

Urbanism Dept. Architecture and Design
Scotland

Urban Studies, School of Social and
Political Sciences, University of Glasgow

THIS PLACE MATTERS

Re-thinking local leadership

A half-day workshop for leaders
of places



Architecture+DesignScotland
Aithearachd is Dealbhadh na h-Alba

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The proposition

A chasm is opening between demand for public services and the resources to provide them. A dilemma unprecedented in 60 years is unfolding and our current modes of provision are unsustainable. How we resolve this will shape our society.

Scotland already has a sharply divided population which public services, in their present form, have not been able to correct. The negative outcomes of that failure drive current public spending. With the gap between demand and resources growing, our communities and the places they inhabit will be hit hard and a retreat from meeting that demand will seed social distress. New ways will have to be found.

The Christie Commission set out principles that must guide us: a concentration on prevention and outcomes, a focus on place, and the integration of services - all imbued with the idea of 'co-production'. Prevention presses down on service demand. Co-production augments civic resources. Both raise new questions of scale and governance.

A focus on place and its well-being unlocks all those other ideas. New guidance for single outcome agreements requires 'a clear understanding of place'. 'Place' enables necessary attention to outcomes that really matter. It guides investment towards building healthy and supportive communities. It is the key to open the door to thinking collaboratively about prevention and prosperity. It is the lynchpin of local leadership in the years ahead. That's why **This Place Matters**.

This workshop, provided by the University of Glasgow and Architecture and Design Scotland, explores the centrality of place in addressing these urgent challenges. It spotlights the importance of place distinctiveness and local decision-making. It looks at how the goals and methods of local leadership can, and should, be re-cast.

“ If we are not simply to retreat, ignoring demand and cutting services, with all the social risks that entails, the time for re-thinking and new action is now.

The approach

2017 is the critical year when current modes of public service provision begin to fail as resources drain away and demand increases. That's what the government says. If we are not simply to retreat, ignoring demand and cutting services, with all the social risks that entails, the time for re-thinking and new action is now.

The only measure of success is outcomes - not service outputs nor 'deliverables', but outcomes that mark and signal changes of real relevance to family and community life. New paths of prevention must be mapped. The starting point is to recognise that public services alone can't 'deliver' health or well-being or thriving places to live. The journey requires mobilising civic assets, in the widest sense, and working across the divides of institutions and services, markets and communities. Building that new 'relationship ecology' can happen only at the scale and within the governance of the places people inhabit.

Civic assets are in part physical and more of their control will soon vest in the communities in which they sit. As important are the people for whom public services exist. Those individuals and their communities, living in the places they live in, are themselves assets and agents of change, essential co-producers in the design and management of services. Talking to teachers about teaching, children about childhood, and neighbours about their neighbourhoods is more likely to provoke workable solutions supported by the people they are designed to help.

Making this happen means thinking differently about the conversations we have with citizens about public services. It means thinking differently about resources - about making assets, managing assets and cultivating social capital. It means aligning those resources for a common purpose. It means thinking differently about governance, building it on relationships and collaboration.

That is possible only if we work at a scale which is relevant and comprehensible and if we share common understandings, often through stories, of the place we live. Stories convey authenticity. Authenticity and a relevant scale together breed support for change and for collaboration in the pursuit of change.

Collaboration - a new community planning duty for public agencies in one place - stretches beyond those public agencies to all those who participate in the shaping and making of successful places. Collaboration has two indispensable building blocks among others: conversations with citizens and local data. It needs stories from the ground, and rich local data from the ground, user generated and systematically collected. It requires new relationships. And they require authentic leadership

Conversing with citizens and gathering data both require a scale that people can understand and to which they relate, a scale that matters. Change and well-being at the level of place provides the most useful frame for collaboration and the leadership which drives it.

So place stands at the centre. Past failure in concisely creating successful and resilient places helped produce the negative outcomes now driving public spending. If we invest in and strengthen place - and all the human connections, attachments and assets that make it work - then we provide the basis for collaboration and co-production. In turn they are the means to provide the outcomes on which our common future depends. Strong, resilient, connected places promote local prosperity and that prosperity itself provides the foundation for social improvement and reduces pressure on public services.

This all puts larger and different burdens on local leadership. Those leaders need to know that places, successful or unsuccessful, don't just drop from the sky. They are made by our human action, either through thought and deliberate deeds - or through accident. Those that are thoughtfully and deliberately made are likely to carry and embody the values and aspirations of the leaders who helped make them and the professionals who enabled them.

They are also likely to be successful places. And successful places serve better the people that inhabit them.

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Workshop Outline

The workshop is a starting point. Its intentions are to assist participants:

- acquire understandings, attitudes and mental tools for place leadership
- develop the relationships and common commitments towards collaboration and effective place leadership in this locality
- build a common understanding of the particular issues for this locality
- acquire access to resources for further development in individual and collective place leadership.

The workshop is fast-paced and participative. Over about 3 hours, plus a break, there will be short presentations together with participative workshop sessions in varying forms. Deliberately, it aims to cover substantial ground in a short time by linking the tacit knowledge of experienced participants to the broader concepts of place leadership.

After the workshop, participants will have access to a local information pack and password access to a website of presentations and a report of the event.

The workshop leaders will be:

- Professor David Adams, Ian Mactaggart Chair of Property and Urban Studies in the University of Glasgow
- Professor Trevor Davies, honorary professor of Urban Studies in the University of Glasgow and from 2003-07 Convener of the Planning Committee of the City of Edinburgh Council.
- Diarmaid Lawlor, Head of Urbanism Architecture and Design Scotland



Running order

1st workshop

Place, us, them

1st presentation

Uncertainty to hope - the skills of 'public narrative'.

2nd workshop

The story of your future - part 1

2nd presentation

Founding on Values

3rd presentation

What makes a successful place?

4th presentation

Stories from elsewhere

3rd workshop

The story of your future - part 2

4th workshop

Getting there - assets and actors

5th workshop

Getting there - barriers and blocks

6th workshop

Getting there - building leadership

5th presentation

The tools to lead

Reflections

Participants and presenters

Next Steps

Participation will be small, up to 20, and must of necessity reflect the collaboration of place. Included should be:

- political leaders and professional leaders from local government,
- leaders from other public agencies active in this place,
- leaders from the private sector and
- leaders from the third and community sector.

The follow-up

The University of Glasgow and A+DS are also able to offer follow-up consultancy services, where necessary recruiting others with specialist knowledge or skill. These services, supplied in various possible ways, can help promote informed change and may include:

- Diagnostics programme - understanding your place
- Values, vision and outcomes - devising the outcomes your place really needs
- Development scenarios - alternative physical futures for your place
- State-market analysis - shaping better relationships between commerce and the public interest
- The real economy - sustaining resilient local prosperity in austere times
- Public narrative - a crucial leadership tool for your place
- Relationship mapping - making better use of all assets in your place
- Mentoring - for political and place-making leaders in your place