

Place-Maker-Space:

Nick Gant 2015-16

The Community21 *Place-Maker-Space* was an investigation into the role of place-making and maker-spaces within the context of localism agenda for more inclusive and collaborative, grass-roots planning.

It references and tests the concept of 'Urban Rooms' as a central recommendation of the UK government commissioned Farrell Review 2014. The review suggested that every city should have a space that facilitated engagement and collaboration between Universities, the private sector (developers) and communities in the collective design and envisioning of the future of the built environment. This corresponded with radical changes in planning legislation brought about through the localism bill (DCLG, 2011) and emergent cultures of 'place-making' that each seek to empower local communities to greater power and means to 'envision' the future of their neighbourhoods as live-able places. However despite the prevalence of the term 'vision' in statutory planning processes and guidance the term is not clearly defined as an objective and evidence and literature suggests communities are under resourced in terms of tools, methods and resources for enabling 'envisioning'.

The formation of the space is in itself a part of the constructive research methodology and combines elements of making and the co-design and deployment of tools for engagement and envisioning within the maker-space. A contrives a hybrid model that builds on research into *place-making* and *maker-spaces*. The Place-Maker-Space therefore constrictively engages with these research questions:

Research Questions:

- How might *making* and *maker-spaces* add function and value in the context of envisioning place (place-making)?
- What agency does the facilitation space ('Urban Room') have in facilitating engagement and the collective 'envisioning' of *the future of the city*?

The Place-Maker-Space (Urban Room) was built on a major urban development site using reclaimed materials in Brighton and was co-funded by The University of Brighton, the site developers U+i PLC and in collaboration with local social enterprises and community groups (in accordance with the tri-party Urban Room recommendation). It was tested as functional space and proposition with a range of approaches used which were tested including the further application of envisioning tools developed in previous research (Gant et al, 2013, 2015).

Further associated outputs and dissemination:

Place-Maker-Space workshop and journal paper:

Gant, N. (2017). *Place-Making-Space: a workshop of tools and methods for 'crafting communities' and 'making places' in the post-global / post-localism era Papers*. Making Futures. Plymouth College of Art.

<http://makingfutures.plymouthart.ac.uk/2015/journal-home/current-journal/workshops/http://makingfutures.plymouthart.ac.uk/media/51150/nick-gant.pdf>

Exhibitions:

'Urban Rooms, Civic Schools & City Learning. Past, present and future'. Tate Modern Museum, Exchange, London

'Urban Rooms, Civic Schools & City Learning. Past, present and future.' 14-18th May 2018. The Bartlett, UCL, London.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/uclurbanlab/sets/72157666921483017>

It featured in IDFX Design Magazine and was used by a range of parties; Local Authorities, public engagement events for the site developers at envisioning events and the Department of Communities and Local Government.

Link to associated Community21 webpage

https://community21.org/casestudies/13341_place_maker_space_brighton