

MAKING THE CASE FOR PLACE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

Placemaking is a malleable term, open to interpretation. Whether it's physical design characteristics, land values, job creation, biodiversity, new amenities or simply a sense of well-being, people assign different values to areas. Everyone knows a good place when they're in one, but there's no magic ingredient or singular approach.

Future of London's 2017 programme, Making the Case for Place, set out to better understand how different stakeholders value the impacts of placemaking, and how to foster greater common ground between their views and interests. Focusing on value highlighted that some impacts are easier to value than others.

While it is relatively straightforward to assign a numeric value to commercial and economic impacts, qualities that are 'softer', such as well-being or social connectivity, can be more difficult. Formal impact frameworks steer practitioners towards this focus, but things are changing. Policy is already nudging practitioners towards more holistic valuation, and practitioners from all sectors are developing their own models and metrics.

Running throughout 2017, the programme brought together over 500 people from the public, private and community sectors, and included a debate, senior roundtables, practitioner workshop, full-day conference and six field trips to places undergoing change across London. The report distils this wealth of input, knowledge and experience, which includes:



- An explanation of different user perspectives on placemaking
- An assessment of placemaking valuation guidance
- Case studies of emerging approaches to valuing placemaking more holistically
- Guiding principles for placemaking delivery bodies
- Calls to action for policy-makers, delivery bodies, developers and communities

Our guiding principles show that good placemaking is cyclical. The process does not end at development completion: practitioners need to engage users frequently and over a number of years to truly understand the impacts of their work, and to learn lessons. Cross-sector knowledge-sharing is also vital.

We hope this report inspires all parties – policy-makers, the GLA, local authorities, developers and communities – to see the value of good placemaking, and create a healthier, more inclusive London.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES



- Understand the different baseline positions of partners and stakeholders.
- Include views from a wide range of groups. Innovative engagement and tapping into existing networks can help.
- Listen to stories and histories to learn a place's character and narrative.
- Learn how people want to be involved (e.g. lobbying, caretaking, managing, informing).
- Audit business, culture, heritage and community assets to see how they connect and contribute locally.
- Learn about the demographics of existing and new communities.
- Understand wider area change and investment.
- Be honest about what can and can't be achieved.

- Use evidence to define and build on the character of a place to ensure authenticity.
- Identify beneficiaries and expected impacts.
- Build partnerships to gain buy-in, including with community leaders and groups.
- Involve communities, businesses and stakeholders. Challenge them to be ambitious.
- Plan how success will be measured at different stages in the process. Ensure this includes regular partner feedback.
- Ensure project appraisal balances social, economic and environmental benefit.
- Be flexible with design principles and be prepared to respond to change.

- Set out clear evidence requirements and objectives.
- Use the Social Value Act and planning levers to get the best outcomes.
- Give environmental and social metrics parity with economic and commercial ones.
- Employ good legal support experienced in embedding social and environmental value into regeneration and placemaking schemes.
- Determine the best long-term management model and build it into procurement.

- Minimise disruption to communities.
- Identify areas where delivery could be changed or enhanced to better meet objectives.
- Continue to engage, keeping both early and future occupiers involved as a scheme unfolds.

- Develop a strategy to capture people's experiences of a place over time.
- Explore big data to enhance evidence.
- Use findings to create case studies.
- Share lessons learned.
- For larger schemes, plan for longitudinal analysis.
- Be credible: robust and realistic information will help add value and learn lessons.

Placemaking is an ongoing process. As a place adapts and changes, practitioners should revisit early principles to supplement and verify findings from the evaluation stage. This will indicate whether new placemaking schemes – and which types – would further benefit an area.

For the full report and more on these principles, visit futureoflondon.org.uk/publications