

Making Place International Conference – report

The Making Place International Conference took place in Glasgow on 10 June 2019. The conference was held in the fitting surroundings of the Old Fruitmarket, an example of a space that has been reinvented and redesigned to meet the changing needs of the community.

The exciting programme included key note presentations, a live workshop, panel discussion, two site visits, twenty-seven parallel sessions and an exhibition. [The presentations are available to view online.](#)



Main hall of the Old Fruitmarket, the main venue for the event

What Happened



David Crichton, Chair of NHS Health Scotland

David Crichton, Chair of NHS Health Scotland and chair for the morning session opened the event to the 270 delegates. A city welcome by Glasgow's Lord Provost, Eva Bolander was followed by a Scottish welcome from Aileen Campbell MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government who spoke about the transformation of the East End of Glasgow through the Clyde Gateway regeneration

project, where using a place making approach has provided creative solutions to community issues. We were then treated to a rousing performance from [Big Noise Govanhill](#), a children's orchestra which supports participation, citizenship and creativity in one of the most diverse areas of Glasgow.



Youth orchestra Big Noise from Govanhill performing on the main stage

In her international welcome, Monika Kosinska, Focal Point for the WHO European Network of Healthy Cities reminded those present about the importance of partnerships and engagement with communities to improve people's lives. Summing up, Monika commented that today's conference highlighted the strong will there is to do things differently.

In his keynote address, Sir Harry Burns argued that we must move towards mobilising for social action. Community development helps to support independent and collective action which gives people control over their own lives. Good health outcomes are about more than tackling the behaviours that lead to poor health; we need to understand the drivers of those behaviours.



Sir Harry Burns giving his presentation on mobilising for social action

The afternoon panel discussion, chaired by Mark Beaumont, featured Scotland's Chief Architect, Ian Gilzean who explained the importance of 'designing for the everyday'; embedding social contact and connections to nature in our policy and design principles; and creating liveable, active cities like Copenhagen. Prof. John Ashton was also on the panel and argued that to transform places we need individual imagination and collective vision fused with personal and collective passion.

Live Place Standard workshop

Throughout the day, members of Glasgow Disability Alliance participated in a live workshop using the Place Standard tool. They explored the barriers that disabled people often face in connecting with communities of place and participating in place-making activities. Workshop participants fed back to the audience about the findings of their workshop, which included the importance of including communities of



The Live Workshop hosted in partnership with the GDA

interest in place-making. Chief Executive Tressa Burke highlighted that those who experience inequality should be involved in solutions to tackle it.

Exhibition, parallel sessions, workshops and site visits



Site visit to the new Woodside Community Health and Care centre



Katherine Pollard presents her workshop on the topic of Vacant and Derelict Land

During the course of the day, delegates had the opportunity to visit the conference exhibition which featured five Scottish and three international projects highlighting the use of the Place Standard Tool in a variety of environments and settings. They could also choose from 29 parallel sessions, workshops and site visits held within the conference centre and external locations in and around Glasgow. This provided a dynamic and thought provoking opportunity for delegates to explore the wide range of approaches and possibilities within place and network with others.

Making Place

We know by instinct and through research that the places where we spend our time have an important impact on our lives. The way a place looks, functions and feels can influence everything from our health and wellbeing to the opportunities we can access. In addition, improving the quality of places can help to tackle inequalities. Understanding the existing and potential strengths of a place can inform good decision-making, this allows us to target resources where they are most needed and deliver better results over the long term. Everyone aspires to live in a good place and, in our own way, we are all striving to improve our place.

The Making Place International Conference was a celebration of place and sought to further progress effective place-based approaches across Scotland, the UK and internationally, highlighting the importance of this way of working to improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities. It brought together a wide range of participants across communities and the public, private and voluntary sectors.

Conclusion

The conference aimed to

- contribute to a common understanding across policy;
- increase place-based thinking amongst participants;
- support effective delivery through the sharing of effective practice; and
- provide a forum to exchange knowledge, celebrate, inspire and expand the application of place-based working and cultivate emerging collaborations.

In the delivery of these aims the conference embedded the four conference themes:

- shared language and culture;
- physical environment;
- social environment;
- design environment.

Feeding back after the conference, delegates told us that they had gained new ideas, improved knowledge, new contacts and that they had enjoyed the day! However the sharing and learning didn't stop there - the conference received an outstanding amount of engagement across the NHS Health Scotland Twitter and Instagram accounts and the reach was even further extended by the support of the organising partners and delegates. Over 2.2 million impressions on Twitter were received, which is an indicator of how far the content reached. Over 345 participants engaged with and contributed to the conversation on social media, which amounted to 1,045 tweets using the #MakingPlace19 hashtag. Social media activity on the day also increased traffic to the newly launched [Place Standard Learning Resource, hosted on the NHSHS Virtual Learning Environment \(VLE\)](#).

The legacy of the Making Place Conference will endure in the up-cycling of the physical and digital materials, particularly regarding the exhibition materials, but also in a less tangible but equally important process of conversations, connections and learning that will inform and challenge people's thinking regarding the places people live and their impact on their present and future.

The Making Place conference was co-produced by:

- NHS Health Scotland
- Scottish Government
- Architecture & Design Scotland
- World Health Organisation European Healthy Cities Network
- Glasgow City Council

Full details regarding speakers, parallel sessions, panel discussion, site visits and the exhibition are available [on the Health Scotland website](#).