, you'll have to make an extra effort, either to connect special groups of people, to make them feel welcome or to do them extra justice in a complex society.

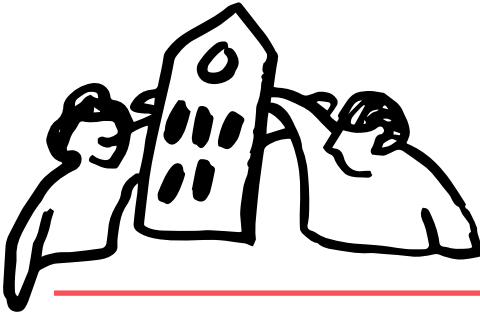
The following cases will introduce you to wide variety of local practices and approaches that give way to a different kind of thinking. The first three chapters zoom into a particular area: the inner city, a museum and a leisure venue. The second three chapters are closer to the home. The authors show how you can have an active policy to support social and cultural integration in the social housing sector and work towards recognition and a feeling of home, across many different cultural backgrounds in the streetscape. Lastly, we share two very practical tools. The first provides a fresh look on how biking can be more than just a means of transport. And in the second article is describe how you can strengthen the ecological diversity of your cities' urban green spaces.

Lots of practical inspiration to further build your own practice!

ROTTERDAM INNER CITY, CREATING A CITY LOUNGE FOR ALL

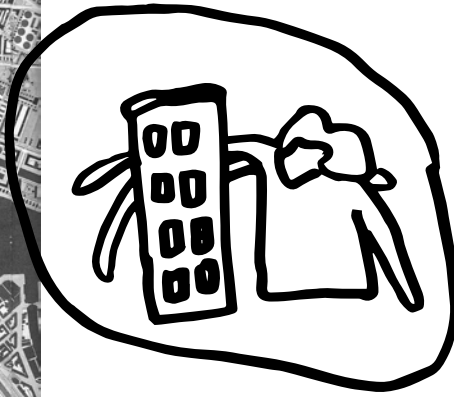
APPROACH

Emiel Arends



How to make the inner city of Rotterdam a place to meet, to stay and enjoy for everyone or how data can help make the inner city more attractive for all.

Rotterdam is a typical Inner City for Dutch standards. The urge to modernise has played a role in the city development for over 100 years. After the bombing in WWII, the Inner City was rebuilt in a modern style. The new Inner City, following the American model, was designed with broad boulevards, separate space for functions and, for the Netherlands, new building typologies were introduced. This plan served as the blueprint for rebuilding the Inner City until 1985 and its consequences are visible in Rotterdam until today. This fact is important to understand, that the challenges faced by the Inner City of Rotterdam are different than those of the average historical towns in the Netherlands. At the same time, Rotterdam struggles with the same 'soft' problems as any Inner City: how to keep it attractive for people who live, visit and work here, what to do with ever rising real estate prices, the transformation into a place-to-be instead of a place-to-buy, the bustling liveliness of a city versus the need for quiet places for those who are in search of rest, etc.



BLUEPRINT PLAN
Source: Traa, 1946

CITY LOUNGE

In 2008 the new plan for the Inner City was launched, called 'the Inner City as City Lounge'. This plan was not shaped around physical interventions (like the former ones), but shaped around the soft themes. The 'City Lounge' was the concept of a place to stay, meet and be entertained. This was a huge shift in the way people thought about the Inner City. A place where almost no one lived, people experienced it as a concrete jungle, which lacked events and culture and was only busy during shop opening hours. Important goals underneath this plan were densification of the Inner City with housing, more and better public spaces and a new balance between cars, bikes and pedestrians. The main question was how interesting this was for the main users and if they shared the same values towards the 'City Lounge' goals. Three main groups can be identified.

INHABITANTS

The new 2008 plan was a game changer for houses in the Inner City. It changed the course drastically to add more inhabitants and mix them within the Inner City. The plan in 1946 foresaw 10.000 new homes. The new ambition was set for 45.000 homes. To have a more balanced population, these new homes were aimed for people with middle and high range incomes. This does not sound like an Inner City for all, but keep in mind that almost 40% of all houses within the boundary of the Inner City are already social housing (max rent €635). This percentage goes up dramatically if you add the neighbourhoods directly around the Inner City. If you look to the household composition in 2018, 60% are single-person households, 22% are 2 person-households and 15% family households. These numbers have remained pretty constant over the last 20 years. Most of the people (ca. 40%) who live within the Inner City are between 20 to 40 years old, but there are also more than average numbers of elderly people compared to other cities (approximately 15%). The biggest influx comes from middle-income people and the biggest group that leaves are families. On average 75% of all households live less than 10 years within the boundaries of the Inner City.

WORKERS

The plan in 1946 prioritised the city as a place to facilitate work. Today this translates to an Inner City where 27% of all the jobs in Rotterdam are located. This number is still growing every year. There are certain sectors that traditionally find a place outside the old city centres, but are well represented in the Inner City of Rotterdam. The financial sector is the biggest employer, followed by the medical cluster. The SME, normally the biggest sector in Dutch Inner Cities comes in third. Also, the last couple of years there is a major influx of freelancers and people with short-term contracts. Altogether this adds up to approximately 120 000 people who work in the Inner City every work day.

VISITORS

Visitors are divided into several groups. The biggest group, ca. 40 000 000 visitors, are those who come for shopping. Mostly these are people from Rotterdam and the surrounding region. Tourists make up for 1 100 000 visits every year and are growing rapidly (14% increase last year). Next to these visitors there are also 100 events and festivals hosted in the Inner City (partly) in the public spaces, aiming at local residents. The average time spent in the inner city has risen spectacularly by 10% (over 4 hours).

ARCHETYPES AND MOTIFS

Knowing the users of the Inner City beyond the categories and numbers described above is important. Every intervention done to accommodate these categories is equivalent of hoping it will work. In 2008 we took motives for being in the Inner City as the leading principle. This resulted in 7 archetypes. These archetypes are responsible for over 60% of all visits, without the classical approach of inhabitants, workers and visitors. For every archetype you can ask questions like: Where do they come from, what are the triggers for these archetypes, how to approach this archetype, which time of the day they use (parts of) the Inner City, etc. An example of an archetype is 'the cosy family'. This archetype is responsible for 14% of all visits and has a strong focus on shopping and cultural amenities like the Maritime Museum or Pathe (movie theatre). They use the Inner City mostly during the day. Best way to reach them is by local papers. They are drawn to family events, good parking, and activities that are affordable for a group. This archetype can be seduced with kids activities, popular chain stores, an informal approach and discounts for eating, shopping or parking. There is a way to translate this information into maps (day and night), which result in a heatmap per archetype with locations, streets used and time spent.

PROLONGED STAY IN THE INNER CITY

The 'City Lounge' essentially is a place where you want to be. First numbers showed that the average time people spend in the Inner City was short in comparison to other cities (study F. vd Hoeve, TU Delft). People who visited by car stayed approximately less than two hours, the total average was below 4 hours. This was not the duration that fits an attractive city. The target was set to prolong the time spent in the Inner City. In order to do this, a monitoring system was needed to track and follow flows of people 24/7. It measures the number of people, time spent in the Inner City, which routes are most frequently used, which places are being visited the most, and what the point of entry is for these flows. This information, combined with the data collected for archetypes and motives, enabled the creation of a strategy, executed by several programmes. 'Connected' city was a programme which made huge investments in public space. A lot of iconic places were redesigned into more pleasant spaces with spots to sit, more greenery, and less car use. This programme also focussed on the plinths of buildings. By making a plinth strategy for the Inner city (city at eye level), rules have been introduced for new and existing buildings in order to stimulate more interactions between pavement and building functions. The programme was focused on places and streets who were used the most. Flow monitorization provided the much-needed input to shape this programme. Through a programme called 'liveliness and hospitality', emphasis was put on training taxi drivers and hotel staff on how to be more hospitable, a new wayfinding system for the Inner city, temporarily programming for the public space, city marketing, etc.

But knowledge of different city visitors' motives, investing in public space and focusing on liveliness is not enough. There are some key ingredients to make this work. First you need a monitoring system. This helps you invest every euro in a place you know people are using. This tells you exactly the difference between the day and the night time use of the Inner City and what streets and squares are activated during these times. Second ingredient is testing and experimenting. City planning usually works through extensive processes which will take years to complete and require substantial investment. You might also say they bring about irreversible results, which traditionally leads to an elaborate participation process in which different opinions are expressed and not all can be honoured. Doing an experiment, before a process like this, together with all stakeholders to first test if the proposed intervention works can be extremely helpful. This way of thinking has led to many experiments. They are small and temporary, but by using the monitoring system during and after, the result becomes visible. If the experiment was a success, the final transformation (via the traditional city planning process) was launched. If the experiment failed, we went back to the drawing board to see what could be tested differently.





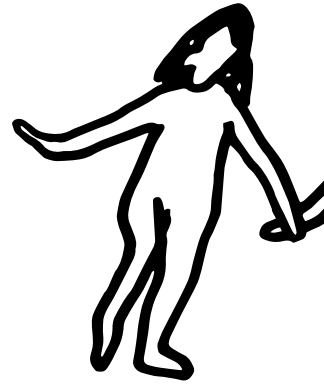
BEFORE/AFTER
OF NIEUWE
BINNENWEGPLEIN
Source: Rotterdam
Municipality



KAREL
DOORMANSTRAAT
Source: Rotterdam
Municipality

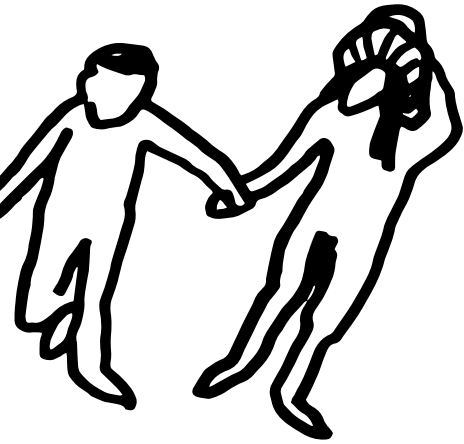
FLYING GRASSCARPET

An example of an experiment is the 'flying grass carpet' on the Grote Kerkplein. This square had formal appearance with a couple of benches, a lot of paved surfaces and some trees. The experiment involved adding more greenery, more room for playing and informal gatherings. The square was covered with a big piece of artificial grass with some markings in the form of lines and shapes in different colours (as a way for children to play on it). On the grass a sandbox was placed and real plants in pots. The monitoring system showed a spectacular discovery. The square was used twice as much as before, and the time spent on the square had tripled. It was also used by several groups during the day. As a quiet place to eat, play and relax in the Inner City. During the experiment people were asked why they came to the square (among other things). The most surprising answer given multiple times was the fact that there was a quiet green space free from traffic where children could play. This was mentioned by people who lived close by in small apartments without a proper balcony. This experiment showed the potential of a green spot, with more seating arrangements and things to play with. The final design was made along those themes and now the square has real grass as well as more and better plants. The data from the monitoring system is even more promising. The success of this experiment led to another much bigger 'flying grass carpet' on the Schouwburgplein and with (for now) similar results.



SCHOUWBURGPLEIN
Source: Rotterdam
Municipality





GOODIEBAGS

Source: Rotterdam Municipality

010-GOODIEBAGS

Another example of an experiment (nonphysical) were the '010-Goodiebags'. These bags were handed out by the main parking garages in the Inner City. The idea behind these bags emerged from the monitoring system which showed that people in cars spend roughly 2 hours in the Inner City and on average do not walk more than 400 meters from their car. The bags contained coupons for free coffee, discount in certain shops, a map of the Inner City, focussed on the things we know these archetypes like. To use these coupons, you had to walk much further to another part of the Inner City from the specific parking garage where you got the bag. This tested the willingness of people to walk to places they usually did not visit and to walk more than 400 meters. Both objectives proved successful. '010-Goodiebags' is now part of the weekly routine of projects being organised in the Inner City.

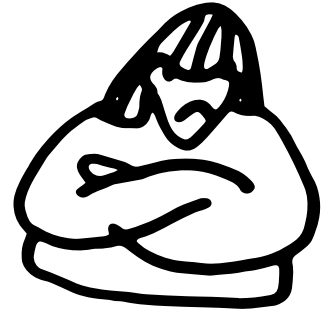
CONCLUSION

The two examples showed that with small precise interventions today, you can contribute to more extensive and major transformations tomorrow. In conclusion, the Inner City of Rotterdam is more than ever a place for everyone. The goal is to continue exploring the right balance between expensive and long processes and a short-term experimental programme to test interventions. Also to work with stakeholders on what their ambition could look like and testing the long-term processes. It comes down to knowing who your key users really are, knowing what they (dis)like and putting in place a monitoring system which proves your experiments and shows where people are at all moments of the day. Most importantly, these experiments should be done with entrepreneurs, residents and other stakeholders in the Inner City. This way of working increased the willingness of all involved in the Inner City to collaborate and make a change through the adventure of an experiment. In the span of 10 years, the Inner City in Rotterdam has become a better and more beautiful place, a place with a lot more users and visitors; a place where the accent shifted from 'build more' to a place where you want to be. There is still work to be done, but the first conclusion is that the 'City lounge' has been accomplished.

ÖSTBERGA, ÖSTBERGA: MUSEUM WORK IN A DIVIDED AREA

LOCAL
STORY

Bo Larsson



A museum has many tasks, among those are: collecting and conserving cultural heritage, disseminating knowledge via exhibitions and publications, and being a focal point for visitors. The City Museum of Stockholm, part of the municipal City of Stockholm, has an operational area of over 188 square kilometers which encompasses about a million people. Municipalities here are socioeconomically diverse – opportunities and even life expectancy vary across neighbourhoods.

One main objective of Stockholm's politicians is to stimulate urban integration and social sustainability, defined in terms of personal fulfilment, affinity, security and – by synthesis – well-being. How can the museum contribute to this end?

One way is to ask ourselves who we work for, what form our work takes, how and to whom we present it, and last but not least – where our work takes place. Should the static museum building be our sole arena? We posed these questions in 2016–17 during Östberga, Östberga: the City Museum On Site, a project conducted in the suburb of Östberga. Located immediately south-east of the centre of Stockholm, the area is best described as a divided space: Gamla Östberga, built c.1960 by the HSB building society, consists of 800 privately owned housing-cooperative flats; Östbergahöjden and Östbergabackarna (referred to below as Östbergahöjden) was built a decade later during the Million Programme, a state initiative to build a million new homes in ten years. Here Svenska Bostäder, a municipal housing corporation, built 49 blocks of 1 200 rented flats.

Gamla Östberga and Östbergahöjden are very different in nature. The former is usually associated with the industrial working-class and the latter with criminality, torched cars, and even murder. The latest incident, in the summer of 2017, saw a young man gunned down in the street.

Many of the area's characteristics are typically present in less affluent parts of Stockholm with apparent lack of services and poor public transport. Östberghöjden is almost an enclave, surrounded by major roads, industrial estates and one major green space.

*A BURNT-OUT
CAR – A SOMEWHAT
COMMON SIGHT IN
ÖSTBERGA*

*Source: Johan Stigholt,
City Museum of
Stockholm*



Although the Museum focused on Östbergahöjden, one of our goals was to actually break down the mental barrier that divides the two neighbourhoods. Another goal was to collect knowledge about life in the area and reinvest it in the inhabitants. We also aimed to spread local information which, although known to the Museum, was relatively new to local residents.

Our methods were cohesive if sometimes unconventional. City walks narrated the area's one-thousand-year archaeological history; in-depth interviews focused on life in Östberga; summer jobs let young people document their perspective on the neighbourhood; and participatory observation at places such as the parklek playground, preschool and Östberga Community Centre allowed us to collect stories and photographs, and to share our own talents and skills.

We held narrative cafés, film screening evenings, and handicraft courses. We also produced an interview magazine and an exhibition (and later on a detailed report). The exhibition was held at Östberga Youth Centre, which was also the venue for our talks. Our activities were designed to both give and receive.

Holding the exhibition in Östberga was an obvious, albeit problematic choice. It was important that the exhibition does not come off as patronising or lecturing locals about their home. Yet at the same time we needed exhibition content. The solution was a 'show, do not tell' concept, with elements such as card and memory games, and a huge floor game with giant dice, all conveying information about the local area.





*PEOPLE FROM
ÖSTBERGA SHARE
THEIR MEMORIES*

*Source: Johan Stigholt,
City Museum of
Stockholm*



*DOGGE DOGGELITO,
A WELL-KNOWN
SWEDISH RAPPER,
ATTENDS THE FINAL
EVENING OF THE
EXHIBITION*

*Source: Johan Stigholt,
City Museum of
Stockholm*

However, the above-mentioned murder impacted the exhibition. The incident took place shortly before the opening, which led to a two-week postponement. Given that the exhibition was open to the public, some were concerned that criminals might turn up.

Certain features were therefore toned down: a photograph of police officers was made smaller and the 'Welcome' sign was re-positioned away from the entrance. The importance of the exhibition taking place was reaffirmed by everyone with whom the City Museum came into contact: criminals must not dictate events in Östberga.

Did we manage to contribute to social sustainability? We think so.

Many local inhabitants:

gladly shared their stories and showed interest in those of others;

took part in activities that both narrated the history of the area and drew on locals' own experiences;

transgressed the neighbourhood's mental boundary to take part in various activities;

provided many positive personal examples of what our long presence in the area meant to them

We believe that the Museum's presence in Östberga helped strengthen self-fulfilment, local affinity and security among people in the area. We know, for example, that our input later contributed to the opening of a local cultural centre. Collective well-being was reinforced, at least in part because we succeeded in stimulating local people's interest in their home environment.

CRITERIA FOR A HYBRID PLACE: A TOOL FOR CREATING INCLUSIVE LEISURE VENUES

TOOL

Philippa Collin

In a landscape where there is limited social mixing, leisure venues which host a vivid cross-section of Amsterdammers, stand out as shining examples of conviviality and hope. Inspired by the concept of hybridity, which breaks down divisions between groups and opens up space for interaction and innovation, we have dubbed such venues ‘hybrid’ places.

So what are the secrets of a hybrid place? This tool is the result of trying to answer that question.

RESTAURANT BAZAR,
AMSTERDAM

Source: Abdülkadir
Poyraz





TOOL FOR ANALYSING FROM A WIDE SET OF PERSPECTIVES

The tool is a simple scan which can be used to holistically observe and analyse the tangible and intangible characteristics of a leisure venue. It will help you map out a structured way important elements like the complex combination of its physical location, architecture and décor, company values & ethos, the quality of service, diversity of personnel, use of language, degree of co-creation with clients and its programming and products.

But also things like, verbal or non-verbal exclusion strategies (e.g. bouncers at the door). Or transparency on the 'rules of the game' for using the venue. And detail on how the venue is marketed via channels, possibly reaching a wide audience. By carefully filling in all the questions, it becomes clear if the leisure venue is truly a hybrid place and/or what it could do more to become so.

The tool is useful for anybody specifically interested in inclusive leisure. It is been shared with creative industry students of different disciplines and used in the field by a variety of grass-roots organisations who have created neighbourhood venues where newly-arrived refugees and locals share skills & interests.

TEACHING DESIGNING FOR INCLUSIVITY

Upon designing the tool, we also revealed a gap; we need to teach our creative industries students how to design inclusively from scratch. If you are interested in a copy of the scan or the progress of our new Inclusive Design Toolbox for Creative Professionals, please make contact!

ACTIONS TOWARDS SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOODS IN ZURICH, SWITZERLAND

APPROACH

Marie Glaser & Margrit Hugentobler



Access to suitable and affordable housing is typically difficult for disadvantaged groups in Switzerland. These often include people with few professional qualifications, various kinds of handicaps or few financial resources. Among them are migrants and refugees, elderly people and the 'working poor' who receive no social benefits and who all too often fall through the social safety-net. Many live under precarious circumstances in Switzerland: when they have no rental contract or only a short-term tenancy, when the rent costs are too high in relation to income and lead to indebtedness, and when the accommodation is not adequate.

The tighter the housing market – as for example in Zurich – the smaller their chances.

Here we focus on the problems of social integration of foreign-born residents who are socially and economically disadvantaged. After briefly introducing the general importance of (non-municipal) cooperative non-profit housing associations in Zurich, we picked one exemplary project as a successful approach to integration in non-profit housing as we forecast their importance for the future. The integration of disadvantaged people will take on greater urgency, knowing their shrinking chances on the housing market.

THE SWISS HOUSING MARKET

In Switzerland there is no national policy of 'social housing' as in some other European countries. However, the question of who has easier access to what form of housing is answered differently in different places. Due to the distinct Swiss federal system, the organisation of housing provision for people who cannot find a flat without difficulty varies from canton to canton and from city to city. This study therefore focuses on Zurich, the largest Swiss city. With around 407 000 inhabitants, Zurich is relatively small but the metropolitan area neighbouring the city includes around 1.5 million people. In addition, the pressure of growth has continued since the middle of the 1990s and the number of people with a migrant background has also increased.

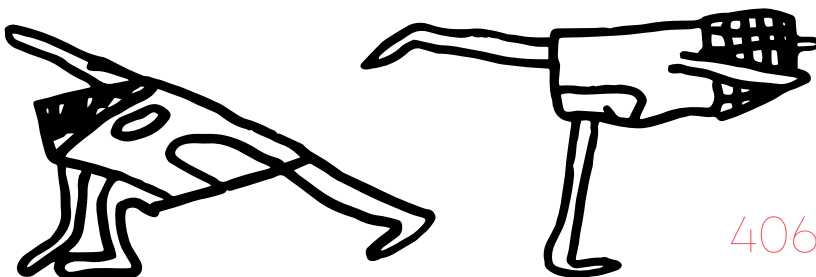
The excess demand for housing in Zurich led to an average increase in rents of around 10% in the last 15 years, despite a low inflation rate. For new tenancies the market prices increased by 18% over the same period (Statistics City of Zurich, 2013). The average net market rent for a 3.5 room flat on the outskirts of the city was around CHF 2 575.

The fact that Zurich remains a socially-mixed, lively and attractive city is thanks to the historically high proportion of non-profit housing construction. Whereas the proportion of non-profit housing in the whole of Switzerland was down to only 4% in 2014, in Zurich more than 150 smaller and larger non-profit housing associations have at their disposal around 20% of more than 210 000 flats. A further 4,5% of the non-profit housing stock belongs to the city (Statistics City of Zurich, 2018)

FINANCIAL AND SOCIAL SUPPORT

Particularly in larger cities and in regions with a tight housing market, like the one surrounding Lake Geneva, there are various state and non-state provisions for housing support. They provide and/or safeguard adequate housing for socially or economically disadvantaged people through various non-monetary forms of support (or in combination with financial support). This includes assistance in flat-seeking or housing integration, preventive measures to avoid eviction notice as well as sheltered and supervised housing.

The demand for counselling and support in seeking and safeguarding accommodation has exceeded available provision for years, and can best be compared to a drop in the ocean.



STIFTUNG DOMICIL

Stiftung Domicil (Domicil Foundation) is a relevant actor on the Zurich housing market with regard to finding and maintaining housing for, and integrating, low-income households who have hardly any chance of finding a suitable flat on their own.

Domicil supports families, single parents, the unemployed, people from other cultures, the so-called 'working poor' without social benefits, a group that has seen a sharp growth in recent years, people with debts and people on social benefits or disability pension in Zurich (Domicil Foundation, 2018). Domicil also provides support in flat-seeking and takes on joint liability for all tenancy agreements or is liable to the landlord for the agreement.

The foundation is financed via public authority contributions (performance mandate from the City of Zurich Social Department), membership contributions and donations. The combination of financial guarantees to landlords with the non-monetary provisions of housing integration and support, which are just as important, is especially promising here.

Domicil's success is based on the constant expansion and intensive fostering of a network with local landlords, public authorities and other actors from the local social and health network. Important partners of Domicil include larger professionally-run non-profit housing associations, as well as some newly founded ones that have open and tolerant values, reflected in inclusive housing practices. In return Domicil offers professional and successful preventive action to deal with possible conflicts on highly heterogeneous, socially and culturally, housing estates.

LUCHSWIESE ESTATE

The "Luchswiese" housing estate belongs to a municipal Foundation for Families with Many Children. It currently owns just over 500 flats which are rented to low-income families with at least 3 children. Because many of the families also have a migrant background, the proportion of these residents is higher than on other municipal estates or those of cooperative, non-profit housing associations. The Luchswiese housing estate in Zurich-Schwamendingen was built in 1994. The 40 flats each have 4 to 7 rooms, there is playground equipment for children of all ages in the courtyard and two kindergardens. The 230 residents, including 150 children and teenagers, come from 16 countries. Whereas at the beginning of the millennium, most tenants came from Switzerland or EU countries, ten years later the proportion of tenants from outside Central Europe was around 70%. Currently Schwamendingen is the urban quarter with the highest proportion of people without a Swiss passport at around 41% (Statistics City of Zurich, 2015).

In 2004 the Foundation commissioned the project to Stiftung Domicil (see above): A temporary social worker-post with a 40% workload was created. After conclusion of the project the social worker nevertheless remained available to a reduced extent as a kind of caretaker depending on demand (Barandun, 2012). The project was financially supported by the Federal Housing Office.

“FIT FOR THE FUTURE”- INVOLVING THE FATHERS

A broad participation process was set in motion in reaction to problems on the estate. Primarily noise at night, especially during the summer, caused by teenagers living on the estate but also from elsewhere. Their behaviour was perceived as threatening. At times there were leftover empty bottles and sometimes also syringes. Visits by the police and a security company hired by the housing management were of little use.

The aim of the project was therefore to improve intercultural life on the estate, to promote participation and support the empowerment of all participants. The special feature of this project was that fathers with a migrant background were specifically included. With their regular presence in the evenings they managed to establish contact with the teenagers and solve the problem of violence in the public space. In view of the diverse challenges of the Luchswiese estate, building functioning participation structures was rather complex.

The first phase included information and needs assessment. Direct contacts with residents – ‘doorstep work’ – was in the foreground. Particularly, to get the fathers involved, it was crucial to communicate that they are important actors for participation and problem solving. An intercultural fathers meeting was set up. The fathers had a central function in dealing with teenagers in the context of conflicts in public space. Supported by external specialists and violence-prevention bodies they worked out mutually-agreed, respectful codes of conduct for coexistence with the teenagers in the courtyard. At the beginning the fathers felt insecure and were sceptical about what they could achieve. By working together for a common aim, the fathers began to speak with one voice and their parental authority changed. Active fathers formed a network with a telephone list. If there were problems at least three of them would go out. With a few interventions they directly experienced the effect that their presence can have.

The fathers’ group was embedded in the structural participation bases that were set up at the beginning of the whole project. These included residents’ meetings for each building and tenants’ meetings for the whole estate. Other groups were formed such as for mothers, boys, teenagers, girls and a garden group. The new participative organisation took on responsibility and achieved visible results. This increased confidence in external specialists and in participants’ belief in their own capabilities. In order to make these processes sustainable, existing professional networks in the quarter were linked with the demand of groups being set up.

CONCLUSION

Integration in housing is not a category that relates only to migrants or to special, particularly targeted housing projects. Integration is a two-sided process of approach and negotiation that is part of the everyday reality of our lives. The challenges are increasing migration from all parts of the world, migrants with sometimes extremely traumatic experiences of fleeing conflict, and greater social heterogeneity.

Approaches such as that of the Domicil Foundation in Zurich, which before all other measures, enables access to affordable urban housing in neighbourly coexistence for disadvantaged people, are necessary preconditions. Financial help such as taking on temporary joint liability for the tenancy agreement, together with non-monetary measures such as help in flat-seeking, housing coaching as far as professionally supervised living form the basis for integration.

The Zurich housing project described here shows that successful integration requires participation. Those who are asked and can have their say will get more involved in the community discussion and be more committed to taking part in shaping their own estate. Structural channels of participation and codetermination concerned with the use of space but also with the development of a neighbourly exchange of ideas and experience and life together are central for successful communication. As shown in the example, expert support is essential from the beginning of the project. Intervention is certainly possible when conflicts already exist but it is complex and prolonged. As the Luchswiese example shows, serious problems that already exist in neighbourhoods can be successfully addressed with participative, empowering strategies. Many Zurich housing cooperatives with new approaches focus on participation, sometimes already in the planning phase, before occupation and especially during the operational phase.

Experience from the housing projects once again points to the central social role of the caretaker on estates with a high proportion of people with a migration background and this can certainly generally apply to larger housing estates (Brech & Feigelfeld, 2017). Of course, successful integration also has spatial implications. It requires a variety of good, soundproofed flats on an estate with which residents can identify, providing community rooms, outdoor spaces that promote communication and good infrastructure. However, networking with other relevant actors and the city, concerning social and cultural issues, is just as important.

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INTERETHNIC COEXISTENCE IN VIENNA'S SOCIAL HOUSING

APPROACH

Heidrun Feigelfeld & Joachim Brech

For clarity: 'social housing' in Austria means 'municipal housing' plus 'publicly funded housing', mainly rental, with access for people with up to medium income level. In Vienna, more than 400,000 flats currently house almost every second household – an exceptional position in Europe.

Migration and growing cities lead to a considerable increase in 'mixed population' in terms of migration history. The still growing stock of good quality publicly funded housing in Vienna is a main place where 'good coexistence' is put to the test.

This study examines housing estates built by Sozialbau AG (an important limited-profit housing association) over the last sixteen years in Vienna. To what extent can we speak of 'good coexistence' of residents and what preconditions have been decisive in achieving it? It is a question of whether residents feel integrated, whether they share in the social life of the housing estates and if it commensurate with their opportunities and wishes. These questions are relevant because an ethnically heterogeneous mix of residents has become the norm in housing estates built by limited-profit housing associations – which many would like to assume does not exactly make coexistence easy.

'Good coexistence' means that residents treat one another with mutual respect and recognition of each other's characteristics despite their differences regarding social status, ethnic origin, age, gender and lifestyle. It also means that all residents, including young families, elderly citizens, couples and single people, teenagers, children and disabled individuals should be involved in the social life of housing estates.

MAIN RESULTS

The results paint the following overall picture of coexistence in the housing estates constructed by the Sozialbau limited-profit housing association since 2000.

Can life in the estates be described as 'good coexistence' between Austrians and migrants? Yes, it probably can. Overall results are positive, even though, as in some areas, the outcome was not as good as was expected and notwithstanding some negative evaluations about specific aspects. Yes, when the results are differentiated and overlaid residents are not always unambiguous: they may be irritated by something but nevertheless they are proud of their housing estate, identify with it and would almost unconditionally recommend it along with the association that manages and owns it. And ultimately statements are always influenced by the life situation of those answering.

'Good coexistence' is a wish that in the first instance has nothing to do with ethnicity but is a matter of general everyday life. And it is the 'small' everyday things that make for 'good coexistence', such as: closer contact with neighbours or settling a dispute in the building. However, there are special challenges to living in ethnically-diverse housing estates.

RELAXED
CONTACTS/CHAT OF
NEIGHBOURS

Source: author's
personal archive

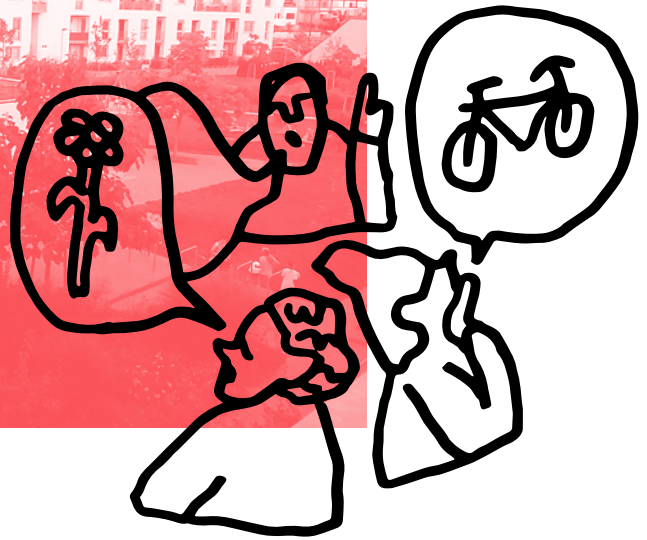


An overview of the survey results, namely of the different ratings, shows significant differences between each group of issues: questions related to the structure of the housing and to the organisational facilities (such as: satisfaction with the infrastructure, with the performance of the housing management and the caretakers, with services, with the area) receive impressively high ratings, often above seven out of ten, sometimes even higher. (Certain differences are apparent, to put it bluntly: how and where one lives is more decisive here than who one is). So quality matters.



MEETING IN THE
COURTYARD/HIGH
STANDARD FACILITIES
IN 'SOCIAL' HOUSING

Source: author's
personal archive



General life together is seen less positively, but is nevertheless satisfying for the majority. (Those with a migration history are the most satisfied.) Obviously, there is space for improvement.

Polarisation becomes visible in questions of interethnic coexistence. There are still more people with a positive attitude than those reacting negatively, but the difference is relatively small. (The latter also includes a 'hard core' group of residents who react negatively to almost all questions concerning interethnic issues.) Thus, it is evident that interethnic coexistence is a process of learning that requires support.

Among those interviewed, in many questions of coexistence, there are the undecided, the wavering, and the close-lipped, always at least a fifth and more. Maybe, 'winning' them could decisively improve the situation.

In summary: Despite all the positive ratings, especially in terms of building structure and housing management, in too many questions of coexistence, especially interethnic coexistence, groups of similar size are for or against. But there are also many undecided.

THE ETHNIC DIMENSIONS OF LIFE TOGETHER – MORE IN DETAIL

Various questions prove sensitive, such as: the level of satisfaction with different ethnicities, or also with the dominance of some, the quest for a balance formula that enables good coexistence, the desire for 'limits' or even 'restrictions', with around a quarter of respondents not giving a concrete answer. This is a notable result. Acceptance of ethnicities prevailed only slightly. The idea of a fifty-fifty 'mix' of Austrians and migrants on housing estates was only appreciated by three out of ten. The attitude of enriching diversity was somewhat more favoured, those with a positive or cautiously positive attitude outweigh those with a negative attitude.

THE KEY ISSUE OF FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS

Based on the appraisal described above (high level of satisfaction with the housing and its facilities, good overall life together, but ambiguous positions towards different ethnicities among neighbours), there are several indications of the need for urgent action in this limited-profit housing, namely indications for the management of existing housing estates and the planning of new estates.

For existing housing estates, it is a question of limiting grounds for conflict, mediation and enabling residents' initiative based on continuous monitoring of life on the housing estates.

In the planning of new housing estates, the approach should be to avoid architectonic elements and spaces which experience shows lead to conflicts.

It is obvious that it is to a far greater extent a question of the "software" of organisational and social measures, than of the "hardware" of the built environment. All this is true on the housing association level and on the local policy level (e.g. conditions for funding, allocation).

For existing housing:

MODERATION

Caretakers and housing managers are in many senses intermediaries. A continually moderated exchange of ideas about experience on individual housing estates can help in overcoming difficulties.

Current efforts on all sides towards "more diversity in public and private services" could result in more people of various origins becoming caretakers or working in housing management. Caretakers who themselves have a history of migration can build bridges to other migrants and also to Austrian residents.

There is high approval for the local neighbourhoods of housing estates although individual problems should be recognised. Housing companies should also take up the task of bringing together existing neighbourhoods and 'newcomers' in large-scale, inner-city development projects in cooperation with municipal bodies active in the area.

MEDIATION

The findings on conflicts and conflict solutions show a clear necessity for the increased expansion of mediation. Mediation should not only first be used when there is reason to intervene but also where potential or latent conflicts are smouldering. In particular, the needs of residents going through difficult phases of life – as is frequently the case with single-parents and the elderly – should be actively addressed by low-threshold services.

SELF-ORGANISATION AND DIALOGUE WITH THE HOUSING COMPANIES

Local levels of autonomous organisation and forms of communication between residents cannot and should not be set up on a 'top-down' basis organised by the housing management. However, they can be promoted through 'empowerment' – meaning providing structures such as access to digital information media and spaces for meeting – and by encouraging residents' independent initiatives.

Desirable dialogue between the companies and the residents could be further improved by decentralised information systems (e.g. wider provision of digital information screens on the estates, with apps as well as with more on-the-spot meetings).

The greater participation desired could be achieved through the development of creative offers to get involved, tenants' representation as well as in other ways.

The apparent potential of integrated residents who have lived here for some time should be 'unlocked' for interethnic understanding. They would be good at communicating the necessity for a 'give and take' on all sides.

PLACES FOR COMMUNITY

Communal rooms, which are of a particularly high standard in newer subsidised housing, are important for residents, even if they seldom or never use them. From a spatial point of view they are entrées which help to show that housing is more than just an isolated flat but also life in a community.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Notwithstanding ongoing documentation work into the housing estates on management and allocation level, it would make sense to maintain a structured monitoring system as a prophylactic measure. A broadening to a mix of indicators and a view of the profiles of different types of housing would provide an early warning system for developments and potential problems. Focused evaluations could then serve as periodic checks on the target concepts of the housing companies.



"SOMEHOW, I HAVE ARRIVED IN VIENNA."

Source: author's personal archive

With new projects:

GOOD BUILDING DESIGN

Some points of criticism that were raised – such as disturbance through noise or a lack of cleanliness – are very quickly attributed to certain groups of residents, children very generally, migrant children in particular and of course teenagers. Looking more closely at individual housing estates, it can sometimes be seen that the disturbances leading to conflict can hardly be avoided due to the building planning – and one does not want to introduce restrictive provisions for use or even threaten sanctions. Numerous potential trouble spots, resulting from badly thought-out planning, were identified on visits – whether it be inadequate soundproofing or echo chambers, insufficiently robust materials, residual niches or rooms with incompatible uses next door to each other. In brief: the planning should be reviewed with a checklist for 'social sustainability' to still better avoid potential sources of conflict.

THE QUALITY OF THE LOCATION AND SURROUNDING AREA

As found in the survey, non-profit housing companies should get themselves involved in urban quarter planning at an early stage in order to maintain locals' high degree of satisfaction with the neighbourhood and allow them to play a part in positive developments.

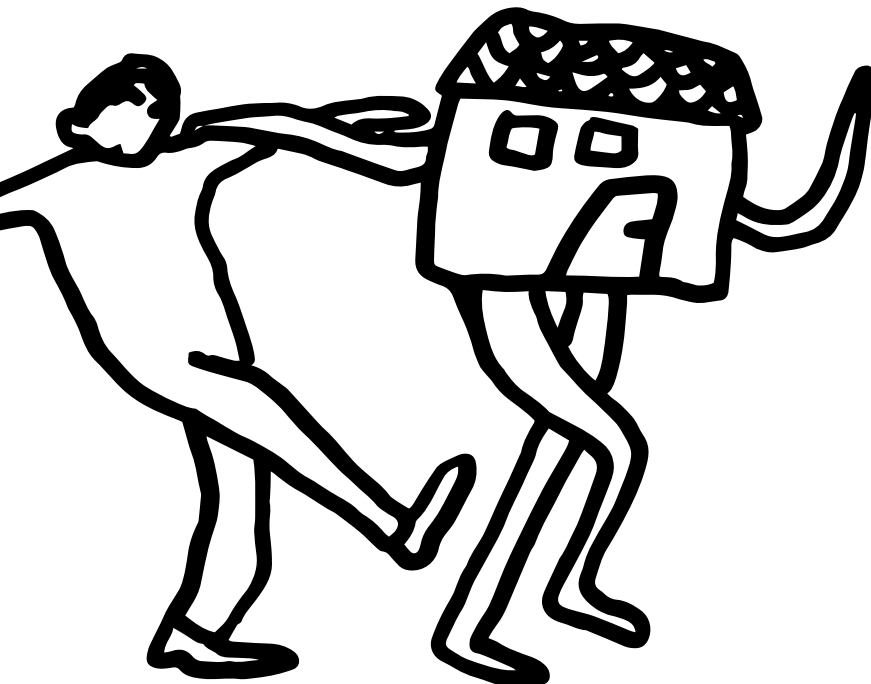
In most bigger cities, there is high demand, so housing construction, also by limited-profit companies, should find more creative ways of obtaining affordable building land. For cities such as Vienna, for example, that means continuing in inner-city areas and not only on the periphery. Further building means densification, that is Vienna's policy remit. This also includes ethnically concentrated areas. Large housing associations can play a key role here on the basis of their experience with interethnic housing.

THE REMIT FOR INTEGRATION

The remit for integration can only be met if the development of the 'mix-ratio' of autochthonous people and migrants on housing estates is kept under review. The discussion of a 'tolerable mix' in this study clearly made current limits palpable. It therefore falls to housing companies along with state policy to develop sensible strategies to the foreseeable predominance of residents with a migrant background. This applies to the first occupancy of future projects but also to new tenancies in the housing stock. It will be necessary to achieve a balance between older and newer housing so as not to leave the main part of integration work to the latter.

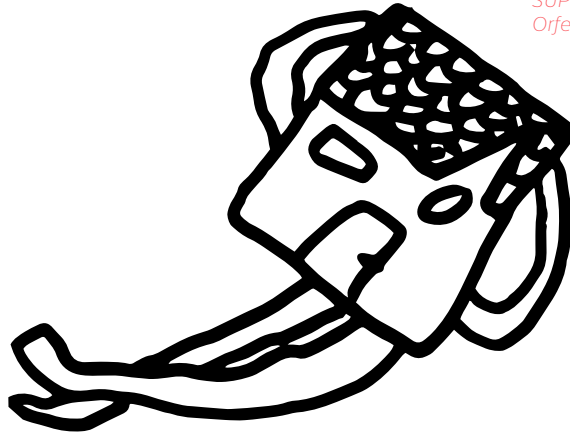
The key to creating housing estates that foster 'good-coexistence' is to set the right conditions, that is up to the housing company. The rest is in the hands of responsible, active residents, regardless of their origin.

The conclusions, prospects and recommendations presented here are based on our own research. Methods used were a long-written questionnaire (sent to 16 estates, over five hundred respondents; representative of 69 estates, 8.300 apartments), twenty oral interviews (residents, caretakers), data analysis and site visits. To learn more about the study: Brech, J. & Feigelfeld, H. (2017). Living together on Housing Estates. And: The Key Issue of Framework Conditions. And: Current Relevance of an Initial Project. In Ludl, H. (ed.) (2017). Integration in Housing – Models for Social Cohesion. Vienna, AT: Sozialbau. Or retrieved from www.sozialbau.at/index.php?id=212 (whole book or single files) (in English). Many thanks to Prof. Dr. Herbert Ludl, until recently General Director of the Sozialbau housing association, for commissioning the study, for support in carrying it out and for editing the 2017 book containing the findings, embedded in other sociological contributions, plus a 2017 English, slightly abridged, version.



Barbara Steiner

Extract from Barbara Steiner: Beyond being nice, SUPERKILEN: A Project by BIG, TOPOTEK 1 and SUPERFLEX, Arvinus + Orfeus Publishing, 2014



Superkilen is an urban park project in Copenhagen designed by SUPERFLEX in collaboration with architectural firms Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG) and Topotek1.

Superkilen is divided into three main areas: The Red Square, The Black Market and The Green Park. While The Red Square designates the modern, urban life with café, music and sports, The Black Market is the classic square with fountain and benches. The Green Park is a park for picnics, sports and walking the dog. The park was commissioned by the City of Copenhagen and RealDania.

100 OBJECTS IN PUBLIC SPACE

SUPERFLEX developed the concept for Superkilen using what they defined as 'extreme participation' as a strategy to engage residents around the park, an area known as one of Copenhagen's most diverse neighborhoods. Residents in the immediate vicinity of Superkilen come from more than 50 countries. SUPERFLEX asked local residents to nominate specific urban objects encountered in either their country of national origin or in their travels abroad, including benches, bins, trees, playgrounds, manhole covers and signage. The nominated objects were either produced as a 1:1 scale copy or purchased and transported to the Superkilen. SUPERFLEX traveled with five groups to Palestine, Spain, Thailand, Texas and Jamaica in order to acquire their nominated objects and install them in the park. In total, over 100 different objects from more than 50 different countries are installed in Superkilen.



RED SQUARE
Source: Superflex



BLACK SQUARE
Source: Torben
Eskerod

Although common, and not special in their typology, the objects were supposed to have certain qualities: each “amazing, unique and special”, such as the fountain from Morocco, which refers to a tradition of artisanal water features. Nanna Gyldholm Møller from BIG puts it like this—the project group wanted to have “the best practice items from all over the world.” She recalls the group’s first visit to the area, when its members noticed that the litter bins and the telephone boxes were blown up and that almost everything was destroyed. “However, the City Council had only the cheapest telephone boxes installed. Not everything was good quality; so we decided to give the people better things.” Choosing objects because they were considered to be exotic or politically correct was never an issue. Besides the expected design qualities, the objects should have been able to create relationships with different people and to establish, in this way, emotional connectivity.

The objects were bought from catalogues, reconstructed from photographs or built anew on site. Some were redrawn, modified according to technical, economic or legal requirements and finally produced by Danish firms. Some were done in collaboration, such as the giant Japanese Octopus, built on site by Japanese and Danish workers. Accompanying, misunderstandings, mutual approximation and translation were obvious issues, not only in regards to the octopus but to all collaborations and productions commissioned in Denmark. Yet, Jakob Fenger points out that even a 1:1 relocation means translation. “I think it is always translation, like if one takes an object and places it in a new context. By doing this, it develops a new life, a new meaning, a new reason to be there and to be used”. Martin Rein-Cano pushes this thought further to issues of migration. Being a migrant himself, he looks at migration as a translational process that creates something new in the end. “This transformation is going on when you move from one place to another. You learn a new language; you start to translate your original language. So, you relearn, to a certain extent, your original language, and simultaneously you start to question it. The new language opens a new way of thinking.”

However, what is positively described here also raises debates about integration, cultural incorporation and annexation—sensitive and heavily debated issues also in connection to Superkilen. It is probably time to mention here that neither cultural incorporation, nor the debate about it, is new. Both have been an issue in landscape architecture for “hundreds of years”, as Rein-Cano puts it. He is convinced that just the details have changed: “from the Greek temple, to Chinese, or Russian billboards and advertisement. The difference is that our objects are connected to the banality of every day and not to the idealism of Ancient Greece.” Although the big temples in the English romantic garden “are mainly copies and interpretations, sometimes resulting in a misinterpreted translation” Rein-Cano strengthens the creativity of such processes.

However, the copy and paste principle that he sees in the English romantic garden is also significant for parks such as the Tivoli or the Epcot Center. Rasmus Nielsen from SUPERFLEX points to this reference: “In the end, the park is this mash-up, gigantic Tivoli, with a big emphasis on telling stories about each object, and the constellation of objects together creates stories. Superkilen is not necessarily that far away from [...] Disney’s Epcot Center, which was never made in the way that he had imagined it. Disney thought of it as an experimental prototype, a kind of park where you could experiment with different ways of living and seeing different places.” And, critics might add, it is not far away from consumerism, which has become an increasingly important political, economic and social factor since the 1960s.



Yet, even if the cultural practices of cut and paste can be found in many historic and contemporary examples, not only in the ones mentioned here, the questions about how to deal with cultural incorporation and exploitation critically, how to take up a stance beyond a purely consumerist, swallowing attitude, remain. In this regard, it might be helpful to recall montage techniques, which were developed by avant-garde artists and filmmakers. The contradictory constellations of, in principle familiar elements produce frictions that stimulate new (critical) readings and evaluations. In my opinion, Superkilen is full of deliberate and readable frictions as well. However, and this marks an important difference to avant-garde practises, it also flirts with the commercial sphere. The use of new technologies supports this aspect well: An application for smart phones has been developed specifically for Superkilen, which serves as a tool to inform about the project’s details. With this app the project team makes use of a popular gadget in order to get closer to its potential recipients accepting its vicinity to the world of consumers of smart phones and applications.

Now, let us have a look at the frictions: They can be found in the material of the objects themselves, in the constellation of objects, and in the relationships between objects and their surroundings. And it is exactly this that makes cultural incorporation and annexation at least very difficult. Some objects were cheaply produced originally—such as the neon sign with the half-moon and the tooth—but have turned into well done pieces, as in the case of the dentist’s sign, into “one of the most beautifully, perfectly made first-world objects”, as Martin Rein-Cano says. Its transformation speaks about different expectations in standards, for whatever reasons we can only speculate. Looking at this and other objects, one may notice little strange details caused by the changes—e.g. lowered swings, solid, shatterproof glass, graffiti protection surfaces—which stimulate reflection about security standards, regimentation, protection, economy, and nonchalance. Some objects—such as the bull—look kind of monstrous, others simply awkward—such as the barbecue grill from Canada, an object whose functional use is quite unclear at first sight.

Apart from the object's appearance, symbols, motifs, patterns and signs slip into the Danish context, which may be considered as being alien, provocative, or simply folklore, depending on the position of the viewer. Furthermore, there are deliberate conflicting constellations, such as soil from Palestine and a manhole from Israel next to one another. Summarising, one could say that the objects kind of remain alien to one another and do not match fully with their surrounding. Yet, even if the objects "do not sit comfortably in the same space" – as one critic puts it, they inhabit nevertheless common space. This corresponds to Bjarke Ingels remark that despite the wide range of objects coming from different cultural backgrounds, Superkilen "has unexpectedly become quite tasty." However, this does not necessarily mean that it confirms classical notions of beauty, as it is exemplarily expressed by Astrid Bruus Thomsen from Realdania. "Usually, when I see Realdania projects in connection with, for example, cultural heritage, I find them really beautiful. It is not so easy to see the beauty of Superkilen." The tasteful and the tasteless reside next to one another. Superkilen offers visual coherence but disrupts this coherence in many places. It is "deliberately ambivalent" and challenges notions of "good looking". Essentially, the visitor / reader / viewer is addressed twice – firstly in terms of his/her consumerist desires, and secondly, in terms of his/her willingness to partake in discourse. Superkilen provides and interconnects these two alternatives in order to manifestly complicate both a purely consumerist as well as an analytical or discursive understanding of them. The park, its objects and their relation to the surrounding are not completely seductive; there is also something hideously aggressive, uncomfortable about.

THAI-BOXING,
BANGKOK
Source: Iwan Baan



SELECTING THE OBJECTS

The objects were chosen after numerous sessions with people from Nørrebro, preceded by various modes of search. Ranging from announcements in newspapers, handouts to posters in libraries, and a call on the Internet, the intention was to get as many people as possible to propose objects. However, the proposals were first—as mentioned by Jakob Fenger from SUPERFLEX—mainly functional: “we want a slide, we want benches, we want a lot of light because of insecurity in the neighbourhood, we want more green, and we want to have a playground for the kids.” At first, only a few people suggested pieces directly. In consequence of this, a catalogue of objects was made, which should inspire people to move towards thinking about concrete objects instead of functions, something they were used to. The problems addressed with this procedure point to a cardinal problem of all participatory projects:

- How to stimulate participation without forcing people and without being patronising?
- How to open up to thoughts people might have not considered themselves?
- How to promote an exchange of different expertise (aesthetical, technical, local) at eye level?
- And finally, what if people do not want to participate for whatever reasons, if they do not want to play the game others set up the rules for?

SUPERFLEX responded to this pile of problems with a subproject, in which they pushed citizenship involvement to the extreme. To put it differently: They set up five exemplary cases and asked people who usually do not show up in the announced meetings, mostly elderly people and kids: what they would like to have for Superkilen if they could chose everything they want? With them Jakob Fenger, Bjørnstjerne Christiansen, and Rasmus Nielsen travelled to Bangkok, Palestine, the US, Spain, and to Jamaica to research and find the longed for pieces.

Apart from these very particular cases, the final selection was then done by a jury, which consisted of BIG, TOPOTEK 1, SUPERFLEX, and members of Kilebestyrelsen (board of administration). Actually, one must say that Superkilen is a curated project based on citizens' involvement but not truly collaborative in all its single parts. The project team set up the frame, directed the project, and gave space to interests, views and desires not necessarily fully congruent with its own. Martin Rein-Cano admitted that the team was “not happy with everything at first sight.” At the same time, he clearly sees “the possibility to be kinky, without having to take the full responsibility for it.” He is sure that “without these accidents, it would not have been as great”, because the project team’s “good taste” would have not allowed the stupid bull or the tooth, for example.” The project team never retained absolute control of the results, but it also never gave up control; or as Bjarke Ingels puts it: “You resign quite a bit of the authorship but without losing control.” Yet, authorship was also



challenged within the project group: although working closely together from the beginning, working methods and ways of engaging with the public differ slightly. Working together, incorporating chance, and letting other proposals in, basically meant to limit oneself as subject; authorship becomes contingent, permeable and, above all, receptive.



THE BLACK MARKET
Source: Iwan Baan

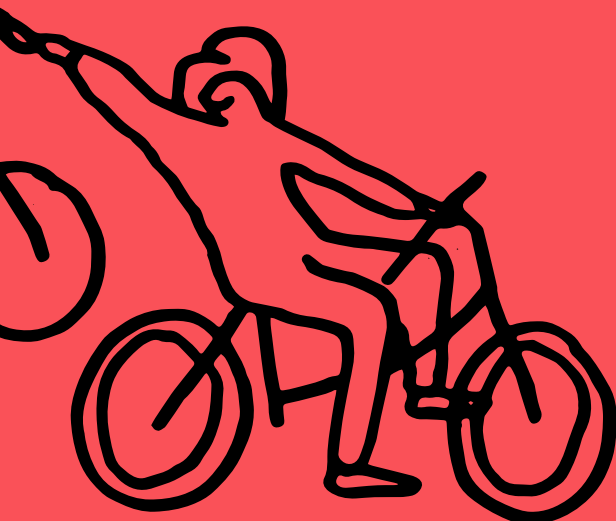


CIRCULAR CYCLING TO CONNECT, STRENGTHEN AND ACCELERATE SOCIAL IMPACT

TOOL

Janine Hogendoorn

The Netherlands is one of the leading countries when it comes to citizens using the bicycle as an equal mode of transport to go to work, shop, or visit friends. Cycling is 'normal' here. However even in the Netherlands people's health is getting worse. With growing urbanization and poorer air quality due to car use and fossil fuels, public space is becoming more and more important. A study shows that 50% of people would sit still in their car even for a short-distance ride (below 10 miles). If cycling can help address all three issues, namely health concerns, public space and air quality, the question is how to nudge people to cycle more often?



NUDGING PEOPLE TO RIDE A BIKE

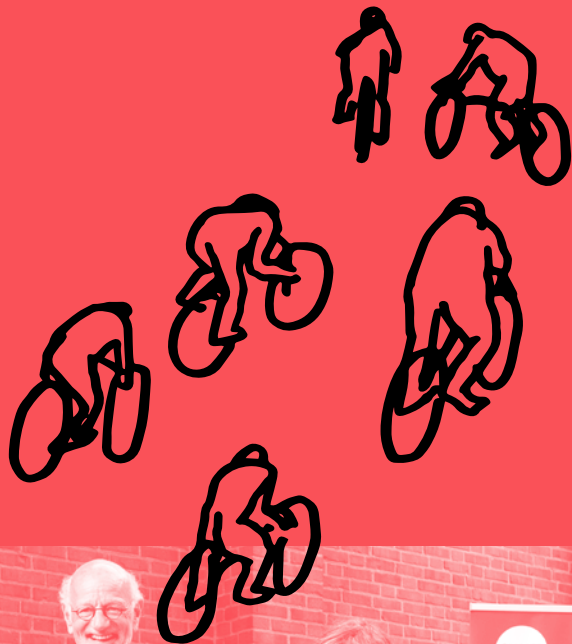
Each person can have an impact on the future through their own daily choices. Rewarding the miles cycled from different perspectives can help people make the right choice. First, people become more aware that they actually have a choice and second, social and financial benefits may eventually persuade them to mount their bicycle for a longer time.

RING-RING PLATFORM

Ring-Ring has developed a platform and an app to reward actual miles cycled from five different perspectives: municipalities, employers, insurance, entrepreneurs and citizens. With several local city governments on board, our reward programme has been implemented to exchange cycled miles on a neighbourhood level with citizen initiatives from that neighbourhood. The process of measuring and rewarding miles is done automatically through algorithms based on real miles cycled to, from and in the specified areas. Local initiatives become visible, citizens learn from these bottom-up ideas and inspire each other to start their own project. Most citizen initiatives strive to be more connected and to use our public space to meet and learn from each other. Everyone can join and help to speed up the realization of the ideas, just by cycling. It is a win-win situation for people and cities and a positive cooperation between government and citizens.

IMPACT

Since the start of the programme two years ago, we've seen a total of 35 projects, including planting apple trees and educating children about healthy food, providing welcome bags for new inhabitants, nature education designed outdoors, cycling for all ages, music for kids in hospitals and many others.



TWO MOMENTS
IN WHICH A CIVIL
SERVANT AND THE
ALDERMAN SHARE
THE VALUE OF
NEIGHBOURHOOD
CYCLE KILOMETRES
WITH THE CITIZENS.
THE GARDEN WITH
SPECIAL TREES AND
PLANTS IS FOR ALL
TO VISIT AND THE
WELCOME BAGS
ARE INTENDED FOR
NEWCOMERS IN THE
NEIGHBOURHOOD

Source: Ger
Neijenhuyzen



EXPLORING TOOLS – ECOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF URBAN GREEN SPACE

TOOL

Jerod Myers

Building off concepts and strategies presented earlier in *Inclusive Ecology*, this section provides a brief overview of a ranking index that I developed as a master's student. The methodology can help urban planners, or any interested stakeholder, evaluate the ecological strength of green spaces in their cities and towns.

The tool was designed to allow individuals without formal education or training in landscape ecology to begin to characterize green space and evaluate how its spatial configuration (size and shape), distribution (quantity, distance, location), human use, and vegetation management, contribute or detract from overall ecological health.

The methodology is far from perfect, but results from the evaluation exercise may allow for some broad, qualitative conclusions about the ecological strength of the analyzed green space. With that information in hand, one can initiate conversations and begin to establish strategies for management and growth of the green space network. The categories, indicators, and the point system for the ranking tool are presented in the table below.

1. SPATIAL CONFIGURATION

1.1 RELATIVE SIZE

- 1 = small;
- 2 = medium;
- 3 = large

The size of the habitat influences the viability of the population. Larger areas can usually support more diversity and native species. For the purposes of this exercise, observers are encouraged to qualitatively assess the size of 'habitat' observed, and not the entire site (i.e. a patch of forest in a park vs. the entire park).

0-3

- 1 = Straight, Thin;
- 2 = Rectangular;
- 3 = Round

1.2 SHAPE

Several studies confirm that a more rounded shape better preserves biodiversity by protecting the interior, or core, habitat.

0-3

- 1 = Busy streets, High density or intensive commercial/ industrial use;
- 2 = Low volume streets, Low density, or residential zone;
- 3 = Public land, Open space, Nature reserves, Rural areas

1.3 ADJACENT LAND USE

Land use intensity can impact habitat value. More intense uses reduce compatibility and create conflict, particularly along the border.

0-3

- 1 = Completely isolated;
- 2 = Limited Connection;
- 3 = Highly connected

1.4 CONNECTIVITY OR PROXIMITY TO NATURAL AREAS

Connections to natural areas or preserves allow for greater mobility of organisms from source habitats.

0-3

- 1 = intense human use;
- 2 = moderate use;
- 3 = low to no use

2.1. HUMAN USE

Human use can impact the quality of space. Direct observation of how citizens interact with space is the most desirable. If people are not observed in the space, the intensity of use can be inferred according to several factors, such as the presence of trails (formal and informal), trash bins and/or litter present, play areas, soil compaction, art installations, etc.

2. USE

2.2. PROTECTION MEASURES

0-3

- 1 = No protection;
- 2 = Little Protection;
- 3 = Adequate protection, no notable impact

Visible measures that reduce direct human impact, such as rules and signage or installation of temporary (or permanent) enclosures for protection of particular areas (breeding grounds, nesting etc.)

3. VEGETATION

3.1. DEGREE OF 'NATURALNESS'

0-3

- 1 = Vegetation clearly managed for human use;
- 2 = Semi-natural, maintaining some natural state;
- 3 = conservation/protected area

A green space is classified as an 'anthropogenic habitat' if the site is managed rather intensively to maintain human use. Semi-natural spaces are those that contain remnants of natural spaces, where management is not as intensive, nor exclusively for human use. Although it can be argued that there is no 100% pristine space in the city, the sites characterized as 'natural' are the reserves and zones established for the conservation of habitats and their species.

3.2. HEIGHT OR MANAGEMENT OF GRASS

0-3

- 1 = Short grass: intense management, frequently cut, weekly to biweekly;
- 2 = Medium height grass, cut monthly to bimonthly;
- 3 = high grass, cut annually (2-3 times)

Areas of reduced mowing can harbor greater insect diversity. Height of grass is easily observed.

3.3. STRUCTURE

0-3

- 1 = 0-6 observed elements
- 2 = 7-14 elements;
- 3 = 15-19 elements

This methodology requires the observer to look for elements that impart vertical and horizontal structure and are adapted to the urban context, including natural and artificial elements.* (page 434)

3.4. INVASIVE SPECIES

0-3

- 1 = Visually dominated by invasive species ($\geq 50\%$).
- 2 = Easily observed, but do not dominate the space (25-50% coverage).
- 3 = Rarely Observed (0-25%)

Invasive species have become an issue in many urban environments. Observers can contact local park staff to see which species are relevant to their city. In the case of Washington, D.C. five easily identifiable species were selected.

** The observer should look for and count the following elements: forest, group(s) of trees, row(s) of trees, single trees, hedges and shrubbery, dead wood, tall herbs/grasses, manicured lawn, annual vegetation (short-lived), trodden or intensely used vegetation, exposed or bare soil, plants growing on vertical surfaces such as walls or fences, walls and broken stone/rubble, artificial structures, paved areas/paths, aquatic plants, presence of water, mosaic of different park areas, varied topography.*

SITE VISIT,
WASHINGTON DC
Source: author's
personal archive



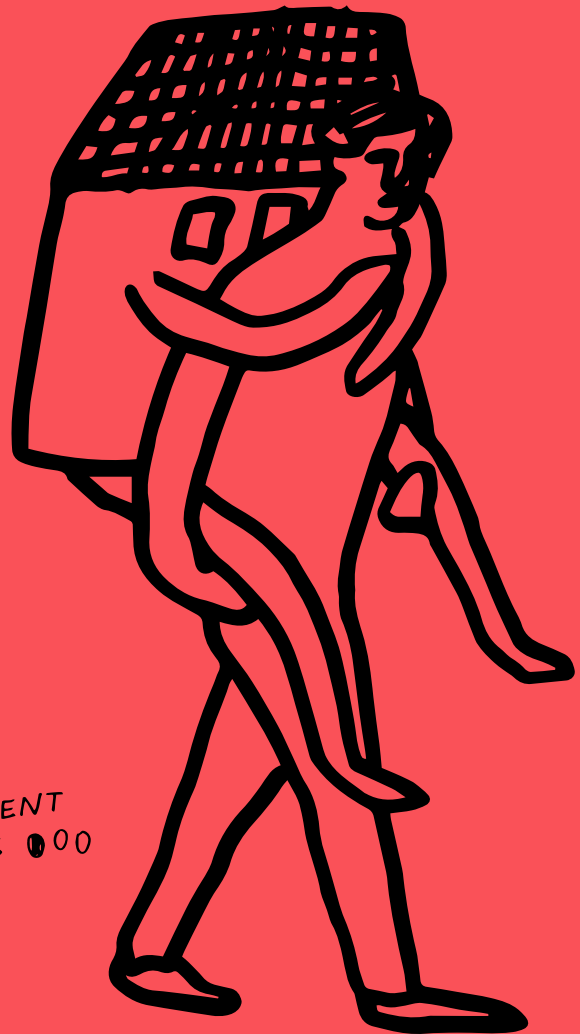
A PRACTICAL EXAMPLE

The following example presents the ranking index in practice. The observed space in Washington D.C. is on public land in front of a school. The corner of the site has a 'desire path' which has been compacted by heavy foot traffic. Desire paths typically represent the shortest and/or most easily navigated route in a green space. Aside from the corner, the size, configuration, and location of the site do not permit many recreational activities. No other human activity was observed in this particular space. There is very little vegetation beyond manicured lawn. Due to close proximity to a community garden (adjacent land use across the street), its linear structure, and exposure to sunlight, this might be a suitable area for pollinator-friendly vegetation.

Ranking Exercise:

- 1.1 RELATIVE SIZE ●○○
- 1.2 SHAPE ●○○
- 1.3 ADJACENT LAND USE ●○○
- 1.4 CONNECTIVITY OR PROXIMITY TO NATURAL AREAS ●○○
- 2.1. HUMAN USE ●○○
- 2.2. PROTECTION MEASURES ●○○
- 3.1. DEGREE OF 'NATURALNESS' ●○○
- 3.2. HEIGHT OR MANAGEMENT OF GRASS ●○○
- 3.3. STRUCTURE ●○○
- 3.4. INVASIVE SPECIES ●○○

Total: 14/30



435

WORKING ON BETTER INCLUSIVE CITIES: JUST DO IT!

Now that you have read the book and explored how exclusion in public space is being countered across Europe, we hope that you will see your own work in a different light. Fostering inclusivity, as evidenced by the experience of our contributors, is not a straightforward path with a single clear solution, but instead an ongoing process that we have to continuously inform, adapt to, and learn from.

We invite you to get involved, stay in touch, and even share your stories and experiences with us as we continue to learn about the best ways to keep the city “our city”.

Here are some ideas on how you can stay involved:

Contact us at contact@stipo.nl

Contact the authors in your own country

Join and/or work with the Placemaking networks that are active on every continent

Explore the placemaking toolbox and add your own tools www.placemaking-europe.eu

Take part in one of the trainings offered in Europe or the USA.

But foremost: just start doing. Learn from the small steps and make them bigger along the way!

PLACEMAKING NETWORKS AND ORGANISATIONS

PLACEMAKING EUROPE

The European Placemaking Network

- placemaking-europe.eu
- open source Toolbox with more approaches and practical tools
- facebook European Placemaking Network
- linkedin European Placemaking Network

CITY AT EYE LEVEL INTERNATIONAL NETWORK

The international network on improving cities, streets and places worldwide

- thecityateyelevel.com
- open source publications and case studies
- trainings
- Facebook City at Eye Level
- LinkedIn City at Eye Level

PLACEMAKINGX (GLOBAL)

The global network on Placemaking

- www.placemakingx.org
- connect to the global Placemaking Leaders
- find your national placemaking network
- or learn how to start your own

STIPO, TEAM FOR URBAN DEVELOPMENT (EUROPE)

- www.stipo.nl
- publications and tools
- trainings

PROJECT FOR PUBLIC SPACES (UNITED STATES)

- www.pps.org
- conferences
- publications and tools
- trainings

BIOGRAPHIES

ALBERT ARIAS

University of Barcelona

Albert obtained a bachelor in B.A. Geography by the Autonomous University of Barcelona and a master in M.A. Urban Management by the Erasmus University of Rotterdam. Since 2004 he has worked as a consultant, project manager, researcher, and teacher in different companies and universities on urban and tourism issues. Active member of the Research Group on Territorial Analysis and Tourism Studies at the Universitat Rovira i Virgili. Working on his dissertation on the enactment of tourism as a political issue through the case of Barcelona. He has been the Head of the Strategic Plan for Tourism 2020 Barcelona (2015-2018). He is currently advisor for urban planning at Barcelona City Council since 2018.

ANDREAS LINDINGER

Jane's Walk, Vienna

Andreas is a consultant, innovator and urbanist, with an interdisciplinary business and sustainability background. He is passionate about livable cities and next-generation transportation.

ANDREEA MAIER

Civitta Romania

Andreea is an urban planner, working in the field of strategic planning and social development. So far, she has been involved in elaborating over 10 development strategies at municipal, metropolitan and national level. Passionate about the dynamics of planning and, implicitly, the catalytic factors within it, Andreea wants to develop products and good practices to improve the process of governance and territorial cooperation with the help of technology.

ANGELA VAN DER KLOOF

Mobycon, Delft

Angela van der Kloof specializes in bicycle education, engagement and planning, working as a consultant, trainer and researcher on projects locally, nationally and internationally. She combines her job at Mobycon with a PhD position at Radboud University (Nijmegen, Netherlands) in which she researches the passing on of

"cycling knowledge" from parents to children in the Netherlands. To her the bicycle and cycling are tools to stimulate participation and interaction in an environment that is social and accessible for all.

ANTONELLA RADICCHI

Technische Universität Berlin

Antonella is a registered architect and she holds a PhD in Urban Design and Territorial Planning, with doctoral studies conducted at MIT (Cambridge, USA) and at the University of Firenze (IT). She is currently an associate researcher at the Technical University of Berlin, where she leads the Hush City Mobile Lab project. Her research and professional work on soundscape has received international recognition and awards.

AYSEGUL CAN

Istanbul Medeniyet University

Aysegul received her PhD from the University of Sheffield, Department of Urban Studies and Planning. She is interested in social exclusion, inequality, and territorial stigmatization in the urban space.

BARBARA STEINER

Kunsthau Graz

Barbara is curator, editor and author. Since mid 2016 she is director of Kunsthau Graz. In her work, Barbara examines political, economic, social, and cultural interdependencies and conditions of artistic and curatorial production, drawing attention to various concerns and interconnected processes of negotiation.

BO LARSSON

City Museum of Stockholm

Bo has been working in museums for almost 30 years, beginning in the end of the 1980s. He has a PhD in social sciences, and has written books and articles mostly about the way people organize their life. Bo's great inspiration has been the American folklorist and professor Henry Glassie.

CAROLINA CARRASCO

Espacio Lúdico, Chile PIZARRO

Carolina is Carrasco is co-founder and Applied Research Director at

Espacio Lúdico NGO, urban citizen innovation platform based on game strategies. She is a specialist in collaborative urban design and urban planning. Academic and Director of the Master in Design of Integrated Cities at the University of Viña del Mar, Chile.

CHANTAL ROBBE

Stadkwadraat, Utrecht

Chantal works as a financial specialist in area development and urban planning. She is interested in social (macro) tendencies that form incentives for area development focusing on real estate development. She is an urban planner and urban geographer by education.

CHRIS ROORDA

DRIFT, Rotterdam

Chris Roorda is consultant sustainability transitions at research institute DRIFT (Erasmus University Rotterdam). He works with public authorities, NGOs, companies and other clients to strategize for systems change and build change networks. Over the last years, Chris developed his enthusiasm for urban mobility transitions, leading projects in Rotterdam and other European cities focusing on the social-economic benefits of people-centered cities.

CLARE RISHBETH

The University of Sheffield

Clare Rishbeth is a senior lecturer at the Department of Landscape Architecture, University of Sheffield, UK. Clare's research focuses on cultural diversity in landscape experience and urban design, and how our experience of place is shaped by personal and community histories of migration. These understandings inform an analysis of use of public space, streets and parks, and the social potential of the public realm to support positive intercultural encounters.

DIMA YANKOVA

La Marina de València

Dima holds a BS in Mechanical Engineering from Union College, NY and a Master in Engineering for Sustainable Development from Cambridge University. She is currently working as a Project

Associate at La Marina de València, Valencia's waterfront redevelopment agency, working on coordinating both local and international projects for the improvement of the urban environment.

EMIEL ARENDS

Municipality of Rotterdam

Emiel works for the City of Rotterdam as an Advisor on urban affairs. He is also a lecturer at the University of Rotterdam.

FENNEKE WEKKER

University of Amsterdam

Fenneke works as a political sociologist at the University of Amsterdam. Her research focuses on mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion in urban settings. Her book 'Top-down Community Building and the Politics of Inclusion' (Palgrave, 2017) deals with the pitfalls and paradoxes of professional community building. Despite the forceful attempts of social workers in an Amsterdam working class area to create an inclusive local community, insurmountable barriers were erected between groups of residents, along lines of race, class, gender, sexuality and religion.

FRANS WERTER

Buro De Steeg, Utrecht

Frans is a sociologist with 30 years of experience in participatory development planning in the Netherlands and in many countries all over the world such as Pakistan, Ethiopia and Bolivia. He is often asked to serve as an independent facilitator of projects and public meetings. Since 1999 Frans is the co-director of Buro de Steeg in Utrecht, the Netherlands.

GIULIA GUALTIERI

STIPO, Rotterdam

Giulia is a passionate urban developer with a background in architecture. Her professional and educational experience is multidisciplinary and international. She developed her passion for cities and communities through living in Italy, Turkey, Somaliland, and the Netherlands, where she developed her skills as an open-minded and versatile team worker with a main interest in social justice and culture.

HANS KARSSENBERG

STIPO, Rotterdam

Hans is a founding partner of STIPO's interdisciplinary team for urban development. He works as project manager for human-scaled, cooperative, inclusive, community-based and sustainable area development, as a public developer and placemaker, and as advisor and trainer. In collaboration with many other partners worldwide, he is an initiator, leader and driver behind the international program The City at Eye Level.

HEIDRUN FEIGELFELD

Independent urban and housing research, Vienna

Heidrun studied architecture at the Technical University of Vienna. Since 1991 he has been a manager and researcher at SRZ / Stadt+Regionalforschung Vienna and a freelancer. Heidrun is responsible for numerous Austrian and European projects and publications in fields such as housing, quality of life, urban development and urban renewal.

IJSBRAND HEERINGA

Yacht, Amsterdam

IJSbrand is a planning professional working on topics related to urban development and local governance. He is a graduate of the Master in Urbanism, at the faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment at the Technical University of Delft. IJSbrand obtained his MSC in July 2018.

JACQUELINE BLEICHER

Global Urban Design, London

Jacqueline is an urban designer, masterplanner, placemaker, registered and chartered architect and the founder of Global Urban Design, a social enterprise. She utilises environment-behaviour research, community-led design principles, and universal design principles to make better design decisions. Jacqueline designs for people and actively promotes the practice and use of urban design principles and sustainable development to achieve successful, inclusive places, destinations and cities.

JANINE HOGENDOORN

Ring-Ring, Amsterdam

Janine is an economist and a mother, with a drive to help build healthy, energy neutral, clean cities together for all species and provide a methodology to circulate value locally.

JEROD MYERS

Long-Range Planner Virginia, USA

Jerod is an entry-level planner working in a rural-suburban community in Virginia, USA. His interests include design interventions and policy frameworks that integrate ecological concepts into placemaking.

JERDEN OSKAM

Hotelschool The Hague

Jeroen has a PhD from the University of Amsterdam and is the Director of the Research Centre at Hotelschool The Hague, a worldwide top 10 ranking public hotel management school in Amsterdam and Hague. He has done extensive research on Airbnb and 'Sharing'; his latest book is 'The Future of Airbnb and the 'Sharing Economy'. The Collaborative Consumption of Our Cities.

JISKA STAD-OGIER

Wij Staan Op!, Leiden

Jiska is a personal and juridical expert on creating an inclusive society for physically disabled people. She co-founded 'Wij Staan Op!' (translates 'We Stand Up!'), a foundation that strives to increase societal inclusion from the perspective of young adults with a physical disability. Jiska is a speaker and expert on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

JOACHIM BRECH

Independent urban and housing research, Munich

Joachim studied architecture at the Technical University of Munich and sociology doctorate at the University of Bremen. He is a freelance planner, researcher and consultant in the fields of urban development and housing. Joachim is also the author of numerous publications and studies.

JORN WEMMENHOVE

Humankind, Rotterdam

Jorn is a creative strategist and co-founder of Humankind, where he advises cities on how to accelerate the transition to an inclusive, sustainable society by imagining the city of tomorrow and already showing it today. His passion lies in finding creative ways to tackle complex social problems. At the age of 20, he co-founded El Desafío Foundation, a non-profit that promotes youth development and local democracy in Rosario, Argentina.

JOSÉ MIGUEL GÓMEZ

Espacio Lúdico, Chile

José activates public spaces through tactical maneuvers linked to play experiences. He is an architect with a master's in urban projects. José is also a national player of GO game, a co-founder of Latinamerica Placemaking Network and a member of the Placemaking Leadership Council (PPS) and CivicWise.

JULIE HEYDE

DVTup, Paris

Julie is a French placemaker. Trained as an architect in France and Delft, she spent 10 years working as an architect in Paris and New York, before launching DVTup in 2016 (a French firm in the social and solidarity economy, that focuses on users experiences and oversees collaborative urban project). Concerned by the lack of social links, love and fun in urban common spaces, Julie believes users and local communities have to be the main focus and energy of space development. Since 2015, she has worked with her team on introducing more human-oriented processes in both the public and the private sectors.

JULIET KAHNE

PPS, New York

Juliet is an urban geographer who obtained her MSc and PhD in Urban Geography from Kings College London, focusing specifically on the process of gentrification. She has participated in various urban research projects both in the U.S. and Europe exploring different

types of social and environmental neighbourhood change through ethnographic methods. Juliet is currently the Director of Education and Events at Project for Public Spaces in NYC, where she enjoys developing opportunities for practitioners and academics alike to share their knowledge with others. Juliet is originally from Los Angeles, California, a place that has forever shaped her perspective of cities.

KALISTENI AVDELIDI

National Centre for Social Research of Athens

Kalistení is a researcher at the Institute of Social Research of the National Centre for Social Research in Athens. She is a D.P.L.G. Architect with postgraduate specialization in Historical and Technical Research in Contemporary Art, and she is also a city and regional planner with research expertise in social considerations of urban design/planning and in the spatial morphology of urban tissue.

KONSTANTINOS GOURNIANAKIS

STIPO, Rotterdam

Konstantinos is a political scientist from Crete, Greece currently pursuing a Master's degree at the Erasmus University in Public Administration: Governance of Migration and Diversity. Passionate about the urban landscape and public space policies, he always seeks innovative and sustainable ways to uncover the hidden assets of neighbourhoods. During his time at STIPO, he worked as the project planner for "Our City? Countering exclusion in Public Space."

LAURA SOBRAL

The City Needs You Institute, São Paulo

Laura is a Brazilian urbanist and architect. She is also a German Chancellor Fellow with the Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung. She has a BA and MA in Architecture and Urbanism from the University of Sao Paulo and completed an exchange program at Universidad Politécnica de Madrid in 2008. She is a co-founder of the Instituto A Cidade Precisa de Você [The City Needs You Institute], an NGO that aims to improve public

spaces through social actions such as publications, projects, seminars, etc.

LENINN HERNANDEZ

Bureau Urban Living, Utrecht

Leninn was born in Colombia. He studied spatial design at the Academy of Art of Utrecht. Leninn is the founder of Bureau Urban Living and he works for the Municipality of Amsterdam as a designer of public spaces.

LIOR STEINBERG

Humankind, Rotterdam

Lior is an urban planner and co-founder of Humankind, a multidisciplinary collective accelerating the transition towards urban happiness for all. He helps cities look beyond functionality and plan urban spaces that make people smile. Being a Jane Jacobs' enthusiast and a fan of great public spaces, he is keen on making cities better with an emphasis on local, innovative interventions and on including residents in urban planning.

MALIN ZIMM

White Architects, Stockholm

Malin has a PhD in architecture and is currently working as a Research Strategist at White Arkitekter.

MARGRIT HUGENTOBLER

ETH Zürich Faculty of Architecture

Margrit Hugentobler, PhD, M.S.W., has directed ETH Wohnforum ~ ETH CASE (Centre for Research on Architecture, Society & the Environment) until 2016. Her research focus is on innovation and quality development in housing in the context of urban development.

MARIE GLASER

ETH Zürich Faculty of Architecture

Marie studied European cultural anthropology and literary studies in Munich, Washington D.C. and Vienna. Her research and teaching focuses on social and cultural housing studies, housing and poverty, and cooperative housing developments. She has authored and co-authored numerous publications.

MARIE-ANGE DE KORT

Inholland University of Applied Sciences, Amsterdam

Marie-Ange is a senior lecturer and researcher at Leisure & Events Management, specialised in concept development and brand strategies, creating smart (leisure) solutions for a variety of complex questions in an urban environment. As a coordinator of the graduation minor Smart Culture, she has a special focus on urban Cultural offering, Retail development and Placemaking in the city region of Amsterdam. Her current project investigates the influence of gentrification on the lifestyle, consumer behavior and needs of inhabitants and visitors of Amsterdam South-East and North as well as the concept development for several retail centers and squares located in these areas.

MAURITS KREIJVELD

Wisdom of the Crowd, Delft

Maurits Kreijveld is a futurist and consultant. He is an expert in digital innovation, collaborative innovation and platform economics. He is also a frequent speaker and lecturer at business schools. He has advised more than thirty governments (national and regional, European) and international companies on the potential future impact of new technologies (artificial intelligence, blockchain, nanotechnology) on their organization, such as new business models (such as collaborative economy, platforms) and design of the public environment (smart cities). Maurits worked with several think tanks on themes such as the societal impact of new technologies, scenario planning and foresighting and innovation models. Before, Maurits worked with the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs on innovation, ict and new media policy.

MICHAEL W. MEHAFFY

KTH University, Stockholm

Michael is a member of the Placemaking Leadership Council and a co-organizer of the Cities for All conference. He is a researcher, author and urban designer.

MINOUCHE BESTERS

STIPO, Rotterdam

Minouche is a partner at STIPO Team for Urban Development. She is an experienced designer and facilitator of collective processes, which are essential for truly understanding and aligning all different perspectives of urban stakeholders and co-creating better future solutions. Her work focuses on creating better places by among others developing inclusion, organising the commons, working towards the energy transition and involving digital technologies. Currently she is the chief editor of "Our City? Countering exclusion in Public Space." a book by STIPO, PPS and Placemaking Europe.

MIRANDA KAMP

Inholland University of Applied Sciences, Amsterdam

Certified tourism lecturer with knowledge and experience in coaching and supervising projects. My current focus is the international stream of the Tourism Management department. In addition to teaching tourism and communication courses, I conduct research for the Urban Leisure and Tourism Lab.

NEZHAPI-DELLE ODELEYE

Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge

Nezhapi-Dellé trained and worked as an architect before moving into planning, where she helped pioneer policies and delivery of sustainable design and construction in Wembley regeneration projects in the 1990s. Her personal research explores how knowledge systems of indigenous planning principles illuminate the role of space and time in urban design co-creation. Current projects examine the agency of planners and communities in placeshaping.

NIAMH MOORE CHERRY

University College Dublin

Niamh is an Associate Professor in the School of Geography, University College Dublin. Her research is focused on understanding the governance of urban development and its outcomes, from a policy and grassroots perspective. A Playful City is Ireland's first not-for-profit focused on creating more playful, engaging and inclusive cities with and for communities.

NIENKE SLUIMER

STIPO, Rotterdam

Nienke is a fresh urban planning junior at the STIPO team for urban development. She obtained her MSc in Urban & Regional Planning from Stockholm University in June 2018. Nienke is specifically committed to projects that concern public (green) space, inclusiveness, leisure and well-being.

PÄIVI RAIVIO

RaivioBumann Public Art & Urban Design Studio, Helsinki

Päivi is an artist-designer with a focus on public art, participatory design and arts-based placemaking. Päivi is a partner in RaivioBumann – an art and urban design studio working for better, more inclusive, fun and meaningful public spaces.

PETER WILLIAMS

The Means, London

For the past 25 years Peter has run a placemaking practice which combines research, consultancy and programme delivery. He chairs a local recreation association and serves as the CEO of one of the largest Business Improvement Districts in the UK which reaffirms his interest in and non-partisan approach to urban governance.

PHILIPPA COLLIN

Inholland University of Applied Sciences, Amsterdam

Philippa works as a researcher and senior lecturer in intercultural communication at the Inholland University of Applied Sciences, as well as a freelance urban anthropologist. Her interests cover questions related to urban development and conviviality such as hybrid places, social cohesion, embodied experience, meaningful encounters, systemic exclusion and cultural entrepreneurship. As a freelance anthropologist, she supports both educational and civic organisations aiming to become more inclusive, through holistic change in their institutional culture. As a lecturer, she maintains a vibrant international network of colleagues with common interests throughout the Euro-Mediterranean area.

RAMON MARRADES

La Marina de València

Ramon is urban economist and activist turned a creative bureaucrat and placemaker. He is currently the chief strategy officer at La Marina de València, Valencia's waterfront redevelopment agency. Ramon also co-founded Urbego, an international network of urban professionals. His work focuses on the interface between public space and economic development.

REBECCA RUBIN

White Architects, Stockholm

Rebecca has been working on inclusive and gender equal design and process since 2015, developing a normcrative design practice. Her work has been multiply rewarded, (Suitability prize UV, The Arkitekt(h)en award) and she is currently designing several normative projects both in Sweden and internationally.

REINHOLD STADLER

Civitta Romania

Reinhold is a young urban planner, specialized in public spaces, urban mobility and strategic planning, working both as a consultant and a teacher. He gained extensive experience working in more than 20 cities in the last 7 years as part of Civitta Romania and other important consulting companies while also transferring his knowledge to the next generation of urban planners in the School of Urban Planning, part of the "Ion Mincu" University of Architecture and Urbanism.

RENÉE RODIJMANS

STIPO, Rotterdam

Renée is an urban anthropologist with a heart for urban change on the level of the daily life. She recently moved to Rotterdam where she works for STIPO, and is currently living in a tiny home as care-taker of a public rooftop-park. She combines experience ranging from urban agriculture to tactical urbanism in order to facilitate change in people's relationships with their environment.

RENET KORTHALS ALTES

Make Space 4 Play

Renet is a child-centered designer, consultant and trainer. Her education is dual: BS & MSc in Architecture (Technical University Delft) and Pedagogical Academy for primary schools. She has fourteen years of experience as a playground designer, in a wide variety of (inter)national contexts. In the Netherlands her work varies between community participation projects, (co-)designing & greening schoolyards and (co-)designing community spaces to play & meet. Her international projects focus on enabling children, who have limited access to play, to advocate for their right to play, and to take action for it. She has contributed to several books (The city at eyelevel for Kids, The inclusive city, learn-move-playground, Playgroundideas' inclusive design manual), she trains architects in child-centered design (Egypt, Rwanda), and presents at international symposiums to inspire others (Cairo, Seoul, Split).

ROGER ESTOP

(formerly) Chelmsford City Council, UK

Roger is an urban designer and land use planner, whose work promotes best practice in British municipal councils. As design lead for Chelmsford City Council, Roger led and collaborated on master planning for city centre renewal and large municipal growth plans. Roger contributes to design review across South East England.

ROOS GERRITSMAN

Inholland University of Applied Sciences, Amsterdam

Roos is an Associate Professor at Inholland University of Applied Sciences. She is an urban sociologist and has combined educational programs with (inter)national research projects within cities as a leisure and tourism lecturer and researcher since 2000. She is one of the founding members of the Urban Leisure & Tourism Lab, based in Amsterdam. Her main interests are: urban tourism, placemaking, inclusive and sustainable design research and lifestyle communities like yoga.

ROYA SHOKDOHI

Hanze University of Applied Sciences, Groningen

Roya is an architect and urban planner. She was practicing architecture before transferring to the academic area. She is passionate about the social impact of architecture and user-centred approaches. Roya is also particularly interested in paradigms such as sustainable cities, healthy cities, vital cities, resilient cities and liveable cities.

SANDER VAN DER HAM

STIPO, Rotterdam

Sander is an urban psychologist who works with residents on improving their streets and neighbourhoods. His work is focused on building communities through place-led development. Sander says he greatly enjoys listening to residents' stories about feeling at home, because they help him come up with ideas for how to create better community places and how to actually build them.

SIMONE TENDA

Het Hof van Cartesius, Utrecht

After her active involvement in free and open social and cultural spaces during her studies on cultural integration, Simone now bridges the gap between makers and institutions, supporting and constructing a welcoming and affordable space in Utrecht, the Hof van Cartesius.

SITO VERACRUZ

FairBnb, Amsterdam

Sito is a digital urbanist, a project manager and a social entrepreneur specialized in the creation of interactive city tools. He studied Law and Urban Planning in Madrid, where he lived from 2003 until 2012. Sito moved to Amsterdam in 2012, where he soon experienced the rise and effects of vacation rental platform in the city. This inspired him to start developing the concept of a 'Fairbnb platform' in the middle of 2016, which eventually led to the creation of 'Fairbnb.coop'.

STEPHANIA XYDIA

Place Identity, Athens

Stephania is a Cultural Policy & Management expert based in Greece. She is involved in international projects reconnecting citizens and institutions for cultural change. Stephanía has also been a leader in several award-winning projects on participatory placemaking, social innovation and cultural regeneration.

SUHEYLA TURK

Lund University

Suheyla has finished her bachelor's degree and continued to her master's education in urban planning. Recently, she has been writing her PhD thesis about affordable housing provision problems at Lund University, department of human geography.

TARIQ NASSAR

IPCC, Jerusalem

Tariq was born and raised in Ras Al-Amoud neighbourhood in East Jerusalem. He has been recognized as a leading community architect and urban planner. Tariq has completed numerous successful community engagement placemaking projects in East Jerusalem.

THEO STAUTENER

Stadkwadraat, Utrecht

Theo works as a financial specialist in area development and urban planning. Along with feasibility studies on land use and real estate, he takes care of finance, new models of cooperation and new concepts. Over the last 10 years Theo and his company Stadkwadraat have invested in new business models for multiple value creation. In their work they have adopted placemaking and other strategies for optimizing the use of urban land together with a solid financial base for projects and a growing attention to sustainability.

THIEU BESSELINK

The Learning Lab and Townmaking Institute, Amsterdam

Thieu is the founder of The Learning Lab (a think-tank for learning and social innovation) and the co-founder of the Townmaking Institute (an urban research and development institute that focuses on knowledge and societal asset development for urban commons). Thieu did his MSc in Political Theory and Urban Studies at the London School of Economics and wrote his PhD with Richard Sennett at the European University Institute.

TINA VILFAN

BE Arkitekter, Copenhagen

Tina is a Slovenian architect based in Copenhagen specializing in urban design. As a practitioner and researcher, she focuses on developing tools needed to create vibrant and sustainable cities. She is an active contributor on new approaches for designing cities, emphasizing public involvement through placemaking.

MORE STIPO PUBLICATIONS



THE CITY AT EYE LEVEL – LESSONS FOR STREET PLINTHS, THE SECOND AND EXTENDED VERSION (2016)

Editors: Hans Karssenbergh, Jeroen Laven, Mattijs van 't Hoff

Available in English and Dutch



THE CITY AT EYE LEVEL IN THE NETHERLANDS (2017)

Editors: Jeroen Laven, Sander van der Ham, Sienna Veelders and Hans Karssenbergh

Available in English and Dutch



Cities have always seduced both culture and capital alike, therefore experiencing resulting pressure from periods of growth, decline, and overall change. However as growing processes such as gentrification, touristification, big money, and smart technologies continue to develop and interfere with our everyday sense of belonging, we must begin to ask tougher questions and seek concrete solutions to maintaining our rights and access to the public places in our city.

Complexities within our society can easily be witnessed in our public spaces – from squares to streets, to parks, to neighborhood gathering places. These are places where individuals look to fulfill a variety of different needs and act out their everyday lives. Public space is where we all meet and connect, and where we explore both friction and expression. Public space is also where we can choose to be anonymous or the complete center of attention, where we can find comfort amongst other people, and where we can exchange or share our cultural values. Yet with growing social and economic polarisation in our cities there is a great need to understand how we counter exclusion in these shared public spaces and create cities where everyone actually feels at home.

How can we ensure that public spaces represent and serve the people who live near them and use them? In this book, we feature a range of cases that explore how exclusion in public space is being countered across Europe. We present research insights, local stories, tools, and actions, from a variety of different voices, to provide you with a clear understanding of what is needed to maintain a sense of belonging in our cities' public places. We also show how actively working with the local community, from engagement through to design can change the way urban spaces are created and activated, particularly by reaching out to and encouraging participation from those voices that often go unheard.

