

**Supporting social innovation in  
settlements**

**Strathclyde University  
23 April 2015**

**Investing in natural assets for a  
better built environment, wealth  
creation and wellbeing**

**Clive Mitchell**



... how **research and practice** can support social innovation and what **tools...** to enable the application of **systems thinking** in decision-making of different users in planning of the sustainable development of the built environment and in caring for the natural environment

But...governance? Who makes what decisions on whose behalf and in whose interests?

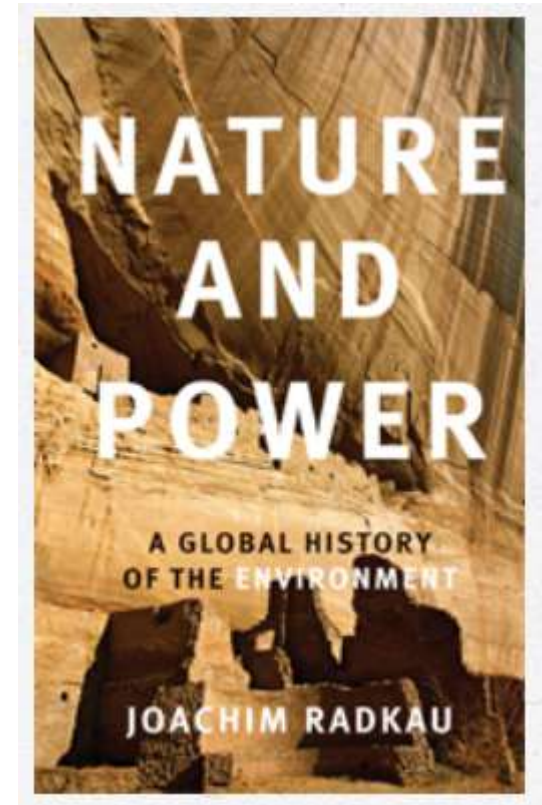
Whose place is it anyway?



- Why is this not mainstream...?
  - Assets, wealth creation and wellbeing
  - Public engagement, decision-making
  - Whose assets?
- 
- The public domain...



- Nature emerges from power relations across society
- The environmental sector is at the very thin edge of these power relations
- “When all is said and done, nature protection springs from human needs [and] has a chance in the long run only if it is popular...
- [It] requires a spirited civil society, the courage of one’s own convictions, citizen initiatives, and a critical public”



I came...

I built...

I sold...

I profited...

I left



A good measure of a sustainable place is one that makes people healthy



Bethnal Green, 1863

Blue Gate Fields, 1872

A good measure of a sustainable place is one that makes people healthy

**“Traffic will be to 21<sup>st</sup> century public health what sewage was to 19<sup>th</sup> century public health”**

Scrofula	Diphtheria	Stress & mental health	Obesity
Cholera			
	Typhoid	Asthma	
Dysentery	<b>1858</b>	<b>2008</b>	Heart disease



Russell Jones,  
GCPH, *Sustainable  
Places and  
Sustainable  
Development*, May  
2008



“If you do what you’ve always done, you’ll get what you’ve always got”

**Dr Harry Burns, Chief Medical Officer for Scotland**





- David Marquand (2004) *The decline of the public – the hollowing out of citizenship*
  - Private domain – relationships and personal ties
  - Market domain – access to economic resources (power and wealth)
  - Public domain – dimension of social life – public interest – citizenship, equity, service – need (not personal ties, power, wealth) – human flourishing – rights – active citizenship *among equals* – trust. Includes e.g. fair trials, welcoming public spaces, clean water, rights of way, free public libraries, ('natural' monopolies?)



## Assets and Co Production: In Plain English

- Made here by us
- Nothing about us, without us, is for us
- Building the boat not just steering it
- Working with us, not doing things to or for us
- On tap not on top
- Lighting 1000 fires all over the community
- I have a problem I want help to fix it
- What can I do?



## Different aspects of places are connected and interdependent across a range of scales

SUDS

Food

Travel

Health

Biodiversity

Heat island

Beauty



"When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything in the universe"

John Muir, 1911

# Scale: connected and interdependent



## A Pattern Language

Towns · Buildings · Construction



Christopher Alexander

Sara Ishikawa · Murray Silverstein

WITH

Max Jacobson · Ingrid Fiksdahl-King

Shlomo Angel



Bird brick by  
Aaron Dunkerton



Bat Bricks built in to a property Copyright  
John Haddow & Anney Youngman / BCT

**Brick Biotope** – Micaela Nardella &  
Oana Tudose – FABRIKAAT, 2012



Brick habitats by Chooi-leng Tan – London  
Design Festival, 2010 <http://inhabitat.com/brick-habitats->

[provide-mini-gardens-and-mini-homes/](http://inhabitat.com/brick-habitats-)

## NATIONAL PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

### THE GOVERNMENT'S PURPOSE

To focus government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth

### HIGH LEVEL TARGETS RELATING TO THE PURPOSE

Growth   Productivity   Participation   Population   Solidarity   Cohesion   Sustainability

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

**WEALTHIER  
& FAIRER**

**SMARTER**

**HEALTHIER**

**SAFER &  
STRONGER**

**GREENER**

We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe

We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people

We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation

Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens

Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed

We live longer, healthier lives



---

Scottish Natural Heritage

---

**We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place  
for doing business in Europe**



Norwich  
Union/  
Aviva  
office  
building,  
Perth



# We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people.



A screenshot of the John Muir Way website. The page features a navigation bar at the top with links for Home, John Muir, Coast to coast route, Doing the route, Other essentials, Accommodation, and Additional routes. Below the navigation bar is a large banner image of a cyclist on a road bike, with the text "Cycle coast to coast along canals and classic routes." The main content area is divided into several sections: "The coast to coast route" with a map, "Get out with your horse", "Plan your cycle", "Plan another walk", "The story of the John Muir Way", "Events", "Noticeboard", and "John Muir" with a portrait of John Muir. The website is designed with a purple and blue color scheme.



---

## Scottish Natural Heritage

---

**We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation.**



**Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.**



**Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.**



**We live longer, healthier lives.**



# We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society.



Source: Harry Burns (CMO),  
Social  
Circumstance  
and Health,  
October 2007



**We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk.**



**We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger.**



# Scottish Natural Heritage

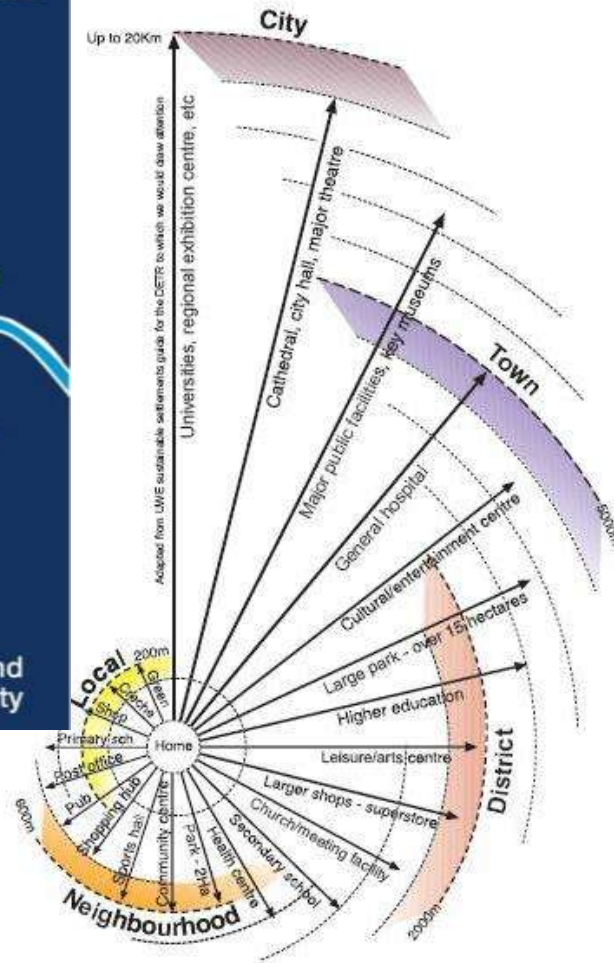
We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need.

Encouraging the redistribution, linkage and weaving; together can help to make public events accessible to all the community



Richard Rogers Partnership  
August 1996

Key events, parks and streets propagate activity





**We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.**



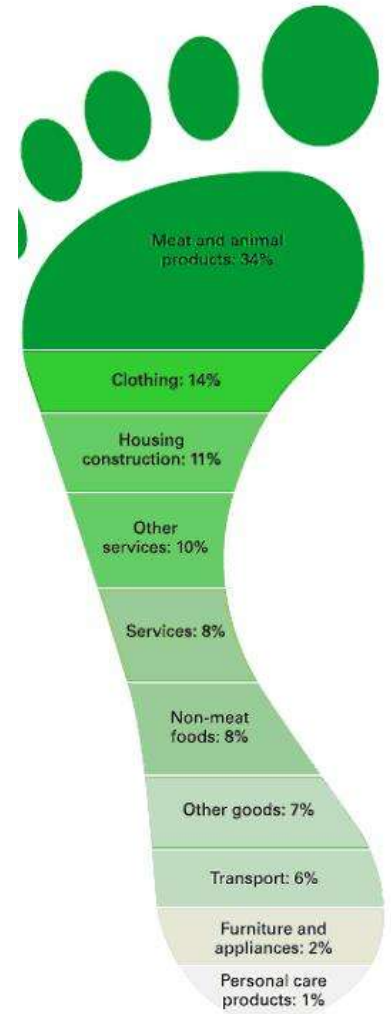
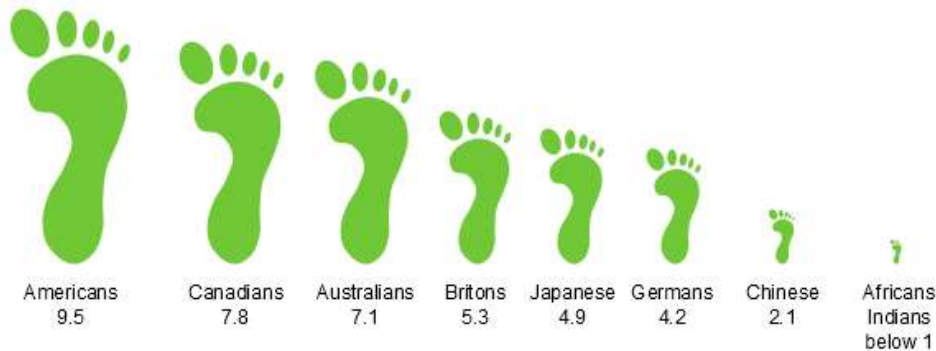
**We value and enjoy our built and natural environment  
and protect it and enhance it for future generations.**



**We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity.**



# We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production.



**Our people are able to maintain their independence as they get older and are able to access appropriate support when they need it.**



**Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.**

Green lung. Soakaway. Refuge.

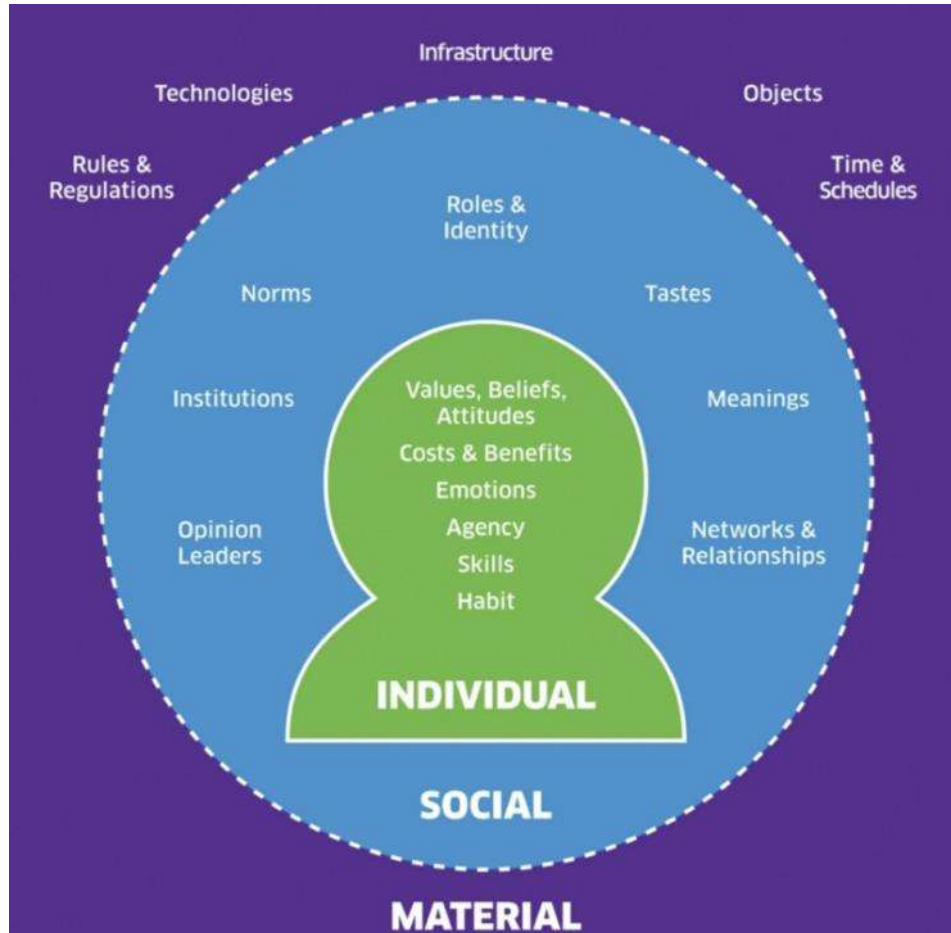


More than just an urban green space.



# Places = wellbeing

Scottish Government –  
ISM model



## Why are we so poor at creating sustainable places?

- We look at the 'bits' rather than an Holistic view
- We do not take time to understand how and why our place has developed or exploring how it will be used
- We leave it to others then grumble!
  - Local authorities
  - Developers





- **NICE** *Physical activity and the environment*
  - Control groups or areas (including varying levels of activity etc before the intervention)
  - Valid measures
  - Before/after
  - Confounding factors
  - Impacts on neighbouring areas
  - Long term, including follow-up – at least 1 year
  - Impacts on specific individuals
  - Social factors – community effects
- **Scottish Government** *Individual – Social – Material factors in behaviour change*



- Made by people for people or for profit?
- Where the private, market and public domains come together?
- Granularity of people, place and democracy?
- How does research and practice inform the discussions that people have about *their* places?
- How do places work at the neighbourhood level?
- An emergent feature of the political-economy?
  
- How do the technical/sectoral aspects of place tie into these political questions?



