

Placemaking for Cities

Pilot project on the transfer of good practice in community-led placemaking



“You need to find friends you can work with. Not all of our local authority is placemaking friendly. Building relationships inside and outside the municipality is the key to progressing community-led placemaking projects.”

Dave Lawless, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council



FINAL REPORT

PLACEMAKING FOR CITIES P4C

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1. Introduction

This report provides an account of the main outcomes of Placemaking 4 Cities (P4C) project and offers critical evaluation of process as well as content of this pilot project in good practice transfer (GPT). In doing so this report draws together detailed descriptions and assessments of the transfer process from learning logs, the mid-term review and exit interviews with P4C participants. The learning logs and the mid-term review are attached in a separate appendix entitled 'Supporting Documents'.

The first part of the report is concerned with an analysis of the results that were achieved. It begins with a presentation of the good practices and anticipated outcomes defined in the baseline study and compares these to the actual results and outputs achieved. The good practices that were adopted and adapted through the transfer are presented at the end of this section. We then review the methodological approach that was adopted to facilitate the GPT, focusing in particular the preparation and executing of the peer review which was central to the transfer process. This is followed by an attempt to assess the impact of the P4C pilot for participating cities of the medium and longer term and the report concludes with a number of recommendations about the design and delivery of future GPT networks.

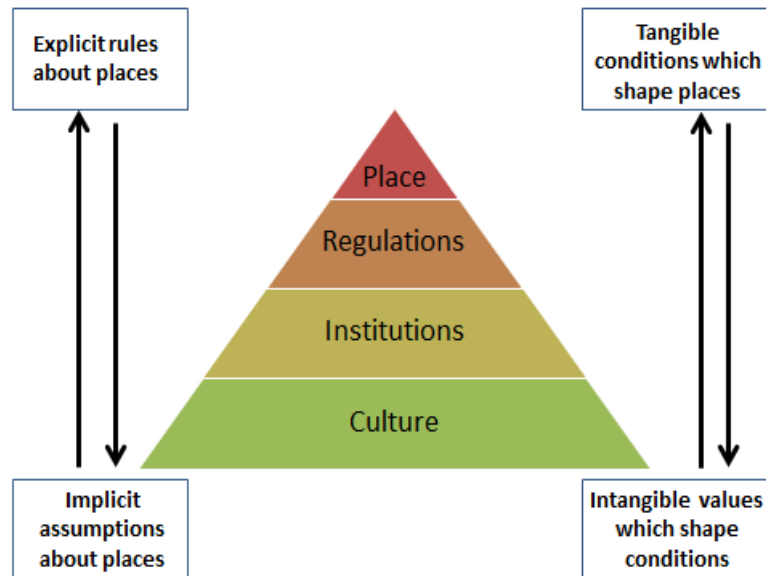
2. Analysis of results

The P4C project started from the premise that placemaking was about enabling local people to take the lead in creating spaces they wanted to use. Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council (DLR) was recognised to be very effective in developing and enabling communities to take the lead on a wide range of socio-economic and environmental initiatives, including placemaking, and was therefore chosen to be the giving partner for P4C. The partners who came together for P4C had worked on the SURE project previously and therefore possessed detailed knowledge about each other. The partners transferring good practice into their own context were Albacete (Spain), Eger (Hungary) and Pori (Finland)¹.

2.1 Conceptual framework used

Working relationships were robust and constructive and characterised by high levels of trust and mutual understanding. Hence when during the kick-off meeting in Paris the P4C group was tasked to develop a framework for their GPT the partners were able to come up with a framework that continued to provide the guiding principles for the remainder of the project. The starting point was that a GPT in placemaking cannot be concerned with techniques alone, the *context* in which placemaking methods are applied must be analysed in order to explain why particular placemaking approaches were chosen and also why some methods worked and others did not. The diagram below shows that how the P4C network conceptualised the 'place'. It is conceived of as being the result of and subject to physical, social and economic actions. The most tangible, such as design, maintenance, equipment, are the 'tip of the iceberg' while the actual drivers which create the conditions that shape places are regulations, institutions and cultures. These are in turn influenced by the actual conditions that are created.

¹ For further details on the P4C partners please see the baseline study at: <http://urbact.eu/placemaking-cities>



While regulatory and institutional frameworks have a profound impact on the physical, social and economic dimensions of a place, they are also slow to change. Therefore it was decided that it would be unrealistic to expect measurable changes resulting from the GPT pilot project in relation to institutions and regulations. Changing attitudes and behaviours of individuals, on the other hand, can happen comparatively quickly. By focusing on the way people behave who work in institutions which have to the power to determine how a place is designed, used and maintained we can develop an understanding of the local culture that drives institutional and regulatory frameworks and bring about change ‘bottom up’.

2.2 Good practices explored

The GPT focused on the engagement of communities in placemaking because this was seen to be the main area of expertise DLR would contribute to P4C. The practices identified for adoption by receiving partners during the good practice exchange visit to the giving partner DLR differed slightly from those initially identified during the drafting stage of baseline study. This is because it was not until partners could see and explore personally the work done in DLR that a clearer focus emerged on what could and should be transferred. However, the final version of the baseline was issued in shortly after the exchange visit to DLR had taken place, hence the pilot started with a coherent framework for the actions that were to be considered for transfer. The chosen good practices in placemaking included:

- Place analysis
- Stakeholder analysis
- Place animation
- Reaching and engaging residents
- Overcoming resistance to change
- Creating quick wins
- Identifying and developing community leaders
- Developing the capacity of small traders

The rationale and nature of these practices are briefly described below.

Place analysis

P4C partners practiced the use of a questionnaire based on the Project for Public Places toolkit. Other means of analysing public spaces based on design, planning and economic development principles. The application of a questionnaire is of course a rather 'superficial' way of engaging place users and may be inappropriate for residential areas where more informal methods, such as simply walking through a space, recording its features and identifying opportunities for improvement. Engaging with existing civil society groups, encouraging residents to bring pictures showing the way a place was used in the past and organising a small event with refreshments to talk informally about the place has been found to work effectively in DLR.

Stakeholder analysis

For the staff at DLR and also their partners in civil society organisations stakeholder analysis is an integral part of every community development project. This is because early on we need to identify supporters and blockers of change, stakeholders with power who need to be won over and those with little influence who need to be empowered. This informs the approaches taken to reaching and engaging residents. Undertaking a separate stakeholder analysis for internal and external actors often identifies actors who work across institutional boundaries. When trying to bring together different organisations and sectors these 'boundary spanners' become critically important stakeholders for a project.

Place animation

Every city wants vibrant public spaces but creating the conditions for this is difficult. Most P4C partners had been involved in some form of place animation, usually temporary events that draw visitors into a space and encourage some form of interaction. While such animations are inexpensive, they do require some financial resources and we learned that traders tended to be reluctant to commit any financial resources to place animation such as this. Hence animation techniques to be one-off or seasonal events and sustainable only for as long as someone pays the to cover costs. We saw residents animating spaces they could control, semi-public spaces like the community garden (see below) or open spaces in front of their homes. To encourage the animation of central public squares through residents is difficult and tends to be part and parcel of organised events.

Reaching and engaging residents

It is widely acknowledged that writing to residents, leafleting or placing news items in the press are ineffective in reaching and engaging people. Social media might hold the promise of reaching a wider audience but may exclude important target groups and in any case placemaking must go beyond encouraging people to comment. To create a community-led placemaking process we are aiming to make people take practical actions that shape the places they use. At a minimum, active engagement in placemaking means that people are willing to give up their time to contribute to a debate about ways in which their local place can be improved. At best people will take charge of the planning and implementation of placemaking. Yet just asking citizens to give up time and contribute to a debate tends to be difficult, even for the good practice provider in DLR who can draw on a deep culture of community engagement, resources and strategic commitments towards this goal. In his many years of working with communities Dave has learned that he must knock on each door to ask people directly, face to face, whether they can see opportunities for improving their local area and whether they would be willing to come to a meeting to discuss ideas. It is

often only through personal, face to face contact that residents develop the level of trust required to get them out of the safety of their homes and into a public meeting.

Overcoming resistance to change

Frequently people who are reluctant to engage in debate on potential change are also resisting proposal for change. During the exchange visits P4C partners were able to explore in some detail how much resistance to change there was at the beginning of many community led placemaking projects they saw. Those who resisted change are often in the minority but they were the most vocal at meetings. As defending the status quo is always easier than convincing people of a new idea minorities resisting change can quite easily undermine any placemaking initiative.

Project leaders faced with such situations need to develop their facilitation skills but these could not be explored during the exchange visit. Hence it was decided that a specific training session would be run at the first GPT transfer meeting which was scheduled to take place in Pori. Nevertheless, simple techniques were discussed, such using the 'building blocks of agreement' method over a series of meetings. The principle here is to avoid trying to get agreement on a whole project, but rather on individual elements of the change process. So the starting point might be to agree that something needs to be done to improve a place; once there is agreement on this point one can start to discuss specific actions that might improve the place. Another way of engaging residents and creating support for change is to have them sign a declaration which says that they would be supporting improvements during the initial 'door knocking' stage. When objectors try to sabotage discussion at the public meeting you can refer to a list of residents who are signatories to a proposal for change.

Creating quick wins

Just like the 'building blocks of agreement', creating 'quick wins' is an effective tool to overcome resistance to change. Of critical importance for quick wins is that these must demonstrate that the local community can make a difference. Hence anything proposed as a quick win must be within the capacity of local stakeholders to achieve them. For example, a quick win in relation to open space in a residential area might be based on residents planting flower bulbs or trees to create instant but simple improvements. Any placemaking initiative aimed at creating a community-led placemaking process should avoid a situation where the municipality takes full responsibility for the delivery of quick wins – these would be quick wins for the municipality, but not a community-led placemaking project.

Identifying and developing community leaders

Winning the support of a resident or business person who is well connected and respected can be of enormous help in overcoming resistance to change. Such people should be identified through a stakeholder analysis. However, many communities do not have a 'leader' and the officer wanting to develop a community led placemaking project might have to 'grow' a leader. This requires time and 'one-to-one' support. In DLR community leaders are grown all the time and many of the people we met during our visit are the result of Dave Lawless and his colleagues providing opportunities for local people to become leaders. This does not tend to require formal training, although the training needs of such volunteers should be assessed and responded to. Two things are critically important in supporting local people on their way to become community leaders: first giving them the opportunity to participate in range of different forums where the municipality seeks the engagement with

local residents; and second, identifying an officer from the municipality who provides a mentoring role for the volunteer. In the case of DLR there is a very well established institutional network of NGOs who grow their community leaders and provide mentoring support. However, in the case of P4C partners it is likely to that an official from the municipality might have to take on this mentoring role in the first instance.

Developing the capacity of small traders

This emerged as an additional placemaking topic during the transfer visit. There tends to be an assumption that it is only residents who need to develop their abilities to engage in planning and problem solving processes. Business people, on the other hand, are perceived as professionals who have such abilities. This was identified as a fallacy during the exchange visit: small traders in particular require the same support as residents to understand and engage in processes aimed at improving commonly shared facilities, such as public places. However, there seemed little practical evidence of how such capacity building processes might be undertaken. While the principles set out above are likely to be applicable, this was an issue where the giving partner had limited expertise to offer and partners agreed to keep this topic under review as the pilot progressed.

Practices explored separately to the exchange visit

There were some practices partners were not able to explore in any detail during the exchange visit. These included visioning techniques, such as the *future dialogue* explained in the URBACT toolkit and also *option appraisal*, the simple *coat hanger technique* used extensively in DLR is explained in baseline study of the SURE project². Techniques associated with managing conflict in public meetings as well as multiple stakeholder analysis were explored in a specially arranged training session during the GPT visit to Pori, led by the giving partner in conjunction with the Lead Expert.



Good practice exchange visit to the giving partner DLR, March 2014



2.3 Transfer of good practices

During the baseline study and the exchange visit in DLR P4C partners were asked to identify a small number of specific practices they wanted to adapt for and apply to their local context. The answers changed over time and the learning logs 2, 3 and 4 show how each partner tried to define the practices they were going to apply in their city and how this might be

² http://urbact.eu/sites/default/files/import/Projects/SURE/outputs_media/SURE_baseline_study_FINAL.pdf

assessed. In the end each partner adopted each of the above but with different emphasis. For example in Albacete and Eger there was a strong emphasis animations and working with traders while in Pori there was an emphasis on reaching and engaging residents. While the learning logs are a snapshot in time and often point to further work that is required to achieve desired outcomes, overall there has been a substantial transfer in good practices from DLR to partner cities.

The table below provides an assessment of the extent to which the outcomes defined in the baseline study were achieved. The good practices presented in 2.2 above are compressed into indicators for two outcomes defined for the pilot, while other outcomes listed below are considered to be the consequences of the application of good practices. The evidence on which this summative assessment is based can be found in the learning logs appended to this report. These learning logs contain a more fine grained assessment of the extent to which practices were transferred and their impact which reflects local contexts in greater detail. This is not attempted here.

Outcome defined in baseline	Indicators of performance defined in baseline	Alabacete	Eger	Pori
A local action group has been formed which facilitates a dialogue across stakeholder groups, institutions and departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group is chaired by non-official Cross-departmental/cross-institutional resource allocation for placemaking Local community is engaged and informed about the work of the group 	 Project led by NGO, limited scope to influence 	  	Group chaired by official  
Community development techniques practiced in DLR have been adapted and applied	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place analysis Place animation Stakeholder analysis Reaching and engaging residents Overcoming resistance to change Identifying and developing community leaders Creating quick wins 	      	      	      
Different placemaking options have been evaluated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place analysis (questionnaire, video, other) Options appraisal Action plan 	  	  	  
Practical placemaking activities have been undertaken	This might include any placemaking actions referred to in the state of the art section of baseline study			
The impact of placemaking activities have been assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before and after comparison of the place using the same tools as for the initial place analysis Interviews with stakeholders about perceived changes to the place 	The assessment of impact would need to be undertaken post completion of this pilot	ditto	ditto
Barriers to a fuller transfer of the good practice have been explored and identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisations which have an important impact on the 'place' collaborate with each other Officers leading placemaking work across departmental and institutional boundaries; Residents, businesses and users have some control over the way a place is designed and managed; Leadership and organisational cultures support the placemaking process 	The work was led by an arms-length NGO hence there was limited scope to influence practices of the municipality The space offers very limited scope for this Limited engagement of senior officers	  Space offers very limited scope for this 	   Limited engagement of senior officers

2.4 Effectiveness of good practice transfer

The overview of the results achieved in this GPT pilot suggest that most practices that were explored in DLR were transferable. The learning logs provide a detailed assessment of the extent and the impact of the transfer at the time of the transfer visit. To provide a deeper insight into the effect the transfer had on the locality as well as individuals this section provides an assessment through the voices of the partners who adapted and transferred practices. Most of the interview data presented here were collected shortly after the final conference in April 2015, but a limited number of statements contained in the mid-term review are repeated here. The perspective of P4C partners are presented under five themes, which are:

- Adaptation of practices
- Continuation of transferred practices
- Impact on professional practice
- Barriers encountered
- What to repeat and what to do differently next time

Before we set out the perspectives of P4C participants on the extent to which practices were adapted, transferred and continued, the importance of being able to build on prior knowledge and working relationships established through participation in a previous URBACT network are briefly explored next. This included individual partner representatives who had taken part in SURE and P4C, as well the Lead expert and the consultant providing administrative and project management input who had fulfilled the same roles in the SURE and P4C projects.

Prior working relationships

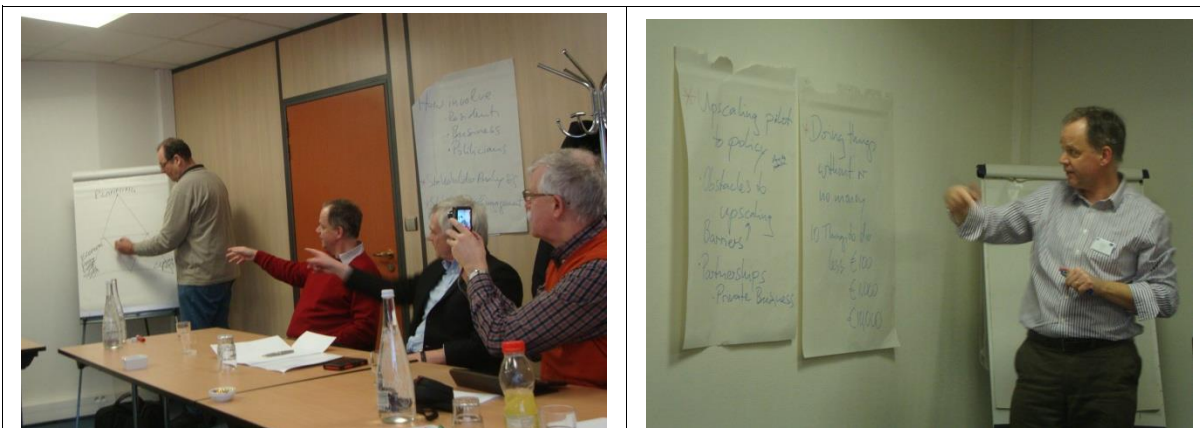
Early on in the pilot partners pointed out that having worked together on the SURE project meant that important relationships and knowledge about the context in which each partner were present at the time the project was formed. This supported the development of a conceptual framework at the kick-off meeting and rapid development of principles on which transfer should be based.

“With SURE it took 6 months to get things going and people seemed to wait for the Lead Expert to push them on. Here it was clear at the beginning that there was going to be action rather than a plan. People are much more confident to push their project forward and there is much more peer interaction now. During our monthly meeting I hear about so much work, so much experimentation going on in the partner cities. That’s fantastic. There is definitely more energy, more confidence and more mutual trust between partners.” (DLR)

“We were interested in learning from each other. This was not a theatre show where you tell fairy tales to impress your guests, there was a willingness to seek and accept criticism. We had to trust each other which meant that we did not try to impress each other. This kind of learning project needs an honest approach and sharing what you do not so well.” (Pori)

“We definitely see a change in attitude. When we did the SURE project asking the residents of the target area how to improve it was seen as a crazy idea. It will never work we were told, but it did and we have just opened the community centre there. And now we are doing placemaking and people are not so sceptical anymore.” (Eger)

“If we did the P4C project without SURE we could not launch it, or if we did it would be more superficial. We did much work to gain the trust of local leaders during SURE. ... I see this as a continuation of the SURE project.” (Pori)



Partners developing the conceptual framework for P4C during the Kick-Off Meeting in Paris.

Adaptation of practices

Partners reported that being able to see the reality of applying practices they are considering for transfer was the pre-requisite for a critical analysis of how to adapt them. This was particularly important where such practices are very different to established norms, expectations and processes in the receiving city:

“There is no tradition in Hungary to take a bottom-up approach. But our residents are very active and they want to engage with the decisions that affect them directly. We could see that DLR was a success and decided to try it in Hungary. ... With P4C we are learning how to do bottom-up.” (Eger)

“We have to adapt, not transfer practices. We have not done the same as in DLR, we cannot copy directly, but we had to work out how to do it differently so that it could be successful in Albacete.” (Albacete)

“Seeing it in action was essential. ... We saw that community empowerment can work and that it is not too risky. We decided we should do it in the Makasiinitori square.(Pori)

“To see how DLR are working with residents was really important for me. To understand that it is also the case in DLR that local people do not naturally come together to organise activities is really helpful.” (Albacete)

“The questionnaire technique was very useful to us. In DLR we saw how it could work and when we did our own questionnaire here in Eger it was very important because we could start our placemaking project together with the local population.” (Eger)

Some statements point towards the analytical process of adapting, i.e. changing, practices so that they fit into a different context:

“I see the community garden in DLR more as a process than a product. Understanding their starting position, that it was not easy to win support and how they managed to change people’s attitudes was a revelation that will influence my practice for ever. What Dave did was not forcing ideas onto individuals or using the power of the municipality to make decisions that suited him. It is a soft process and that is what we are trying to copy here in Pori.” (Pori)

“We follow the philosophy of the community garden project in DLR but not the actual practice. We cannot create a garden on the boulevard, but we will get people together by growing some plants. If we grow too many we donate them to other NGOs because there is not much space on the boulevard. It is not so important what the actions are as long as people work together, sharing time and ideas.” (Albacete)

“What we saw in DLR was not only good practices, we saw different perspectives on good practices and that was really useful. For example, Bob Hannan the City Architect in DLR, he is not so eager to do everything citizens in contrast to Dave. He highlights the professional approach of designers and Dave of community development. We need to achieve a balance and seeing this in practice was very helpful to me as a professional planner and architect.” (Pori)

While reflection on the practices partners had studied in DLR formed the starting point of the transfer process, partners continued to learn and develop adaptations through the pilot: *In Pori we saw how we could connect with the local college. We adapted this principle for Eger and have now established a long term relationship with our arts college. They will organise exhibitions and other placemaking actions in future. In Albacete we saw how to work with busy traders who are not connected with each other. That was very useful for us in trying to reach out to our traders and develop our placemaking actions. It is very difficult to do, but we can see that we are not alone with this difficulty. (Eger)*

“Seeing how Albacete organised their placemaking actions opened my eyes. I suddenly understood that there are some things I must do personally, but other tasks, such as organising a competition, someone else could do and do better probably.” (Pori)



Exhibition on new waterside walk in Eger and ‘Fashion Show’ in Albacete



Exchange visit in Albacete, October 2014 and Eger January 2015.

Continuation of transferred practices

P4C facilitated a wide range of practical placemaking actions (for details see the appended learning logs) which were experiments in trying out new practices. Some of these will be repeated, hence there is a continuation of practices that were transferred. In addition to undertaking specific, one-off actions, there is a sense that capacity to bring about placemaking activities has been built through P4C:

“We now have people interested in taking action. The Gardonyi Square is the example; we were worried that this new square will be deserted. But people keep asking us how they can use the square. They want to use it with their own ideas, not in the way it was done through our animations we did with P4C. That is a very important development. P4C has improved the co-operation between citizens and the municipality and the traders also. This will create opportunities again and again for placemaking in future” (Eger)

“The exhibition will continue and animations on the squares will continue. We also bought a stage that local groups can hire, just as they do in DLR. That will carry on and have a big impact on placemaking in Eger.” (Eger)

“The container has been painted and is now back on the square, but the university now owns it. They will use it for their projects and the residents can also continue to use it. We are developing a partnership between residents, arts students and the university. This is a very unexpected outcome.” (Pori)

“The residents may take action this spring with planting the containers. If I take part it will be as a citizen, as an activist. I cannot do it any longer in my role as a planner.” (Pori)

The retailers are almost certainly going to find ways of animating the boulevard again this year. They would love to do the fashion show, but the way we did it with P4C is too expensive for them. Storytelling will definitely happening. I might get involved, but as a citizen, I cannot carry on doing it through work. (Albacete)

The P4C project is known across the city. The success we had with placemaking might trigger support for traders and NGOs who want to do something similar this year. (Albacete)



In Pori the concept of using a versatile container for placemaking was developed with residents and university students has been tested during the pilot and is used for new projects from spring 2015.

Impact on professional practice

Partners reported that the experience of being in ‘learning mode’ and encouraged to reflect on their own practices while exploring practices of their partners enabled them to detect changes in their own attitudes towards their professional practice. The comments below suggest that some of these are very practical changes, while others might be more far reaching:

“I learned that I have to go to very many meetings with residents or traders and that I have to keep on reminding people what the project is about. I see that I made too many assumptions about what people might think and how their minds work.” (Albacete)

“I learned perseverance in reaching out to citizens is the key. Working with them, not for them, that is the key.” (Albacete)

“Every visit to a partner gave me new insights, personally I learned a lot. I learned that interaction with residents is important in all urban development work. From now on, when I run a meeting with citizens, I will be better at listening to residents and know ways of how to get them involved.” (Pori)

“How to overcome resistance to change was a main learning point for me. I saw how Dave gives objectors the opportunity to participate and be part of the project. Instead of over-ruling

them by the power the municipality has, he involves them in a discussion with their neighbours and thinks of ways to make them get benefits out of a project they don't want. This is really good practice we saw. Dave is a real professional in this way.” (Pori)

“P4C had a most important impact for my professional practice. As an architect you have an idea on how to solve a problem and you turn it into reality. But how to make a connection with local stakeholders is something you do not learn much about as an architect. That has changed now with this project. I have learned that we should not assume we know what local people think, we must pay more attention to the opinions of local people.” (Eger)

There are also changes to the way community development and placemaking is approached by local stakeholders in the participating cities:

“I think we are beginning to change the mind set of some leaders of departments. In future we will have more opportunities, P4C paved the way to create more community engagement. Mikko's sub-urban development project has a clear placemaking focus and clear links to the activity of the Park Department. We are now much more confident about trying to foster collaboration between individual officials and departments.” (Pori)

“P4C is the proto type, the experiment. Bringing four departments together to consider how together they can support what traders and residents want to do in the boulevard is innovative. P4C is creating for the first time real transversal, cross-cutting work, and it's doing this without tangible investments. This is innovative and I hope that in the longer term we will succeed in changing attitudes.” (Albacete)

“Things are beginning to change here. Placemaking encourages residents and groups to come forward and suggest actions on the squares. Politicians and officials will need to learn to encourage this.” (Eger)



Place animation in Eger, January 2015



Sharing new ideas of collaboration of professionals in placemaking during exchange visits

Barriers encountered

Having access to resources beyond the pilot stage was identified as a key barrier to continuation. These ranged from having small amounts of money for refreshments, materials or equipment to facilitate practical actions, to asking for staff to be appointed to deal with community development across the municipality, of which placemaking would be a part:

“The placemaking approach is suitable to change attitudes. But we need more time to create ownership and we also need money, human resources. The college for example is very happy to organise placemaking events, they do not need money for staff but for exhibition materials. NGOs are very happy to invite ideas for placemaking and to co-ordinate actions, but they need human resources. Without any money nothing will happen.” (Eger)

“We have the container, a really good resource, but how do you manage it? For example, it costs €80 to transport the container from the painting site back to the square. Who pays for it? In practice no department holds a budget for it, without P4C I am not sure anyone would have agreed to pay. It is more difficult to find €80 than €8,000. These are the practical barriers we face in placemaking.” (Pori)

A similar point is made in relation to organising placemaking work. Where the P4C pilot ended without having established a group or forum that would take the placemaking agenda forward there was scepticism about the capacity of local stakeholders to take the work forward. Partners referred to a diagram in which the metaphor of ‘the sun’ was used to identify the core of a placemaking network. During the P4C project this core was provided by the officers in each city who were leading the pilot:

“Placemaking will continue, but not the way it could. The ‘sun’ is missing, there is no one to organise placemaking. In the SURE project we found a ‘sun’ in the target area and actions are still going on two years after the SURE project finished. Here we did not find the people who could be the owners of the placemaking process. We need more time.” (Eger)

There are no personal development courses for community development here. All community engagement is contracted to NGOs and private consultants. They could run a workshop for officials, but it’s not in their interest to empower us to their work. Structurally the municipality is not very capable of continuing the community development we have started through P4C. (Pori)

“Resident engagement is seen like a sort of social work. City planning is hard planning, objective and about strategic choices. What we do here with P4C is not very well understood at strategic levels in our municipality.” (Pori)

Transferring different practices to the municipality is difficult, I am not sure if they want to learn. It’s easy for them to give the work like P4C to us because they don’t need to change. I think the community prefers to work with us rather than the municipality. We are more flexible and open minded. (Albacete)

“Politicians struggle to listen to people because they think they have all the power. It is surprising for them to see that citizens can do things without explicit political support. In our LSG politicians and residents are on the same level. This is new and can be difficult for them to accept sometimes.” (Eger)



Discussion with partners in Eger on the challenges of the future of placemaking after the project.

What to repeat and what to do differently

Partners were asked what they felt should definitely be repeated should a similar project be designed in the future and what they would want to change. Their responses about the positive aspects of P4C are presented first, followed by suggestions on how the project design could be improved:

The peer review was a very useful method. It was good not just to be told what we wanted to hear but to have critical friends who could tell us what to do better. It is a very good method for learning from each other. (Albacete)

“Taking the LSG members to other cities should be repeated. Although they found it difficult to participate in the peer review and the detailed discussions, they can study different practices and think for themselves what and how practices can be adapted to our situation. Taking three or four local people to visit others cities is very important, it builds your capacity.” (Eger)

“It was important to invite residents to partner cities on the transfer visits. It was a real empowerment for them. They are so much involved in civic activity in Pori but we need to give them more say here in Pori. This is one of the things they learned from the visits, that residents have more power in other cities.” (Pori)

“Even though we sometimes thought we might not be learning, when I look back I can see that we did learn a lot.” (Eger)

“It was a very pleasant project, I loved it.” (Eger)

Shortcomings of the P4C project design were concentrated around the short time scale and the need to obtain a large amount of information prior to undertaking the peer review. More time was required to explore good practices and understand how partners were trying to adapt practices. This could be achieved through more online meetings and also more frequent visits. One suggestion on how to deal with the increase in time required to do more visits would be to employ a local consultant to do part of the project work locally

If we did this again we would need more time. A little more money too, but mostly time. (Eger)

The baseline study was too early. These details need to come just before the meeting when we study the adaption of practice. All data in the baseline is really secondary to the practices we are here to analyse. (Albacete)

We need more information before the exchange visits. Like Albacete, which provided detailed information on the placemaking during the online meetings. We should have done more of that for each partner. (Pori)



Place animation in Eger, March 2015

The project was too short to create a lasting impact on community development. There is change that will last, connections between retailers and residents are much closer, but the impact could have been bigger with more time. (Albacete)

P4C has been very time consuming, I was nearly full time on P4C for six months. In future we might use a consultant as in Albacete to run parts of the project. They are professionals in managing community or placemaking projects. They can organise events, get the right photos, the right resources – I have to balance very many pressures and could not do such a project again. (Pori)

2.5 Reflections of the giving partner

The lead officer from Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, Dave Lawless, together with his colleagues William Morton and Wessel Badenhorst invested more time than originally planned into the exchange process. The initial input into the preparations of the good practice transfer visit was very high, and while the remainder of the project required less energy from Dave and his colleagues, it placed significant demand on them both in preparation of and during the exchange visits:

“As part of the P4C project we learned the importance of accepting that all cities have different cultures, history’s, institutions, regulations and public spaces. We wanted to create an opportunity within P4C for all the partner cities to experiment and learn from implementing real actions in their cities which involving citizens in public space actions. I am very happy with how our partner cities embraced this opportunity and experimented in their cities. This process has provided much by way of a learning from each other. We in Dun Laoghaire certainly learned from this exchange because there is no one right approach to creating good neighbourhoods and cities. There is always something to learn.”

(Dave Lawless)

The peer review was considered to have been an effective way of reflecting on and debating practices in a critical yet constructive way. The importance of robust and trusting relationships was emphasised as having been instrumental in building a successful exchange. The availability of a small project fund to resource placemaking actions was also considered essential to the success of the GPT:

“One of the very positive aspects of the project was the availability of a small amount of funding for Local Learning Actions. Learning through doing was one of the key successes of this GPT project. This learning was further consolidated by the LE as part of the Peer Review and study visits.” (Dave Lawless)

Overall the main shortcoming was considered to be the lack of time. Although having a short time frame kept partners focused, there was a need to allow more time for placemaking actions to unfold in the local community:

“The time frame for this GPT was very short. While this forced us to be very focused, it was at times a very big commitment to take on within our considerable organisational work priorities. I think future GPT projects could be spread out over a two year period.”

(Dave Lawless)



The final conference organized by DLR provided to the partner representatives opportunities to meet local professionals and also activists of other civil society organisations involved in placemaking

2.6 The essence of good practices transferred

Over the course of the pilot a small number of principles emerged as applying across all the different practices that were applied during the pilot. These principles became a kind of 'short hand' for describing the essence of effective community-led placemaking within the P4C network. While the bullet points below should not be taken as a framework for practitioners aiming to develop community led placemaking practice, they are presented here as a way of pointing to core elements of effective placemaking practices P4C partners identified in the course of this pilot.

- **Get people talking**

Reluctance to engage with constructive actions that would improve public spaces is often rooted in people being afraid to open up a conversation in which they share their views with others. Being pro-active in encouraging a dialogue between citizens and officials, or between different interest groups is the starting point for any community-led placemaking initiative

- **Work at their speed**

Residents and traders have their own lives to lead and cannot change demands on their time at short notice. Reluctance to become involved in unfamiliar and potential threatening processes of exchanging views or taking practical actions cannot be overcome by pressurising stakeholders into a timetable that is not of their making.

- **Do things with people, not for them**

When there is pressure to demonstrate progress municipalities are quick to do things that residents have asked for. This will generate one-off improvements but not an ongoing involvement and commitment towards improving the place.

- **Do things with little or no money**

Lack of funding is frequently identified as the barrier to action, but Residents and traders can do many things with very little money. Facilitating placemaking that is low cost and draws on resources local stakeholders have control over promises to be the most effective route to generate ongoing, sustainable community-led placemaking

- Aim for quick wins early on

Reluctance to get involved, pressures on personal time, lack of funding are key barriers to community engagement in placemaking. Try to move as quickly as possible to practical actions, led by and involving the resources of the people for whom the space has some relevance. This demonstrates that improvements are possible and tends to lead to more ambitious and perhaps long term projects.

3. Review of methodological approach taken

In developing the P4C project a conscious decision was taken to provide seed corn funding to support practical animation and transformation of places. A project budget of €20,000 for each partner provided essential resources to purchase materials, hire equipment, rooms, transport or paid for external expertise to run events and activities. Other decisions included to keep a reflective diary throughout the pilot, building knowledge incrementally throughout the pilot, design transfer visits that allow for the deep exploration of practices and to have all partners involved in assessing the transfer of practices.

3.1 Reflective diary

It takes more than one visit to develop a comprehensive understanding of a particular practice. Thinking about how such a practice could be adapted to one's local context and then to explore ways of applying it is a complex and ongoing process, which requires the processing of explicit knowledge which is transmitted through written material, presentations, site visits and discussions, and also implicit knowledge which relates to 'a common understanding' of how things should be done. These are ultimately rooted in values, behaviours and cultures that have emerged in the place where the good practice is being studied. Identifying these contextual factors in which the practice embedded is essential to thinking about ways of adapting a practice to one's own context.

Encouraging participants to keep a diary is a frequently used method to capture the process of exploring, adapting and applying new ideas. The advantage of the diary method is that it requires little training of participants, is unobtrusive and complements other methods of data collection and analysis, such as the peer review which is presented below. Furthermore, keeping a personal diary of key events, challenges and 'revelations' encourages a critical reflection by the participant on the context in which they operate on a routine basis. This approach has been proved in many different contexts to generate rich practitioner led insights on how to improve processes or services.

At the end of the transfer visit to DLR each participant was issued with a notebook designated as their P4C diary. This notebook contained an aide memoir showing the conceptual pyramid capturing the conceptual framework for the transfer of placemaking practices together with 12 bullet points reminding participants about the focus and desired outcomes of the GPT process. These points were based on the outcomes and indicators defined in the baseline study presented under 2.2 above.



The uptake in the use of diaries was mixed. For some participants the P4C diary became the main project file, containing their project notes, reflections, creative ideas, planning and organising of the transfer actions. Others quietly dropped the use of their diary after the first exchange visit to Pori. However, there was at least one officer from each city who kept their diary extensively and throughout the duration of the P4C project – in some cases the diary is continued despite the formal transfer process through this pilot has ceased. The insightful interview data presented here can be, at least in part, attributed to the use of the diary method in this project. The diaries were personal and their content confidential as far as the GPT process was concerned.

“The diary was very important. There are so many things, new ideas, you have to take in. And there are so many challenges trying to transfer practices. Even simple things like doing quick wins and the pop-up exhibition become really complicated. Dave makes practices like reaching residents sound easy, but when I look through my diary I see that it really was a huge challenge for me.” (Pori)

“I have prepared my interview with you in this diary! My diary is the heart of my project. Everything is in here.” (Albacete)

The diary was very useful. I made notes during the study visit, but only quickly, there is so much going on that I can't concentrate on writing. But on the way home I looked at what we had learned and made many more notes. I also made action points, thinking about how we could transfer some things. That was very useful. When you get back to your office after a trip there are so many things you have to give attention to. The diary reminded me what was waiting to be done from my plan. I find it so useful that I now have a diary for a new project I started. (Eger)

The diary was very helpful when I had to tell our local stakeholders what happened during the visits and what we want to try out here in Eger. (Eger)

There are so many new ideas coming up all the time, putting them in one place is really helpful. All my meetings with local stakeholders are in here. We just bought the stage and in here are now all the things we have to do and all the ideas local stakeholders have put forward. It is really useful to have the history of the project in one place. (Eger)



Speaking to our project manager during the transfer visit in Pori

3.2 Building knowledge incrementally

Transferring good practice is broadly speaking a process that goes through four stages. These consist of the exploration of a new practice, its adaptation to a new context, the application of the new practice and an evaluation of the application, which can then lead to the beginning of the process with further exploration, adaptation and application. The structure of this pilot project was based on one good practice exchange visit to the giving partner followed by transfer visits to receiving partners. Little attention had been given at the design stage of the project about what would happen between the good practice exchange and the transfer visits. During the exchange visit in DLR it became clear to all participants that this exchange could only be the beginning of the transfer process. More structure was required to facilitate learning and exchange in between meetings of the partners. Two decisions were taken to address this deficit. First, to run scheduled online meetings of the network and second, to create a space for learning about new practices during the transfer visits.

Three online meetings were scheduled between the good practice exchange and the first transfer visit and took place roughly every four weeks. They lasted around 90 minutes and were attended by all partners, with an average participation of 8 individuals in each meeting. The software used is called 'Go to Meeting' and proved an exceptionally effective way of exchange. Each meeting had an agenda and was facilitated by the LE. The main part of the meeting consisted of a progress report by each partner, with the LE probing for evidence of exploration, adaptation and application of the practices that were to be transferred from DLR. The lead officer from DLR played a critically important role as 'critical friend' in this process. This involved clarifying the rationale for particular techniques inherent in the practices to be transferred and frequently pointed to the need for partners to 'dig deeper' and 'go further'.

Challenging and stretching partners ability and willingness to do things differently would appear to be of central importance to attempts to introduce new ways of doing things. This requires a highly developed ability to provide critical yet constructive feedback by both the officer leading the transfer process from the giving partner and the LE. For such a process to be effective there also needs to be a significant level of mutual trust and respect among partners.

“This is a really good network, but you need to have that trust to make the exchange of knowledge work.” (Pori)

With the advent of the first transfer visit the mode of incremental learning changed. Online meetings were to be replaced by monthly transfer visits. These ended up being more spaced out, in particular the postponement of the last transfer visit created a gap in the learning process that was difficult to close. Although two additional online meetings were held, the momentum of the exchange and learning process was somewhat lost due to a three month gap between the second and third transfer visit. However, during each transfer meeting there was much informal learning and development happening. Hence the building of knowledge on the adaptation of good practices expanded to the practices presented by hosting partners and the transfer of good practices can therefore not be solely attributed to the work of the providing partner. Learning from each other formed an essential part of the GPT process.

P4C produced learning through other partners, it was a real success this way. (Pori)

In recognition of the limited time that had been available to explore practices during the exchange visit in DLR, an afternoon was set aside during the first exchange visit to Pori to explore two practices further. One was concerned with the management of ‘difficult meetings’, primarily intended to help partners understand techniques for managing conflict and building consensus, and the other focused on undertaking a multiple set of stakeholder analyses. We recognised that adding a training session onto a demanding three day visit was stretching participants stamina to engage in a focused way. While the training session on handling conflict had a lasting impact on the network, it was decided not to repeat this and the remaining two transfer visits focused primarily on the review of the adaptation of good practices.

“Wessel’s workshop on how to deal with difficult meetings and keep stakeholders involved was very important and very useful.” (Pori)



Training on facilitation of public meetings provided by DLR during the Pori exchange visit.

3.3. Preparing good practice transfer visits

Transfer visits were central to the P4C process. The structure for the transfer visits was originally envisaged to consist of three full days of exploring the adapted practices, with a further half a day dedicated to administrative matters. This proved an unrealistic demand on the time of partners, all of whom are busy practitioners. During the online meetings the following format for the transfer visits was agreed and implemented consistently throughout the pilot:

Day 1 afternoon: Arrival, informal meeting, network dinner

Day 2 morning: Presentation of context and exploration of good practices to be studied

Day 2 afternoon: site visits and meetings to explore practices; start peer review

Day 3 morning: peer review; prepare messages for dissemination in the afternoon

Day 3 afternoon: meeting stakeholders, run CommUniversity

Day 4 morning: review of visit, preparation of future visits, administration

Day 4 afternoon: depart

The presentations on context were kept to a minimum, not taking more than two hours on average because the focus was on practices, not institutions. Such a tight time table was based on the assumption that P4C partners were familiar with the city they were visiting, but as the comments from partners show, this was not considered to be sufficient to allow for a detailed review of the practices that were being studied (see 2.4). The partners then visited the sites subject to placemaking, meet the actors involved in the placemaking practice and frequently participate in the placemaking actions³. The peer review was the single most time consuming activity, taking on average 6 hours of intensive analysis of the practices that were being transferred by the hosting partner. The CommUniversity was a meeting of local stakeholders convened to share with them key messages resulting from the peer review. This took approximately 2 hours and involved a dialogue and at times critical debate with representative of civil society organisations, traders, officials and citizens.

Preparing the content of each visit required substantial effort and time. The LE discussed in fine detail the practices that were to be explored, how they could be presented to visiting partners, including the identification of local stakeholders that would need to participate in

³ For details please see the meeting notes for the transfer visits to Pori, Albacete and Eger on the P4C website: <http://urbact.eu/placemaking-cities>

exploring the practices. The most demanding element of the preparations, however, was the development of a baseline for the visit. This would involve an assessment of the status quo in relation to placemaking in the hosting city and a definition of how things would be different in the short and medium term as a result of the placemaking practices that were being applied. This would be an iterative process running over several weeks, with the host city putting forward suggestions, followed by critical feedback from the LE, and the production of a revised version. On average the development of this baseline took 6 weeks and involved 3 or 4 iterations. This baseline then would feed into the definition of topics the peer review would focus on and after the transfer visit the LE would provide a critical assessment of the extent to which the host city was on a path towards achieving the outcomes they had specified. Yet, despite the prior knowledge P4C partners had of the cities and the detailed preparations that included online meetings and detailed preparation of the exchange visits P4C partners felt that they had insufficient information about the way the practices were being transferred:

In future we need more details in the project work, the practices, in advance of the meetings. We need to have more information about the project development process, organisation, resources and so on. We can do this online to prepare the visits, but have more online meetings than we had in P4C. (Pori)

Full details on the baseline, peer review and overall assessment of transfer at the point of the exchange visit are included in the learning log for receiving each city.

3.4 Assessing transfer through peer review

The peer review was the central evaluative tool used to collectively reflect on and assess the transfer of good practices. Peer review is an established method of supporting practitioners in all manner of professions where professionals providing critical yet constructive feedback on each other's practices. Format and process of the peer review allow for the structured exploration and discussion of complex issues drawing on the expertise of all participants.

The peer review followed a similar format in each of the three receiving cities. The matrix containing the review criteria was issued to partners approximately one week before the visit. Following the site visits to see where and how the placemaking practices had been transferred, partners settled down to begin the peer review. This started with a short two hour session in the afternoon of day 1 and was followed by a longer session taking up the morning of day two. Each participant in the room was asked to comment on the extent to which they felt the host partner had achieved the results they were aiming for, in do so each criterion was discussed in turn. Once every person around the table had made their contribution they were asked to give a score of 0 – 5 for each category. Zero being not relevant and 5 being very good. The giving partner representative would be an equal among the peers, the LE expert facilitated the process, took notes and recorded the scores giving by each partner.

The criteria for the peer review were carefully prepared and agreed between the hosting partners and the LE well in advance of the exchange visit taking place. They were an amalgamation of good practices that were being transferred, the aimed for results identified in the baseline prepared for the transfer visit and key challenges encountered at the time.

Each city had their own specific criteria against which their performance was being assessed, ranging from 24 – 28 specific aspects of placemaking. These were grouped according to the two main foci of the P4C pilot, namely place and culture which were described as ‘the place and it’s people’ and ‘the institutions and it’s people’ in the peer review matrix. Within these two groups three or four categories were identified, for example place analysis, planning, implementation and continuation formed the group of categories for ‘the place and it’s people’. For the ‘institution and it’s people’ we used three categories namely internal collaboration, external collaboration and organisational culture and attitudes. Within this framework each city had slightly different criteria to assess their transfer activities⁴.



Peer-review discussions during the exchange meeting in Pori, September 2014.

The categories and criteria concerned with the ‘place and its people’ received most of the attention in each of the three peer reviews conducted during this pilot. Peer reviewers found it difficult to comment on aspects of the placemaking process which were internal to the municipality, such as culture and collaboration between departments. The participation of visiting community representatives (commonly referred to as LSG members) was problematic, in part because of the technical nature of the discussion but also because it was a very demanding and drawn out process. But the peer review process was also demanding on the peers. The deep exploration of why and how the hosting partners had done or not done certain things requires undivided attention and maintaining this for several hours in a language that is not one’s mother tongue is very demanding. Reflecting on the process at the end of the pilot some partners felt that more time was needed to explore and understand the practices before a peer review could be undertaken. Given that the pilot was already very demanding on time new ways would need to be found to share knowledge about the local transfer process which goes beyond the online meetings that were held following the exchange meeting in DLR to support the transfer process and the provision of the baseline and peer review criteria in advance of the transfer visit. This point requires further attention in the development of evaluative frameworks for future transfer networks.

“The peer review happened too fast. We did not have enough information about what the partners were trying to do. Having just one morning to understand what they are doing is not

⁴ To see the peer review framework for each receiving city please see learning logs 2, 3 and 4

enough. We should have two visits to each receiving partner. One visit to study the practices they are trying to transfer, and on the second visit we do the peer review.” (Eger)

Trust was another issue identified by partners. Having high levels of trust was seen as a prerequisite for giving the hosting partner critical feedback. Both parties, the recipient and the provider of feedback need to demonstrate to each other that they respect each other’s professionalism and also personality. It was here that the long standing relationships between the partners paid dividends. But this also pointed to the difficulties associated with having new people, whether from the host city or visiting partners, trying to participate in the peer review process. The experience from P4C shows that such ‘new comers’ need to have the ability to make technically relevant contributions in a coherent and non-threatening manner while demonstrating a genuine interest in the topic.

“The peer review was a good method, but without the trust it would not have worked. We would have to each other what we wanted to hear. Sometimes to be honest and explain the problems we faced was more difficult than saying everything is fine. To share that other partners are struggling with the same problem is encouraging. It shows that we are not dealing with a fairy tale situation, we are dealing with a real life project.” (Pori)

3.5 ComUniversity

During the exchange visit to DLR the argument was made that learning on community led placemaking practices needs to be spread beyond the seminar room in order to support receiving cities in introducing new practices. This led to the adoption of the idea of the ComUniversity, a method used by officers in DLR to build the capacity of their local communities in relation to a variety of issues, such as dealing with crime, anti-social behaviour, social enterprise and also placemaking.

For P4C this concept was adapted so that the results of the deliberations from the peer review could be shared with a wider audience. Building local capacity would require some critical feedback and it was felt that visiting peers could more easily disseminate critical feedback on local practices than officers employed by the municipality. Hence doing this publicly seemed a good way of raising controversial or difficult issues with the aim of generating a discussion among local stakeholders. Feedback was of course not just focused on constructive criticism and in running the ComUniversity meetings a balance was struck by creating a focus on the good work that was being done. Preparing for the ComUniversity also focused the minds of P4C partners during the peer review because we had to identify a small number of key messages we wanted to share with a wider audience.



CommUniversity during the exchange meeting in Eger and Pori

Arranging a public meeting to share condensed messages is demanding at the best of times, doing this straight after a demanding peer review process put significant strain on participants. However, the ComUniversity created a process of closing the peer review, offering an opportunity for reflection on the main issues that had been discussed and listening to the views of local stakeholders on our findings tended to confirm many, but not all, of the suggestions and arguments that visiting peers had made. Seeing who would turn out to attend a late afternoon meeting was also informative and helped visiting peers to contextualise the reality of cultural and institutional frameworks in which their hosting peers operated.

5. Implications for future Good Practice Transfer projects

This pilot project raises a number of issues which are considered to be relevant for future GPTs. These are presented below and loosely grouped in relation to roles, process and content.

- **Roles**

The giving partner is the expert in the context of a GPT, while the LE is the facilitator and co-ordinator of the learning and transfer process. The LE supports the giving partner in carefully defining the practices that are to be transferred and establishes the processes that will allow receiving partners to explore and apply these practices. Hence the LE supports both giving and receiving partners in transmitting, adapting and applying knowledge on identified good practices.

Experience from the P4C pilot shows that the transfer process is loose and emergent as learning takes places during and outside meetings. The LE has an important role in recognising and encouraging such learning processes and to create opportunities where these can be shared. This requires flexibility and personal, one-to-one engagement with all partners, including the giving partner who is likely to reflect and learn about their own practices as a result of leading the exchange processes.

The giving partner needs to be represented in a consistent way, and most likely it will need to be a single officer or small group of officers who are consistently involved in the entire process starting with the exchange visit and including all online and on site meetings.

Equally, it would be advisable to ensure that the receiving partners are also consistently represented at all learning and exchange meetings. This suggests that a core group of named officers, perhaps two from each partner, who have functions in their locality directly relevant to either the provision or adoption of the good practices the GPT is concerned with.

While the participation of local stakeholders is to be encouraged during transfer meetings, having a changing group of stakeholders from a locality travelling to different exchange visits, as is common practice in Action Planning Networks, should be avoided. It undermines a focused learning and exchange process because new participants are unfamiliar with the processes chosen to assess and critique the transfer process. The P4C experience shows that a critical peer review is very effective in supporting the transfer of good practice, but it is also potentially threatening and requires high levels of trust among participants. Developing a stable core group would be the preferred option for such an approach in good practice transfer.

Familiarity between GPT partners enhances the learning process and should be encouraged, but this is unlikely to be a consistent feature of GPT networks. What should be considered, however, is that the giving partner, and ideally the officers identified as the actual providers of the good practice, are familiar with the URBACT programme. Unlike in Action Planning Networks, in the GPT it is the giving partner, in particular the officers providing the good practices, who have to provide much of the expert input into the exchange process. The experience from P4C suggests that this can be very demanding both in terms of time but also emotionally for the officers concerned. Hence some familiarity with the URBACT approach, the nature of URBACT networks and their dynamics would appear to be an advantage.



Residents from the Pori 'Knitting Graffiti' Group during discussions in Eger

- **Process**

The initial development phase should be dedicated to the rigorous identification of the practices, and with this the specific techniques and knowledges, that are subject to the transfer process. This might involve a collective process where partners explore a range of good practices during the kick-off meeting and then focus on a small number that will become subject to the transfer. This might be followed up by an exchange meeting where these specific practices are studied in detail.

The baseline against which impact in each partner city will be measured should be developed after the good practices were defined and explored in the giving partner's city. Guidance for the development of future baseline studies must be much 'lighter' than the one used for the pilots, focused on enabling participants to define indicators and process that are relevant to their project instead of weighing down the development process with requirements for voluminous reports that aim to cover every eventuality.

The P4C experience shows that one exchange visit is not sufficient, yet there is limited scope for repeat visits to the giving city. The LE needs to create opportunities for an ongoing dialogue which enables participants to question, analyse and reflect on the practices that are for adoption. In the case of P4C this was done through scheduled online meetings of all partners which took place one every month in the run up to the first transfer meeting. The officer from the giving partner played the lead role in advising, critiquing and supporting partners in their attempts to find ways of transferring good practices. Once the transfer meetings started online meetings were discontinued. This may undermine continuous learning and exploration of practices and the purchase of online meeting software that all URBACT projects can use should be given consideration.

A small budget that allowed partners to 'do things' was essential to drive progress in receiving cities of the P4C pilot. Such funding facilitates experimentation and 'learning for real', it also helps to overcome resistance to take practical action.

There should be a forward looking workshop at the end of the GPT network, rather than a conference. The adaptation and adoption of good practice is context specific, hence conferences might be effective ways of dissemination at local, sub-national or national levels, but this does not support all network partners to look to the future in relation to their specific context. Facilitating a critical reflection of the impact the GPT had on each partner, identifying which practices really did work and which might be adapted in the foreseeable future would be an important task in closing the network. This would assist cities in plotting a practical action plan for the continued development of newly adopted practices and, perhaps equally important, provide URBACT with a baseline from which the progress of knowledge transfer can be assessed over the longer term.



PLACE MAKING FOUR CITIES

Fecha:

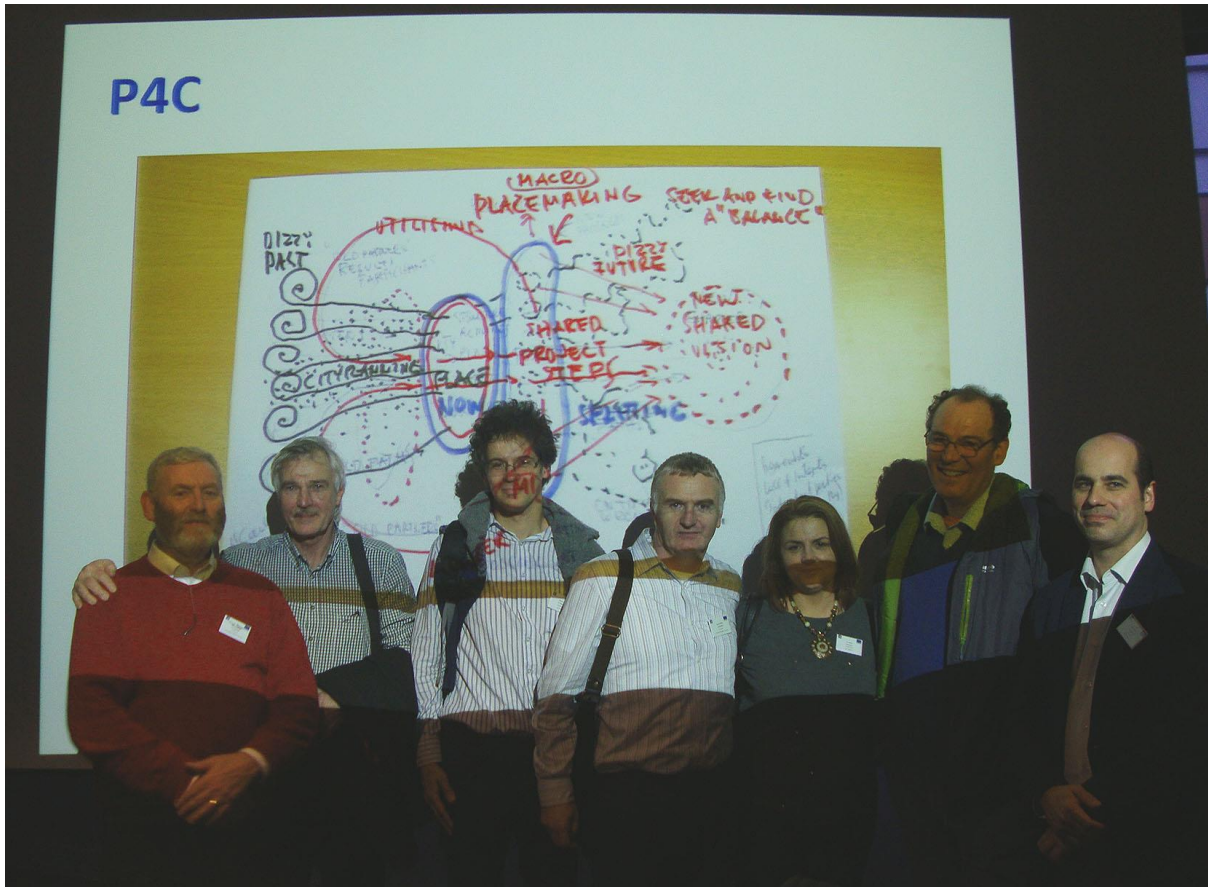
Procedencia				Edades		Motivo de la visita		¿En que otros lugares de Albacete crees que se podría hacer la actividad?	
Barrio:				Menor de 18				Compras:	
Otros:				Entre 18 y 30				Actividades de calle:	
Valore la iniciativa:				De 30 a 50				Otros:	
				Más de 50					
Mala	regular	buena	muy buena	Comentarios que quieras añadir, sugerencias, otros:					

Analysis of participants of place animations, Albacete October 2014

- **Content**

There is a danger that GPTs become a vehicle for the drafting of plans for change, rather than practicing change. The focus needs to be on the practice of bringing about change. For example, partners might focus on creating an effective strategy for youth employment. The GPT then would need to focus on the practices of strategy making, this might involve developing scenarios or risk appraisals, or planning for real techniques. The aim of GPT should not be to produce a strategy document, but to apply practices the LP has defined as being effective for the development of particular strategies.

GPT networks should avoid aiming to change institutional structures and processes. This is problematic because such matters do not tend to change over short periods of time. Instead the focus needs to be on changing the way people act. The extent to which this can be achieved is of course determined by institutional frameworks, but their exploration is not the primary purpose of GPT projects.



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