Reclaim Mini Conference 14th June 2023

An insight into the day's learnings.

top-down, bottom-up approach to community and policy

mapping of GBGI projects in the region

blue space

Livable Cities

green space

research and data about the intersection of planning, public health and GBGI

barriers and conflicts around green and blue spaces

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Reclaim Network Plus
+
Natural History Consortium

Organised with the support of workshop funding from the Reclaim Network.

Dr Thomas Kjeldsen of the Reclaim Network joined us on the day to provide insights into the objectives of the network, and to share examples of projects already successfully completed.

The Natural History Consortium organised the workshop, and is a collaborative partnership working with a broad range of organisations to promote action for nature.

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mapping of GBGI projects in the region

You are encouraged to add or update projects, whether you attended on the 14th June or not.
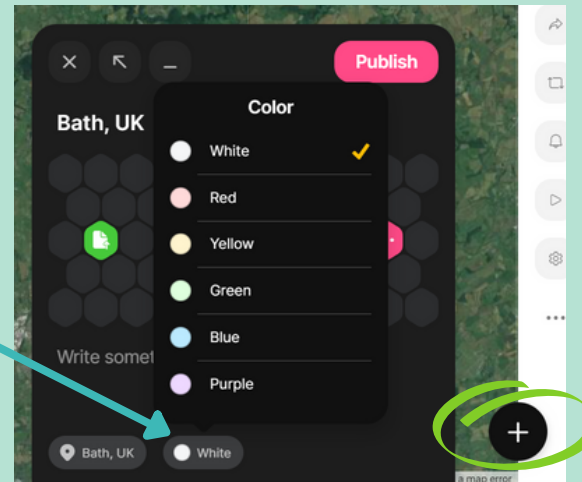
Click here to access a Padlet showing all of the projects mapped so far.
password: ReclaimBristol14

Simply use the (+) button in the bottom right of the screen.

Use this colour coding system to show which stage your project is at:

- Red = ideas phase
- Green = development phase
- Yellow = pilot phase
- Blue = refining or closed

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top-down, bottom-up approach to community and policy

Challenges

- Working with unpaid volunteer groups who can feel disenfranchised by changing their ideas/plans.
- Informal community groups struggle to access funding to enact policy.
- Creating a shared vision agreed on by all.
- Missing professional role to interpret and relay community plans upwards.
- Differences in health infrastructure.
- What information or resource flows from the top-down and from the bottom-up?
- Conflicting ideas about any space's use.
- Big changes demanded from the top may be unsettling if not clearly mapped and planned.
- Potential lack of organisational, social infrastructure needed to coordinate neighbourhood delivery.
- Sometimes only strongest community voices are heard - which views are unheard?
- Sustaining schemes after their completion.
- Proving impact/benefit of health intervention
- Cross-sectoral working is needed.

Opportunities

- Local communities have great agility and ability to respond to changes.
- Sharing knowledge of 'backyards' and ambition for the local area.
- Sense of community ownership of projects.
- Health benefits alongside biodiversity gain.
- Creation of app to signpost to services.
- Link workers and social prescribers as missing link between policy + community.
- Link workers more widely in police, schools.
- Potential collaborative design with communities at the city scale.
- Reconnect communities with knowledge of and responsibility for green and blue spaces.
- Relationships with large scale landowners: potential for large, fast-paced benefits.
- Diversify and distribute knowledge amongst community to make groups resilient.
- Disseminate skills more widely.
- Building action into the everyday by embedding into community social structures.

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blue space summary

River restoration projects: connecting people to nature, improving public health and the environment

Frome River culvert at Cabot Circus is a flood risk because funnel effect. New bridges could link communities over the river, conversations had with local community and schools.

A barrier to blue social prescribing is bad water quality including sewage, agricultural run-off and medicine waste

Access to blue spaces: who can get there, how can we interact with them? How can we cross them? Bridges, boats etc.

Beavers upstream of cities can be useful for holding back and gradually releasing floodwaters. How can we encourage them?

Bath Water Space are working with farmers to reduce run-off. Delicate balance of protecting the river versus inadvertently encouraging damage.

Are there negative impacts to living near water? Flooding anxiety, rare flooding events becoming more frequent.

Yellow fish initiative used to remind people not to throw chemical waste into sewers to assist in maintaining quality.

Blue Infrastructure was noted as a gap in planning discussions by some council workers.

Who pays for blue ecoservices? Conversations about who benefits and loses out - those higher up a river gain sedimentation removal and this ends up lower down. Should costs be shared?

Are trees flood reducers? - perhaps in localised flooding but not over huge areas.

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barriers and conflicts

A tricky balancing act between encouraging people to access nature for health benefits and protecting nature from increased pressure through more footfall.

How accessible are green and blue spaces for disabled people? What can be done to support wider access?

Which types of nature/habitat are most resilient to continued disturbance? Shurbs and trees vs wildflower meadows. Biodiversity benefits?

Dogs: wellbeing benefits of pet ownership versus impact on nature and the needs of other space users (phobias etc).

Dog-walking can increase nature engagement but not cleaning up after dogs spoils areas. Should there be separate areas for dogs?

Need to co-design green and blue spaces with communities to ensure they are well-used and maintained gong forward.

Cultural perceptions of the 'messiness' of nature: a need for communications to change perceptions arund this.

Engaging with schools to increase reach to less-contacted communities and make sure awareness is raised and voices are heard.

Transport as a key barrier to accessing nature for many: who can afford a car? Are buses frequent/reliable?

What is the quality of the green space, and it's primary use? Does a playing field benefit mental health and wellbeing as much as woodland or meadow?

Choice of language gives relatability: biodiversity or nature recovery? What relays the message best?

How can problems of fly-tipping, littering and pollution be addressed? Spoiling of spaces in this way decreases engagement and biodiversity.

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connecting green and blue infrastructure

Click the thumbnail below to see Richard Goldthorpe's presentation

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research and data about the intersection of public health and GBGI

Click the thumbnail below to see the presentations from UWE