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Planning at a City District Scale

Examples of how the Place Standard tool has been used for planning.

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INTRODUCTION

Architecture and Design Scotland has developed a series of Case Studies to illustrate how the Place Standard tool has been used. The case studies also provide information about the perceptions of, and knowledge gained, in using the tool.

Each case study demonstrates how the Place Standard has been used including spatial planning, community planning, design and development.

The groups and individuals involved have shared their approach and lessons learned with A&DS via a survey and interviews. In the case studies participants explain their reasons for using the tool, their approach to empowering local communities and the impact that this has had.

We illustrate the methods used and the perceptions and knowledge gained, showing how this was mapped into processes of spatial planning, community planning, design and development.

PLACE STANDARD - CITY DISTRICT SCALE

This set of case studies shows how the tool has been used to address issues specific to City Districts. This includes two imaginative examples of engagement: imagery used with Place Standard themes to engage non-English speakers in Dundee and a giant wheel used on street corners in Leith.

Case studies are based on survey inputs from:

- Dundee City Council
- Leith Creative

These examples show how the tool can be adapted to engage with particular population groups. In both Leith and Dundee this has helped to engage seldom heard groups; young people, ethnic minorities and the elderly in particular. There is evidence from the work in Dundee that this has widened participation in planning consultation to include previously un-engaged parts of the city.

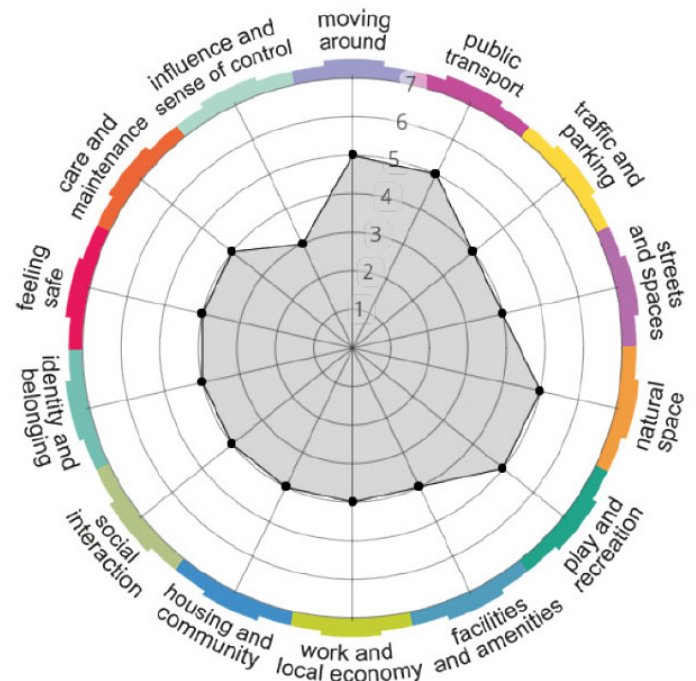
This illustrates the simplicity of structure of the tool helping to break down complex problems, encouraging communities to influence planning processes.

Key learning points

- The tool is engaging and has helped involve new groups in the planning process and to widen participation.
- Specific impacts have included improving green networks in Dundee and an updated Leith Docks Development Framework.
- Good preparation has been beneficial, as in Dundee, where Place Standard themes have been mapped into relevant policies. This established the relevance of the tool from the outset, helping with subsequent ownership and adoption.
- It has helped to be adaptable in the way that the tool is applied and we noted the portable approach in particular; taking the tool to where people are, as in both cases, rather than relying on consultation events.
- The use of illustrations was also notable in Dundee, helping non-English speakers understand the themes.

DUNDEE CITY

Planning Stage	Local Development Plan Main Issues Report consultation
Leadership	Dundee City Council
Participants	91 participants. Focus on young people, ethnic minority groups and elderly people. The project was carried out in partnership with Youth Council, Pupil Council, Dundee CAN, Hot Chocolate Trust and Dundee International Women's Centre



“We reached a wider spread of communities throughout the City which felt more representative. The quality of the responses was unexpected as was the positive experience of using the tool to engage with communities without confrontation or negativity but to have an opportunity to engage and listen.”

Julie Robertson

Planning Officer, Development Plans & Regeneration, City Development Department, Dundee City Council

What were you trying to achieve by using the Place Standard?

We chose the tool as a simple conversation tool to talk about place as part of a process to involve seldom heard groups in development planning consultation.

Prior to consultation the links between the Place Standard themes and the various key issues in the Main Issues Report were highlighted so that we could pull the Place Standard results into the appropriate issue response.

How was the Place Standard tool applied?

The tool was used as part of the wider engagement on the Main Issues Report - there was also online information, information available in local libraries, exhibitions, drop-in sessions and topic-specific workshops.

We used the National Standards for Community Engagement alongside the tool. This influenced the type of engagement we wanted to achieve and helped us to consider barriers that there had been in the past and how we could overcome some of them.

Sessions took place at several venues: in a meeting room, a workshop and at a drop-in youth session. We used the paper version of the tool. People could either complete the compass individually or in a group depending on personal preference or if there was someone who lived in the same area as them or not. Each person identified the area they lived in and used the tool for their area of the City. We provided each group that was involved a summary of the results and key findings. We also collected the comments into eight community planning wards and shared the key issues that had come through the Place Standard consultation with Community Officers to feed in to Local Community Plans.

What influence did the work have and how is it being followed up?

The work helped to break down barriers and to involve communities not previously involved. Results were used to feed in to the Local Development Plan and Local Community Planning processes. The information gathered was recorded as part of the representations received in response to the Main Issues Report. One example of impact was that concerns regarding green space/open

space were consolidated with a new emphasis in the plan to develop and promote green networks in the city. We met with Communities Officers to look at how the results could be used as part of the Local Community Plans review.

Community Planning colleagues went on to use the Place Standard in a City-wide consultation event building on the success of use through the MIR.

What lessons would you wish to share?

Preparation - we identified at the outset how the themes related to what we were trying to achieve through planning, we asked ourselves 'is there a direct correlation and will the results that are gathered have a use?'

We considered how the results could be used - not purely a planning purpose but for use in community planning, or passed on to transportation colleagues, or parks department, if there are issues that have been identified within an area; or used as a tool in developing regeneration plans.

Make sure you consider any barriers to getting involved, we used the tool to try and overcome barriers by allowing young people to choose how they got involved - either through a quick rating of their place or involved in discussion and responding to the themes. For the BME community we used visual aids to represent each of the themes and had translators and volunteers on hand to assist in getting participants involved in the workshop.

Example: Building Stronger Communities		
LCP Strategic Themes	Place Standard Themes	LDP Main Issues & Policy Themes
Building Stronger Communities	Facilities and amenities	Main Issue 6: Putting our city centre and district centres first Main Issue 7: Uses within the district centre retail frontages Main Issue 8: Major out of centre retailing and goods range restrictions Policy Themes: Promoting High Quality Design Quality Housing and Sustainable Communities Town Centres and Shopping
	Identity and belonging	Policy Themes: Promoting High Quality Design Quality Housing and Sustainable Communities Sustainable and Accessible Transport
	Care and maintenance	Main Issue 10: Maximising the benefits of green infrastructure Policy Themes: Promoting High Quality Design Sustainable Natural and Built Environment

Linking Place Standard and planning policy themes.

Making links between the Place Standard and Community Planning

Strategic Themes	Place Standard Themes
Building Stronger Communities	Facilities and amenities Identity and belonging Care and maintenance
Health and Wellbeing	Social interaction
Community Safety	Feeling safe
Learning and Culture	Influence and sense of control
Sustainable Dundee - Environment	Moving around
	Public transport
	Natural space
	Play and recreation
	Housing and community
Work and Enterprise	Traffic and parking
	Streets and spaces
	Work and economy

Linking Place Standard and Community Planning.

Place Standard Themes	Main Issues	LDP Policy Themes
Moving Around <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good places support and encourage people to walk and cycle by providing good quality routes and a pleasant and safe experience 	Main Issue 10: Maximising the benefits of green infrastructure Other Issues – Core Paths	Promoting High Quality Design Sustainable and Accessible Transport
Natural Space <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good places should offer everyone easy access to a range of natural spaces that are of a good quality and feel safe 	Main Issue 10: Maximising the benefits of green infrastructure	Sustainable Natural and Built Environment
Housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good places provide a mix of housing that supports a socially balanced community and meets people's needs throughout life 	Main Issue 3: Supply of land for housing Main Issue 4: Increasing housing density in the district centres Main Issue 5: Promoting lifetime communities – meeting the housing needs of older people Main Issue 11: Supporting the Delivery of Heat Networks Main Issue 12: Safeguarding of Waste Management Installations	Promoting High Quality Design Quality Housing and Sustainable Communities

Making links between the Place Standard and the MIR.

Further Reading

www.dundee.gov.uk/service-area/city-development/local-development-plan/dundee-local-development-plan-2

LEITH

Planning Stage	Leith Docks Development Framework / Edinburgh Northeast Locality Plan.
Leadership	Leith Creative, Here + Now, Biomorphis and Lateral North
Participants	Around 400 respondents at 6 events. A total of 3000 participants were involved in the wider programme.



“One of the key findings was the perceived lack of Influence and Control that participants noted”

Duncan Bremner: Citizen Curator

What were you trying to achieve by using the Place Standard?

As part of the 'People and Places Make Leith Better' project the tool was used to involve and empower those not normally considered in planning or decision making processes.

How was the Place Standard tool applied?

We carried out on-street engagement using a giant version of the Place Standard tool. The Place Standard wheel allowed us to create an event that everyone living or working in Leith could join in with and understand. Working with partners the original compass was converted into a large movable rotating chalkboard.

The wheel was taken out into the community, appearing in a variety of public spaces and at street corners. It was used first near St Margaret's House and in the wider Leith area prior to a design charrette at St Margaret's House.

Assessments were predominately made by groups attracted to the Wheel and supported by a facilitator. Each individual we spoke with had the opportunity to discuss their perspective and to record their own views using coloured chalk. Photographs were taken as the wheel grew. This enabled researchers to then map an average for each session.

This early work with the tool provided the foundations for the activities at St Margaret's House where the Place Standard Wheel was the main fixture. The Wheel also supported another design charrette event in Leith, used alongside a Local Heritage Listings project.

The Place Standard wheel scores were documented and presented alongside qualitative data gathered through the conversations generated around the wheel.

The project concluded in a two-day community conference where the wheel formed an integral part of sharing findings from the several charrettes and events.

What influence did the work have and how is it being followed up?

Outputs were reported formally to the council, the community council - presented in a document called the Leith Creative Blueprint and shared at a series of public reporting events. The research has also fed into the ongoing development of the council's North East Locality Improvement Plan and the updated Leith Docks Development Framework. Design for physical change will form the next phase of work.

What lessons would you wish to share?

By going out into the community and asking for opinions the process empowered local people to express their feelings in a very direct way. We found that respondents were frequently from groups that might be considered as hard to reach.

One of the key findings was the perceived lack of Influence and Control that participants noted. This scored lowest overall. This contrasted to responses to the Wheel in a parallel community in Denmark. On that occasion we spoke to a similar socioeconomic demographic of minority ethnic, younger and older residents from a broadly parallel community. Almost to a person they recorded this segment with the highest score possible.



Further Reading

www.leithcreative.org

CONCLUSIONS

Over the last six months, Leith Creative has engaged with over 2000 people who live and/or work across Leith, asking them what they feel is important and how we can all make our place better. The results have been numerous, complex and sometimes contradictory. Alongside a strong, and proud, sense of identity and belonging in the area, people also feel a lack of agency and are concerned about the future. Through the discussion generated, the Blueprint has identified five action areas - these have been broken down into action points set against identified key challenges.

It is significant to note that many of the suggestions we received are outwith the control of Leith Creative, or even the community more generally. This is particularly true in terms of our built environment, where systems of land ownership and planning dictate what is possible. As such, whilst this research and the charrette process can identify the key priorities for Leith, without greater partnership working, any steps taken will necessarily be limited.

To address this, respondents suggested we consider the potential of establishing a Community Development Trust for Leith. This could provide the forum, tools, and structure to achieve the commitment needed from a broad range of agencies, citizens, commercial and political stakeholders.

The next stage would be to assign responsibilities going forward. This could form the basis of a joint commitment for the future. Leith Creative could be in a position to work with others to deliver on this, with continued and increased support from local and national partners.

One thing is clear, Leith remains a hotbed of cultural and community-based activity with a variety of stakeholders that care deeply about its future. If we can harness this potential for community activism and create spaces for people to come together, whilst generating a greater sense of agency and influence locally, Leith could prove to be the test bed for new approaches in community-led development.

**'HELP TO BUILD COLLECTIVE THINKING AND ACTION.
PROTOTYPE NEW THINKING AND WAYS OF WORKING'**

<http://www.leithcreative.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/LC-Blueprint-2017.pdf>