

PLACEMAKING - [PlacemakingGuideDigitalENG.pdf \(dcfw.org\)](#)

The way places are planned, designed, developed and managed has the potential to positively shape where and how people will live, work, socialise, move about and engage. Placemaking is ensuring that each new development or intervention contributes positively to creating or enhancing environments within which people, communities, businesses and nature can thrive. It places people at the heart of the process and results in places that are vibrant, have a clear identity and where people can develop a sense of belonging.

A place can take different forms and the term is relevant at different scales. For example, a lane, a street, incidental public space, formal square or park can be a place, but the term place can also refer to a wider neighbourhood, or a village, town or city centre. Placemaking is relevant at all these scales and the impact of any proposal should be considered at different scales.

Three key components: Activity (mix of uses and movement), Physical Form (spaces, GI and buildings) and Meaning (unique identity/characteristics, quality etc) providing Sense of Place.

Placemaking covers a range of activities that seek to maximise the opportunities for good places to emerge or flourish. Placemaking can involve new development, improvements to existing places or interventions such as events which help to create activity in a space.

There is no set formula for placemaking. Each place and set of circumstances are different and must be approached individually but all aspects of a development should be integrated including urban design, landscape, ecology, green infrastructure, mobility, highways, utilities, architecture and public art.

Placemaking puts people at the heart of the process. Places that are created or adapted should support the health and well-being of those who live, work in and visit them joining up the needs and opportunities of the whole community. The community should be involved in the process of planning, designing and managing places.

An aim of placemaking is to create a place where there are opportunities to get involved in local life, with a vibrant public realm, where people can get to places easily without depending on private vehicles and where people can get to know each other. This involves early planning considerations which begin to determine the potential level of activity in a place.

The design of the streets within new or existing places is critical. The 'place value' of streets should be promoted and the impact of vehicles reduced. Street layout and design should promote active travel, connectivity and capitalise on the opportunities of public transport stops and stations. Integrating landscape and green infrastructure, including sustainable drainage, into streets can contribute to the character of the street in addition to environmental benefits. Changes to existing streets can provide the opportunity for enhancing the places that they pass through. Street improvement to incorporate greater public transport and active travel priority should be complemented by hard and soft landscape improvements and consideration of edges and thresholds.

Maintenance is an important consideration in the design of the public realm but should not be a fundamentally limiting factor in the delivery of a high quality public realm. Early consideration of landscape and green infrastructure proposals and long term management, with the support of a landscape architect is essential for a sustainable scheme with manageable and cost-effective maintenance. Opportunities should be explored for community involvement in management and

maintenance through early community engagement and ongoing coordination. Excessive management fees should be avoided. Maintenance regimes by a local authority, SuDS approval body (SAB) and any private or community company must be effectively coordinated to ensure the overall quality of the place is maintained.

The value of smaller, community-led initiatives should not be overlooked. These initiatives support community development and can have direct links to improvements in the built environment and the ability of the community to care for and maintain the public realm.