



TURAS

TRANSITIONING TOWARDS URBAN  
RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY

# Bridges to local economies

*Strategies for place and  
community based economies*

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Transversal Planning

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## Disclaimer

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# THE BRIDGE BUILDER

An old man going a lone highway,  
Came, at the evening cold and gray,  
To a chasm vast and deep and wide.  
Through which was flowing a sullen tide  
The old man crossed in the twilight dim,  
The sullen stream had no fear for him;  
But he turned when safe on the other side  
And built a bridge to span the tide.

"Old man," said a fellow pilgrim near,  
"You are wasting your strength with building here;  
Your journey will end with the ending day,  
You never again will pass this way;  
You've crossed the chasm, deep and wide,  
Why build this bridge at evening tide?"

The builder lifted his old gray head;  
"Good friend, in the path I have come," he said,  
"There followed after me to-day  
A youth whose feet must pass this way.  
This chasm that has been as naught to me  
To that fair-haired youth may a pitfall be;  
He, too, must cross in the twilight dim;  
Good friend, I am building this bridge for him!"

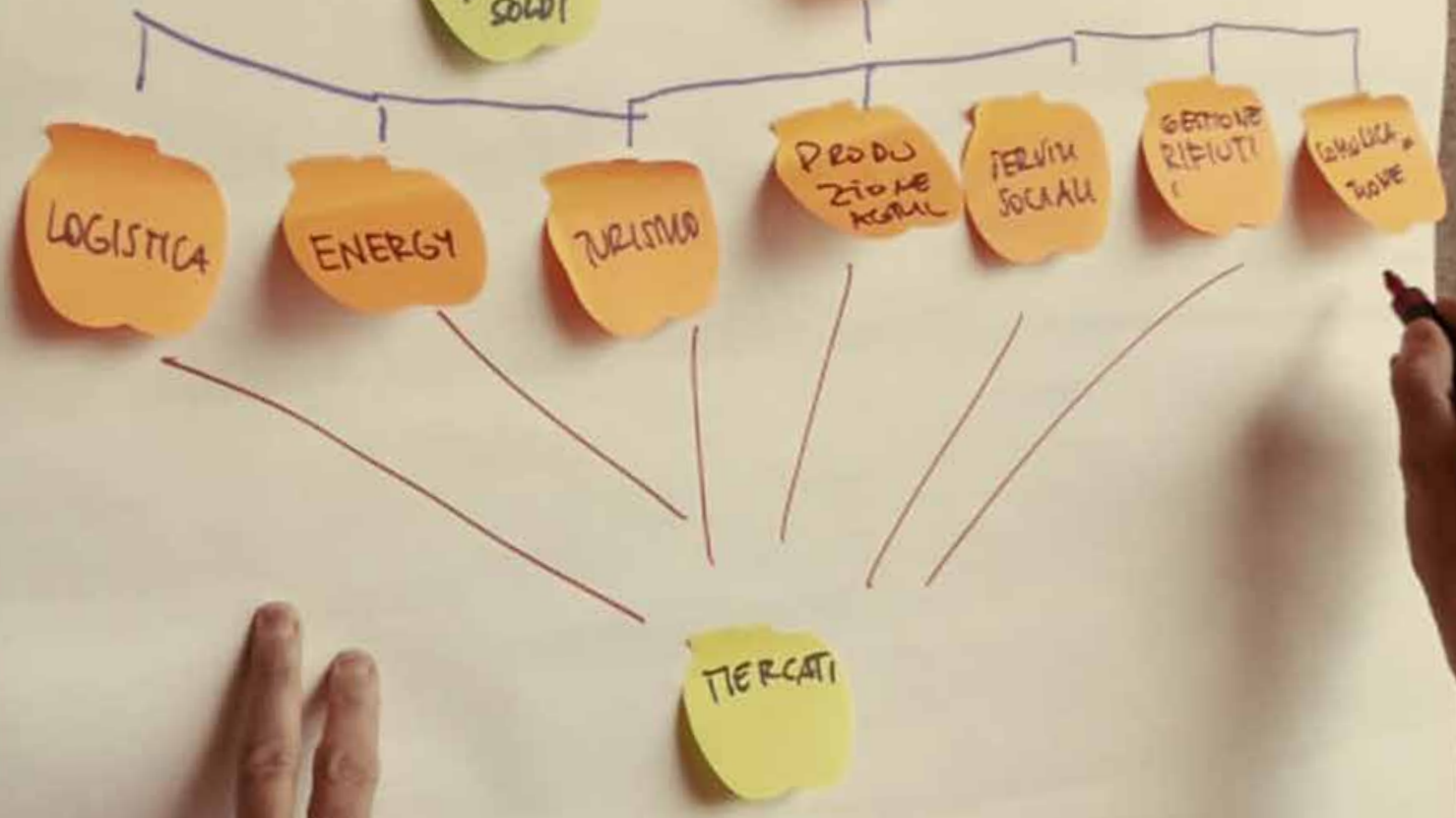
- Will Allen Dromgoole

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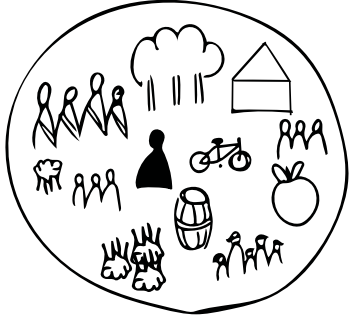
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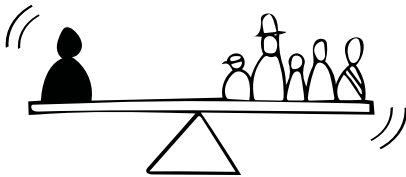


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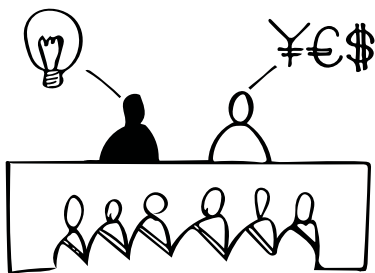
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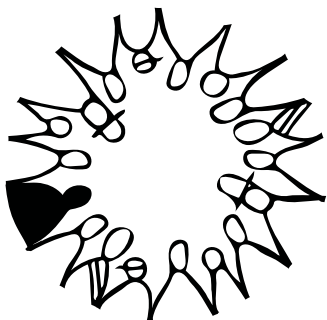
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# Preface

*Rob Hopkins*

Something remarkable is happening around the world. I know that it's happening, because I am fortunate enough to go and see it in lots of different places. I see it in the city of Exeter, whose local currency the Exeter Pound, accepted by hundreds of local businesses, just launched a £4.50 note to celebrate the 450th anniversary of their local canal. Or in Brussels, where the Employment Environment Alliance co-created with the local business community and local authorities a plan of 200 actions for the transition of key local employment sectors towards a more sustainable and place-based economy. Or in Ungersheim in France, where their remarkable Mayor Jean-Claude Mensch is transforming the place through 21 projects that are, for example, bringing in 100%, largely local food in local schools, creating co-housing and installing huge amounts of solar energy.

It's remarkable because it adds two key elements to drives towards sustainability that we have seen in the past. Firstly it recognizes that the changes we need to see are a marathon, not a sprint, and we need to pay attention to our own personal resilience and the risks of burnout. This argument, that how we do things matters as much as what we do, is central to the Transition movement, and to the collection of tools and approaches focused on creating a healthy group culture that has come to be known as 'Inner Transition'.

Secondly, it recognizes that we need to be creating new, place-based economies and livelihoods, and that in order to do so, we need to think like entrepreneurs. Expecting change on the scale required to arise purely through volunteers giving what time they have is not enough. We end up with a 'tyranny of volunteerism', where our groups reflect the demographic of those who can afford to volunteer, rather than the community as a whole. Creating new enterprises which enable the shift to more local, resilient economies is essential, and is already happening in a great diversity of ways.

This shift is changing the way people shop, invest, campaign, engage with their local government, imagine their futures. But as remarkable as it is, it isn't winning. People are giving their all, and, as this report shows, achieving amazing things. But it's a shift, a renaissance, that needs help and support, and the great thing is that the invitation it extends offers huge opportunity and possibility.



It offers the possibility for businesses based in a particular place to reconnect, to come home to that place and to support the new economy emerging there. To play its part in a historic shift. To local government it offers the opportunity to pioneer deep democracy, to fulfil its duty of meeting its community's needs in a very different way. They also have a key role to play in acting as a 'bridge', enabling communities to have the support they need, and enabling their work. To public bodies it offers the opportunity to reimagine their relationship to place, to rethink how it sources food and energy, how it engages and supports local entrepreneurs. This wonderful publication "Bridges to local economies" by the TURAS initiative details how by working together, we could create a historic transformation in our societies. Please take it, run with it, do something extraordinary.

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## **Rob Hopkins**

Founder of the transition movement



Rob is the co-founder of Transition Town Totnes and of the Transition Network. This grew out of many years experience in education, teaching permaculture and natural building, and setting up the first 2 year full-time permaculture course in the world, at Kinsale Further Education College in Ireland, as well as co-ordinating the first eco-village development in Ireland to be granted planning permission. He is author of numerous books on a practical approach to local economy and resilience.

**Photo:** [www. transitionnetwork.org](http://www.transitionnetwork.org)

# **Foreword**

*Françoise Bonnet*

We must transition our production and consumption models to be compatible with earth's physical limits and public services have an essential role to play in the process, one which goes beyond the traditional tasks entrusted to them. Governments must connect stakeholders whether they be companies, public authorities, scientists, residents or users, by taking on the role of stakeholder facilitator. This role depends on governments supporting a certain level of stability that is a legitimate, neutral and takes on the responsibility of the public interest.

We need new tools to deal with these new responsibilities and product-service system, as described in this book, certainly will help in this transition. Transitions to a product-service system approach will depend on a number of factors such as easing into new private financing conditions, stimulating public procurement as a lever to boost demand, raising consumers' awareness to change their attitude towards objects and services, as well as monitoring and following the phenomenon of the transition. Other important steps to take include supporting enterprises through the transition, structuring research, adapting market instruments, strengthening regulatory instruments and setting up regional coordination for projects.

The TURAS project is a concrete example of how the collaboration between all stakeholders can take shape. As an international network of local and regional authorities connecting good practices among Europe, ACR+ warmly welcomes projects like TURAS where multi-stakeholder collaboration is at the core of all activities.

Let's hope this publication will inspire decision-makers in assuming the role as facilitator and encourage all of us to speed up the transition together.

## **Françoise Bonnet**

Secretary General  
ACR+



ACR+ ([www.acrplus.org](http://www.acrplus.org)) is an international network of cities and regions who share the aim of promoting smart material resource consumption and sustainable material resource management. ACR+ has an ever-growing membership of nearly 100 entities representing around 1100 municipalities; and also welcomes NGOs, academic institutions and private organisations.

Since 2014, ACR+ has and continues to support local and regional authorities with the preparation and implementation of ambitious circular economy strategies. This ACR+ commitment has taken the form of the Circular Europe Network (CEN), which gathers ACR+ members that are committed to improving their resource strategies and strengthening sustainable development in their territories.

This initiative builds on the expertise of European front runners within the ACR+ network in order to gather, analyse and exchange information on efficient circular economy strategies implemented by cities and regions. These good practices are available as factsheets on the Circular Europe Network website ([www.circular-europe-network.eu](http://www.circular-europe-network.eu)).

Premesso

di Casal del  
agricole, fossi, ecc.) in  
letteratura scienzi  
di (res  
biomass) e  
di servizi  
per la serv  
in questa  
vere  
sempre  
del  
utili a  
del  
corso

# Visione

Sensazione di apprensione e  
Vorrei cambiare l'agricoltura urbana partecipata attraverso il quartiere di  
Vorrei ottenere la partecipazione attiva e responsabile  
per la progettazione partecipata  
l'agricoltura urbana partecipata

# INTRODUCTION

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**What does it mean for an urban economy to be “green”? What is the role of local actors in “greening” their economies? This book takes a new look at these questions by exploring what local economies would look like if built around specific places and their communities.**

The material in this book draws on extensive research that brought together scholars from different academic disciplines with territorial authorities from Rome, Brussels and London around innovative projects aiming at local economic transitions. The work was part of the EU financed TURAS programme, a research project exploring the transition towards urban resilience and sustainability through action research in twelve cities and regions across Europe. This book is based on TURAS work on governance and economic resilience.

Observing local initiatives in practice helped us to define the contours of a place- and community-based economy. It is an area of activity that builds on existing natural and human-made resources in order to deliver value to local communities. It is also an area that requires the active involvement of local and regional authorities as “bridging actors”. Indeed, the focus of this book is about the transition process towards a more sustainable economy and the role that territorial authorities can play to bridge the gaps between various types of stakeholders, different geographical scales as well as multiple forms of knowledge. We provide specific governance tools in the form of “bridging strategies” and insights about how these strategies can be implemented in practice.

This book targets territorial authorities such as municipal services, city councils, public development agencies, local and regional environmental administrations, planning authorities, as well as the political decision makers that are in charge of these organisations. These actors generally have a focus on the local and a duty of care for the general public. The book is also beneficial to advocacy and civil society organisations that represent local communities, for the latter will have to interact and cooperate closely in the transition towards a place-based economy. Other actors often taking an active role in local economies include the business sector, research organisations and the community oriented financial sector may also draw inspiration. The book can also provide useful insights for organisations that work on local economies at higher levels of governance, such as the EU Committee of Regions, the LEADER Programme of the European Commission’s DG Agriculture, the OECD LEED programme, the European Business Innovation Centre Network

(EBN) or sustainable city networks such as ACR+ and ICLEI. Finally, the book will help with the basic building blocks for anyone acting as the ‘bridge’ between complex problems involving numerous stakeholders.

## **The role of the public actor**

This book was written to support public services professionals to take a proactive stand with respect to the economic activities in their immediate surroundings. We strongly believe that territorial administrations are in a key position to foster the transition towards sustainable urban systems - in fact, it is an illusion to expect place-based systemic transitions without their strong involvement. While they may not drive change, they must be at the centre of the change process and foster the conditions for it to occur.

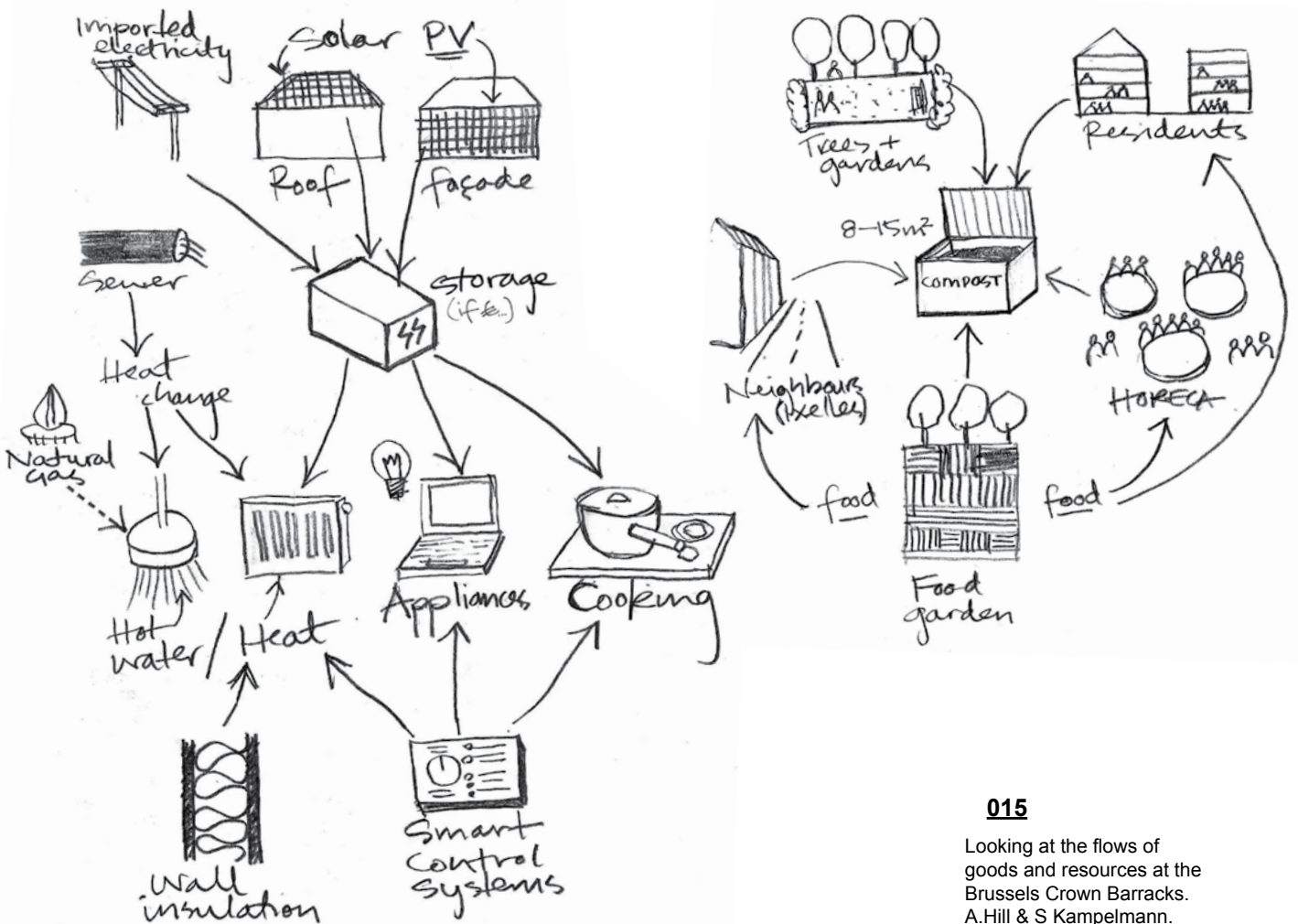
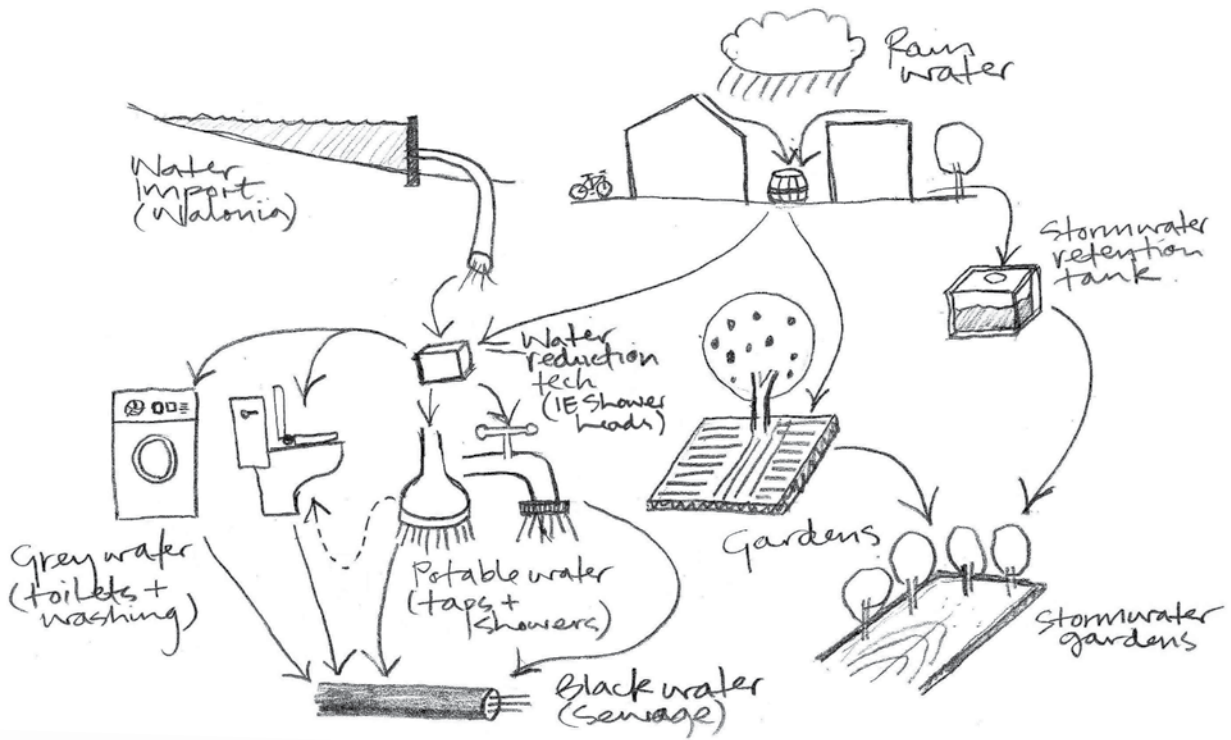
The research results that are condensed in this book provide tested strategies and practical tools for this purpose. Although these strategies and tools have to be adapted in each local context, they have in common that they assign a new role to local authorities: whom are neither the planners nor the regulators of the local economy, but bridging actors that create the conditions for sensible collective choices and actions leading to sustainable social-ecological trajectories.

“TURAS” is not only the acronym of this research project, but also the Irish word for journey. As the concluding report for research on local and short-circuit economies, this book showcases some of the lessons, tools and experiences we gained on our part of this journey, which was mainly concerned with the governance of sustainable economies.

## **About the contributors**

The results presented in this book reflect research and pilot projects carried out under Work Package 6 of TURAS. The project was coordinated by Bruxelles Environnement/Leefmilieu Brussel (Belgium). Other organisations involved include BIC Lazio (Italy), the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham and the University of East London (UK).

Dr. Stephan Kampelmann and Adrian Vickery Hill authored this book with and on behalf of these organisations.



**015**

Looking at the flows of goods and resources at the Brussels Crown Barracks. A.Hill & S.Kampelmann.



**016**

The residents of the small Flemish town of Ternat are fighting a bio-gas plant.  
Photo: A Hill.



# **PART 1: TAKE ME TO THE BRIDGE**

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**So much has been written and said about the un-sustainability of current economics that it suffices to collate a few key words - climate change, biodiversity loss, water shortages, chronic mass unemployment, economic inequality - to evoke the gloomy picture of the immense challenges Europe faces today. We're waylaid by the vastness and complexity of such problems.**

## **1.1 The case for place-based economic sustainability**

What is perhaps less evident in the debate is the role of urban agglomerations in the economics of un-sustainability. Haven't European cities become cleaner and more efficient over the last decades? Haven't we invested billions of Euros in smart city technologies that help us to save energy and reduce waste? Are not more and more European city dwellers these days working on green designs and digital products rather than polluting the environment in dirty factories? Yes, of course.

The environmental impact of Europe's cities has in many respects improved over the last decades. Compared to the 1960s, waste treatment has undergone a true revolution thanks to recycling and waste reduction. Air quality is still worrisome in many cities, but significantly better compared to the days of leaded gasoline, coal- and wood-fuelled heating and inner-city factories. Cycling has ceased to be a hobby and hipster activity and experiences a true renaissance all over Europe. Other promising examples could be added.

Despite such progress, however, our cities remain hubs of unsustainable economic activity. Urban agglomerations play a central role in today's global economies and leave an "ecological footprint" many times larger than their own size. There are also the typical stigmatised problems associated with inequity between the haves and the have-nots, where often the poorest experience the worst negative environmental impacts - surely one of the most significant markers of un-sustainability.

### **Welcome to Smartopolis**

Take the case of Smartopolis, a fictitious city that reunites many characteristics of actual cities all over Europe. Smartopolis is in the fortunate position of possessing not only many beautiful parks, but also numerous highly competitive firms in sectors that display economic growth, including design, digital technology and

research. Their employees use e-bikes to commute from low-energy houses to industrial buildings that have been converted into offices.

While this looks on the surface as the archetype of a new “green” economy, it hides the fact that the products designed and marketed in Smartopolis require raw materials that have to be mined in South Africa and Congo before being shipped to Asia for assembly using fossil energy, from where they are finally imported and used by the consumers of Smartopolis. The innovativeness of the designers of Smartopolis is the joy of their employers’ shareholders, but it also means that the products imported from Asia will soon be discarded and end up as toxic waste that will create costs and headaches for many generations to come. This holds also for the non-recyclable building materials in passive houses and for the batteries in electric cars and bikes of which Smartopolis started to consume tens of thousands each year.

Two decades ago, former industrial buildings and warehouses began to be converted into offices; buildings located next to a canal designed to transport goods in and out of the city by waterway. The conversion of the building means that the initial purpose of the canal is, perhaps irreversibly, lost: the waterway has become what economists like **Enrico Moretti** call an “amenity”, an asset that is appreciated by those that enjoy to look at it but which has no immediate productive value. As a consequence, goods are transported in and out of the city by trucks, thereby creating noise, air pollution and traffic jams for which the Smartopolotian periphery is notorious. It is therefore no coincidence that it is in the periphery that an increasing number of poor families reside. Many households here have one or several of their members who are unemployed: their “human capital” is not sufficient to find a job in the booming sectors of Smartopolis. Unemployment in this area of the city hits the youth particularly hard. The factories in which their parents were employed have closed and new jobs are difficult to find and poorly paid.

What is transported in and out of the city? Thousands of tons of building materials and consumer products are imported from overseas that are sold within Smartopolis without local residents having the skills to produce or even maintain them. Agricultural produce travels hundreds if not thousands of miles before reaching Smartopolis’ supermarkets. And since



The stark contrast of afternoon picnickers in Hamburg in front of one of Europe’s largest ports as materials and products are arriving from all corners of the earth - often with impact on the environment where the materials are sourced from or dumped.  
Photo: A Hill.

◀Moretti, E. (2012). *The new geography of jobs*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

none of the minerals contained in the food ever returns to the agricultural regions in which they have been grown, fertilizers such as nitrogen and phosphorus have to be mined in South Africa, Israel and China to keep an unsustainable model of agriculture going a bit longer. This provides a staggering amount of waste, on average 1 kilo per day for each Smartopolitan.

What about the beautiful parks? Are they at least “green”? Only to the eye. Mainly composed of trimmed lawns that are constantly cut back by motorised engines, the parks harbour low biodiversity and consume more energy and resources than they produce. Moreover, the Smartopolitan city hall uses them to brand the city as “the green capital” in order to attract weekend tourists: a successful campaign in other European cities has increased the number of flights to a nearby airport that is served by low-cost airlines. Such city tourism based on weekend hopping also creates enormous amounts of air pollution and noise - and is clearly not sustainable.

## The need for place-based economics

Our little thought experiment shows the apparently “green” economy of Smartopolis in a bad light. If we compare the globalised economy to a polluting car, European urbanites may not be the dirty exhaust of the car - in fact most of them will perhaps never see the exhaust with their own eyes. They are the drivers - and most often the owners - of the global car.

As this example shows, the economic impact of a city like Smartopolis cannot be analysed in isolation from the places and the communities in which economies are situated. Many economic activities that appear to be “green” and signs of prosperity from a narrow perspective turn out to produce negative outcomes when we take into account their embeddedness in a larger context. Indeed, the economy is only part of a much bigger and complex system that encompasses not only the social and political organisation of the urban agglomeration, but also its connection to biophysical realities within and around cities. Sustainability scholars like *Carl Folke* have started to think about these relationships as forming together a **social-ecological system**, a term that captures the idea that the current configurations of social and biophysical systems form together a dominant regime in which all economic activities have to operate. The challenge cities like



A Smartopolis haven, an estate with solar panels, electric cars and lightening fast internet away from the smoky city. Questions should be asked. Where are the materials sourced to build the houses? Where is the food produced? Where does the waste go? What is the value of local resources? Photo: A Hill.

◀Folke C. 2007. Social-ecological systems and adaptive governance of the commons. *Ecological Research*. 22:14-15.

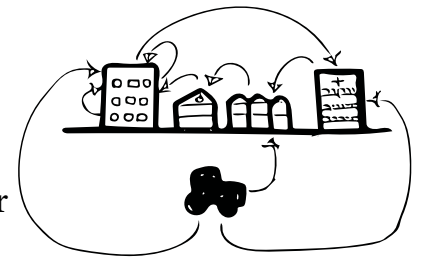
Smartopolis face is greater than the un-sustainability of their economy: ***it is about embarking on a transition from the current unsustainable social-ecological system to a more sustainable and resilient one.***

What would a sustainable social-ecological regime of a European city look like? In fact, nobody knows yet. Social-ecological systems are extremely complex and often we understand the trajectories of social-ecological regimes only by hindsight: as the research by historian *Sabine Barles* explains, these trajectories unfold as history unfolds. Articulating a forward-looking vision for an urban agglomeration is therefore a task that involves many actors at different points in time, with a clear perspective that seeks to overcome the power asymmetries and path dependence often embedded in the system. However, we propose two principles that could guide the transition process towards a new social-ecological regime:

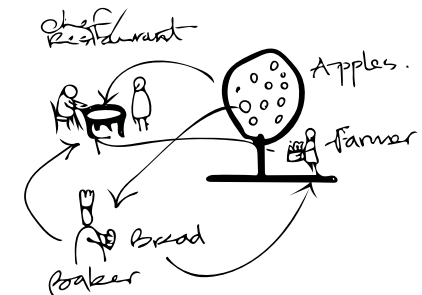
**Economic activities are tightly connected to places.**

Most activities of a sustainable social-ecological regime will be related to a given territory, using existing natural assets and building on the productivity of nearby ecosystems. Construction companies using local materials and peri-urban farmers producing for the regional market are two examples of a tight connection between local economies and local ecosystems. But reconnecting economies to places also refers to human-made places such as existing infrastructures, particular urban sites or the specificities of a neighbourhood. Instead of applying the same economic models everywhere, a place-based economy adapts to local conditions in order to make the best out of each place. A closer connection between economic activity and specific natural and built environments decreases drastically the incentives to pollute: economic agents will be careful to avoid piling up toxic materials and waste in places where future resources will be extracted. By contrast, it creates incentives to restore the biological productivity and engage with business practices that preserve it over the long run.

◀Barles, S. (2015). The main characteristics of urban socio-ecological trajectories: Paris (France) from the 18th to the 20th century. *Ecological Economics* 118, 177–185



Flows of money, resources and services connected to places.



Flows of money and materials from community relations.

**Economic activities are tightly related to communities.**

Instead of producing for a mass of anonymous consumers, economic activities of a sustainable social-ecological regime provide goods and services that create real value to tangible communities of people. Often communities will participate in strategic decisions regarding local economies so as to articulate their needs and preferences, but also to point at existing resources and their best use. To paraphrase the French thinker *Jean Baudrillard*, the un-sustainability of the current social-ecological regime became first apparent when car-makers experienced that it is more difficult to sell cars than to build them. A meaningful dialogue between entrepreneurs and local communities creates incentives to build mutual trust and invest in sustainable practices that generate goods and services with actual value to communities. Communities will not only rely exclusively on advertising and corporate public relations to gather information about goods and services and how they are produced, but also to maintain personal relationships with producers that are themselves members of the local community.

These two principles are already being implemented by numerous transition initiatives all over Europe, often under the banner of a “re-localisation” of economic activity. It should be noted, however, that a sustainable social-ecological regime does not require that everything should be produced locally. Openness, solidarity, trade and exchange are closely related to the European culture and have contributed to the prosperity of cities over centuries - from the Hanseatic League to the EU Directive on the right of their citizens to move and reside freely within EU countries. No urban agglomeration will be self-sufficient and all of them need to maintain trade relations with other cities, regions and countries. Moreover, it sometimes makes not only less economic but also less environmental sense to produce certain goods locally rather than importing them from distant places with a clear comparative advantage - bananas and coffee are an obvious case in point. As a consequence, following the two principles should avoid stepping into what urbanists *Branden Born and Mark Purcell* call the “local trap” that consists of considering everything local as being intrinsically superior.

◀Baudrillard, J. (1970). *La société de consommation: Ses mythes, ses structures.* Paris: Gallimard.



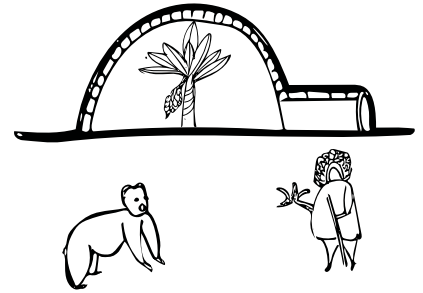
Attack of the Cereal Killers Cafe, London (27/09/2015). The Guardian newspaper reported: 'They came with their sound system, their bandannas and their carry-outs, protesting against the “gentrification” of the East End.' The cafe was merely the scapegoat for aggression against rapid developer-driven change to the neighbourhood.

[www.trib.al/UjUlx8h](http://www.trib.al/UjUlx8h).

Photo: The Guardian

This being said, we argue that these two principles on local economies nevertheless constitute useful guideposts to recalibrate urban social-ecological systems.

1. First, they capture elements that most **bottom-up transition initiatives have in common** and reflect the aspiration and actions of the most progressive citizens of Europe.
2. Second, they are arguably **sensible definitions of what economic activity is actually supposed to achieve**. Instead of producing economic growth for economic growth's sake, fostering economic activity for the sake of places and communities is an objective that could generate large support.
3. Third, linking economic activities to places and communities fundamentally **changes the incentive structure for entrepreneurs**: pollution and resource depletion cannot be hidden away but become visible in actual landscapes and the collective consciousness.
4. Fourth, they arguably correspond to **another founding value of the European Union**: the principle of subsidiarity according to which (political) decisions should be taken as closely as possible to the citizen. Relating economic activities to communities and places could help achieving more subsidiarity in the economic realm.
5. Fifth, relating economic activities closer to places and communities has been shown to be a **successful way to achieve a sustainable management of common resources**. The late **Elinor Ostrom**, the only female economist to be awarded the Nobel prize in economic sciences, has shown through an array of empirical studies from all over the world that giving local users (a community) a stronger say on the management of local resources (a place) - something she refers to as "polycentric governance of the commons" - often leads to more sustainable and future-oriented systems.



The local trap: local is not necessarily the answer - like buying locally grown bananas in the Arctic Circle.

◀Ostrom, E. (2014). A polycentric approach for coping with climate change. *Ann. Econ. Finance*, 15, 71-108.

## 1.2 The role of the public actor

Embarking European cities and regions on a sustainable social-ecological trajectory is an unprecedented challenge, and thinkers like **Pablo Servigne and Raphaël Stevens** have

◀Servigne, P. & Stevens, R. (2015) *Comment tout peut s'effondrer. Petit manuel de collapsologie à l'usage des générations présentes*. Paris: Seuil.

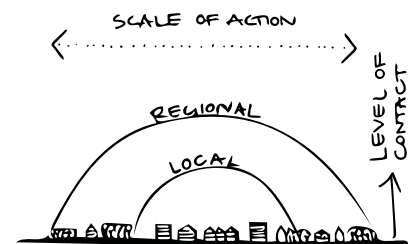
reached the uncomfortable conclusion that a total collapse of the current social-ecological regime may be a more likely outcome than its transition towards a new configuration. Steering urban agglomerations towards sustainability requires to overcome what *Geoff Wilson* calls “path dependencies” and “lock-in effects”, i.e. powerful institutional drivers that mean that it is often much easier and less costly to continue with a current configuration than to transition to something new and unknown. As a consequence, it is difficult to change a social-ecological regime through piecemeal steps: several elements of the incumbent system (e.g. its rules, scope, scale, artefacts, interactions etc.) will have to be modified simultaneously and in a concerted way in order to ensure the viability of a new system. This is all the more unlikely to happen as today’s social-ecological systems intertwine different layers of governance. While these difficulties are titanic, do we have an alternative to overcoming them in some way or another?

To be sure, relinking economies to places and communities can only be achieved through the cooperation and initiatives of the communities themselves - be it at the scale of a neighbourhood, a city or a city-region. From the experience of ongoing transition initiatives, we also know that a broad set of *institutional entrepreneurs* will have become local drivers of change. While we therefore do not underestimate the importance of activating a broad set of agencies, our empirical research in the cities of Brussels, Rome and London has led us to the conclusion that local authorities are often in a good position to facilitate the transition to a sustainable social-ecological regime in the city or region that they administrate. However, using this position will require that local authorities prepare themselves for a new proactive role and learn to apply the new set of strategies that we describe in this book.

## Local authorities as bridging actors

The term “local authorities” actually refers to two rather different public institutions: there are the elected local politicians who oversee, legislate and decide policies in local councils or similar institutions; and then there are the administrations, agencies and other executing bodies that implement the policies. While both political and administrative institutions are important, the TURAS project has mainly focused on the second type of local authorities and

◀Wilson, G. A. (2014). Community resilience: path dependency, lock-in effects and transitional ruptures. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 57(1): 1-26.



As scale grows, connection with place reduces which can lead to an increase in conflict due to poor connection to local problems.

◀Battilana, J., B. Leca, and E. Boxenbaum. 2009. How actors change institutions: towards a theory of institutional entrepreneurship. *Academy of Management Annals*, 3(1):65-107.

worked on the role of the local public administrations and agencies.

So what role could these local authorities play in social-ecological transitions towards economies that are related to places and communities? The short answer is: they can be what *Frances Westley* refers to as “bridging actors”. By this we mean that they can help overcoming the many gaps between actors, interests, scales, types of knowledge that need to be breached in order to embark on a sustainable social-ecological trajectory. For the long answer we invite the reader to explore the four types of bridging activities that we describe in Part 2 of this book.

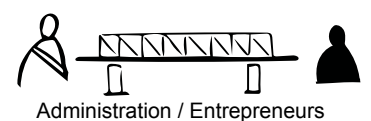
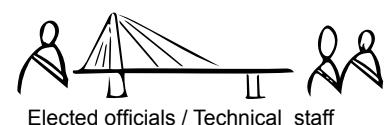
## Why could local authorities be powerful bridging actors?

Most local authorities are in a unique position for mediating between bottom-up and top-down initiatives: on the one hand, they possess direct access to political hierarchies and decision makers. This allows them to identify windows of opportunity for social-ecological change as they have access to political agendas. On the other hand, they are relatively close to the ground and in constant interaction with citizens and civil society organizations.

Crucially, they typically possess the democratic legitimacy to broker between conflicting interests as they are formally bound by the public interest. They are by definition bound to the interests of a given geographical scale and community and therefore well situated to support the type of place-based economy that we advocate. Finally, through their traditional policy competencies, they are able to influence directly partial elements of the social-ecological system, for instance when carrying out infrastructure investments or designing the rules that govern economic interactions.

Although there are many promising examples of European local authorities embracing bridging activities as their new role, it is true that this role requires a new set of competencies, skills, attitudes and policies that are currently not yet in place. The aim of this book is contribute to strategies available to local authorities by showcasing inspiring initiatives we were involved with in London, Brussels and Rome.

◀Westley, F. 1995. Governing design: the management of social systems and ecosystems management, In: Barriers and bridges to the renewal of ecosystems and institutions. New York: Columbia University Press,391-427.



There is no standard approach for bridge building. This will change depending on the problem, context and stakeholders





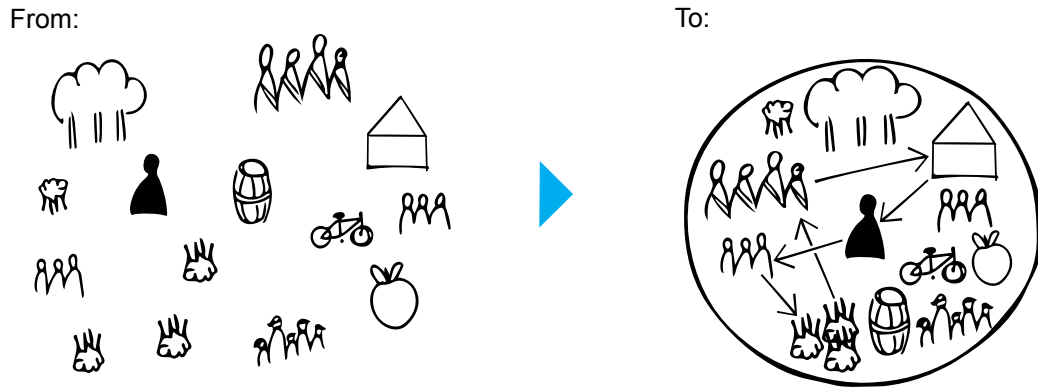
### **1.3 The strategies in a nutshell**

The core of this book are patterns of various strategies that can help local authorities to become better bridging actors. These strategies are condensed accounts of actual transition initiatives towards a more sustainable and resilient form of economics, i.e. what we call place- and community-based economics. While these strategies could also be implemented by other actors such as local business communities or non-profit organizations, we have focussed on the perspective of local authorities, pointing out which role they play in each strategy and which competencies they have to possess in order to implement a particular strategy.

#### **025**

Mayor Vox of Dardesheim (DE) shows off a converted electric car that uses renewable energy from the town owned Wind farm. The local administration here, acted as the connector and intermediary between the residents and their goal to become energy independent.  
Photo: A Hill.

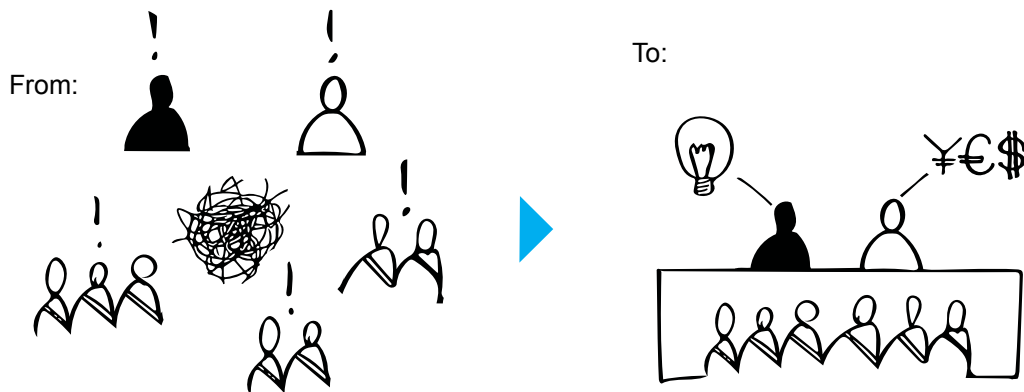
[www.energiepark-druiberg.de](http://www.energiepark-druiberg.de)



**Bridging strategy #1:**  
**Connection between elements and the system**

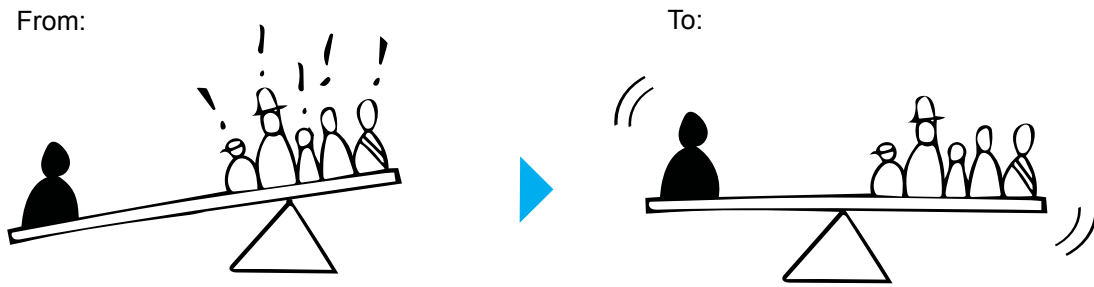
Building a sustainable economy is about connecting places, communities and economic activities in new social-ecological systems. This requires new forms of collective analysis, as no individual expert or organisation can connect all the dots to envision the new configuration of the place-based economy. Our strategies provide resources to help local authorities support the type of collective system thinking that is needed for the transition process towards sustainability.

.....



**Bridging strategy #2:**  
**Cooperation between pioneers and the establishment**

This strategy helps local authorities to create a framework in which pioneers of sustainable economic activities can engage in meaningful and constructive cooperation with actors of the economic establishment. Pioneers and establishment have to cooperate at eye level in order to overcome power asymmetries and vested interests and to foster mutual learning about economic possibilities, but also the limits of up-scaling and regime change.

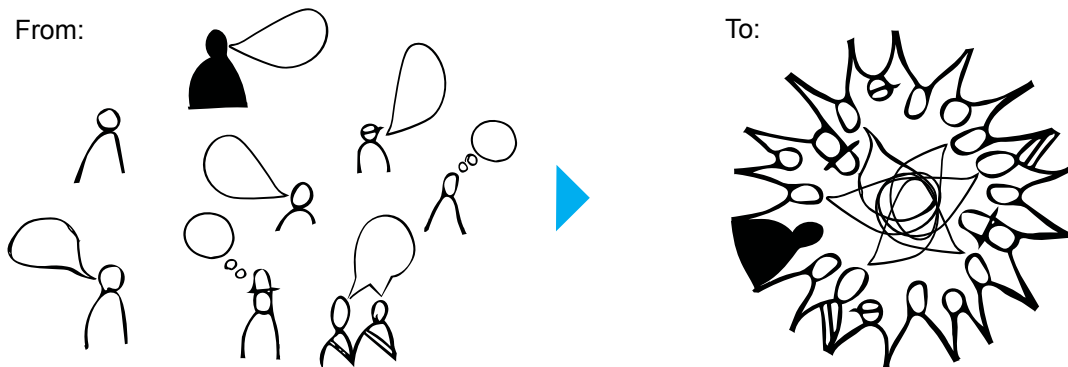


**Bridging strategy #3:**

**Alignment of particular and common interests**

This strategy is about finding institutional arrangements that can align the interests of private actors and common interests to develop a sustainable new neighbourhood. This may include, for instance the owner of a plot of land with the neighbours, public actors and financiers.

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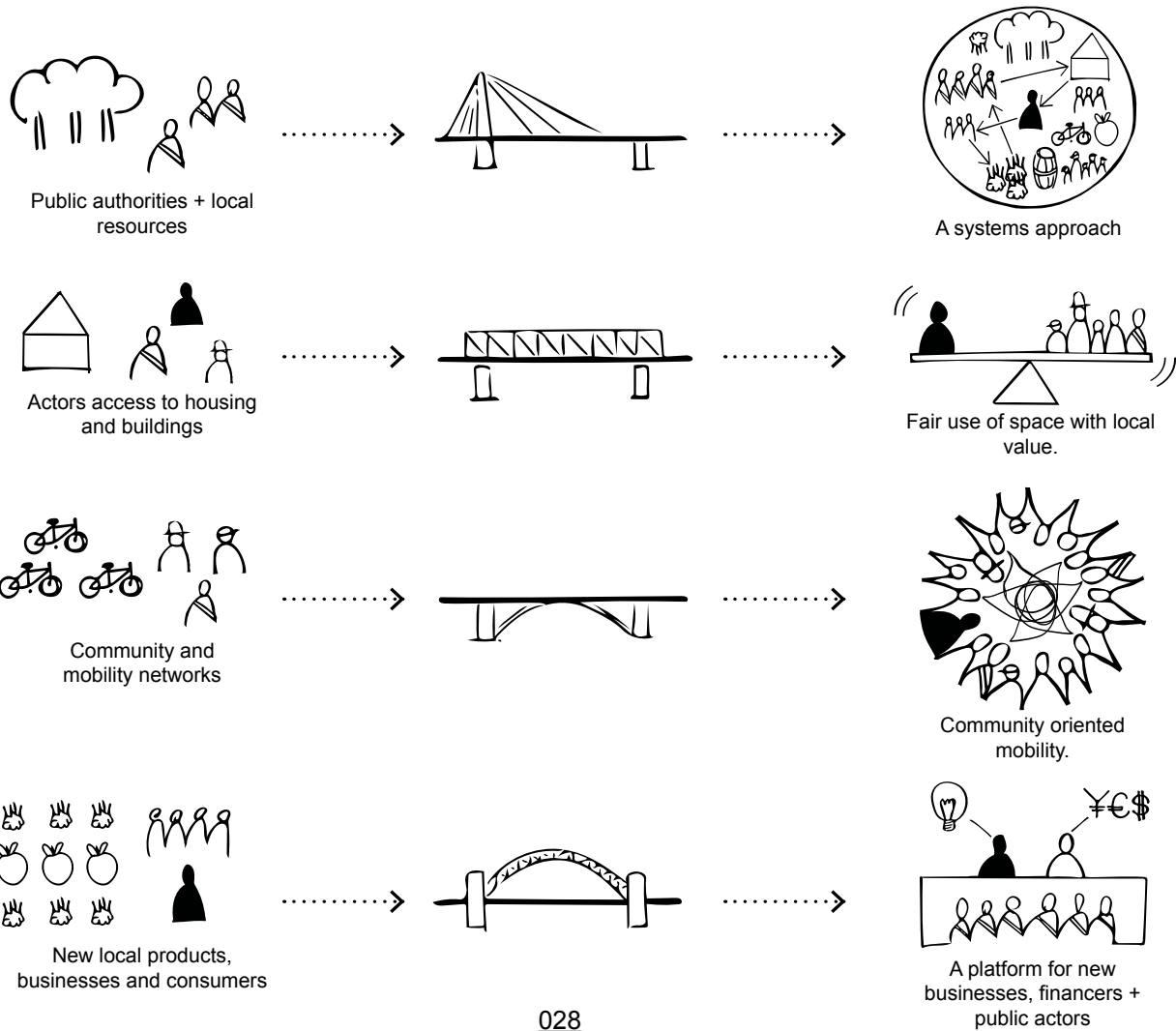
**Bridging strategy #4:**

**Collaboration between communities and entrepreneurs**

The conventional approach to design new products and services has not actively involved the end users. If local economies are supposed to deliver value for communities in a given place, a more prominent and active role has to be given to users. This creates the challenge for entrepreneurs to meet representative members of the community and to engage in meaningful co-creation. Local authorities can be instrumental in this process and our strategies describes how this can be achieved.



029 Solfatarata di  
Manziana vision  
workshop, March  
2016. Photo A Hill



The bridging strategies should be adapted to the local context in terms of local resources, governance structures, actors and skills.

## Caveat

We think that the strategies in this book covers a large set of recurrent challenges posed by transitions to a social-ecological configuration of local economies. This being said, they are by no means exhaustive and many other bridging strategies could be added. Moreover, each generic strategy will have to be adapted to the specific context in which the local authority operates: for example, the department for economic regeneration of a municipality will have different resources and constraints from a regional economic planning agency. The problem area and level of complexity of the transition process will also differ according to the local circumstances, as do the type and number of stakeholders that will be involved in the implementation of each strategy. We therefore encourage the reader to focus on the essence of each bridging strategy and think about how it could materialise in his or her local context.

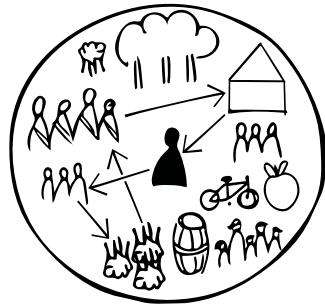


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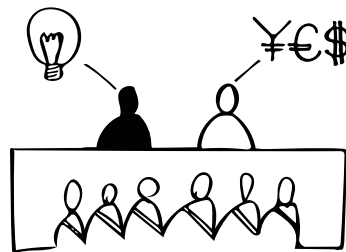
A discussion moment while developing a systems map in Rome.  
Photo: A Hill.

## PART 2: BRIDGING STRATEGIES

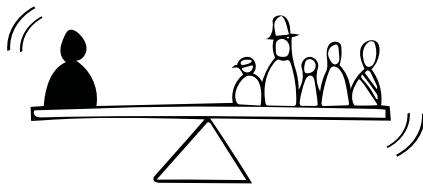
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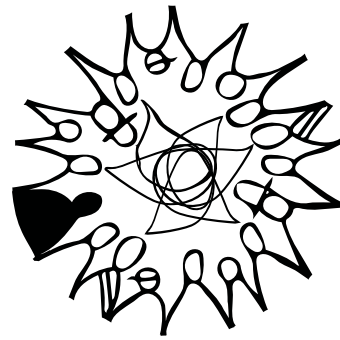
Connecting



Cooperating



Aligning



Collaborating

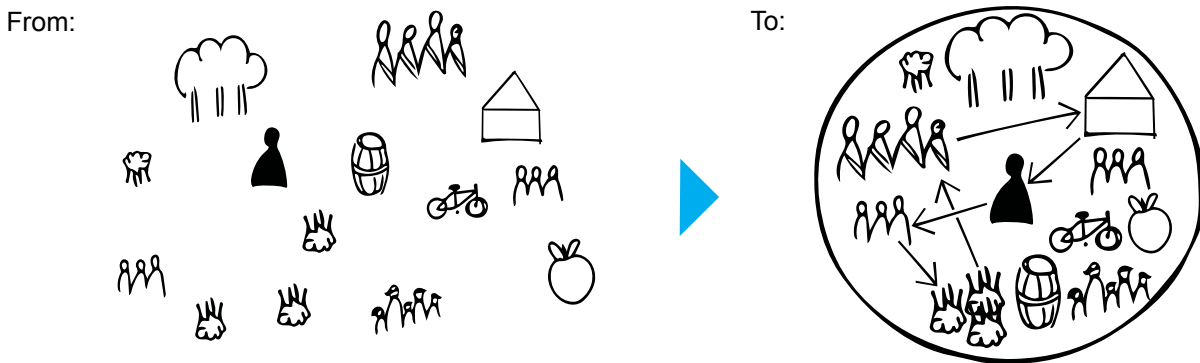
In the following pages we will describe the concept of these four strategies and then look at how they have been applied in actual projects.

These four strategies contain many overlaps – in fact it is very easy to combine all four within the scope of a project or over the evolution of a project from vision making to creating the conditions for entrepreneurship and innovation.

There is no recipe for how to apply these strategies – context, attitudes, financial conditions or perhaps political motivation will all change how a problem is explored and the kind of outcomes that may be most viable at the time.

We therefore stress that before rolling out such strategies, it may be necessary to carefully observe the current state of relevant stakeholders.

## 2.1 Connecting the elements of a social-ecological system



*Often, all the components of an effective system are available, locally. But getting people to sing from the same song-sheet is another challenge. This is something that will involve open dialogue, co-creation - and systematic thinking. This strategy helps with defining the steps of an artful system thinking workshop.*

### The strategy at a glance:

Challenge	Tactics	Implementation by local municipality in Rome, Italy	Required competencies of local authority
Disconnection between physical and socio-economic aspects of urban development	Taking a system thinking approach to economic planning	System thinking workshop with 60 local stakeholders on the transition of the “Parco Agricolo”, a unique asset with 460 ha of undeveloped land inside the Lazio Region, towards becoming hub of a local food system	Political and analytical ability to frame transition to place-based economy as system transition  Analytical ability to define scope of system and identify relevant stakeholders for collective analysis
A social-ecological system cannot be analysed without community stakeholders attaching meaning to it	Adopting the position of a curator who cares about the subject without imposing own interpretation	Curatorial approach to system workshop emphasizing meaning and multiple ways of knowing	Capacity to adopt a non-neutral, normative stance that cares about transition  Provision of framework blending rational and more personal ways of exploring system transition
Knowledge necessary for system transition scattered across actors and scales	Structuring the workshop as a curatorial cycle that helps navigating between specific and broader perspectives	The workshop allowed oscillation between particular themes (agriculture, landscape, urbanism, governance) and the whole (function of Parco as hub of local food system)	Personal competencies to act as curator in system thinking workshop  Ability to identify subsystems and lead workshop group through oscillation between system- and subsystem level  Technical competencies to transform workshop outcome into system representations



## Why is it relevant?

Too often the traditional way of compartmentalised actions still prevails in local economic development: while urban planners and real estate developers shape the physical basis of the economy, economic stimulation agencies and administrations responsible for training and business start-ups tend to focus exclusively on people. Moreover, local communities hardly get a meaningful say in economic development policies concerning their environment - indeed often there is formal consultation with responses coming from interested parties and communities not having an informed opinion. Such an approach can lead to situations in which places, communities and the economy are disconnected rather than in symbiosis. Maybe the problem starts further back: society as a whole remains unable to “predict” what is needed and the focus is generally on the short-term rather than in longer term investment.

Building a sustainable economy is about connecting places, communities and economic activities. Moving from a compartmentalised to a concerted approach is, however, a big challenge: without an effective approach to envisioning the complex interactions between places, communities and the economy it is very difficult to make any progress in the way of transition.

The bridging strategy presented here is about how local authorities can help connect the different elements of the social-ecological system that underpins the place-based economy. Since no individual expert or organisation alone can connect all the dots to envision the new configuration of the place-based economy, the strategy is an approach that bridges between different types of knowledge, but also between the various actors and scales that are involved in a comprehensive approach to local economic development. The bridging strategy has two building blocks that help to deal with complexity: system thinking and curating. *We now introduce each of these two approaches* and show how they can be used in a “system thinking workshop” curated by a local authority.

A detailed description of section 2.1 can be found in:

Kampelmann, S., Kaethler, M. & Hill, A. (2015). “Curating complexity: a participatory approach for real-world system transitions.” Presented at the 51st ISOCARP Congress, 19-23 October 2015, Netherlands and Belgium.

## System thinking

One of the most powerful ways to capture complexity is through thinking in systems - from the Greek *systema*, “organized whole, a whole compounded of parts” - that adopts a holistic perspective in order to examine how the elements of a system “stand together”. In the 1970s, system thinking revolutionised the understanding of complex biotopes such as forests or oceans by framing them as intelligible “ecosystems”. Around the same time, *MIT scientists* applied system thinking to global biophysical developments and charted “the limits to growth” beyond which global production systems would become unstable.

◀Meadows, D. H., Meadows, D. L., Randers, J., & Behrens, W. W. (1972). *The limits to growth: A Report to the Club of Rome's Project on the Predicament of Mankind*. New York: Universe

Although it is rarely adopted in local economic planning and spatial design, we argue that a “system perspective” provides considerable mileage for dealing with the different forms of complexity associated with them. It invites the participants in a development situation to consider how different particulars (such as a new building, a new economic activity, a new park etc) together form a whole.

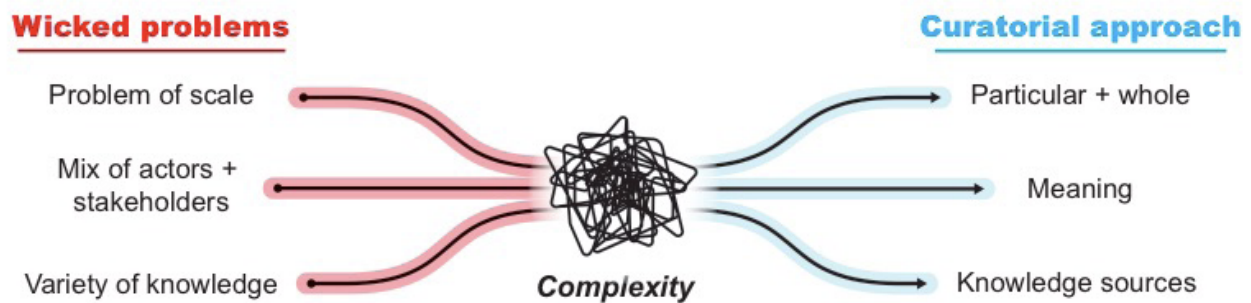
The kind of systems encountered in local economic planning situations are, however, intrinsically different from “hard” systems applied to natural science and engineering. The presence of multiple types of knowledge and actors mean that the understanding of social-ecological systems requires dealing with multiple overlapping perspectives as any specific discipline or body of knowledge will always be partial and provisional. These systems defy overly rational approaches and tools and call for a plurality of voices, lenses, and instruments.

Complex conditions such as this occur notably due to the fact that key elements of the system - the local community stakeholders and their knowledge - are not exogenous to the analysis of the system. They can for instance decide on the goals and the rules of the system and, on a more fundamental level, assign meaning to the system. The curatorial approach we present in the next section offers an innovative and conscious effort to adopt system thinking in a setting in which the meaning of the system is subject to interpersonal dynamics that are part of the planning situation.

## The curatorial approach to system thinking

While much has been written about potential tools for system thinking, considerably less is written about influential roles that can facilitate it, as individual approaches or assemblages, within a participatory setting. Roles like organiser, facilitator, or moderator tend to reflect the logic of simpler problems that can be ‘fixed’ through analytical decomposition and are not relevant for system thinking. We propose that local authorities adopt a curatorial role, a position that deals with complexity and conflict using multiple approaches, methods and logics.

Figure 1 (below): Challenges of wicked problems that can be explored through system thinking and the basic aspects of curating.



The Swedish curator *Maria Lind* defines the curatorial, as “...a way of thinking in terms of interconnections: linking objects, images, processes, people, locations, history and discourses in physical space like an active catalyst generating twists, turns and tensions.” In today’s art and design world, the curator plays an important role as translator and mediator between the artefact and different audiences. He/she is intimately connected to the artefact itself and deeply concerned with the output of the translation, actively giving it form but plays a role which is neither the cultural producer nor the audience.

◀Lind, M., von Bismarck, B., Cohen, A. P., Gillick, L., Wood, B. K., & Zolghadr, T. 2010. Selected Maria Lind Writing, B. K. Wood (Ed.). Sternberg Press.

The curator, having been provided with institutional or cultural legitimacy, has a wide arsenal of techniques for engaging audiences and translating the story of the artefact and its significance. Moreover, the curator is not neutral but takes a normative stance to the work that he or she brings to the audience. We think that adopting this role can help local authorities coordinate the type of system thinking in which many stakeholders will have to participate to make a sensible system out of what are so far treated as disconnected and compartmentalised elements.

## How can it be implemented?

We argue that framing urban planning situations as ‘wicked problems’ and adopting a curatorial approach with systems at its heart, provides considerable mileage for moving forward, untangling stand-offs and making such problems accessible to relevant actors. In effect, this implies a re-framing of the role of facilitator as a creative knowledge broker, mediating, translating, positioning and choreographing different types of knowledge.

Local authorities can achieve this in a system thinking workshop. Before going into the details of the organisation of such as workshop, we propose three guiding principles that characterise the curatorial approach to system transitions.

## Three guiding principles of the curatorial approach to system thinking

### *1. Bringing stakeholders together to create meaning*

At the heart of the curatorial approach is an affinity and partiality for the subject matter. The local administration should not be value-neutral but assume a position of relationality, whereby the curator recognises his/her own subjectivity in the process of their work. The term curator originates from the Latin *curare*, to care for. The role of the curator, originally, was a caretaker of objects and artefacts and today the curator is concerned with what the artefacts ‘mean’ to different audiences. Local authorities should combine both of these responsibilities: firstly a deep consideration and care for the local context and its potential futures and secondly as translators helping to communicate the context’s meaning according to local stakeholder positions. Certainly this is already best practice for many local authorities.

## 2. Acknowledge multiple ways of knowing

In line with a systems perspective, a local authority that adopts a curatorial approach affirms that there are multiple ways of knowing — equally so, this is paired with a multiplicity of forms of communication. System transitions not only require tapping into the different bodies of specialised knowledge associated with the canon of academic and professional disciplines but also require uprooting accepted knowledge hierarchies — the thinking which has given us these problems in the first place — such as giving preferences to art over science, or a designed artefact over a policy document. Multiple ways of knowing also implies a considerable amount of demystification of the problem being addressed, whereby individuals learn to see and accept their own perspective as part of a much broader discourse. To do this requires re-conceptualising the system transition as a complex problem to be analysed collectively.

◀ Hill, D., 2012, *Dark Matter and Trojan Horse, a Strategic Design Vocabulary*, Strelka Press.

## 3. Moving back and forth between elements and the whole

To work with complexity, it is necessary to work between the individual elements that constitute the whole. The system thinker *Dan Hill* refers to this as skipping between the ‘meta’ (the big picture) and the ‘matter’ (the material detail). Taking from the curatorial and systems thinking tradition, we contend that the particular and the whole cannot be understood without the other, therefore, moving towards systems transitions requires change to occur at the individual and structural levels. The curatorial draws on agency from the individual level into the systems level. This oscillation connects perspectives across scales.

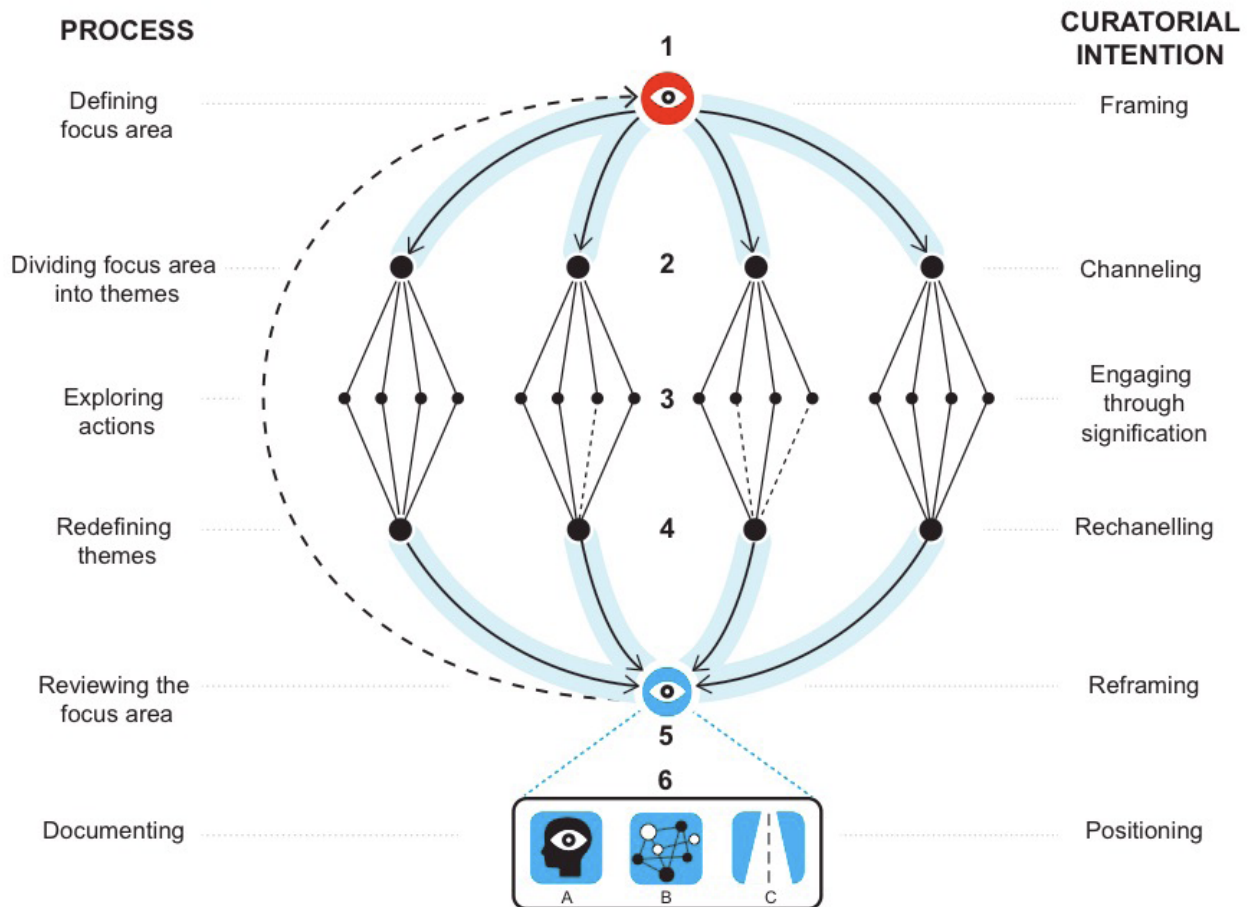


Figure 2: The workshop cycle; the curatorial frames the steps in the process

## Generic structure of a curatorial system thinking workshop

We now describe a system thinking workshop that is designed as a kind of cycle consisting of six steps that are illustrated in Figure 2. The first step (1) opens up the discussion and frames the focus area - this can be seen as divergent thinking and can be quite abstract. The following three steps (2-4) involve splitting the focus area into smaller themes that invokes emergent thinking. Specific problems can be discussed in detail to test the concept defined in the focus area. It also explores action areas that may be explored further after the workshop. The fifth step (5) uses knowledge gained in steps 2-4 to review ideas noted in step 1 through an exhibition of the work produced - this is a moment where the themes are compared and the vision tested. These five steps are what we, in the context of a workshop, call a curatorial cycle, which can occur numerous times over the course of the workshop. Once the general focus area has been defined, it is possible to refine a vision and define specific actions. The final step (6) evidently involves documenting the process and defining steps forward.

## **Steps in the cycle:**

### **1. Framing:**

**Process:** To begin bringing together different ideas, worldviews, hopes and fears.

**Curatorial intention:** To start with the holistic vision of problem area, which is a curated working hypothesis. This is the basis for exploration using different means available, such as artefacts, images, research material or presentations, which set the tone without directly addressing the specific context.

**Outcome:** The basic building blocks of a coordinated vision that allow for discussions to funnel towards specific issues.

### **2. Channelling**

**Process:** Break down the vision of the problem as a system composed of multiple tangible problems, which can be individually addressed.

**Curatorial intention:** to predefine the themes before the workshop in order to channel the focus of the participants.

**Outcome:** Participants are not lost within the complexity of breaking down a large problem. Instead, this activates discussions and accelerates the collaborative process towards predetermined useful themes.

### **3. Engaging through signification**

**Process:** to personally reflect and identify concrete actions, artefacts or conditions for addressing a part of the problem.

**Curatorial intention:** to create the conditions for individuals or small sub-groups to personally identify with the problem or solution and to find a unique voice within the wider discussions.

**Outcome:** The emergence of specific action points for a small part of the larger problem.

### **4. Re-channelling**

**Process:** Integrate different particular solutions within a larger body of solutions.

**Curatorial intention:** valorising leverage points.

**Outcome:** A deepened knowledge of how the particular parts fit within the whole.

### **5. Re-framing**

**Process:** Bring the groups to a point of exchange to review and refine the vision.

**Curatorial intention:** Negotiation of knowledge(s) through bringing together tensions, juxtapositions, complementarities et to catalyse responses and resonance with the proposed vision.

**Outcome:** A closer consolidation of particular proposed solutions within the vision.

### **6. Positioning**

**Process:** Document and communicate the ideas from the previous steps into a meaningful and memorable form.

**Curatorial intention:** To support multiple voices and expressions in translating different ideas into a visual representation.

**Outcome:** a visual representation that incorporates the complexity of the problem and the nuances of the multiple solutions provided.

Case study #1





# PARCO AGRICOLO DI CASAL DEL MARMO (IT)

## The goal

The goal of project is to transition the area towards a coherent and inclusive development. The Parco Agricolo, as imagined by the local stakeholders, can function only if the different dimensions make complementary contributions, hence it is important that the plan is inclusive to all these dimensions. The curatorial system thinking workshop was tested by a local municipality and a regional economic development agency in the metropolitan area of Rome. The objective of the workshop was to bring a variety of local stakeholders together in order to create a systemic vision for the social-ecological transition of the “Parco Agricolo Casal del Marmo”, an area of 460 ha within the North-West area of the metropolitan region of Rome.

## The site

The site contains deep layers of topsoil that have been cultivated over millennia - the soil is referred to as “terra romana” and lies in the heartland of Roman civilisation. Some of this historical legacy has been exploited since the 1980s by a cooperative and a small area serves as pasture for local sheep. However, most of the Parco was left fallow after real estate speculation progressively crowded out agricultural uses since the 1970s. The Parco is surrounded by a partially abandoned complex of buildings that was a mental hospital until some forty years ago and of which the main one is currently used as a hospice. The vicinity is further marked by a hospital and several peripheral neighbourhoods of the city of Rome. Around one fourth of the area is owned by public authorities, the rest is split between various private and ecclesiastical “latifundistas” and a commercial bank. The entire area has been earmarked as “collective interest area” in land use planning as “agricultural park” - a political decision that translated into a considerable financial loss for landowners willing to develop the land, as the market price for land that can be developed is in general significantly higher compared to the price of land that cannot be developed.

### READ MORE:

For a full description of the workshop and project:  
[oppla.eu/casestudy/17574](http://oppla.eu/casestudy/17574)

### 040

The Parco Agricolo di Casal del Marmo, the 460 ha site located within the Metropolitan area of Rome that was until recently considered prime development land.  
Photo: S Kampelmann.

“Latifundistas” - from Latin (spacious) and fundus (estate) refers to the owners of an extensive parcel of privately owned land.

## Applying the curatorial cycle in a three-day participatory workshop

In the case of the Casal del Marmo site, the curatorial approach took the form of a three-day, on-site, hands-on workshop with around 60 participants from the area and five international experts that was organised in June 2015. The key driving force and main organiser of the workshop was the Municipio XIV, but this local administration worked closely with a team of three international curators based in Brussels. The preparation of the workshop benefited from the professional support of BIC Lazio, the regional innovation agency. BIC Lazio gathered input from a wide range of stakeholders and also conducted intensive soil tests to accurately determine the agricultural potential of the Parco. The overall architecture of the workshop was structured in the form of the six steps of the curatorial approach presented above.

**Step 1. Framing.** The initial working definition of the overall problem area of the Parco embraced a non-neutral and political stance: the curators decided to engage with the local stakeholders and the site in order to help co-constructing a meaningful vision. The local authority wanted to promote a positive vision that would suggest to the local and regional decision makers that the Parco could play a completely different role in the urban system. Day 1 started with a guided walk around the site. This was followed by short presentations given by the five external experts that again focused on community-supported food projects in other cities.

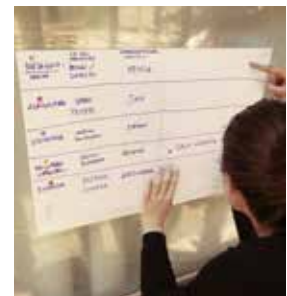
**Step 2. Channelling.** Moving from the whole to the particular was achieved by channelling participants and conversations into a limited set of themes: Steps 2-4 thus took place within thematic groups composed of 10-15 participants that were predefined according to interest and expertise. This allocation was based on the municipality's assessment of each participant's knowledge, interests and professional training. This being said, participants were free to affiliate and follow other themes as well - and many did.

The themes were similar to the 'principles of relevance' that designers identify when addressing 'wicked problems' including: agriculture, urban integration, landscape, energy and resources, and economy. These themes were predefined



**Step 1:** Framing through explanation of the context of the project, on the site, by representatives of public authorities.

Photo: S Kampelmann.



**Step 2:** The group was split into five theme areas, themes as defined through consultation with stakeholders.

Photo: S Kampelmann.

by the organisers in order to save time and ongoing discussion during the workshop.

Each theme was framed as a 'subsystem' of the site as a whole. During Step 2, the groups formed by each theme were given a set of clear objectives and exercises that aimed at developing systematic thinking, including intermediate objectives such as: "understanding system analysis", "understanding system maps", "identifying the elements of the system" and so forth. While the themes were somewhat elaborated for the teams, it was expected that the team validated or redefined them as they saw it.

We found that the act of drawing a system, even a simple system (i.e. how a carrot travels from farm to fork) was enough to set a common vocabulary, defined by the participants, to help integrate actors in the map-making process. This self-interpretation and "rule-making" within the group allowed a critical step forward. We observed that groups that did not start to draw a visual representation of "their" system either struggled to structure their ideas and lost time talking abstractly or otherwise resorted to a communication language that fitted their predominant career or interest and led to a partial analysis (such as schematic design drawings for the landscape group). The workshop confirmed that people are rarely trained to think in systems and will clutter down, focusing on their specialisation if left to their own accord. The basic concept of systems thinking proved to be quite didactic and helped individuals to express their knowledge in a way that would be commensurate with other conversations.

**Step 3. Engaging through sense-making.** Step 3 is pivotal in our workshop structure as it strives to create situations in which all three curatorial aspects come into play. Step 3 further splits the thematic groups into more specific issues and groups of 2-4 individuals that would be most likely to lead to meaningful exchange on a personal level (aspect of meaning). Second, these more intimate conversations would span a broader and deeper spectrum of human communication, and participants were encouraged to walk around the site so as to situate Step 3 in the landscape (multiple ways of knowing and rooting that 'knowing' in meaning). Third, the conversations were framed as a mid-point of the cycle whole-particular-whole (elements within a whole).



**Step 2:** It is crucial to understand how things relate. Systems were mapped very roughly to ensure the group members collectively understood the larger context of their problem area.

Photo: A Hill



**Step 3:** A small group split away to further discuss a particular problem.

Photo: A Bourgain.

The precise content of the conversations in Step 3 was to some extent left to the groups to define, as long as these conversations were oriented towards creating a vision for the thematic sub-system that could be later incorporated into the vision for the whole system. Discussing specific interventions in personal conversations proved to be instrumental for keeping discussions relevant and interesting while also fostering commitment and tangible steps towards implementation, as most conversations involved specific actions that individuals wanted to be and could feel personally involved in.

**Step 4. Re-channelling.** Step 4 is the last step at theme-level and serves to redefine or update the results of Step 2. We set the objective of this step as identifying the action areas with the highest leverage for transitioning the Parco's system in the desired direction. For this purpose, overlapping conversations could be merged and irrelevant or conflicting ones discussed and discarded.

Step 4 was instrumental as a bridge between the personal conversations of Step 3 and the plenary presentation in Step 5. We believe that the symmetric nature of the curatorial cycle allowed to keep the group-level discussions relevant and constructive: results from the personal conversations were presented as contributions to the thematic objectives as well as in the context and language of the framework that the group defined together prior to splitting. This meant that members of the group perceived themselves as "playing for the same team" without excluding the psychologically rewarding sensation of proposing a particularly creative or useful individual contribution.

**Step 5. Re-framing.** In the Parco Agricolo Casal del Marmo workshop this step took the form of a plenary session in which a collage of visual material (including vision drawings and subsystem maps) was exhibited as a backdrop. Representatives of each thematic group presented in turn the main outcomes of Steps 2-4 to the plenary, again in an atmosphere of "playing for the same team" since the thematic work was framed as specialised contributions towards the overall vision for the Parco.

At the end the end of Step 5 the group naturally produced a



**Step 3:** Simply going for a walk in the site is a powerful way to refocus and absorb new perspectives.

Photo: S Kampelmann.



**Step 4:** Upon discussing the detail, the theme groups can come back together to review the larger vision.

Photo: A Hill.



**Step 5:** Presenting all the groups' work offers perspective.

Photo: S Kampelmann.



rather heteroclitic collage of ideas, concepts, propositions and partial visions. But presenting these elements side-by-side as a first step towards a more coherent vision nevertheless created the impression of an ensemble.

**Step 6. Positioning.** The following images (following pages) show the range of ideas developed within the groups. This is only a sample of the output however it shows the diversity of the material developed by the participants and how they represented their ideation process. The groups were asked to include 3-5 'action areas' based on the most significant priorities - many of these were those explored during Step 3. The compilation of all of these diagrams helped define overlaps and the main leverage points for the project as a whole. In this case one of the main conclusions from the workshop was that an independent organisation, we refer to as a 'community interest company' (see following section), was necessary to represent the vision, drive and negotiate change. Another potential element of the social-ecological system of the Parco Agricolo could be the creation of an agricultural incubator to help young farmers to start up their business.



**Step 6:** Defining the next steps forward.

Photo: A Hill

## Lessons learnt

While we initially felt that it was a disadvantage that the organisers were not local, this turned into an advantage as the local stakeholders could see that our vested interest was in the process and not in claiming ownership of the long-term ideas. This not only helped to improve the content of the project, but also helped to raise the expectations from the local stakeholders which led to a stronger, more constructive participation.

Secondly, while we initially felt that a three-day workshop was daunting and perhaps an over-kill, it turned out to be essential to allow for smaller problems to be solved while adapting iterations of the bigger picture.

Finally it is important to take into account that external help is only effective when there is a clear political commitment and effort to implement the planning process. In this case, the local 'institutional entrepreneur' was a highly motivated local councillor whom clearly understood the need for support.

Example of the I-Agri incubator in Bracciano

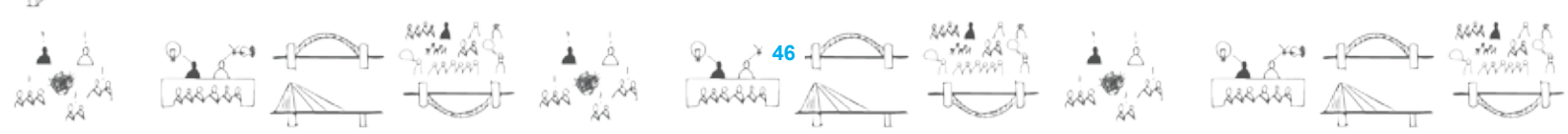
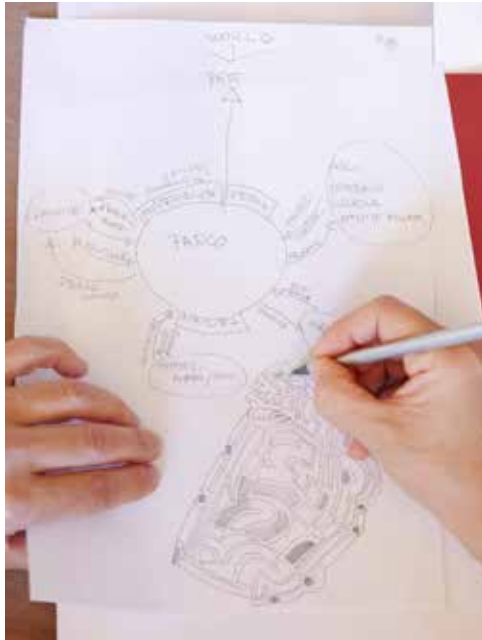
In this innovative project managed by BIC Lazio, the regional innovation agency, the peri-urban incubator helps sustainable agri-related businesses by coaching them, but also by providing plots of land for the testing of their activities. [www.tinyurl.com/nuuz3lu](http://www.tinyurl.com/nuuz3lu)

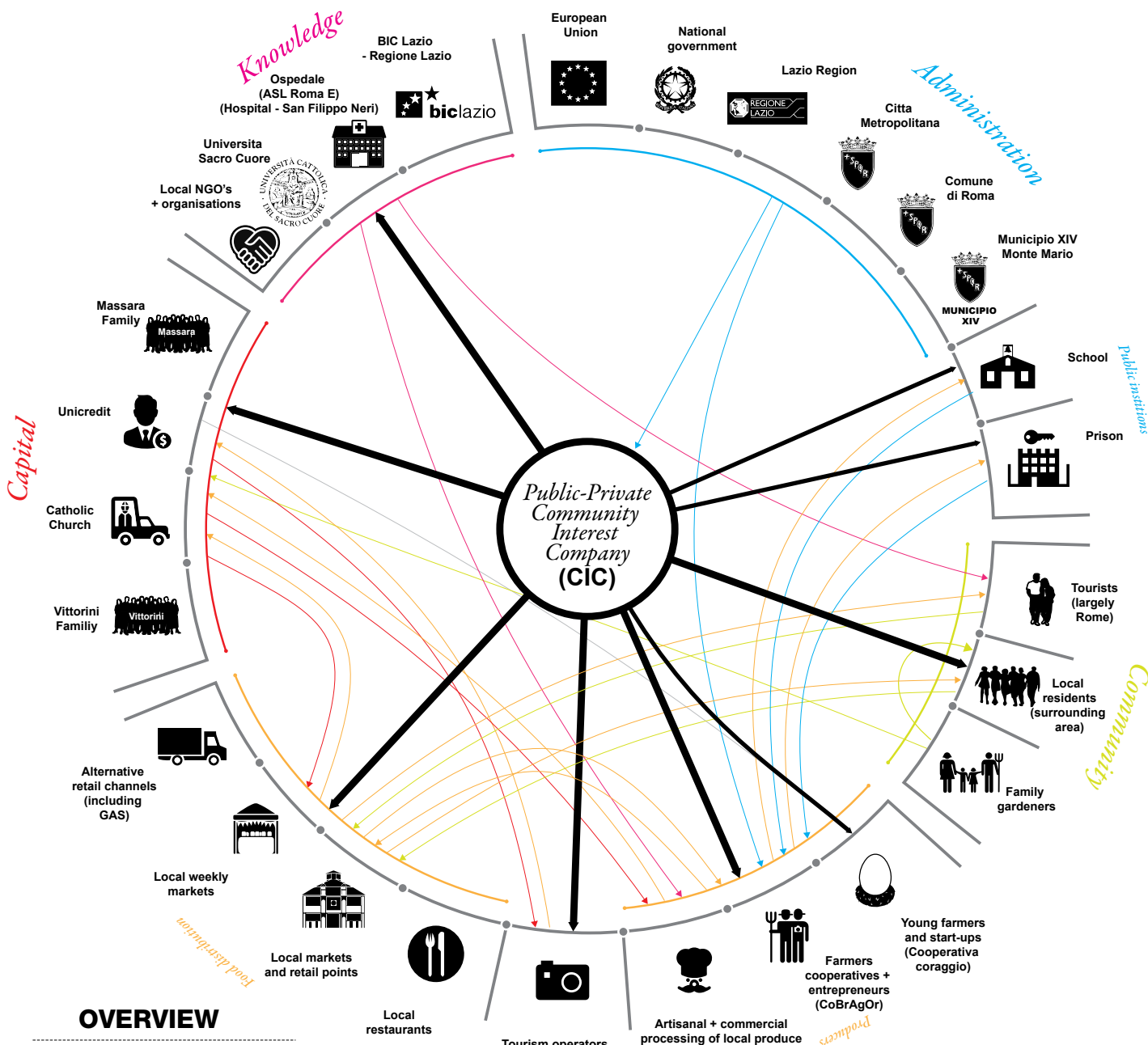
### 046

Photos A Hill + S  
Kampelmann  
p46: Mapping governance.

### 047

The governance map reflecting the outcomes of the workshop with a CIC positioned as a new key stakeholder.





## OVERVIEW

The Parco involves a vast number of actors, issues and conditions with a limited by complex regulations and an overarching vision. To simplify this process and to provide an eye over the activities occurring on the site, a development agency is proposed. This agency is intended to minimise processing time, improve development opportunities and help stimulate community activities.

The development agency is intended to speed up processes, yet act in the public interest while avoiding a public cost. Therefore the agency is intended to be a public-private partnership or a 'Community Interest Company' (CIC).

The CIC acts as a link between relevant stakeholders and brings them together when relevant. It includes a board of directors that represent the main community interests defined in the vision for the Parco. It has three main roles:

- 1/ Define what is possible based on existing regulations and the vision of the site.
- 2/ Help stimulate action and projects.
- 3/ Help bring the community together.

**Knowledge** is about agricultural knowledge as much as it is about innovation.

The CIC can connect organisations that have knowledge and those that need it.

**Capital** in the Parco involves two groups: the land owners and financiers. By chance, Unicredit is both.

Both land owners and financiers will have much to gain from agricultural and community focused projects however will need to create the appropriate conditions for it to happen.

The CIC can act as a go-between, between those that have ideas or initiatives and those that have land or cash.

There are three types of **business** identified.

Firstly there are the businesses that produce the food: cooperatives, kitchens processing food, and innovators that are exploring new forms of agriculture. Secondly the typical markets for the products developed on the site that range from retailers to distributors or even restaurants. Finally there are the operators that are developing tourism projects such as tours, bike hire, festivals and so on.

The CIC can help initiate possible businesses opportunities or help accommodate those that would like to invest on the site.

**Administration** involves both the various levels of government - from the Municipality to the European Union. Furthermore there are also public institutions that are associated with government however have

more specific objectives.

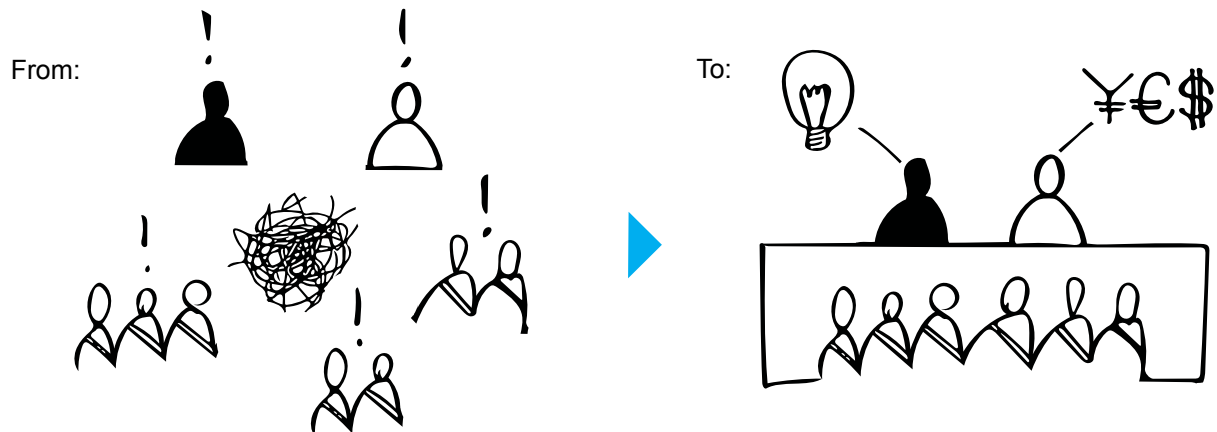
At present there is a problem between those that have the greatest interest and those that have the greatest power (this includes those such as national and EU level government) that have power through funding.

The CIC can act as an go-between, between government policy objectives and the potential of the site. It can also help engage with government institutions such as the schools and the prison.

The **community** involves two groups. Firstly those that are actively involved with the site - family gardeners - who's business is not of a commercial nature. Secondly those that are informally involved with the site - both local residents that may like to use the site as a park or tourists that have an interest in the agriculture and food.

The CIC can help to coordinate between the gardeners and the land owners and create events to attract both local and tourist visitors.

## 2.2 Cooperation between pioneers and the establishment



*Innovation and good ideas can be easily limited by technical matters such as financing, regulations or even existing demand. This may simply be that each stakeholder has a very different perspective which limits absorbing new ideas. While tools such as the PSS toolkit help to envision potentials this strategy is about how to allow new products or services can enter into the market.*

### The strategy at a glance:

<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Tactics</b>	<b>Implementation by regional environmental agency in Brussels, Belgium</b>	<b>Required competencies of local authority</b>
Socio-technical innovations for sustainability transitions often confined to small economic niches and fail to impact at system level	Providing a framework in which niche (pioneers) and regime actors cooperate at eye level	The regional environmental agency invited both niche entrepreneurs (like start-ups) and regime organisations (like federations) to participate in sector-level alliances	Capacity to identify suitable niche actors and engage them in cooperative process  Creation and moderation of process in which alternative paths of transition can be discussed
Asymmetric distribution of power among establishment and pioneers	Brokerage by public authorities bound by common good	Niche actors were over-represented (in statistical terms) in different sector-specific alliances	Ability to obtain and enforce political mandate that gives a voice to niche actors that is stronger than their current economic and political power
Difficulty to evaluate whether a niche activity can feasibly lead to sustainable change at system level	Confront pioneering business models with the reality at regime level	Constructive dialogues in which emergent ideas and models were evaluated and discussed by knowledgeable and experienced actors of economic establishment	Ability to clarify terms and stakes of system-wide transitions in each economic sector



## Building bridges between the pioneers of sustainable economic activities and the economic establishment

This strategy addresses a chronic lack of cooperation between pioneers and the establishment. The pioneers of sustainable activities are often still confined to small niches, but their vision and ways of doing things could help steering the economy towards a place- and community-based approach. Indeed, in many cities we see new forms of sustainable economic activities such as organic food baskets that bring peri-urban agricultural produce to urbanites, often through *socially innovative distribution and payment schemes*; socially innovative deconstruction-for-reuse operators that re-inject building materials by selling them to new projects before a building is destroyed; or initiatives that *systematically map underused urban assets* and promote their use for activities that are valued by their surrounding community.

There are alternative ways in which such pioneering niche activities could turn into full-blown social-ecological regime change, *like up-scaling, emulation and imitation*. What hampers the transition in many cities is that the niche actors do not effectively cooperate with established actors such as sectoral federations, trade unions, schools, public institutions or large companies. Why could this be a problem? On the one hand, the cooperation between niche and regime actors could lead to a better understanding of the scope and feasibility of using the pioneering economic strategy outside of its initial niche. Established actors often have a better vision of the wider opportunity structure and are sometimes themselves part of it. Schools and other public institutions, for example, could be an important venue of increasing the scope of local food systems. On the other hand, the regime actors often have vested interests that work against the pioneers. This means that their cooperation is necessary to avoid that they obstruct the social-ecological transition.

### How can it be implemented?

This strategy can be implemented in form of a multi-stakeholder alliance on the transition of specific sectors of economic activity. The alliance should be created, coordinated and moderated by the public authorities but needs to involve

Payment schemes: AMAP in France; GASAP in Belgium

Reusing Dublin responds to the observation that we don't use space in our city efficiently - and sometimes we don't use it at all. It aims to map underused spaces in order to identify opportunities for using the city more efficiently for the benefit of everyone. Re-using Dublin is a spin-off project from TURAS. [www.reusingdublin.ie](http://www.reusingdublin.ie)

Loorberk, D, 2007, Transition Management: New Mode of Governance for Sustainable Development, International Books.



Rotor Deconstruction is a young actor in the business of salvaged building components. Rotor is currently the only such company in the Brussels Region. The elements put on sale were dismantled from buildings in Belgium (occasionally France and the Netherlands) slated for demolition.

Photo: Rotor. [www.rotordeconstruction.be](http://www.rotordeconstruction.be)



a balanced set of participants representing both niche and regime actors.

It should be noted that territorial authorities can implement this strategy at different scales, for instance at the neighbourhood, city or regional level. A preliminary analysis is necessary to determine the appropriate scale: this will typically depend on the scale at which economic activities can feasibly be related to a given community and place and is likely to be larger for sectors like construction and mobility than for retail and services needs linked to a specific neighbourhood.

The alliance should be based on a clear mandate for transition towards a new community- and place-based economy so as to make it clear from the beginning that the discussions between niche and regime actors will be mostly about choosing between alternative social-ecological trajectories towards sustainability and not about the need for a transition.

The implementation of this strategy has to be designed so as to achieve a good balance between niche and regime actors. In contrast to regime organisations, many niche entrepreneurs do not have the time and resources to participate in lengthy processes with meetings during business hours. To allow them to effectively cooperate, the alliance has to overcome this asymmetry by either organising one-off ad hoc events that

#### **050**

Local authority as mediator, by bringing actors together in dialogue.

Multi-stakeholder workshop organised for the Priority sector 2 - Water of the Employment-Environment Alliance (16/10/2014).

Photo: Bruxelles Environnement

are easier to attend or by remunerating the participation of all actors with expert per diems.

The role of the local authority is to moderate the discussions and mediate between conflicting viewpoints, ensuring that the bargaining power is not systematically tilted towards regime actors. But otherwise it is up to the participants themselves to decide on how to achieve a social-ecological transition of their economic sector. Depending on the local context and challenges, this can take the form of recommendations regarding the regulatory framework, the physical infrastructure or the need for training programmes that the local authority can then transmit to the political decision makers. It can also take the form of tighter cooperation between the participants in the form of joint ventures or other business relationships.

Case study #2



# Environment-Employment Alliance (BE)

## The goal

The EEA was created on the basis of different general observations and considerations around the local context and challenges related to the regional agenda for transition towards more sustainability and resilience. This consisted of a number of objectives. Firstly, there is a real opportunity to support the ambitious goals of the regional environmental policies by stimulating the economy and local employment. The achievement of a regional transition towards more sustainability and resilience relies on the active involvement of different key urban sectors (water, construction, waste, food, ...) which could potentially benefit from the value created by new market solutions and future important public investments/contracts that are needed to meet environmental requirements. Secondly, the offer of these Brussels sectors is insufficiently structured and limited in its capacity (lack of appropriate qualified labour, existing businesses or technologies, ...) to respond to these goals meaning there is a risk a substantial part of the value created could be captured by non-local firms. Finally, the drive for a more resilient local economy in Brussels will require these key urban sectors to adapt and meet the local sustainability challenges

## The context

*This strategy has been applied and tested* in the Brussels-Capital Region (BCR) in Belgium in form of an “Environment-Employment Alliance” (EEA). In its regional policy declaration at the start of the 2009-2014 parliamentary term, the government of the BCR agreed to launch the EEA with sustainable construction as its first sectoral priority. The actual implementation phase of the sustainable construction priority began in February 2011. The other sectors selected to join the EEA were water (November 2012), resources and waste (September 2013) and sustainable food (December 2013). Across all 4 sectors, there have been 16 decisions by the Government of the Brussels-Capital Region (GBCR),

### READ MORE:

For an extended description and the full report, refer to: [oppla.eu/product/17500](http://oppla.eu/product/17500)

### READ MORE:

Chevalier, C., Courtois, M., Kampelmann, S. and Van Vaye, M. (2015). “Territorial authorities as a bridge between niches and regime: the case of the Employment-Environment Alliance in the Brussels-Capital Region.” Presented at the 2nd Interdisciplinary Symposium on Sustainable Development, 20-22 May 2015, Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium

### 052

Skills building in roof repair and insulation - improving skills and the quality of the available building stock in Brussels.  
Photo : Brussels Environnement



ALLIANCE EMPLOI-ENVIRONNEMENT - AXE RESSOURCES ET DÉCHETS  
ALLIANTIE WERKGELEGENHEID-LEEFMILIEU - AS GROND- EN AFVALSTOFFEN

5 opinions from the Economic and Social Council of the Brussels-Capital Region (ESCBCR) and 1 opinion from the Environment Council.

**054**

Employment alliance in Brussels.  
Photo : Brussels Environnement

## Bridging the niche and establishment

The strategy consists of an innovative type of multi-stakeholder alliance for the transition of specific sectors of the economic activity. It involves a balanced set of participants representing both niche and established actors. An Environment Employment Alliance is coordinated and moderated by the local authority who takes on the role of bridging actors between the diversity of stakeholders of the territory to stimulate the co-construction and the implementation of a local transition strategy based on a logic of shared value creation both for the economic players and for society as a whole.

The cooperation between niche and regime actors can lead to a better understanding of the scope and feasibility of using pioneering economic strategies outside of their initial niche. Established actors often have a better vision of the wider opportunity landscape of which they are themselves a part. Schools and other public institutions, for example, could be an important venue of increasing the scope of local food systems. On the other hand, the regime actors often have vested interests that work against the pioneers. This means that the cooperation of regime actors is necessary to avoid that they obstruct the social-ecological transition. Local authorities can help providing a framework in which niche actors can engage

in meaningful and constructive cooperation with actors of the economic establishment. Pioneers and the establishment have to cooperate at eye level in order to overcome power asymmetries and vested interests and to foster mutual learning about economic possibilities, but also the limits of up-scaling and regime change.

The EEA's actions were managed by coordinators who were the cornerstone of the actions. Indeed, these coordinators orchestrated the work specific to each of the some 200 sector-specific actions that have been launched by the EEA. The choice of coordinators is extremely important and must be justified by their skills. In practice, it was the contributors who declared themselves as potential coordinators and as long as there was no objection from the actors present or the supervisory offices. Otherwise, a consensus was reached by the members of the sector-specific work group including both niche and regime actors, or if necessary the Steering Committee. The coordinator was not remunerated for their involvement in the participatory process but the public authorities funded, at least in part, most of the actions through subsidies or by financing contracts and studies. Coordinators symbolically signed the EEA charter which invites them to invest their resources in completing their action while the government agreed to provide its support, financial or otherwise. If there was public financing through subsidies, coordinators were linked to the administration that financed them by an agreement or through an instruction from their supervisory office if it is an administration.

## Lessons learnt

The EEA was based on formal and informal networks to identify niche actors across various networks. However the irony was that the networks were based on established networks and thus the establishment (rather than niche). Public actors, by virtue of extensive checks and balances before making commitments, tend to privilege the establishment. A key lesson learnt was that more dynamic platforms need to be created to bridge between risk averse public organisations and niche actors that often have little history and/or proof of their reliability.



OPALIS ([www.opalis.be](http://www.opalis.be)) is a online resource for sourcing materials and contractors throughout Belgium.

### READ MORE:

For a full description of the EEA experience, Brussels Environment has developed for the TURAS project a methodological guide entitled "Introduction of multi-stakeholder governance to promote the transition of economic sectors to greater sustainability - The experience of the EEA in Brussels". The guide explains the process carried out, its governance and key success factors.

[tinyurl.com/q53ec58](http://tinyurl.com/q53ec58)

Case study #3





# Operation Phosphore (BE)

## The goal

The objective is to establish a more coherent and ecological management approach for organic matter. This objective entails not only circular flows of organic matter between agricultural and urban consumers but also the potential production of energy from bio-waste.

In order to achieve this objective, it was important to bring different actors to work together: small community organisations and start-up companies that pioneer decentralised waste treatment solutions, public administrations in charge of the urban environment and waste management and research organisations with expertise in system analysis and reform.

## The context

The potential of circular economy for reducing waste and reinjecting valuable resources into economic processes has been recognised for a long time. Less attention has been paid to the different trajectories that circular economy can take: it can be implemented as a “New Industrial Revolution” and rely heavily on capital investments and technology; but it can also build on social innovations and investments in human capabilities.

A preliminary study compared these two alternative paths for the case of up-scaling bio-waste treatment in the Brussels region. The study finds that decentralised, human-centered bio-waste treatment offers clear social and environmental advantages and is only slightly more expensive. However, due to certain biological bottlenecks, the author recommends that the region should move towards a hybrid system combining polycentric community composting and industrial compost or bio-methanisation units.

This work asks what technical solutions are available that could indeed enter into cities? Is this technology available? Who operates it? What kind of economical benefits are available? We will be looking into these questions and others in terms of re-industrialising urban areas.

### READ MORE:

For a full description of the project, refer to: [oppla.eu/casestudy/17565](http://oppla.eu/casestudy/17565)

### READ MORE:

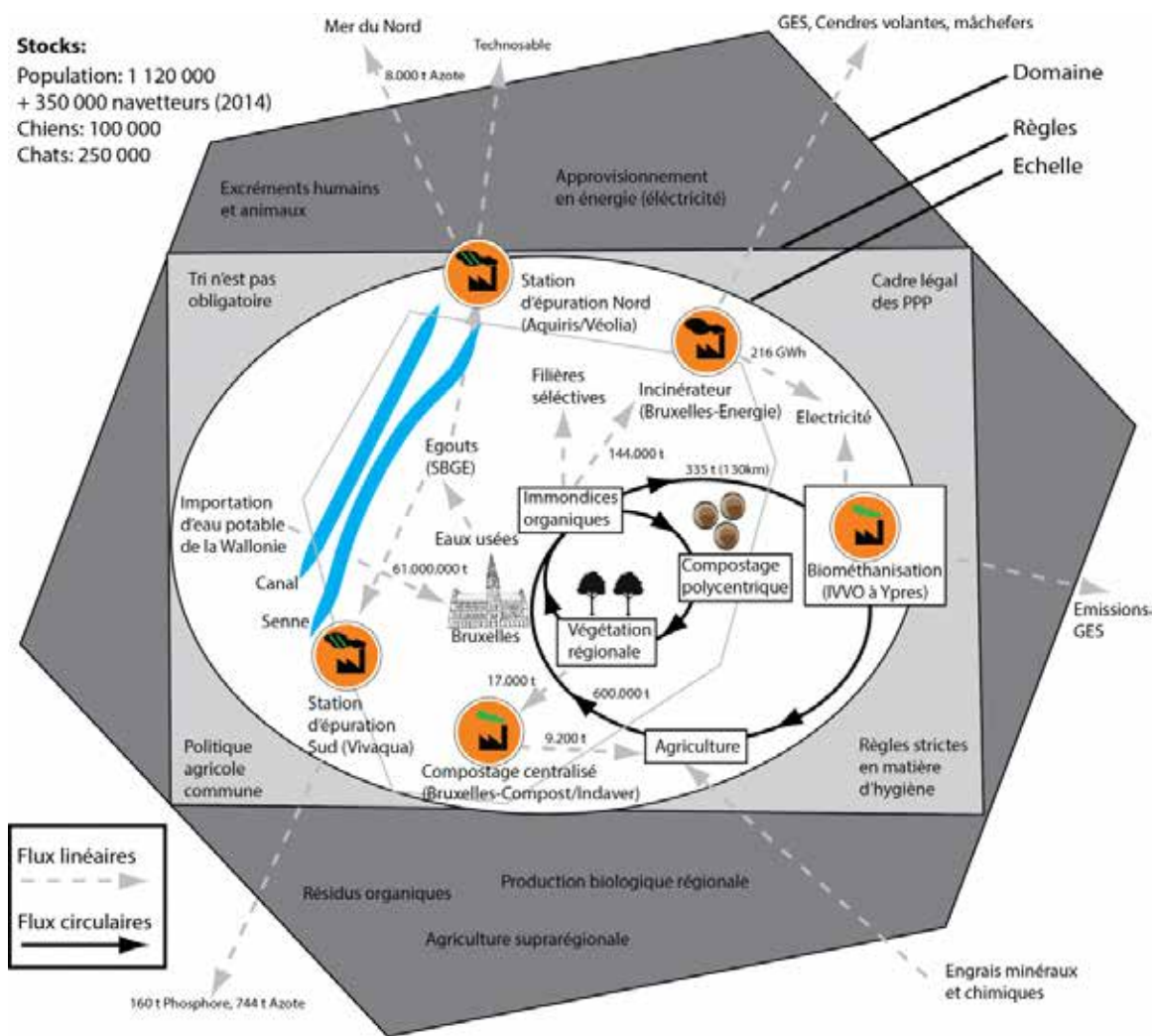
Kampelmann Stephan, « Mesurer l'économie circulaire à l'échelle territoriale. Une analyse systémique de la gestion des matières organiques à Bruxelles », Revue de l'OFCE 1/2016 (N° 145) , p. 161-184



An allotment gardener in Brussels shows off his local compost station.  
Photo - A.Hill

### 056

Compost station.  
Photo :S Kampelmann



## Emergence of the niche

A network of civil society actors, academic partners and local/regional administrations was established in order to work together towards a profound reform of the way in which the Brussels region manages its organic waste. The platform, called *Operation Phosphore*, organised several meetings between the participants and recorded two radio programmes that were broadcast on the radio of the University of Brussels. In May 2016 a formal request for funding was submitted to the regional government. The proposal included a three-year work plan for reforming the organic waste management system.

Operation Phosphore builds on the ideas of co-creation that the region of Brussels experimented with since 2015. It is also inspired by the idea of Living Labs in which academics work together with societal actors towards new solutions.

## 058

The technical system as explored by Kampelmann (2015) showing the circulation of organic waste through the metropolitan area.

The competences regarding the management of organic waste are attributed to an agency that is independent of the Environmental Agency. This has created some tensions in the past and also hindered to some extent the cooperation within the network, as these two agencies do not necessarily share the same views and follow different strategies.

## Lessons learnt

The process has proven how bottom up actors are often needed to drive change. It has also proven that public authorities do not necessarily find the most appropriate solutions, due to embedded world views or political commitments. In this case an independent civil society actor is an ideal medium for bridging between obligations of public authorities, private interests and the needs of the community. Finally it has proven that through open debate, rather than pushing solutions, positive change is possible and working relationships can be built.



059

The socio-technical vision developed for Operation Phosphore based on creating value added use of the organic waste.

## 2.3 Alignment of particular and common interests



*Particular (or private) interests should not be at the mercy of common interests. Doing something that your neighbours do not like can create unnecessary tension on the one hand, but can affect the business' market on the other. Here we show how a 'diplomatic organisation' can help balance these two (sometimes conflicting) demands.*

### The strategy at a glance:

Challenge	Tactics	Implementation by planning authorities in London UK (Barking Riverside)	Required competencies of local authority
How to attract private investments without sacrificing common goods and process control?	Building long-term public private partnerships for delivering economic goods and services that fulfil the identified and articulated needs of a local community.	In large new neighbourhood development of 10,800 homes over twenty year period, regional and local planning authorities defined strategic long-term vision based on sustainability and community involvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Political will to engage in long-term development projects.</li> <li>&gt; Competencies to set out conditions (e.g. speed of development).</li> <li>&gt; Planning capacity to anticipate evolution of community and local ecosystem.</li> <li>&gt; Organisational capacity to create governance structures that adapt to changing conditions.</li> </ul>
How to engage the local community in a process involving commercial interests?	Creation of new organisation forms that blend particular and common interests, to manage and maintain common assets on behalf of community.	Establishment of Barking Riverside Community Interest Company which will eventually become wholly resident-led social enterprise to manage community assets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Organisational capacity to set up interim bodies that manage assets until community can take over.</li> <li>&gt; Understanding of community resources that can be activated.</li> </ul>
How to address the asymmetries (in terms of information, resources, political influence etc) between private and common interests?	On-going engagement of local authority in decision making and empowerment of local community	The CIC currently operates as a shadow body involving the principal owners of the site and the local authority as stakeholder and community capacity-builder.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Human and financial resources to play active role in decision making</li> <li>&gt; Financial and operational capacity to create and operate community empowerment programmes</li> </ul>

## Why is it relevant?

This strategy is about finding institutional arrangements that help align the exclusive interests of a private actor - for instance the owner of a strategic urban asset - with the common good. We show how local authorities can engage in bridging activities that facilitate this alignment between exclusive interests of particular individuals or groups and common interests.

In many situations, a conflict between particular and common interests can block the transition to a place- and community-based economy.

Firstly, the transition process will typically require financial investments: new types of economic activity might require processing and transformation equipments or an alternative logistical infrastructure. It is likely that these investments will have to be provided by private investors. Moreover, many of the assets that are a key elements of the social-ecological system are privately owned. For these reasons, it is vital that the particular interests of investors and asset owners are aligned with the transition process so as to generate their approval and involvement. This, however, is probably more difficult in a move towards a place- and community-based economy than in the standard, globalised model of economic development. In particular, it requires a bridging strategy that attracts private interests, investments and assets without sacrificing common interests and a collective control of the transition process.

Secondly, the involvement of particular interests can create in turn obstacles to the engagement of local communities in the transition process. If, for example, the transformation of a peri-urban asset into a hub of a local food system partly serves the interests of the landowners, this can become a disincentive for members of the local community to engage in voluntary work in this system and discard the entire transition as merely serving the interests of the landowners. The bridging strategy therefore also has to align the interests of the community members.

Thirdly, the alignment of particular and common interests has to address the often significant asymmetries between the two sides. Private investors or owners of strategic economic assets such as land and buildings often have better access

to information and more financial resources to steer the development process in their favour. Asymmetries also exists in terms of the political influence through lobbying. The bridging strategy has to address such asymmetries effectively if the transition is to head towards a community-based economy.

## How can it be implemented?

### **1. *Attract private investments without sacrificing common goods and process control***

This challenge is very difficult to address in short-term, one-off situations. But a promising way of solving it is through building long-term public private partnerships for delivering economic goods and services that fulfil the identified and articulated needs of a local community. In place-based urban developments, planning authorities have to play a prominent role: the regional and local planning authorities will lead the vision, strategy and planning regime for the economic development process. The private sector in turn delivers the elements associated with social and physical infrastructures that reply to community needs and that have embedded sustainable design principles. The key success factor of this strategy is to provide a clear vision that creating a place- and community-based economy that works for people is a commercially attractive investment, for instance by offering a prestige opportunity for private developers.

### **2. *Engage the local community in a process involving commercial interests***

A promising way of addressing this challenge is through the creation of new organisation forms that blend particular and common interests. An example of this is the establishment of a community-focused company – for instance with the legal form in the UK of “Community Interest Company” - to manage and maintain community assets on behalf of the community. Community Interest Companies, which are a type of social enterprise, are required to use assets and any surplus for the benefit of the community rather than for private gain. In the case of place-based development and creating new or regenerating neighbourhoods, it can be a good tool to foster community cohesion, for instance in mixed tenure housing developments over the longer term. It can also promote

Paula Vandergert has published numerous articles on Community Interest Companies.

the integration of new and existing community members and build social capital in a new neighbourhood so that the residents are engaged and proactive in developing community resources and enterprises. Finally, a Community Interest Company can build skills and experience of local residents to manage the community assets, green infrastructure and open spaces.

3. **Address the asymmetries in terms of information, resources and political influence**

Any bridging institution of this kind needs to explicitly address asymmetries in knowledge, resources and decision-making power to be effective. Ensuring local political knowledge and support is key to attenuate these asymmetries, so that community interests are effectively represented in negotiations with private interests.

Another element is to build capacity of the community to proactively engage with private partners and the local authority in the design and planning of the place-based economy. The local authority can also foster processes to allow information flows and knowledge exchange between the local and strategic, public and private interests in a non-hierarchical context. Finally, a supportive environment for emergent local entrepreneurial creativity should be provided; local authorities should also build community capacity to make the most of the community assets for the benefit of the community.

Case study #4





# Barking Riverside Community Interest Company (UK)

## The goal

The project aims to build social capacity amongst the Barking Riverside community in form of a Community Interest Company (CIC). It seeks to actively engage residents in the design, management, and maintenance of local mainly green but also social assets. However, as the project is looking for multi-dimensional long-term benefits and a slow but sustainable build-up of the company, and as the local situation is constantly evolving the short-term objectives (e.g. fostering green roofs) and nature of the CIC (including its composition) are reassessed and adjusted on a regular basis. Already the original master plan envisaged the direct involvement of residents in the maintenance of local common areas as a way of fostering a sense of pride. The 'Community Interest Company' offers a vehicle which includes all key stakeholders and empowers local residents through self-management to support and create a sustainable community - socially, environmentally, economically but also institutionally.

## The site

This bridging strategy was implemented in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, situated in the London metropolitan area in the United Kingdom, in the context of the building of a large new sustainable neighbourhood of 10,800 homes over a twenty year period at Barking Riverside. The main vehicle to align particular and common interests in this case was the establishment of Barking Riverside Limited, a development company with equal shares between private enterprise and public authority (51%/49%) to carry out the development. This case also shows how each of the specific challenges has been addressed.

### READ MORE:

Visit these online resources on this case:

Project summary:  
[oppla.eu/casestudy/17544](http://oppla.eu/casestudy/17544)

Timeline and context:  
[tinyurl.com/oru5yms](http://tinyurl.com/oru5yms)

Implementation of the strategy:  
[tinyurl.com/pet32q6](http://tinyurl.com/pet32q6)

### **064**

Community capacity building through fun and culture – No Fit State circus August 2015.  
Photos: UEL / SRI



## Balancing interests through the Community Interest Company

BRL manages the overall site development, providing the infrastructure and services to the different plots which are then sold on. The emphasis in determining appropriate responses for Masterplan / sites redevelopment is on housing needs. The local planning authority provides the planning guidance and approvals process for the development phases, including the leverage of community gains, whereas the regional authority works with the local authority to set the vision and strategic targets for the site and to provide infrastructure in line with its (regional) competencies.

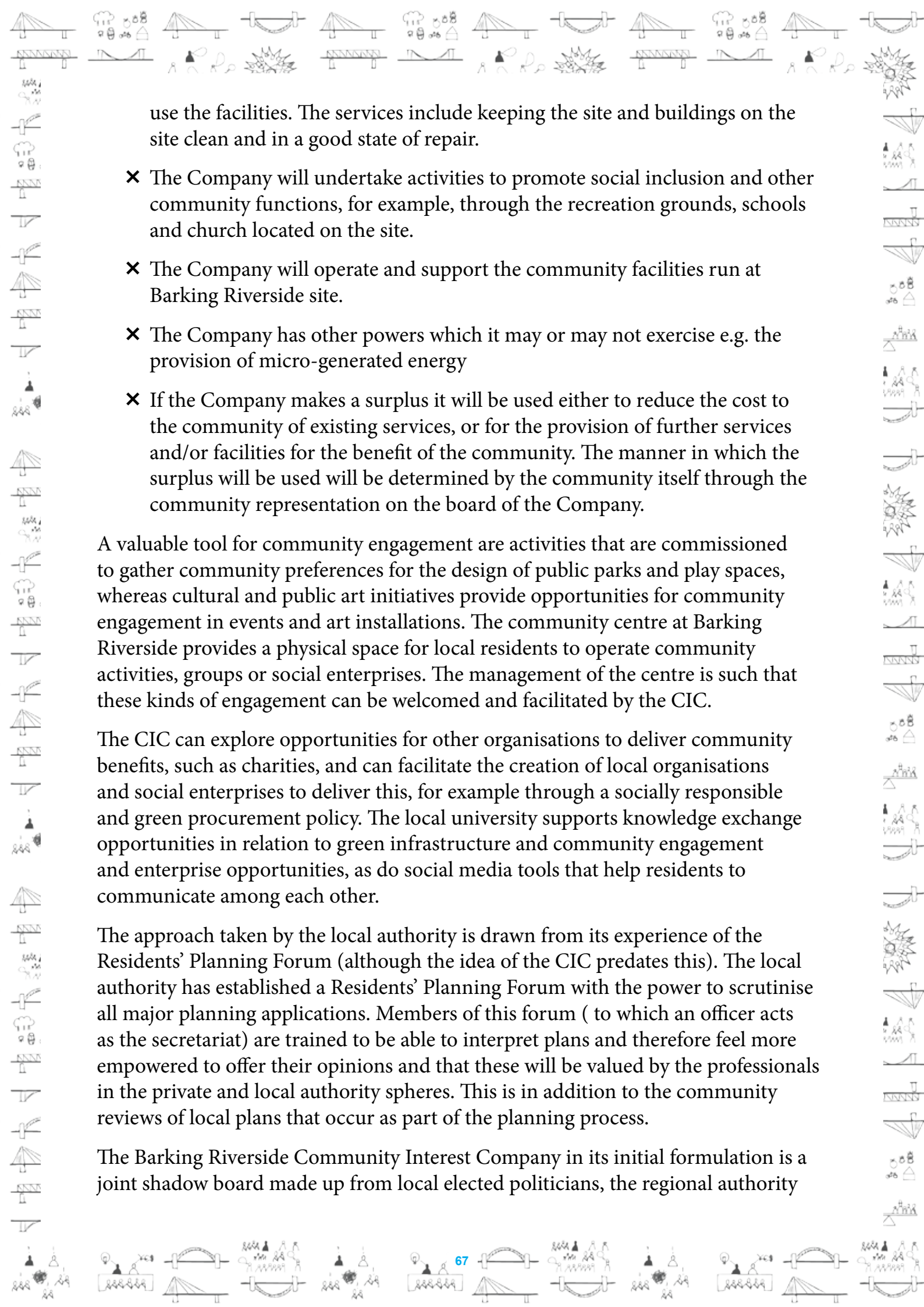
A particular emphasis is placed on understanding of the local and regional context as well as drivers such as climate change, demographic change, sustainable energy, transport and waste management. The local authority has embedded strategic drivers and vision within its planning guidance and through the statutory planning process. What is more, the local authority works across departmental silos to deliver integrated direction and management for planning, housing, education, transport and enterprise, responding to local needs. Finally, the local authority negotiates with regional and central government for investment in public infrastructure, such as public transport.

Within this overall framework oriented towards community needs, private developers through phased development, build out plots for mixed tenure housing ranging from totally social housing, through affordable rents, market rents, shared ownership to outright ownership. The framework aims to ensure the soundness of the overall development over the long-term, anticipating its evolution over time as the community of residents will expand. This strategic development has proven beneficial to incite private investment in the area.

This challenge was addressed through the establishment of the Barking Riverside Community Interest Company which, once the site is built out and fully occupied, will become a wholly resident-led social enterprise to manage community assets. The Community Interest Community engages the local community by pursuing the following objectives:

The Company will hold, manage, develop and deal with land and other assets in which it has an interest at the Barking Riverside site. The Barking Riverside site will comprise housing, social and recreational facilities, as well as commercial activities, and the Company will undertake the long term management of that land and those assets.

- ✗ The Company will be funded through the receipt of ground rents
- ✗ The Company will provide services (including community services) for the residents at the site, and residents from the surrounding communities who



use the facilities. The services include keeping the site and buildings on the site clean and in a good state of repair.

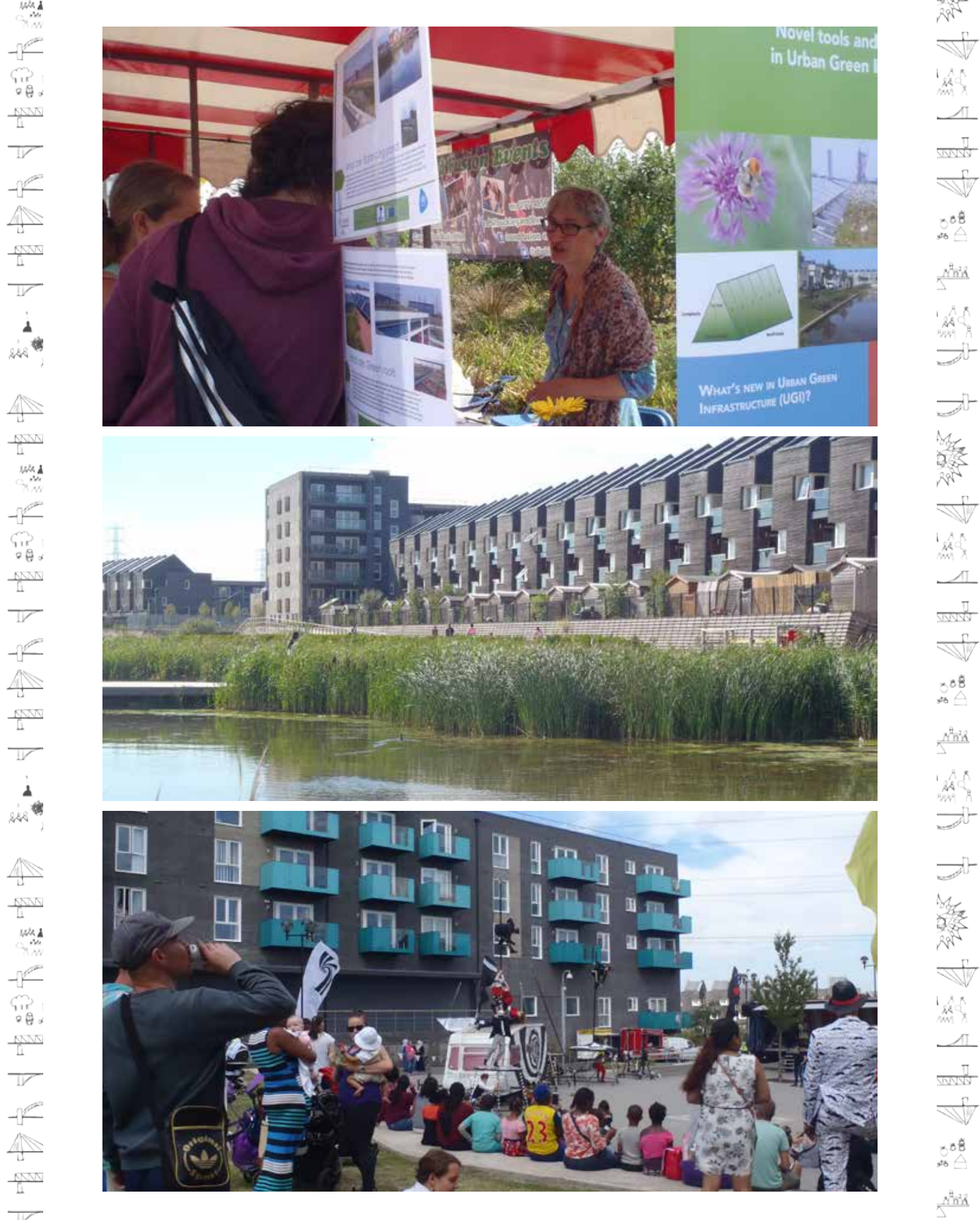
- ✗ The Company will undertake activities to promote social inclusion and other community functions, for example, through the recreation grounds, schools and church located on the site.
- ✗ The Company will operate and support the community facilities run at Barking Riverside site.
- ✗ The Company has other powers which it may or may not exercise e.g. the provision of micro-generated energy
- ✗ If the Company makes a surplus it will be used either to reduce the cost to the community of existing services, or for the provision of further services and/or facilities for the benefit of the community. The manner in which the surplus will be used will be determined by the community itself through the community representation on the board of the Company.

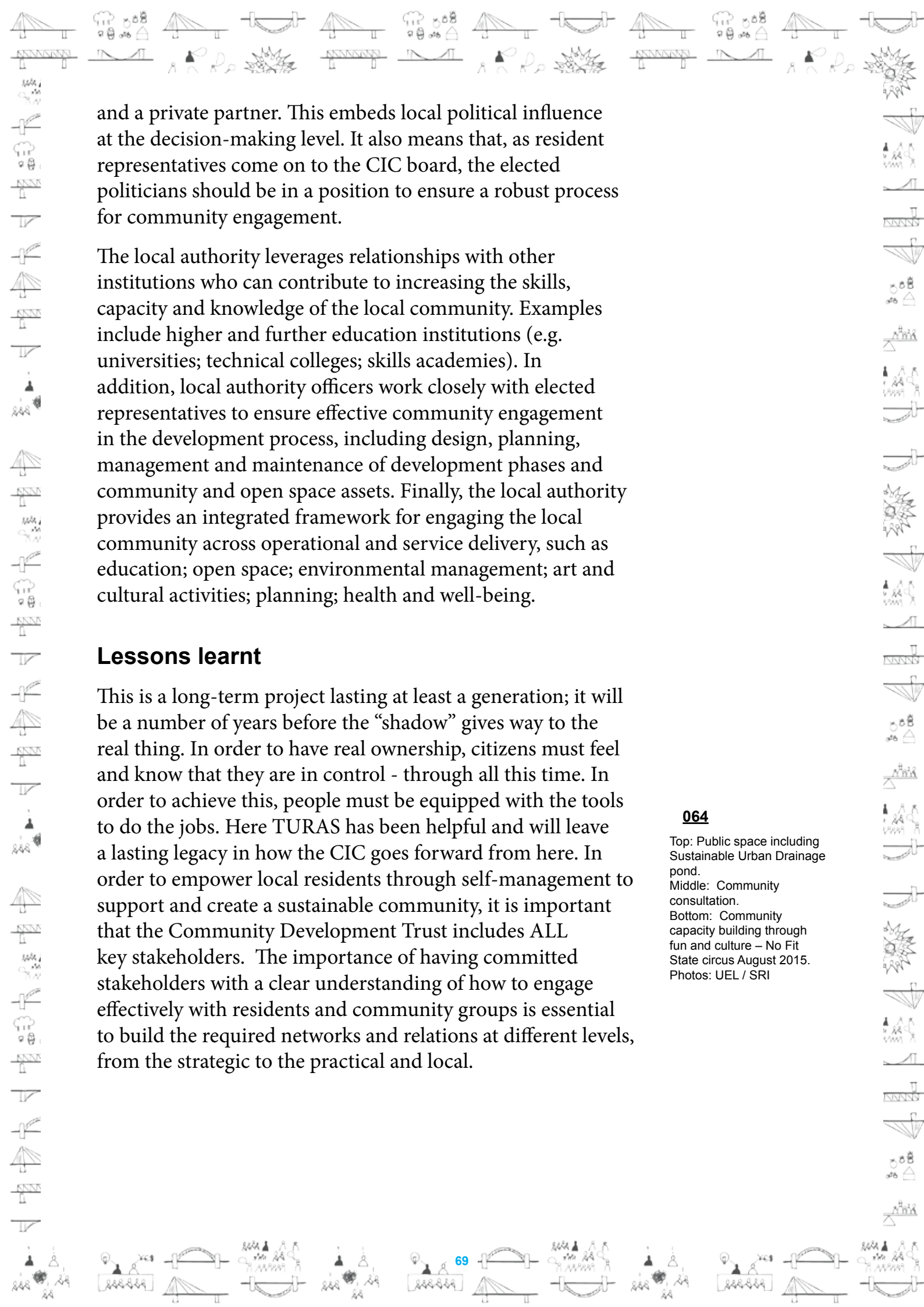
A valuable tool for community engagement are activities that are commissioned to gather community preferences for the design of public parks and play spaces, whereas cultural and public art initiatives provide opportunities for community engagement in events and art installations. The community centre at Barking Riverside provides a physical space for local residents to operate community activities, groups or social enterprises. The management of the centre is such that these kinds of engagement can be welcomed and facilitated by the CIC.

The CIC can explore opportunities for other organisations to deliver community benefits, such as charities, and can facilitate the creation of local organisations and social enterprises to deliver this, for example through a socially responsible and green procurement policy. The local university supports knowledge exchange opportunities in relation to green infrastructure and community engagement and enterprise opportunities, as do social media tools that help residents to communicate among each other.

The approach taken by the local authority is drawn from its experience of the Residents' Planning Forum (although the idea of the CIC predates this). The local authority has established a Residents' Planning Forum with the power to scrutinise all major planning applications. Members of this forum ( to which an officer acts as the secretariat) are trained to be able to interpret plans and therefore feel more empowered to offer their opinions and that these will be valued by the professionals in the private and local authority spheres. This is in addition to the community reviews of local plans that occur as part of the planning process.

The Barking Riverside Community Interest Company in its initial formulation is a joint shadow board made up from local elected politicians, the regional authority





and a private partner. This embeds local political influence at the decision-making level. It also means that, as resident representatives come on to the CIC board, the elected politicians should be in a position to ensure a robust process for community engagement.

The local authority leverages relationships with other institutions who can contribute to increasing the skills, capacity and knowledge of the local community. Examples include higher and further education institutions (e.g. universities; technical colleges; skills academies). In addition, local authority officers work closely with elected representatives to ensure effective community engagement in the development process, including design, planning, management and maintenance of development phases and community and open space assets. Finally, the local authority provides an integrated framework for engaging the local community across operational and service delivery, such as education; open space; environmental management; art and cultural activities; planning; health and well-being.

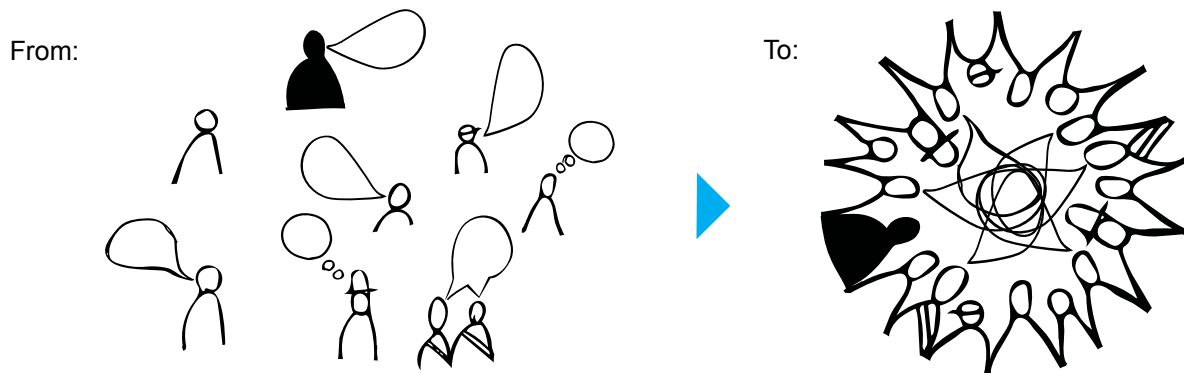
## Lessons learnt

This is a long-term project lasting at least a generation; it will be a number of years before the “shadow” gives way to the real thing. In order to have real ownership, citizens must feel and know that they are in control - through all this time. In order to achieve this, people must be equipped with the tools to do the jobs. Here TURAS has been helpful and will leave a lasting legacy in how the CIC goes forward from here. In order to empower local residents through self-management to support and create a sustainable community, it is important that the Community Development Trust includes ALL key stakeholders. The importance of having committed stakeholders with a clear understanding of how to engage effectively with residents and community groups is essential to build the required networks and relations at different levels, from the strategic to the practical and local.

### 064

Top: Public space including Sustainable Urban Drainage pond.  
Middle: Community consultation.  
Bottom: Community capacity building through fun and culture – No Fit State circus August 2015.  
Photos: UEL / SRI

## 2.4 Collaboration between communities and entrepreneurs



*The conventional approach to design new products and services has not actively involved the end users. If local economies are supposed to deliver value for communities in a given place, a more prominent and active role has to be given to users in process meaningful co-design. Local authorities can be instrumental in this process.*

### The strategy at a glance:

<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Tactics</b>	<b>Implementation by regional environmental agency in Brussels, Belgium</b>	<b>Required competencies of local authority</b>
How to integrate community perspective into design of business ideas?	Create a dialogue between various stakeholders in the design of Product Service Systems (PSS).	Development of a “PSS toolkit” and organisation of thematic workshops bringing together entrepreneurs, users and other stakeholders.	Capacity to animate participatory and creative processes.
How to align new economic activities with regional strategic plans?	Use Functional Economy principles to create stronger link between businesses and a given territory.	Identification of territorial priorities prior to workshops and framing of priorities as “PSS challenges” addressed by toolkit.	Systemic thinking. Diagnosis of place-based economic opportunities.
How to ensure that place-based businesses stand up to economic realities?	Use multi-actor workshop setting to stimulate economic reality in order to test Functional Economy business concepts.	PSS toolkit combines different micro-tools serving as reality check for emerging business ideas.	Expertise in business and marketing.

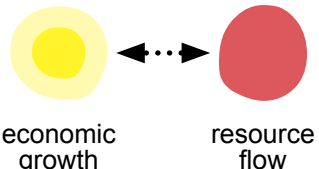


## Why is it relevant?

Traditional industrial processes of product design often churn out oversized items with more functions and higher material throughput than customers actually value. At the same time, producers try to reduce production costs as far as possible, generally to the detriment of the quality of components that cannot be checked at the time of purchase. The planned obsolescence of certain components is common practice in the manufacturing world, with the clear aim of accelerating the rate of replacement and increasing the volume of product sales. Such as design process is not working to the benefit of a given place and a given community: the high material throughput that results from increasing product sales has negative environmental consequences such as resource depletion and waste; and many products are unrelated to the actual needs of local communities.

New economic concepts like Functional Economy, Service Economy, Performance Economy or Collaborative Economy have emerged to relate business practices back to places and communities. Common to these concepts is the idea of a closer collaboration between the providers and the users of economic value. Another shared element is that this collaboration leads to an alignment of interests: the business models derived from these concepts try to ensure that business interests are oriented towards providing the type of outcome that users value. A now popular example of such as new business model consists in selling the service of lighting instead of selling light bulbs: in this case the provider of the service has no incentive to commercialise light bulbs with planned obsolescence and the client pays only for the outcome that she appreciates. As the sustainability scholars *Oksana Mont and Andrius Plepys* point out, this shift in practices can decrease material throughput and generate positive environmental and social effects.

According to the economist Christian du Tertre, the Functional Economy model is particularly suited for the integration of place- and community-based requirements

◀Mont, O., & Plepys, A. (2004). From ownership to service-based lifestyle: the case of joint use of power tools and shared computer resources. Tokyo: The Society for Non-Traditional Technology. 73 pp.

	Low degree of territorial involvement	High degree of territorial involvement
<b>Industrial approach /</b> Material technologies No decoupling economic growth from material flows	<b>Clean industrial model:</b> No integration between the 3 pillars of sustainable development	<b>Industrial ecology model:</b> Weak integration between the 3 pillars of sustainable development
<b>Service approach / Immaterial technologies :</b> decoupling economic growth from material flows 	<b>Service economy model :</b> Partial integration between the 3 pillars of sustainable development 	<b>Functional economy model :</b> Strong integration between the 3 pillars of sustainable development 

as it can be used to create stronger links between businesses and a given territory. The Functional Economy model aims at generating value through the development of integrated solutions for functional needs. This often widens the initial scope of the business activity through a more systematic integration of sustainable challenges. For example, a business might move from selling vehicles to providing a system of mobility solutions. Crucially, the dynamics of coproduction between the providers and users of a function and the integration of products and services in business solutions for households (B2B) or companies (B2B) are part of the constituent elements of the Functional Economy model, as are the requirements of social and environmental sustainability. *Christian du Tertre* has pointed out that, contrary to other models such as “Clean Industry”, “Industrial Ecology” and “Service Economy”, the Functional Economy model allows for a strong integration of the three pillars of sustainable development (see table).

**READ MORE:**

More examples of eco-functional solutions can be found in the following list elaborated for TURAS:  
[tinyurl.com/nk8dxer](http://tinyurl.com/nk8dxer)

◀Gaglio, Lauriol et du Tertre, 2011. L'économie de la fonctionnalité : une voie nouvelle vers un développement durable ? Editions Octarès, Toulouse



**073**

Figure: Illustration of a Product-Service System for the case of a bike delivery service.

Morelli, N. (2006). Developing new product service systems (PSS): methodologies and operational tools. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 14(17), 1495-1501.

The channels through which the Functional Economy addresses the challenges of a place- and community-based economy are embedded in the logic of commercialising functional outcomes rather than material throughput. This can lead to:

- ✘ **De-materialisation** through the selling of functions rather than a physical product, which helps reducing the wastage of resources during production, consumption and disposal;
- ✘ **The creation of local jobs** that are necessary to maintain close links between providers and users. Because the Functional Economy focuses on local markets, providers have to be firmly rooted in order to provide service delivery (maintenance, distribution, logistics, consultancy, etc.). While the production of a product can be relocated to a distant production site, the delivery of a service assumes regular exchanges between the provider and the user.

These benefits stem from the potential effects of business models based on Functional Economy principles on:

- ✗ **Supply** : products are designed to be sustainable (to last, to be dismountable, to be recycled, etc.)
- ✗ **Consumption** : stimulating new ways of consumption (not owning products, sharing, etc.)
- ✗ **The territory** : by integrating the response to societal or environmental challenges at business model level (energy consumption, mobility, waste, pollution, etc.)

Local authorities can help to ensure a tight fit between the business model and the local territory. They can make businesses more aware of local/territorial challenges and encourage them to integrate them in the design of new economic activities. The intention is to link business relations to the territory and to stimulate a stronger territorial involvement in what Christian du Tertre calls a “territorialised social dialogue” between different stakeholders. The bridging strategy that was developed and tested by the regional environmental agency provides a methodological approach to initiate this dialogue.

## How can it be implemented?

The tool we describe here is based on the notion of a “*Product-Service System*” (PSS), i.e. a system in which the service or function that is provided to a community of users and the products that are necessary for the underlying interactions are integrated in a system. Designing a product under the conventional industrial paradigm differs radically from designing a Product-Service System: whereas the entrepreneur is the main (and often only) actor in the former, he is part of a wider set of interactions in the latter. In other words, businesses are not designing products but participate with other stakeholders in the co-design of a system of which they are a part.

Adopting a system perspective is crucial in order to deal with the complex interplay between the social and territorial dimensions of the functional economy, but also in order to ensure that the environmental impact will be positive. As Oksana Mont explains, the environmental impact of the Functional Economy depends on the design and efficiency of

### **READ MORE:**

For more information on PSS refer to:

[sustainable-everyday-project.net](http://sustainable-everyday-project.net)

all established or used networks and infrastructures. Adopting a system perspective such as the PSS approach “might avoid sub-optimisation and minimise the counter-productivity between different policy and management instruments and tools”. However, *Mont* also points out that “approaches need to be developed to ensure the development of PSS of a truly system-based nature with an environmental efficiency goal”. In a review of methodologies for product-service systems, the economist *Nicola Morelli* also underlines the need for practical approaches to designing these systems. The PSS toolkit that has been developed by the regional environmental agency of the Brussels-Capital region is precisely such an approach.

◀Oksana Mont, Product-Service System Concept as a Means of Reaching Sustainable Consumption?, [http://www.score-network.org/files/821\\_13.pdf](http://www.score-network.org/files/821_13.pdf)

◀Morelli, N. (2006). Developing new product service systems (PSS): methodologies and operational tools. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 14(17), 1495-1501.

## The role of local authorities in designing Product-Service Systems

The presence and engagement of local authorities in the bridging process between businesses and the community of users in a given territory is essential for several reasons:

- ✗ Local authorities have a role to play in connecting the strategic challenges around sustainability at the level of neighbourhood, city or region with the orientation that business models can take (the way the local economic activities develop their business).
- ✗ Local authorities can help businesses to better understand the needs of the users and how to inspire them serve these needs in a more sustainable way, notably by setting up platforms for meaningful dialogue between the different stakeholders of the PSS.
- ✗ Moving from ownership to using is an important shift of paradigm. Local authorities have a key role to play in backing up this process in the eyes of the business and user communities.
- ✗ Local authorities are often a legitimate broker to bring a diversity of stakeholders to the table and can help align their interests.
- ✗ In many Product-Service Systems, local authorities will play a role in the implementation of the system, for instance through their participation in private public

partnerships (for instance in mobility solutions such as Cambio). It therefore makes sense for local authorities to participate from the beginning in the design of these systems so as to identify opportunities and obstacles early in the process.

## **A toolkit for participatory design of Product-Service Systems**

The *toolkit* that has been developed by Brussels' regional environmental agency is a workshop methodology that combines system thinking and participatory design in order to inspire and test new Product-Service Systems. Whereas other workshop methods typically stop at the stage of idea development, the toolkit goes further into testing the attractiveness and the feasibility of the implementation of the proposed system. In particular, the toolkit contains micro-tools allowing to test the systems by confronting their most critical/sensitive aspects in realistic simulations so as to 'debug' the system (assess the viability of the solution, highlight the opportunities it represents and any weaknesses, etc.) and to gain a better understanding of how it could be implemented (through partial simulations, a detailed run-through of the service process, ongoing self-completed interviews with the stakeholders, etc.). This Reality Check also makes it possible to examine the system from the users' point of view (appeal and maturity with regard to the concept, sensitivity, etc.).

The PSS toolkit is therefore a methodology using a combination of methods to generate and then pre-test ideas of potential business opportunities formulated around urban sustainability challenges in form of Product-Service Systems.

The methodology consists of several steps (see scheme p80):

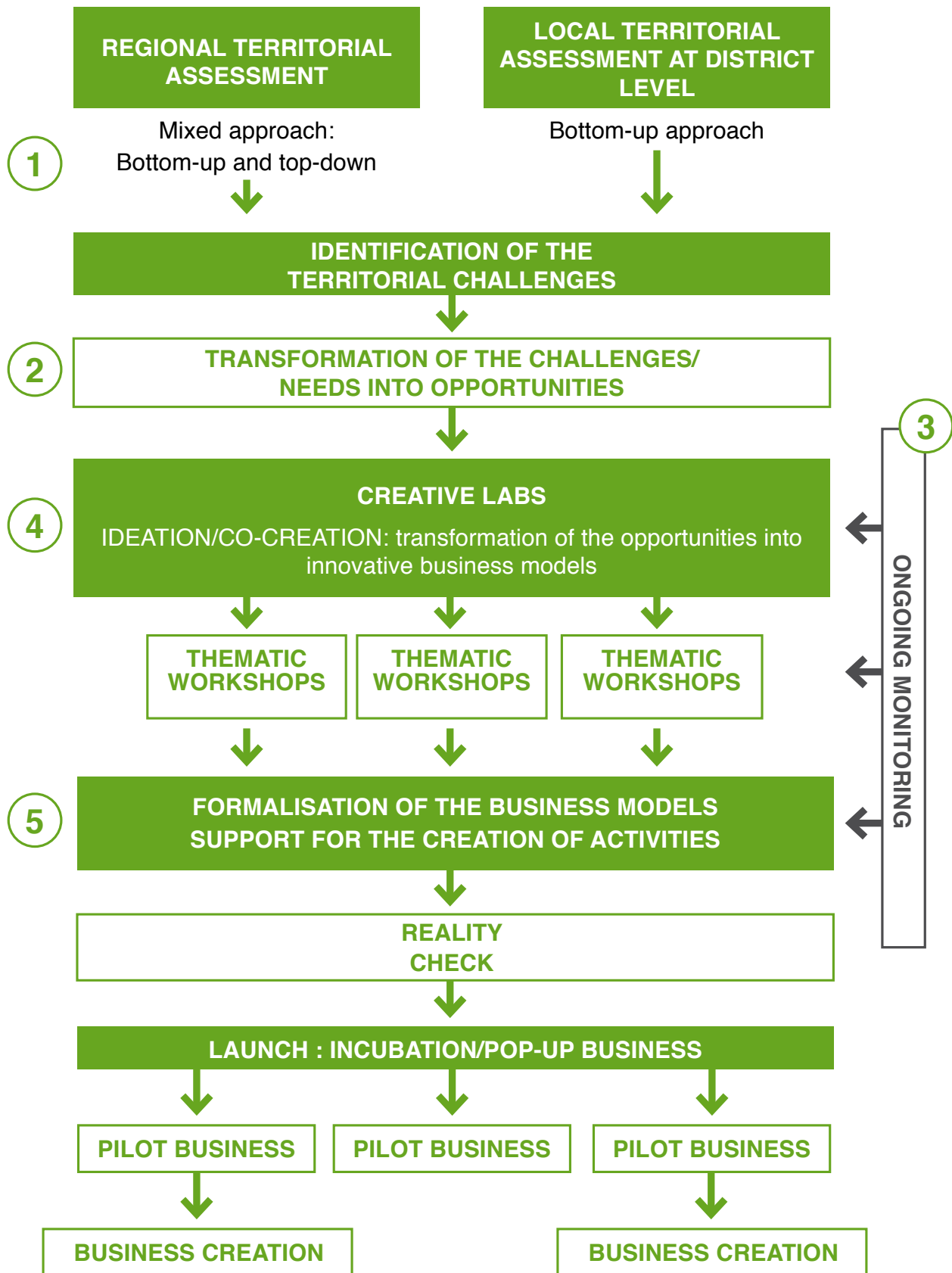
**Step 1:** Selection of priority sustainability challenges by the local authority, often in line with territorial planning priorities;

**Step 2:** Transformation of the challenges/needs into project opportunities through exploring products or services.

**Step 3:** Define how the process will be monitored and reviewed to check success.

**Step 4:** Organization of "Creative Lab Workshops" focussed on user experience and based on a co-creation process between different local stakeholders, including local authorities, entrepreneurs, the community of users, researchers, civil society organizations, etc. The animation process during the workshops includes small exhibitions of inspiring PSS linked to the topic of each workshop. These examples can inspire the participants in developing ideas based on PSS principles.

**Step 5:** Reality check of the potential PSS configurations



Case study #5



# Product-Systems Services Toolkit (BE)

## The goal

The conventional approach to the design of new products and services has not actively involved end users. If local economies are supposed to deliver value for communities in a given place, a more prominent and active role has to be given to users. This creates the challenge for entrepreneurs to meet representative members of the local community and to engage in meaningful co-creation. Local authorities can be instrumental in this process. They also can make businesses more aware of local/territorial challenges and encourage them to integrate them into the design of new economic activities.

## The context

In 2012, Brussels' regional environmental agency was prospecting for more sustainable business models that could help the region to overcome the chronic shortage of jobs - Brussels has a high unemployment rate among low educated individuals - while also addressing environmental challenges. The administration identified the Functional Economy model described by Christian du Tertre as a promising possibility to steer the regional economy towards sustainability. Especially the alignment of economic interests with environmental interests was very appealing, as was the principle to tighten the link between businesses and the territory.

In order to implement the Functional Economy in form of place-based systems, the regional agency decided to create an approach for co-designing Product-Service Systems. The different tools that came out of this approach were developed by the administration with the help from Brussels-based SMEs (SDS, Ecores/Groupe One and Egerie Research) that are specialised in sustainable innovation. These tools were then tested through a series of 5 thematic workshops organized in Brussels in May 2013. Over 50 stakeholders from different spheres (university, entrepreneur, public administration, ...) participated to the workshops.

### **READ MORE:**

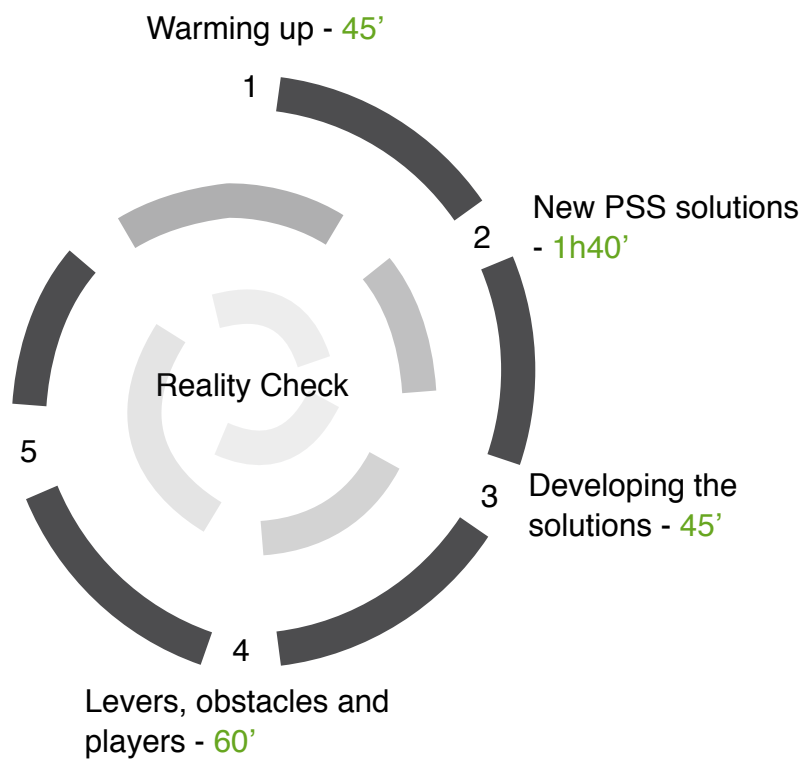
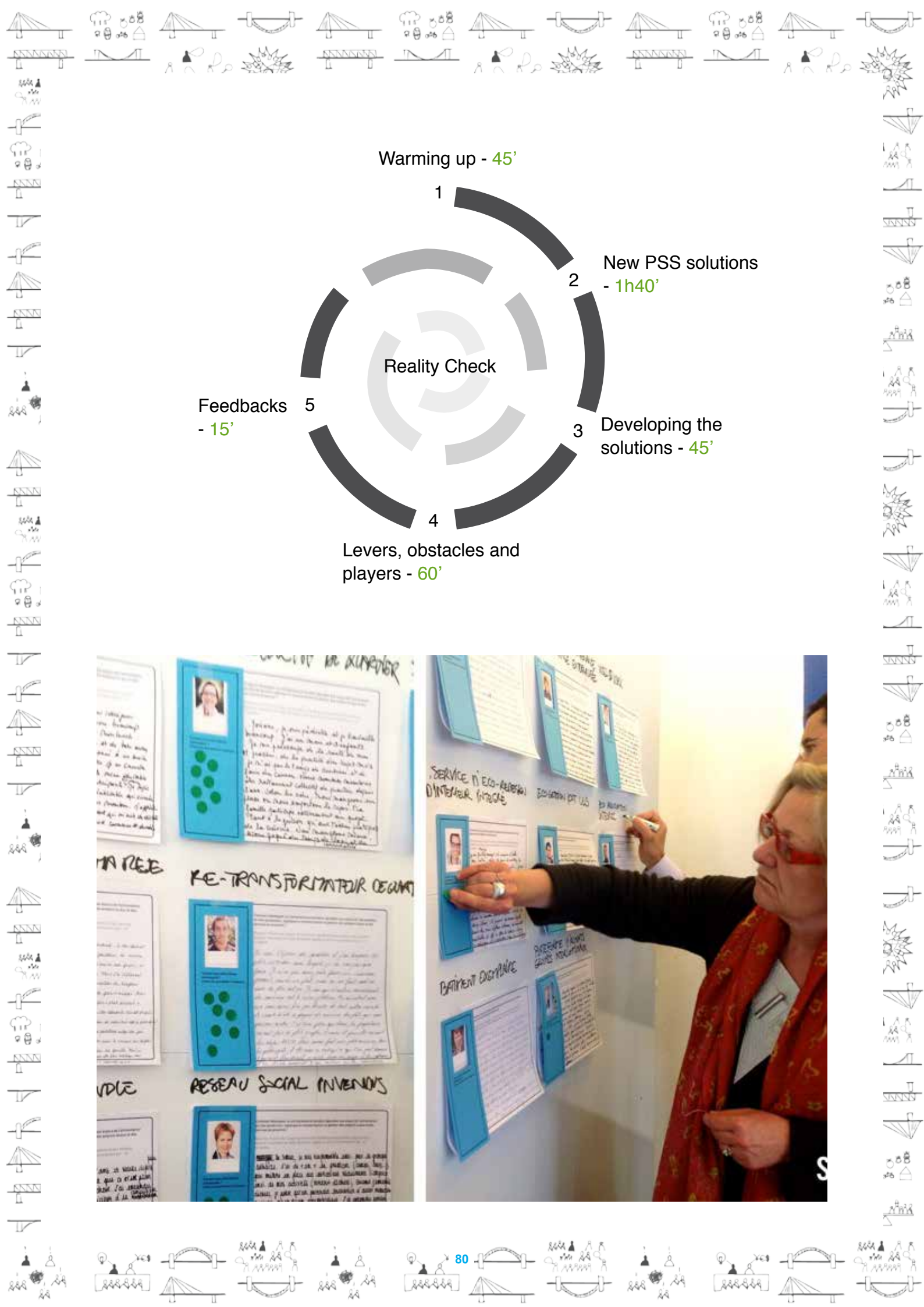
For a full description of the project, refer to:  
[oppla.eu/product/17522](http://oppla.eu/product/17522)

### **078**

Participants from the PSS workshop  
Photos: Bruxelles Environment

### **READ MORE:**

[sustainable-everyday-project.net/pss](http://sustainable-everyday-project.net/pss)





## Applying the PSS toolkit

The PSS toolkit builds upon a preliminary step that consists of a diagnosis of the territory and aims at defining the priority issues in view of a transition towards social-ecological sustainability. These issues were then framed as PSS challenges that business ideas would have to answer. In the implementation of the toolkit in Brussels, a mixed top-down/ bottom-up approach was applied to the territorial diagnostic and was based on information from:

- ✗ The Regional Sustainable Development Plan, which is in turn informed by a territorial diagnostic exercise (viewpoint of political and public authorities)
- ✗ The Employment Environment Alliance, for which a series of stakeholders from the territory was consulted to identify the need of transition for priority regional sectors

The five themes that were identified in this step were the following:

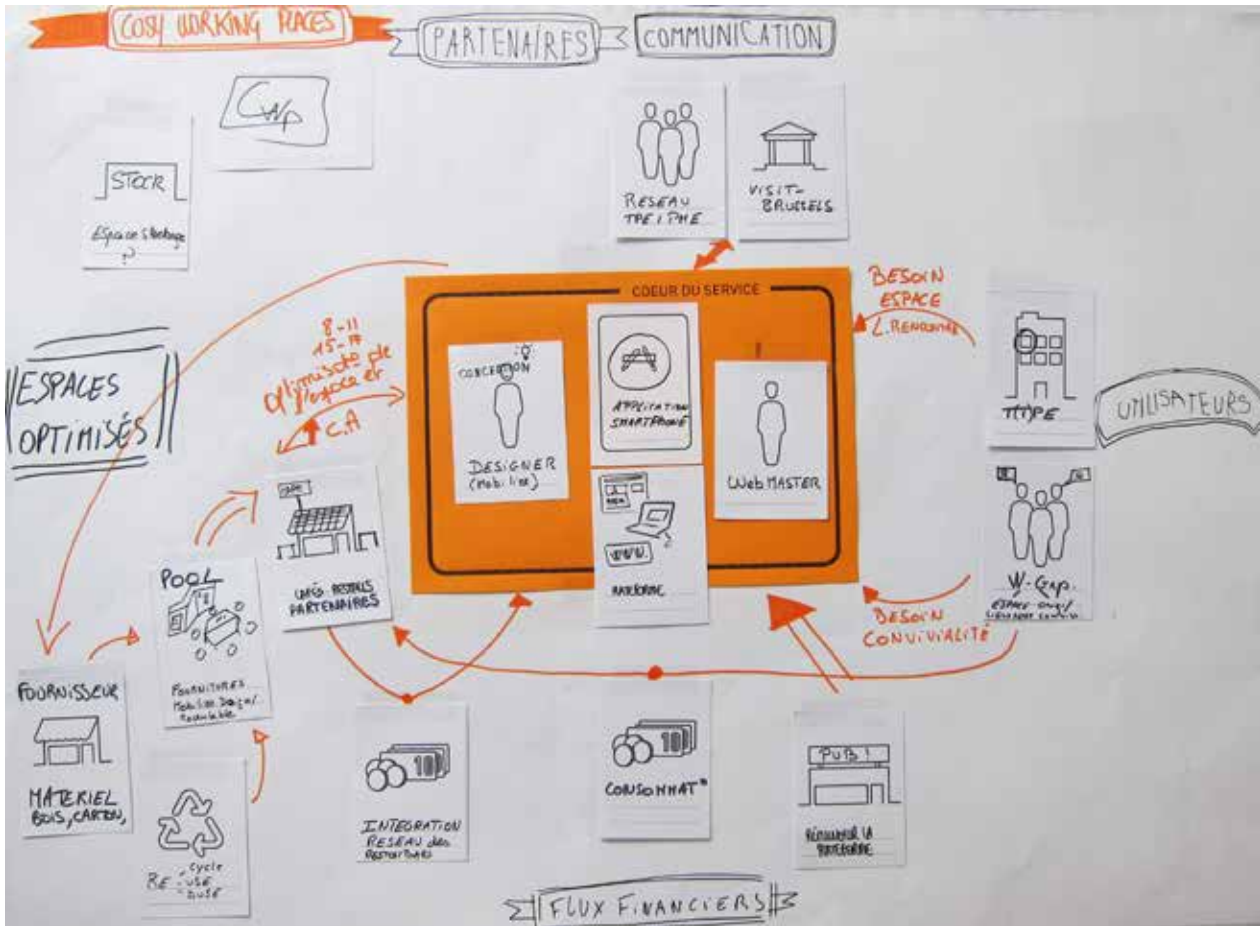
1. collaborative service communities
2. urban sustainable food
3. optimisation of urban space
4. urban eco-logistic
5. exemplary public buildings

It turned out that the territorial approach of the PSS toolkit ensured a close link to the local context, making it possible to identify the strategic challenges that can be integrated into potential PSS business application and help/facilitate the transition to a more sustainable and resilient city. Two of the Product-Service Systems that have subsequently been developed through a specific action of the Employment Environment Alliance include MCB and BeeOdiversity. Entrepreneurs of the two companies, using these names, have received training to the PSS approach through a series of additional coaching sessions financed by a specific action funded by the Employment-Environment Alliance. Both examples show the potential of linking urban sustainability challenges (like waste generation or biodiversity) to business

The full tool-kit can be downloaded here: [tinyurl.com/pqebbg2](http://tinyurl.com/pqebbg2)

### 080

Top: the workshop process.  
Bottom: participation in step 2 looking at user stories.  
Photos: Bruxelles Environment



“...En tant que petite entreprise, nos locaux manquent d'espace. On ne dispose pas d'un lieu agréable pour accueillir des invités dans le cadre d'une réunion de travail. On se sent un peu à l'étroit dans nos bureaux quand on veut réfléchir sur un projet. Depuis qu'on connaît "Cosy Working Places" on dispose de chouettes espaces pour laisser parler notre créativité. Il suffit de réserver une place pour notre groupe dans un café du réseau via le web et on peut travailler dans un endroit agréable et complètement intégré dans le café.”

# CAFÉ RÉUNION

LES ESPACES DE TRAVAIL AU SEIN DES CAFÉS



TRANSITION DES ACTIVITÉS MANUFACTURIÈRES VERS LES PRODUCT SERVICE SYSTEMS À BRUXELLES

## ENJEUX / SOLUTION

Comment offrir des espaces de travail agréables aux TPE et PME ? Comment améliorer le revenu des établissements HORECA en temps de crise ?

Le réseau Cosy Working Places regroupe un ensemble de café - restaurants qui hors des heures de coup de feu proposent la mise à disposition d'espaces de travail intégrés (support d'écriture, aménagement des tables, connexion internet, etc.) aux professionnels. L'espace est réservé via une plateforme web. L'entreprise « Cosy Working places » se charge de recruter les café-restaurants, d'aménager les espaces de travail fonctionnels et d'organiser la réservation des lieux via la plateforme web.

## CARACTÉRISTIQUES PRINCIPALES

- Large choix de lieux de réunions conviviaux
- Réservation de l'espace via plateforme web
- Localisation des café-restaurants participants via une application
- Intégration d'espaces de travail fonctionnel au sein des cafés-restaurants membres du réseau
- Optimisation de l'espace des établissements HORECA en dehors des heures de coup de feu

## CIBLES CLIENTS

- Indépendants, TPE et PME

## PLATEFORME PARTENAIRES

- Cafés et restaurants
- Fournisseurs de matériel de bureau
- Architecte d'intérieur

## PROPOSITION DE VALEUR

- Pour les clients :
- Avoir accès à un espace de travail convivial à moindre prix
- Pour les partenaires (membres du réseau) :

- Optimiser l'espace de mon restaurant
- Augmenter le taux de fréquentation et le chiffre d'affaire de mon établissement
- Avoir une bonne publicité

## DIFFUSION / DISTRIBUTION

- Réseaux de regroupement des TPE / PME (ABE, G1, etc.)
- Site internet
- Visit Brussels

## RESSOURCES LOCALES / LOGIQUE D'ÉCONOMIE CIRCULAIRE

- Optimisation de l'espace urbain
- Intégration d'espaces de travail recyclés et modulables
- Maintien de l'emploi local

## FLUX DE REVENUS

- Service de design des espaces de travail
- Vente des consommations aux usagers des espaces

## INDICATEURS DE RENTABILITÉ DU BUSINESS

- Nombre d'établissements HORECA membres du réseau
- Nombre de places de travail disponibles
- Nombre de réservation des espaces de travail

## RECOMMANDATIONS / DISCUSSION

- Le système ne doit pas être payant pour les entreprises, les café-restaurants sont rémunérés au travers des consommations
- L'accessoirisation des espaces pour en faire des espaces de travail ne semble pas primordiale. Le cœur du service se situe dans le site de réservation pour remplir les cafés aux heures creuses...

development through a systematic, place- and community-based approach:

- ✗ **MCB.** The company leases wooden modules for theatre décors that can be easily transported and (dis)assembled, thereby avoiding the waste that is normally generated by disposable décors. The MCB system is therefore an example of selling the function of the decor rather than the material support of the decor itself.
- ✗ **BeeOdiversity.** The company places bee colonies on site (of private customers, public administrations and so on) and manages them. BeeOdiversity combines these activities with a service of environmental evaluation (indicators based on information collected by bees, such as the presence of pesticide pollution, the quality of plants and so on).

See the evolution of MCB's project here: [home-mcb.com](http://home-mcb.com)

See the BeeOdiversity's website and how it has turned into a operational company: [beeodiversity.com](http://beeodiversity.com)

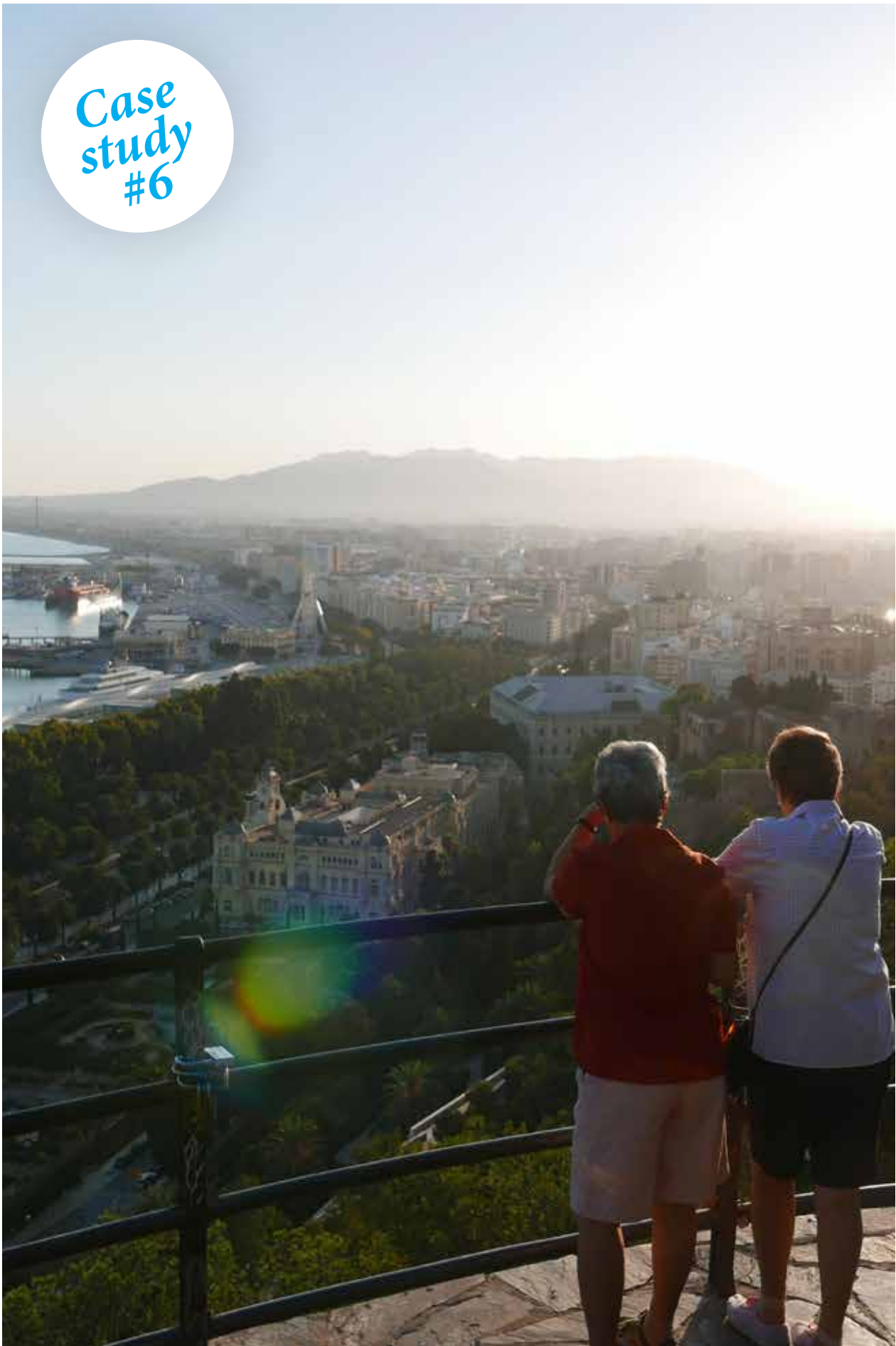
## Lessons learnt

The development and first implementation of the PSS toolkit was only a first step for Brussels' regional environmental agency. Indeed, the transition towards a Functional Economy is a long-term process that requires follow-up and persistence. The experience in Brussels suggests that the application of the toolkit could benefit from connecting it to an open collaboration platform that facilitates the integration of more stakeholders, but also subsequent implementation of the systems that are elaborated during the thematic workshops. Unfortunately, some promising ideas did not materialise, notably due to insufficient promotion and support of potential entrepreneurs that need to take over and implement ideas. A practical problem of the workshop was that many stakeholders, especially entrepreneurs, were not able to participate due to time constraints. In order to pursue the implementation of Product-Service Systems, the Brussels region has incorporated them in a new Regional Circular Economy Plan (RCEP). One of the main goals of the RCEP is to rethink economic models so that they are more circular, resource-efficient and that they create local jobs, and PSS are now part of the tools the regional plan for Circular economy intends to stimulate.

### 082

Top: A functional map from step 3.  
Bottom: The final deliverable.

Case study #6



# Product-Systems Services for neighbourhood renewal and resilience (ES)

## The goal

The Malaga's regional Local economic development Agency, Promalaga, is responsible for stimulating a strategy for co-creating a new resilient economic development model for the city based across the principles of economic, social and environmental sustainability. The intention is to focus on the initiatives of local actors - pooling individual and collective interest and entrepreneurship.

## The context

Prior to the financial crisis of the late 2000s, the regional economy was to a considerable extent driven by the construction sector. This meant relatively high wages and strong employment for different groups of the population, including young or relatively unskilled workers. But the South of Spain and Malaga in particular was particularly hard hit when real estate prices started to fall in 2007. The banking crisis also meant that new investments where stopped – even a lot of building sites that were already in progress came to a halt. The over-dependence of Malaga's economic system on the construction sector is problematic for at least two reasons. Firstly, a crisis in real estate development is not compensated for by other economic sectors so that it becomes a general crisis, leading to high regional unemployment and other economic problems, such as the loss of fiscal income. Secondly, it can be argued that developing land cannot be a sustainable strategy to begin with.

## Applying the PSS toolkit approach to generate ideas of business opportunities at neighbourhood level

A stakeholder workshop, hosted Malaga's recently inaugurated Centre Pompidou, consisted of some 30 participants from across Malaga's business, academic, professional, administrative and residential community. The workshop was

### READ MORE:

For a full description of the project, refer to: [oppla.eu/casestudy/17561](http://oppla.eu/casestudy/17561)

### 084

Overlooking Malaga.  
Photo: A Hill

### 086

A photo of the three completed templates.  
Top: 1. Analysis.  
Middle: 2. Character of the user/s.  
Bottom: 3. The business model.  
Photo: A Hill

1



### CONSTRUYENDO "EL CENTRO HISTÓRICO" AMABLE

#### CUALQUIER OTRA INFORMACIÓN DE INTERÉS PARA CONOCER EL BARRIO

##### INFORMACIÓN SOBRE POBLACIÓN

• Datos poblacionales que se publicaron en un censo para el territorio a escala de un polígono de estudio. Se debe tener en cuenta la densidad de población y la estructura de la población (edad, sexo, etc.).

##### INFORMACIÓN SOBRE EMPLEO

• Empleo temporal y estacional de temporada.

##### INFORMACIÓN SOBRE EMPRESAS Y EL COMERCIO

• Datos sobre las empresas y comercios existentes en el barrio.

##### INFORMACIÓN SOBRE SECTORES DE ACTIVIDAD

• Datos sobre los sectores de actividad que se desarrollan en el barrio.

##### INFORMACIÓN SOBRE LOS EQUIPAMIENTOS

• Datos sobre los equipamientos existentes en el barrio.

##### INFORMACIÓN SOBRE LAS INFRAESTRUCTURAS

• Datos sobre las infraestructuras existentes en el barrio.

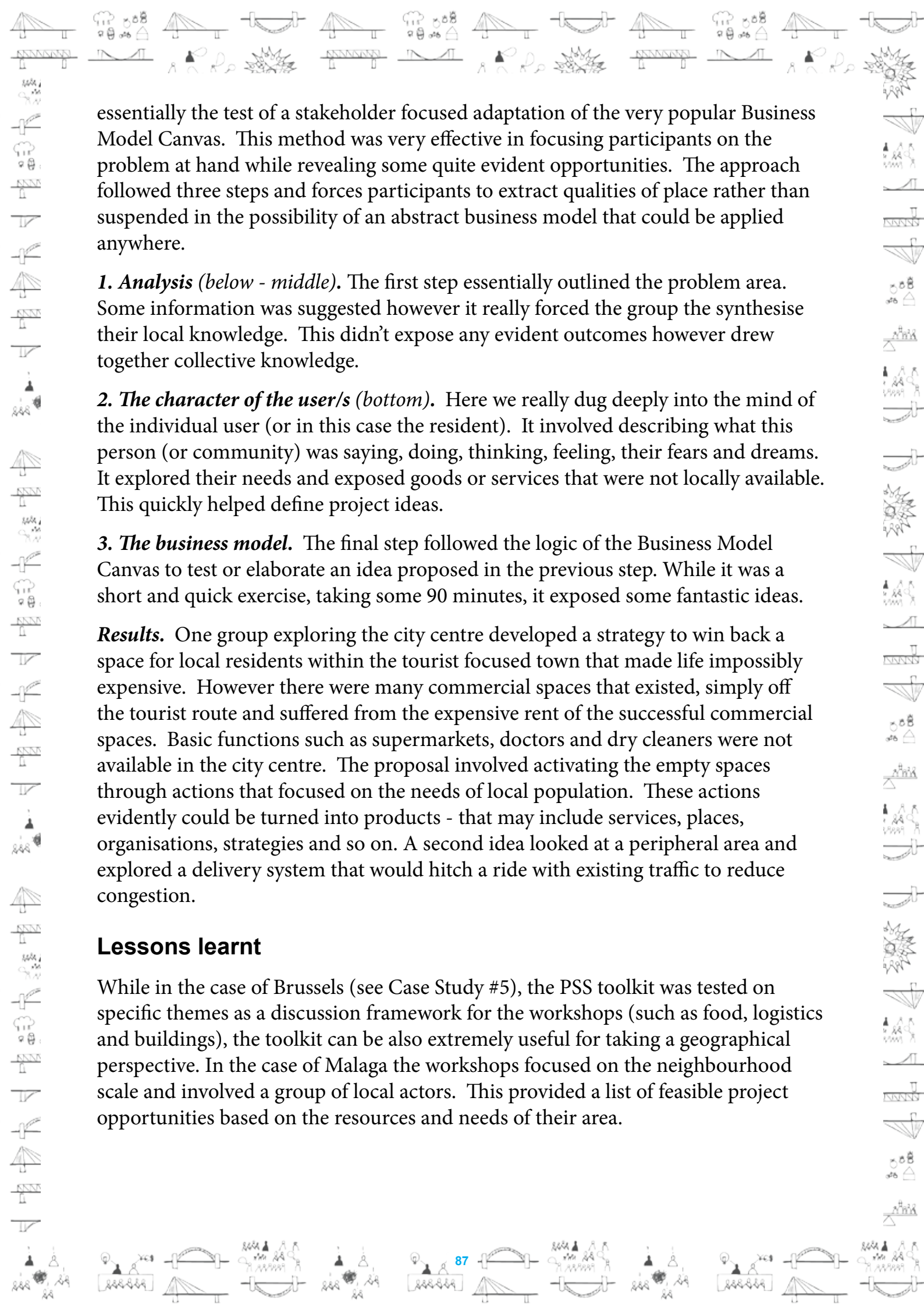
2

<b>SOBRE EL BARRIO:</b>		<b>NECESIDADES CUBIERTAS EN EL BARRIO</b>	<b>ACCIONES CORRECTORA</b>
<b>DICE</b>	<b>HACE</b>	<b>NECESIDADES NO CUBIERTAS EN EL BARRIO</b>	
<b>PIENSA</b>	<b>SIENTE</b>		
<b>MIEDOS</b>	<b>SUEÑOS</b>		

3

**NEGOCIO: PRO MALAGA "CENTRO"**

<b>6. SOCIOS CLAVES</b>	<b>2. ACTIVIDADES CLAVES</b>	<b>1. PROPUESTA DE VALOR</b>	<b>5. RELACIONES CON LOS CLIENTES</b>	<b>4. SEGUIMIENTOS DE CLIENTES</b>
<b>3. RECURSOS CLAVE</b>	<b>7. CANALES</b>	<b>8. FUENTES DE INGRESOS</b>		
<b>9. ESTRUCTURA DE COSTES</b>				



essentially the test of a stakeholder focused adaptation of the very popular Business Model Canvas. This method was very effective in focusing participants on the problem at hand while revealing some quite evident opportunities. The approach followed three steps and forces participants to extract qualities of place rather than suspended in the possibility of an abstract business model that could be applied anywhere.

**1. Analysis (below - middle).** The first step essentially outlined the problem area. Some information was suggested however it really forced the group to synthesise their local knowledge. This didn't expose any evident outcomes however drew together collective knowledge.

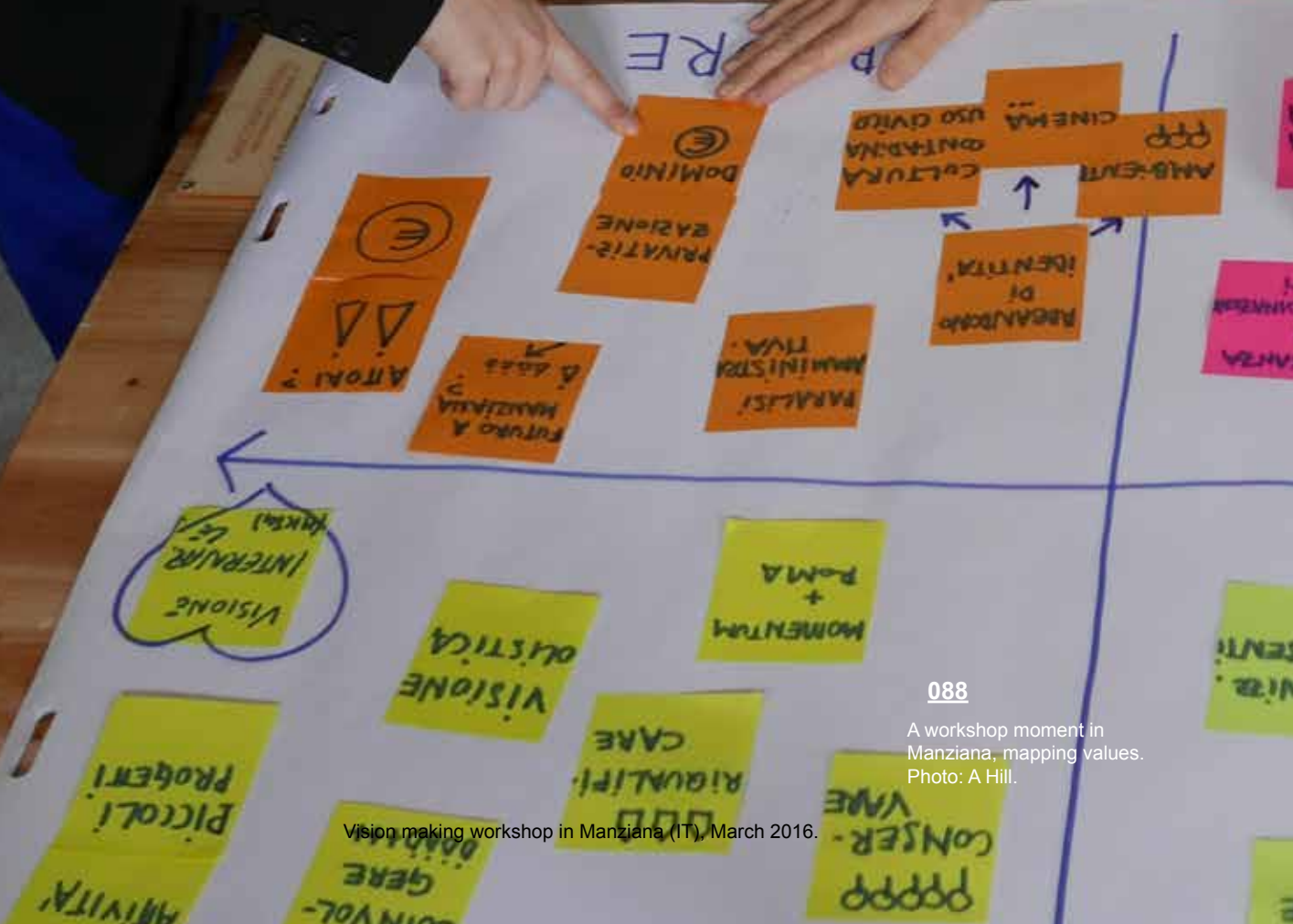
**2. The character of the user/s (bottom).** Here we really dug deeply into the mind of the individual user (or in this case the resident). It involved describing what this person (or community) was saying, doing, thinking, feeling, their fears and dreams. It explored their needs and exposed goods or services that were not locally available. This quickly helped define project ideas.

**3. The business model.** The final step followed the logic of the Business Model Canvas to test or elaborate an idea proposed in the previous step. While it was a short and quick exercise, taking some 90 minutes, it exposed some fantastic ideas.

**Results.** One group exploring the city centre developed a strategy to win back a space for local residents within the tourist focused town that made life impossibly expensive. However there were many commercial spaces that existed, simply off the tourist route and suffered from the expensive rent of the successful commercial spaces. Basic functions such as supermarkets, doctors and dry cleaners were not available in the city centre. The proposal involved activating the empty spaces through actions that focused on the needs of local population. These actions evidently could be turned into products - that may include services, places, organisations, strategies and so on. A second idea looked at a peripheral area and explored a delivery system that would hitch a ride with existing traffic to reduce congestion.

## Lessons learnt

While in the case of Brussels (see Case Study #5), the PSS toolkit was tested on specific themes as a discussion framework for the workshops (such as food, logistics and buildings), the toolkit can be also extremely useful for taking a geographical perspective. In the case of Malaga the workshops focused on the neighbourhood scale and involved a group of local actors. This provided a list of feasible project opportunities based on the resources and needs of their area.







## **PART 3: BRIDGE BUILDING IN PRACTICE**

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**Any transition towards a vibrant place-based economy requires tapping into different sets of knowledge, engaging seemingly unrelated stakeholders and aligning apparently competing economic interests. We have shown how these challenges can be addressed through four generic bridging strategies that have been developed and tested in cases across Europe. In this chapter we are concerned with the practical implementation of these strategies. For real-world transitions will not thrive on knowledge and strategies alone: someone has to implement them.**

## **3.1 Introducing Transversal Planning**

### **What is transversal planning**

There is an increasing awareness of the complexity that is involved in the transition process – complexity that half a century ago may have been taken for granted but is gradually becoming the centre of projects or problems. This ranges from transitions to renewable energy systems (particularly wind turbines), to more sustainable mobility (particularly bikes and collective transport), to local food, urban metabolism or circular economy, to local community participation, local crime, employment and many other multi-dimensional issues.

The consequence is that planning the transition of a site or a problem from one point to another will expose a multitude of questions that are usually dealt with separately by different actors. These actors may range from politicians, structural engineers, architects and designers, business developers and entrepreneurs, housing experts, procurement administrators, economists and so on – all of whom have a distinct world view and interests. Besides these specialists there may be other actors with valuable knowledge whom are often left out of early stages of planning – such as user groups, neighbours, municipal authorities etc – yet are vital players in the future of a place. How can all these voices constructively contribute to the future of place or the management of complex problems?

As a result of a gap between the capacity for ‘bridge-making’ and the process skills within public services, we have developed the ‘transversal planning’ method which helps present a clear yet flexible process for dealing with such complexity ([see following pages for the method](#)). We present the transversal planning method as striking a balance between incorporating diverse views and remaining operational and result-oriented. ***In a nutshell, transversal planning is about rendering place-based complexity manageable without running into the pitfalls of oversimplification and silo-thinking.***

This approach to complexity involves working with actors and stakeholders; from the heart to the mind. The role of the transversal planner is similar to a “curator” in the art world, helping in: identifying constraints, collating resources, filtering ideas and positions, bringing together stakeholders in order to co-create a meaningful vision. The role helps making an essential step that is often disregarded in the planning process yet can make a radical difference when dealing with place-based complexity.

### **Why will it have better results than other planning methods?**

Post-war planning methods were exceedingly top-down, with decisions taken by a small circle of powerful actors who consult specialists on specific technical problems. This approach has shown its limitations and there are numerous accounts

of failed urban interventions that it produced. One reason for such failures is that without an effective dialogue between specialised experts, developers are often tempted to focus on individual aspects of a programme rather than a more “systemic” reading of the project site: this can lead, for instance, to technologically sophisticated interventions that are not accepted or properly maintained by users.

The market-driven approach and the consultative approach are two alternative planning methods that can avoid some of the pitfalls associated with top-down planning. Market-driven planning is mainly driven by actors with access to resources who will only reach out to other actors if this is commercially interesting – consider the consequences of 80’s Thatcherism policy on public services. This approach has often led to uncoordinated interventions, socially undesirable outcomes and creates conditions for corrupting political interests. The consultative approach aims at engaging as many actors as possible and seek their opinions, but in practice this approach has often not been able to effectively bring together diverse ideas within the planning process. Although consultative planning has aroused initial enthusiasm from otherwise unsolicited stakeholders, it rapidly runs into different forms of “participation fatigue” as stakeholders are frustrated that their views are prompted but only rarely find their way into final outcomes. Worse still is when public actors see that their contribution is a theatrical performance to push through a thorny project.

We have found that a transversal vision of development can help to anticipate and attenuate conflicts that normally appear at later stages of the planning process, when changes to the initial programme come at exorbitant costs or are even impossible.

### **How was it developed?**

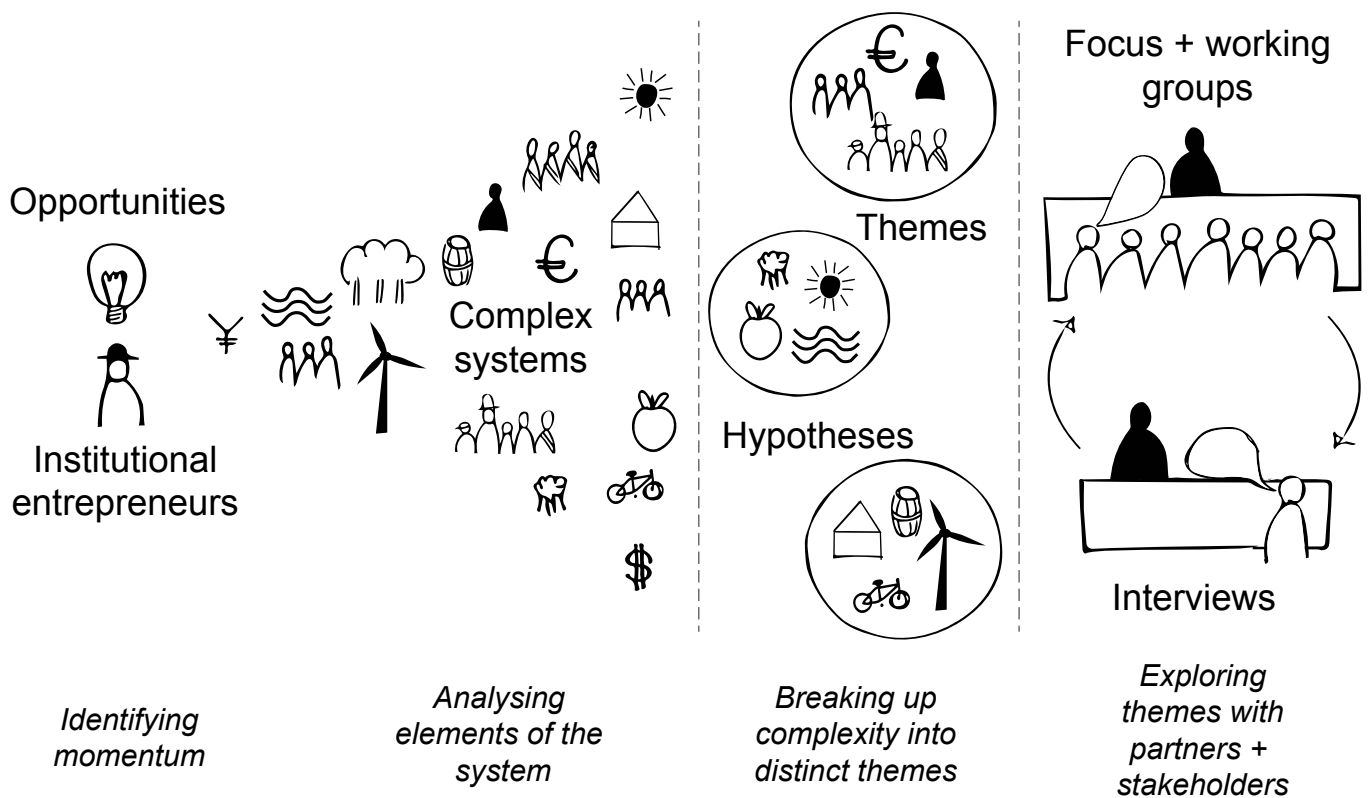
Transversal planning brings together numerous methods and is truly cross-disciplinary but allows the practitioner to build on their skill-set and knowledge (see [section 3.3](#) on the competencies of a bridge-builder). The focus of the transversal planner is on the transition process towards a more sustainable economy and the role that territorial authorities can play to bridge the gaps between various types of stakeholders, different geographical scales as well as multiple types of knowledge therefore draws on user-centred design, urban planning, action research, scenario planning, the curatorial process, agile project management to name a few sources.

## 1/ Inception

## 2/ Research

## 3/ Framing

## 4/ Exploration



## The Transversal planning method

1/ The **inception** generally involves an initial hypothesis or driving actor – what we call an ‘institutional entrepreneur’ (essentially the person that pushes a project). It is about defining the launching point, in terms of the socio-economic environment of the problem or project, the main driver of the project and the institutional context upon which it is grounded.

2/ The **research** stage involves exploring documents, reports, plans, speaking to experts, interest groups and users or residents in order to understand the larger system.

3/ After an initial research phase, we disentangle the problem and frame it in terms of distinct themes connected to the initial hypotheses. The **framing** stage is about defining the most relevant leverage points upon which to act. These themes may be based on careful systems research, or may be synthesis of expert knowledge.

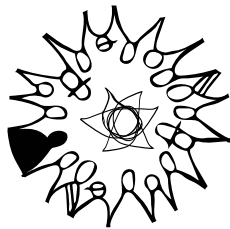
4/ **Exploration** involves testing, elaborating and refining the themes that were chosen in the previous step. During the exploration, concise summaries of the themes area developed through focus groups with users, expert panels, in-depth interviews and a synthesis of research. This step is the main input for the subsequent dialogue about the potential complementarities and tensions between the different themes, i.e. their integration into a systemic vision.

## 5/ Conversation

## 6/ Documentation

## 7/ Implementation

## Workshops

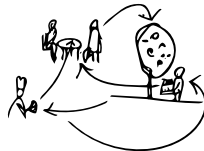


## Debates

*Co-creating  
vision of  
new system*

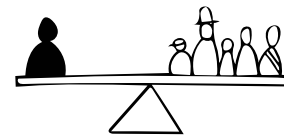


## Narratives

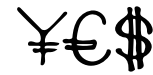


## Sketches

*Synthesising  
output*

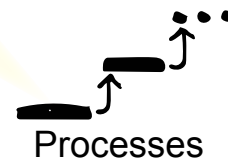


## Governance



## Finance

*Strategy +  
programme*



## Processes

*Assisting  
development*

5/ The **conversation** moment is where the co-creation occurs. Co-creation is based on strong background research to avoid confusion and discrepancies, but opens the horizon to test the themes within multi-disciplinary discussion and co-production. In this way participants are encouraged to actively communicate through a range of mediums – through words, writing, drawing or even acting.

6/ In the **documentation**, the output of the co-creation process is condensed in a meaningful narrative, describing the philosophy and conceptual cornerstones of the vision, which is supported by sketches/schemes. Until this stage, the themes and ideas converge until they are synthesised into a vision document or masterplan. This is about building key ideas so that all new work can be well founded and a range of different actors with different interests and expertise can contribute to the project. The output could involve text, drawings, plans, schemes and processes diagrams.

7/ Transversal planning is about transitions. Therefore the **implementation** stage is a critical step to help the ideas to move. This final step is where the organisational structures are built, business and finance models are proposed and possible staging is laid out. It is at this stage that a project can proceed or problem explored with more confidence and focus.

Case study #7



# Solfatara di Manziana (IT).

## The goal

The aim of the project is to develop a vision for Manziana's former Sulphur mine (the Solfatara), which is located on the fringe of the town and the edge of an ancient forest. For the project to be successful, it is essential to co-produce it with community support, taking into consideration the context of the whole area.

## The site

The Solfatara di Manziana sits on the edge of two places: a town and a forest. It is located next to a regional road connecting the lakes to Rome and is in sight of many casual visitors. The site is managed by the Università Agraria (an organisation that manages the commons), however could host activities that are very different from the Università's normal responsibility. It is a site that has been under the careful watch of thousands of neighbours, yet inaccessible as it was once either industrial or contaminated. There is little money floating around, yet much community enthusiasm to do something on the site.

## Applying the transversal planning approach

This project was based on the transversal planning process used over the course of a year to better understand the site's challenges, help define opportunities, create conditions for co-creation and how to define the next steps.

The project had a strong influence on the political level of discussion, or at least explicitly addressed an issue of political interest. This will ensure that the project will receive public support and funding. In addition, existing local and regional interests are connected to the site. Some of these are considered ambitious, such as re-animating the site's history as a cinematic location, but other more general interests such as job creation, education, and the strengthening of local economy could be supported by the future development.

### READ MORE:

For a full description of the project, refer to: [oppla.eu/casestudy/17491](http://oppla.eu/casestudy/17491)

### 094

View of the former storage warehouse.  
Photo: A Hill



The result was not a master plan, but a synthesis of opportunities, that can be broken down into three key themes. These include: 1) gateway between the forest and Manziana, 2) an agricultural innovation hub and 3) a renewable energy station.

During the visioning process, ideas were generated based on abstract examples. In later stages, the project will rely on case studies that are based on feasibility, in particular, energy regeneration aspects. In addition, the co-creation process targeted local and regional interest and focused on connecting it to the site. Redevelopment of the site has thus moved higher up the agenda. One of the major outcomes of the workshops is the involvement of the local actors. The co-creation process created confidence and trust in their voices being heard in the further development of the site. Their long-term vision for the Solfatara is to address all dimensions of sustainability by generating income from the site, creating a space for

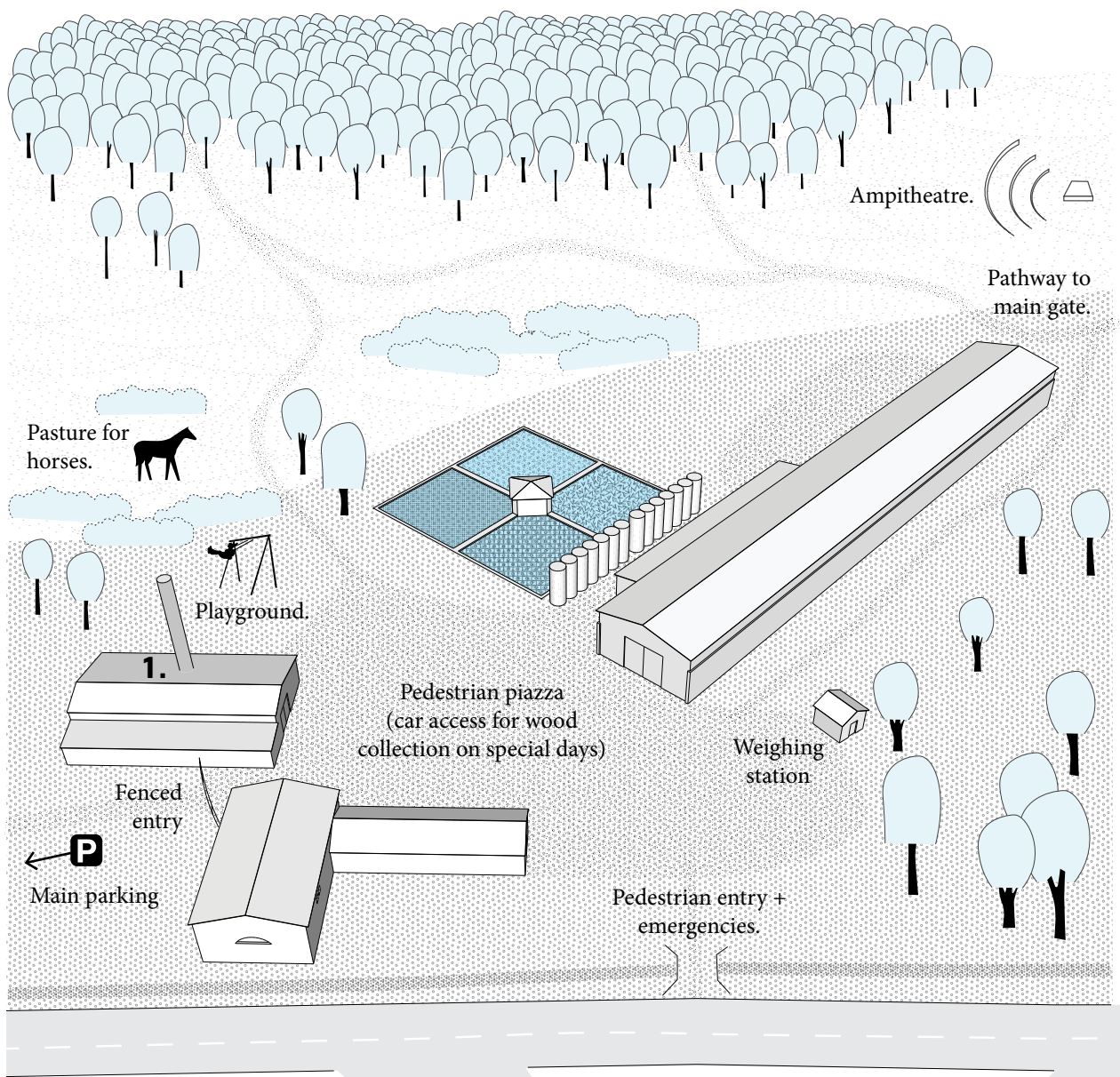
**096**

Top: View of the former mine pit.  
Bottom: A workshop moment in March 2016.  
Photo: A Hill

**097**

Scheme of the site.  
A Hill



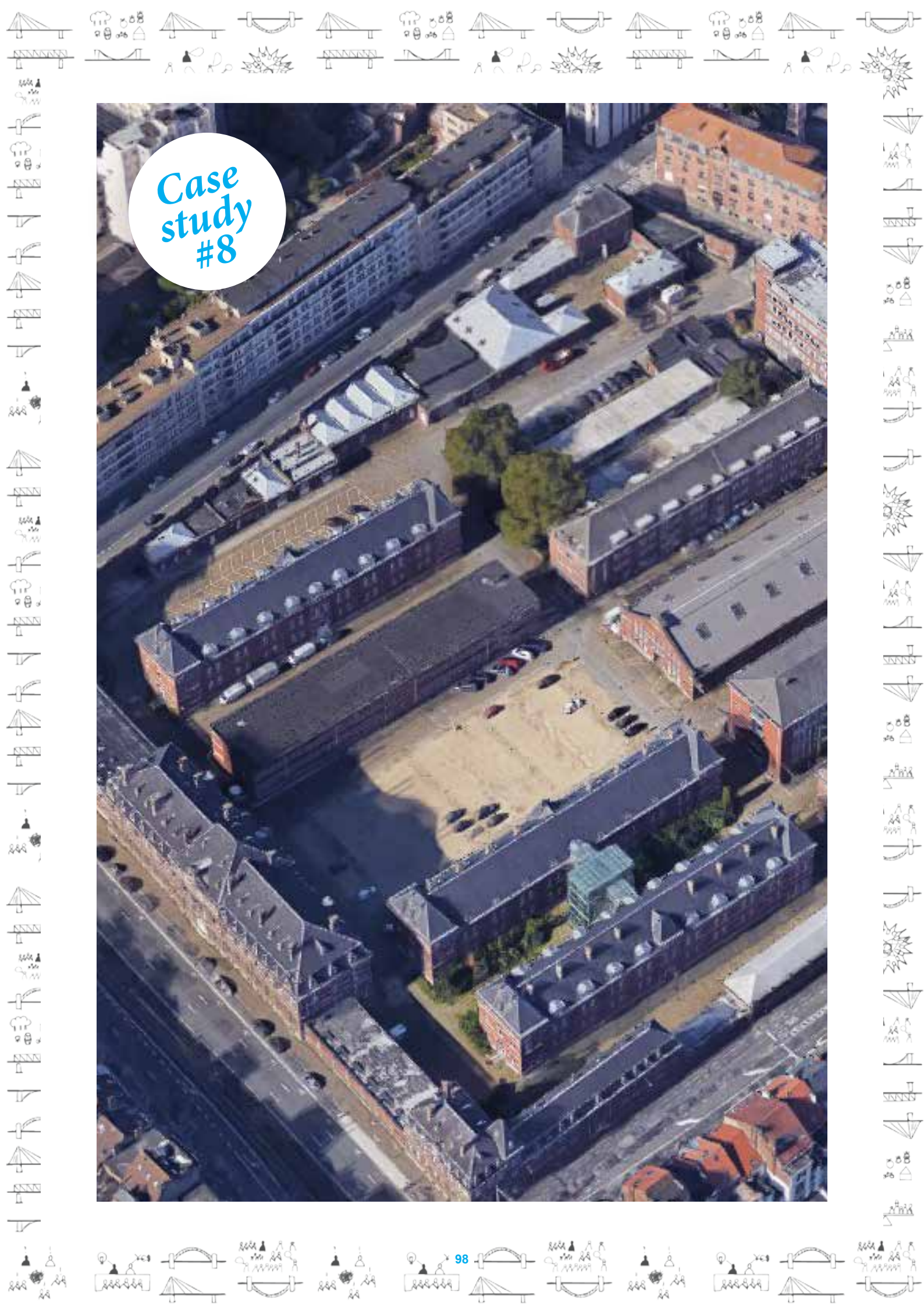
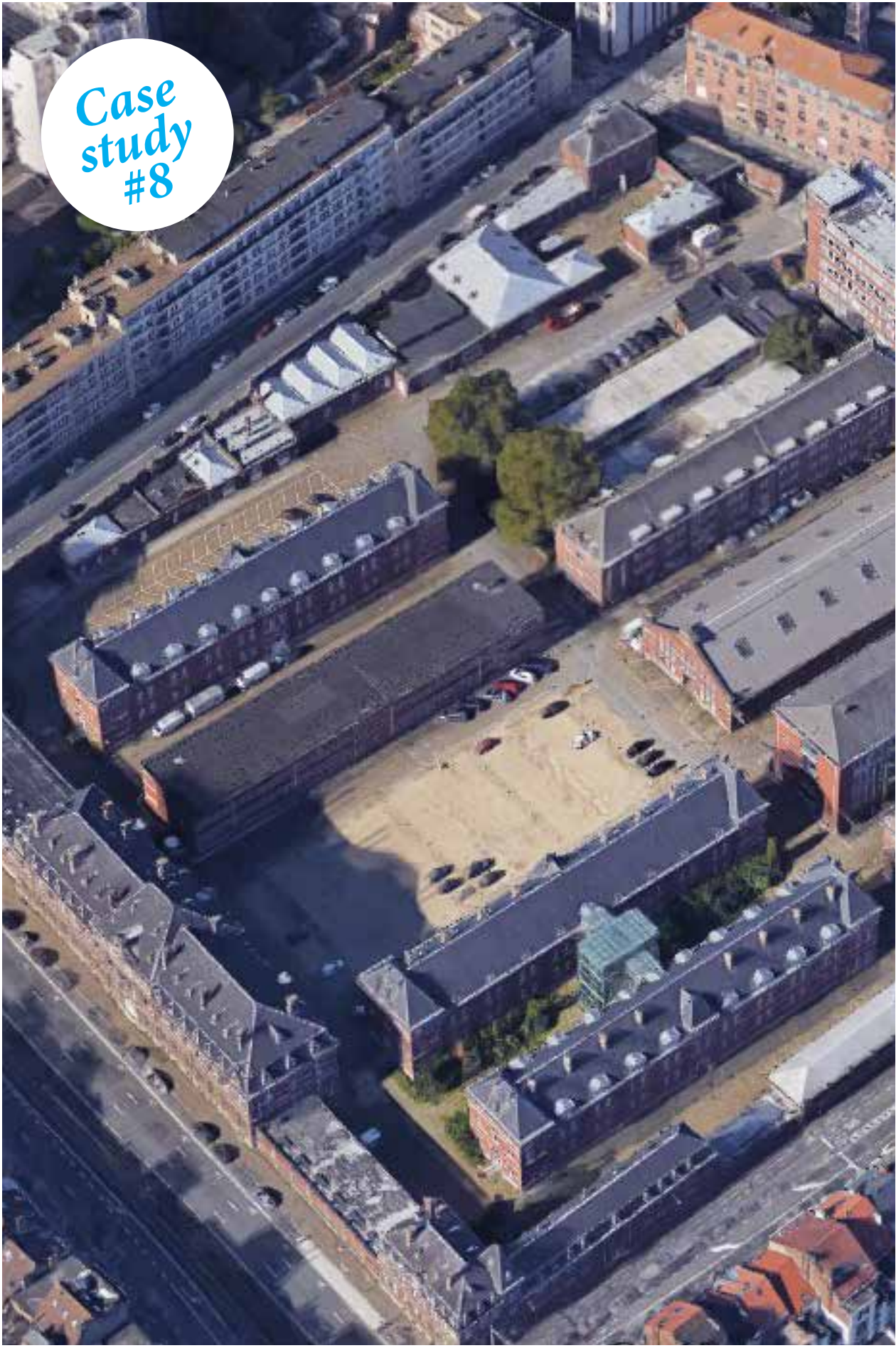


community events and creating a greater educational value of the forest. Although local residents have increased their confidence in constructive dialogue, genuine change will not be seen until the site is operational and can be compared to a previous state.

### ***Lessons learnt***

In delicate planning conditions where stakeholders are incapable of having honest and pragmatic face-to-face conversations, the planner must firstly build trust and take a vital ‘moderating’ role (see Section 2.1 describing the curatorial approach) in understanding interests, motives, and tensions through individual interviews or discussions. The planner then must take a ‘curatorial’ role in synthesising these interests and providing the conditions for a constructive discussion to occur on issues relevant to each stakeholder.

Case study #8



# THE BRUSSELS CROWN BARRACKS (BE)

## The goal

The goal was to bring university stakeholders together such as relevant administration staff, academics, and students in order to clarify the objectives of the project and develop a common vision for the site. The vision will allow for a constructive contribution to the future of the project and can be used to communicate the main ideas and sketch out the main themes for the architectural tender documents.

### READ MORE:

For a full description of the project, refer to:  
[oppla.eu/casestudy/17568](http://oppla.eu/casestudy/17568)

## The site

The project is based on the reconversion of a part of the Crown Barracks, a 44,000 square meter complex in the South of Brussels that was previously used by the military and then as police headquarters. The Brussels University Alliance brings together the two major universities of the Belgian capital and obtained around €12 million from European Structural Funds in order to reconvert two large buildings of the Crown Barracks that will host a variety of functions, including student accommodation, common learning and living areas, commercial space, restaurants, a business incubator, exhibition areas, spaces for urban agriculture and other functions. The ambition has been set very high. Firstly the project promises to offer excellence in building technology and explore the 'circular economy' at a building level. Secondly there is an ambition to run a consultative and co-creation based process involving academics, operational staff and students (the future users) within both the French speaking ULB and the Flemish speaking VUB. Finally there is an ambition to develop this project independently of the regional government - contrary to development advice given to the government.

### 096

Isonometric view of the site.  
Google Maps, Accessed  
May 2016.

There are numerous levels of complexity. As a start, the ambition to create a program based on 'circular economy' is challenging as there are various interpretations of what circular economy would mean at a building level. Secondly there is a challenge to embed the interests of a variety of academics from two different universities representing two language groups

### 100

Entry gates into the site.  
Photo: A Hill

### 101

Four schemes used to synthesise the objectives for the project.  
A Hill & S Kampelmann



and often very different philosophies. Then there is the challenge to ensure that the university political level agrees with the development of the project, even if the money has been secured. Furthermore, the site cannot be accessed as it contains sensitive intelligence infrastructure which since the terrorism events in Brussels has left the site almost inaccessible for citizens. While some of these problems are out of our hands, we have been engaged to create a single vision for both universities.

## Applying the transversal planning approach

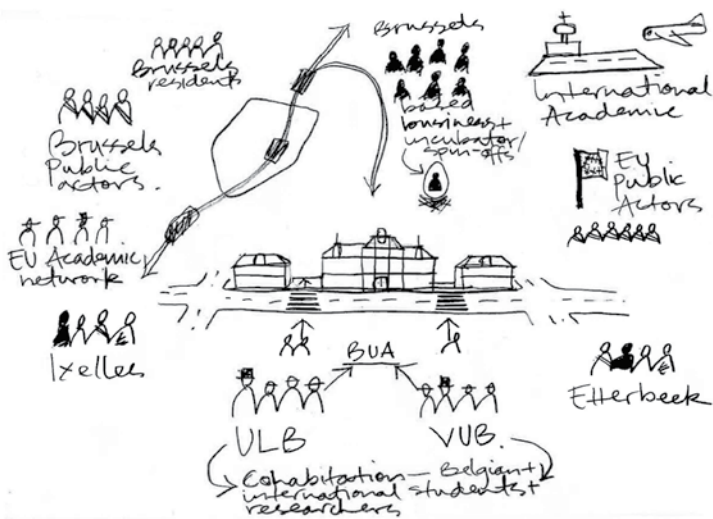
The project followed the Transversal Planning process, step by step. Firstly, the Brussels University Alliance (BUA) was engaged to better understand the problem area.

Secondly, available background material was researched to identify work done to date, as well as identifying four distinct themes: the relationship between the site and the larger context (the landscape), the collective functions of the building within the context of the neighbourhood (common space), the technical functionality within the context of circular economy (circular flows) and finally the conditions of the accommodation (Privacy).

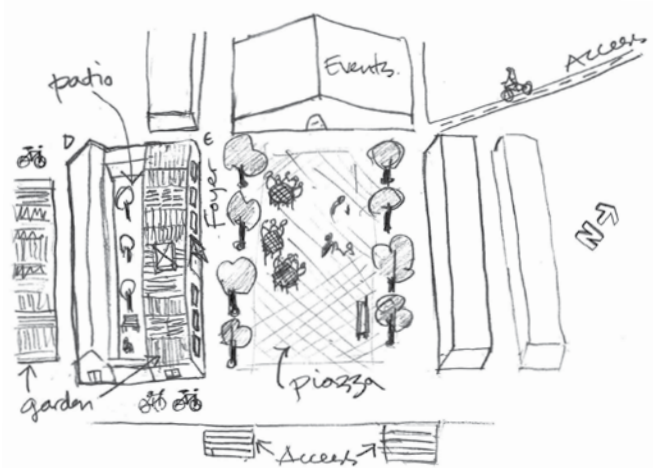
Once the main themes were defined and approved by the project committee, they were developed in detail through interviews, expert and focus groups.

The result was used to formulate a hypothesis document and was tested within a half-day workshop.

Finally, the outcomes of the workshop were packaged into a vision document that will help with all future communication and work on the site.



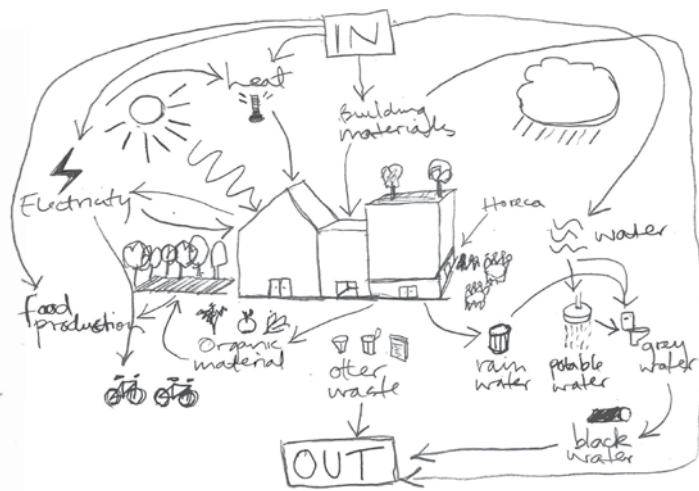
**The landscape**



**Common space**



**Intimacy**

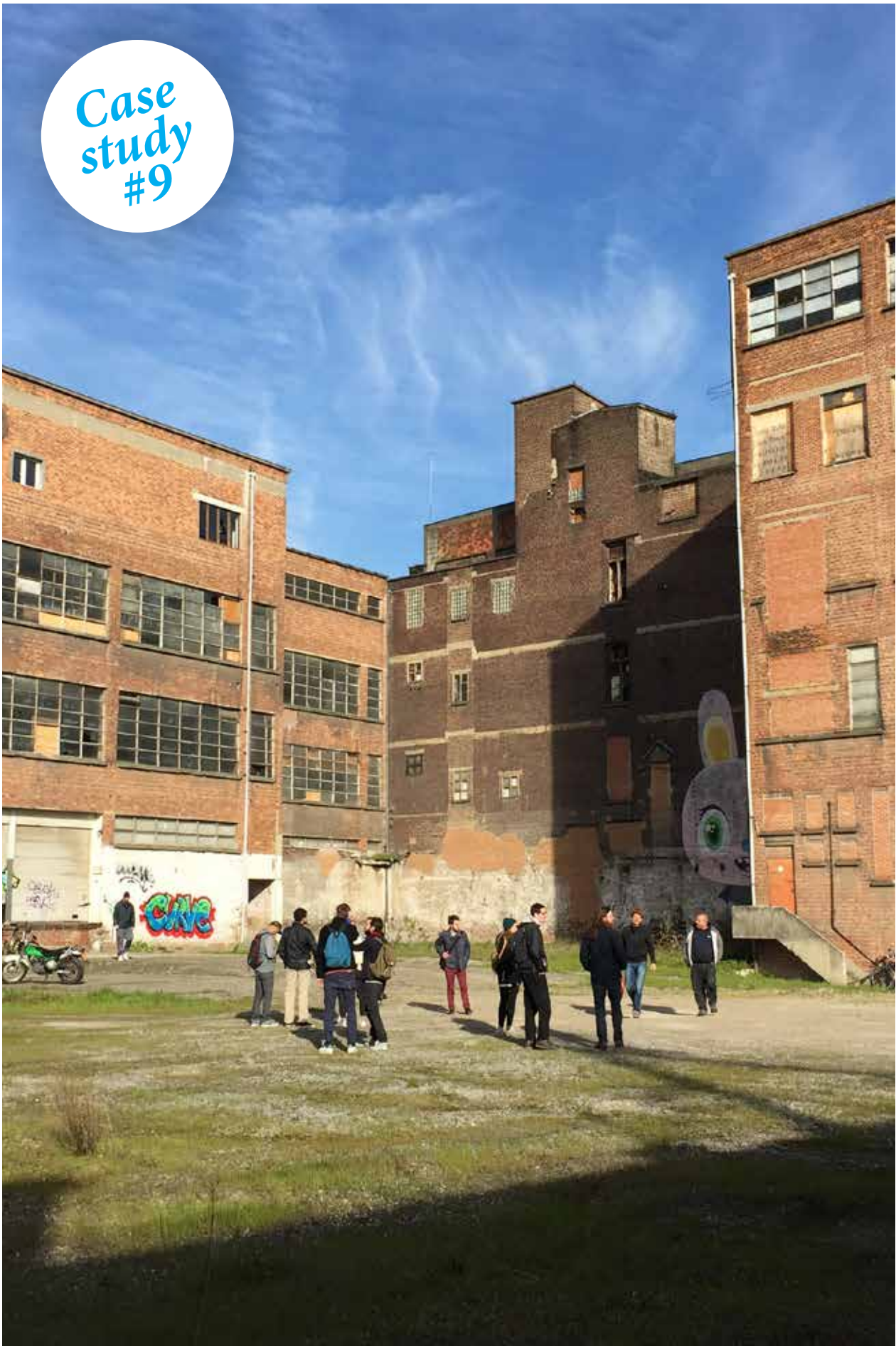


**Circular flows**

## Lessons learnt

The most crucial long-term benefit is the process that was used to bring the stakeholders together in order to give them one strong voice. The process has focused on social sustainability and thus, has increased the value of the project before its implementation. The project also takes into consideration the long-term technical aspects of sustainability (such as electricity, water, waste, and heating). However, implementation depends on a vast range of factors which are outside of power of the planning processes.

Case study #9



# STUDIO C (BE)

## The goal

The main objective for this project is to create a temporary use of a large former industrial building that will consequently have a positive impact on the existing and future neighbourhood adjoining the site. The Studio aims to bring together three core themes: social, cultural and productive functions. Further the building was to be treated as an ecosystem and therefore all partners involved should be complimentary.

## The site

The site is at critical position bridging an existing and very poor neighbourhood (Cureghem) with a new development area that will likely be focused on higher end apartments on the former industrial areas. There is a lot of hesitation in mixing local manufacturing with housing and other functions so we aim to use Studio Cureghem to prove how a mix of functions is not only possible but absolutely essential in creating a vibrant destination and a rich local economy that is properly integrated into the context.

A public tender was opened by the owner, the regional public developer, who has no short-term use for the building (5-10 years). The project was awarded to a consortium of local organisations and business however it was not clear what was to be done on the site and by who. The level of ambition, the diverse range of actors involved and the sensitive link to the local community made this a perfect project to apply the transversal planning method.

## Application of the transversal planning process

The bid was a success and work had to begin immediately on bringing together the team and eventually the pioneer partners - none of whom had worked together in the past. As this is not only a complex site but a complex constellation of partners, co-creation was seen to be vital in learning about the capacity of the team and the project.

### READ MORE:

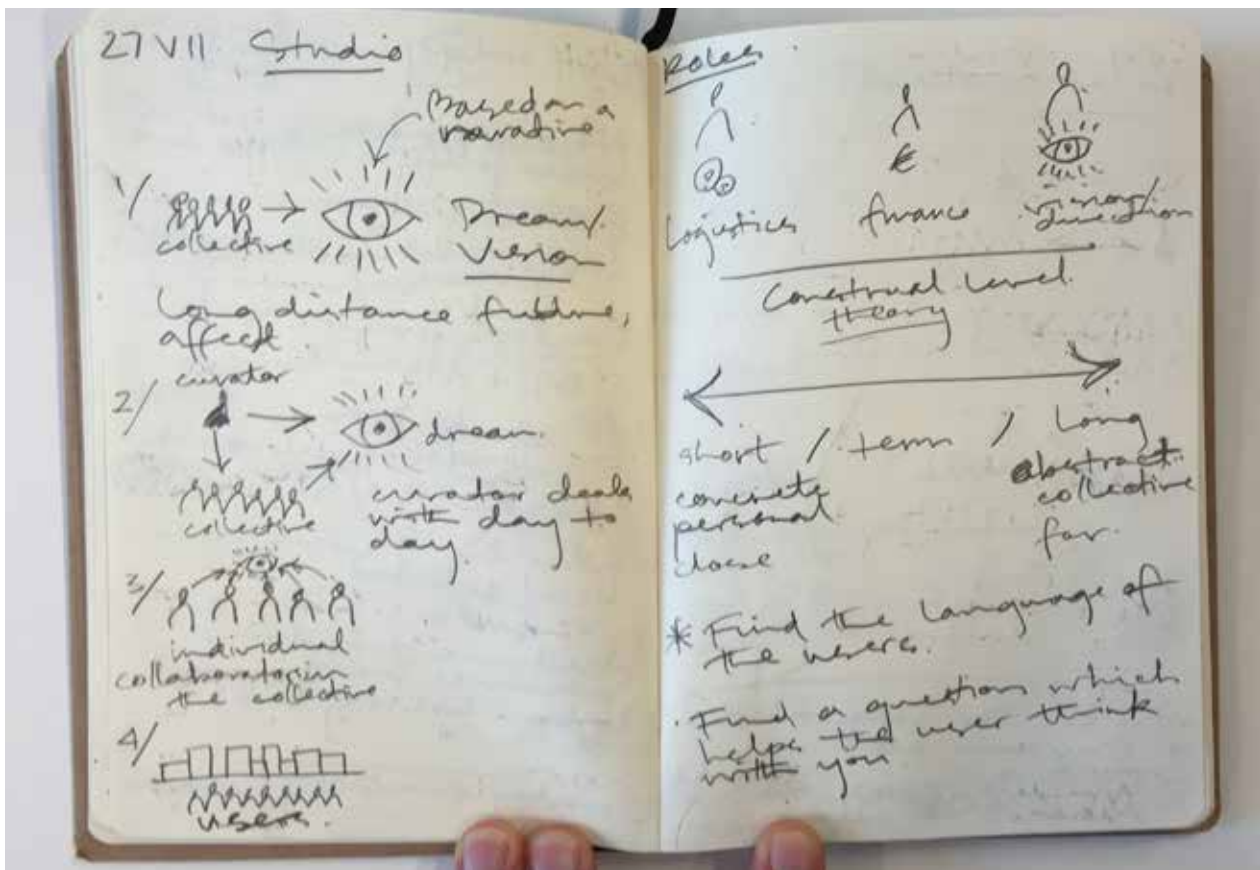
For a full description of the project, refer to: [oppla.eu/casestudy/17571](http://oppla.eu/casestudy/17571)

### 102

View of the interior courtyard space of the building.  
Photo: A Hill

### 104

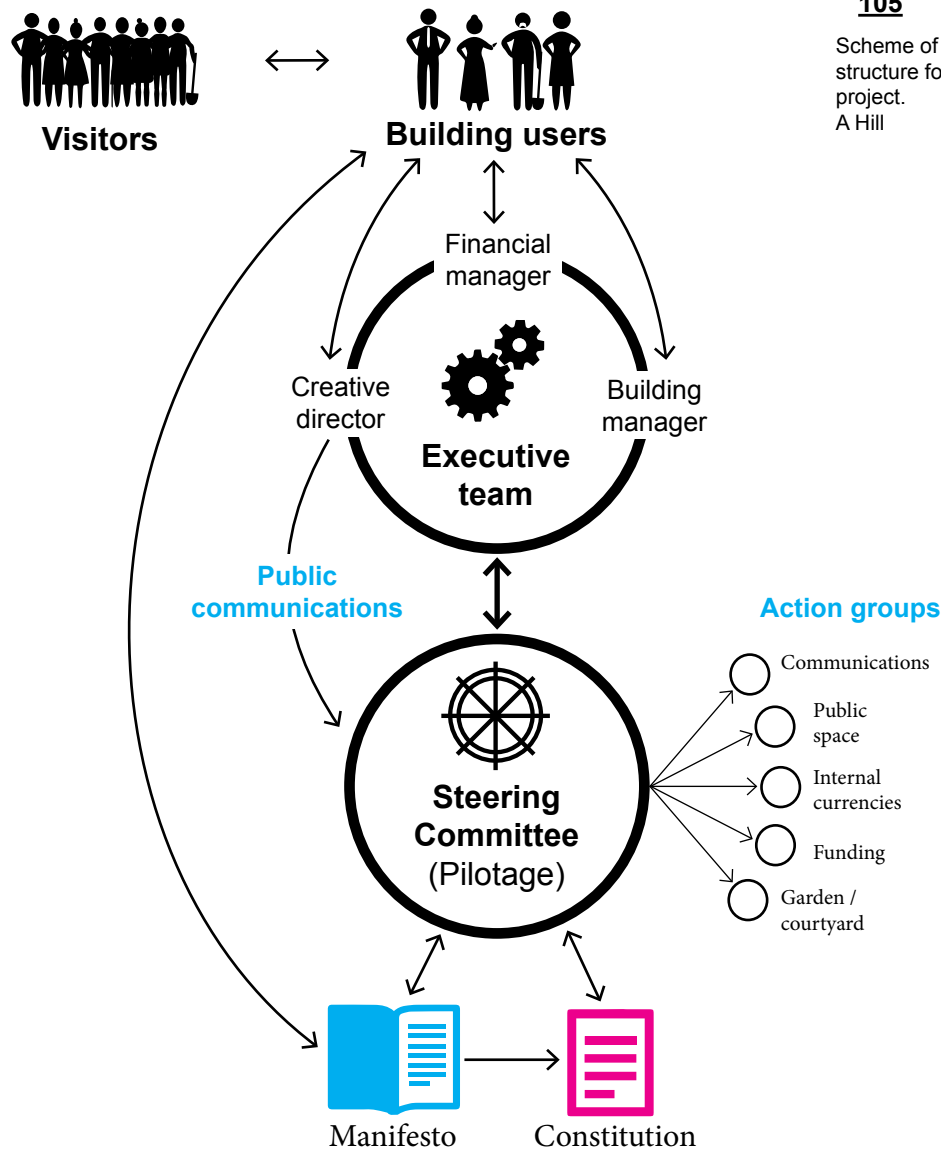
Sketch of the function of the vision document.  
Photo: A Hill



As the project started with nothing in place, it was essential that the partners felt involved in building the project and that no partner dominated the process. We began with three work-group meetings attended by members of the project partner organisations (six organisations in total). This was essentially aimed at setting up the key building blocks of the project, including the general vision for the site, the governance model, exploring the role of the building for the neighbourhood and the city as a whole, looking at the brand of the building, defining a communications strategy and so forth. As it was impossible for all partners to join together simultaneously, we ran a series of one-on-one meetings to flesh out more specific issues such as internal/external communications, the governance structure and the funding model. Not all aspects were of interest to all the partners but one partner needed to take over the overall project management. The result is a governance model and a vision document (a manifesto) which the pioneer partners and all new partners will sign.

This first step did not establish what the partners were going to do within the building. Likewise, as none of the partners had worked together before, it was essential to look at new and unique opportunities presented through the constellation of actors present on the site. Therefore it was essential to establish a workshop moment where all of the partners would participate in a co-creation based discussion firstly to get to know each other and then to explore new site specific ideas. This workshop is based on making three themes: collective facilities needed, shared activities and the actual project each partner will be doing.

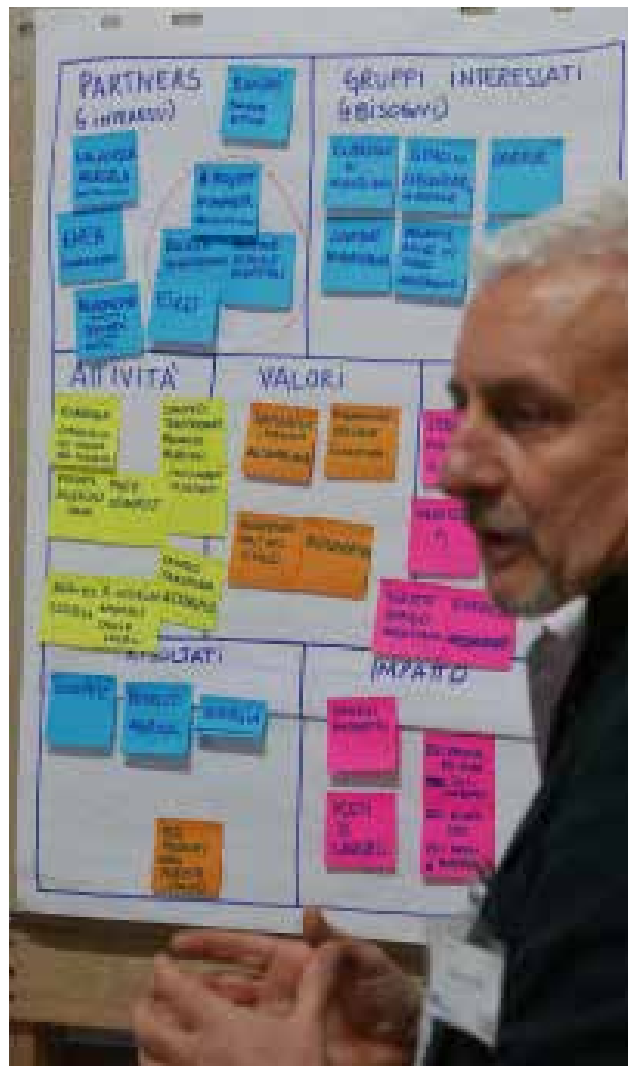




While much of this experience is not unique in an organisational sense, what does make it special is that the organisation is intimately related to the available resources on the site (socio-spatial) and looks at using temporary use of empty buildings to provide value added for the local community.

## Lessons learnt

The process of bringing together a variety of different partners on a temporary occupation project should be done slowly and carefully. If any of the partners sense that there is a partner with a heavy hand, the entire collaboration can collapse. However through building trust, partners can gain from the value added in the partnership. The process of developing project ideas is also important as partners should not expect simply to transport a project that was working successfully in another site without finding synergies of the actors within the new site. Otherwise little value added will be gained.



## **3.2 Tools for bridging**

As has been described and illustrated within this document, the ‘bridging’ process is not a lonely one. It is a process that depends on communication, discussion, co-creation and interpersonal skills.

### **Forms of communication**

There are numerous forms of communication, both verbal and non-verbal. For some people, talking may come as a natural form of communication as it is generally the fastest way to communicate a short message. However speech is abstract, difficult to define and easily confused. We feel that language must be complimented by writing, drawing, making and performing.

### **Tools for co-creation**

Whether it is an interview, an expert meeting, a focus group or a workshop, it is essential that all discussions result in a constructive output. In our experience, the more visual the conversation is, the clearer the outcome.

A tool is merely an device that facilitates a task - it will not do the task itself. On the following pages we present four examples of tools that we find essential for the bridging process and require little more than pen and paper. Understanding how these tools work can allow one to use the necessary tool based on the circumstances at hand.

**Who:** 1) Stakeholder mapping: the penta-helix (p109)

**Why:** 2) Exploring emotions: back to the future (p111).

**How:** 3) Building the bigger picture: the vision dashboard (p113) and 4) Testing contradictions: dialectics (p115)

All discussions need moderators: a partial coordinator of the discussion whose prime objective is to ensure the topic is thoroughly discussed and that all participants have a chance to communicate their perspective. This role requires practice and the capacity to navigate the discussion process while mediating conflict or uncertainty. The following tools indeed help with this. While there are a vast range of similar tools, each practitioner should find those that suit them.

#### **READ MORE:**

Tools developed within the TURaS project:  
[osmosnetwork.com/category/tools](https://osmosnetwork.com/category/tools)

Service design tools  
A great collection of workshop and ideation methods.  
[servicedesigntools.org](https://servicedesigntools.org)

DIY: Development Impact You (NESTA)  
A very large collection of tools, laid out on a beautiful website with very clear steps, a video and sometimes references.  
[servicedesigntools.org](https://servicedesigntools.org)

Learning Network on Sustainability  
Focused on learning and the aid sector.  
[lens.polimi.it](https://lens.polimi.it)

Civic Activism  
A large collection of tools on citizen and community lead action.  
[civicactivism.buildingchangetrust.org](https://civicactivism.buildingchangetrust.org)

Design Kit  
IDEO is one of the largest and most established firms operating in the field of service design and user experience.  
[designkit.org/methods](https://designkit.org/methods)

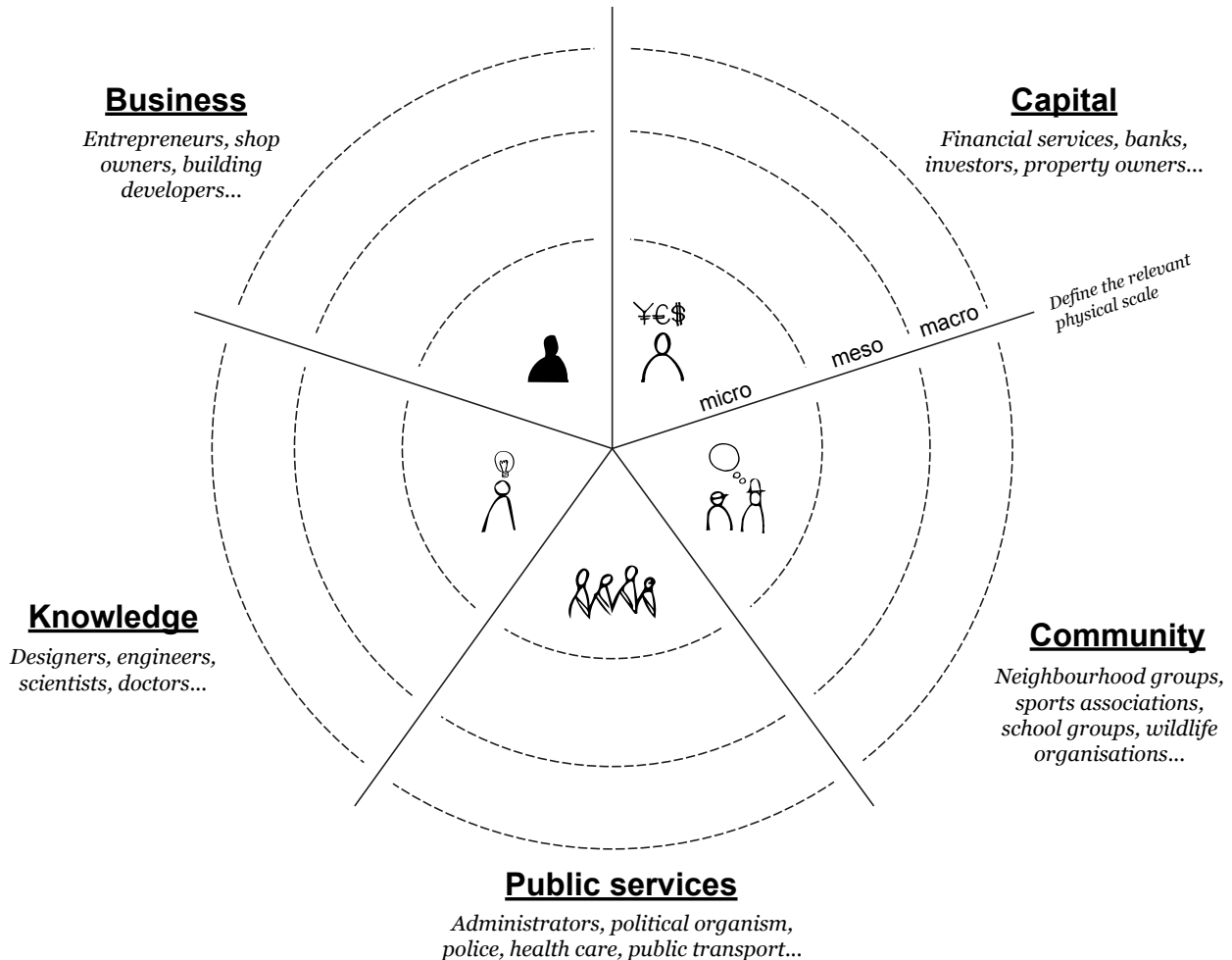
#### **106**

Various photos of the exercises in action.



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Top: Serious play to explore actors.  
Bottom: after the fun, the stakeholders can be mapped.  
Photos: A Hill.

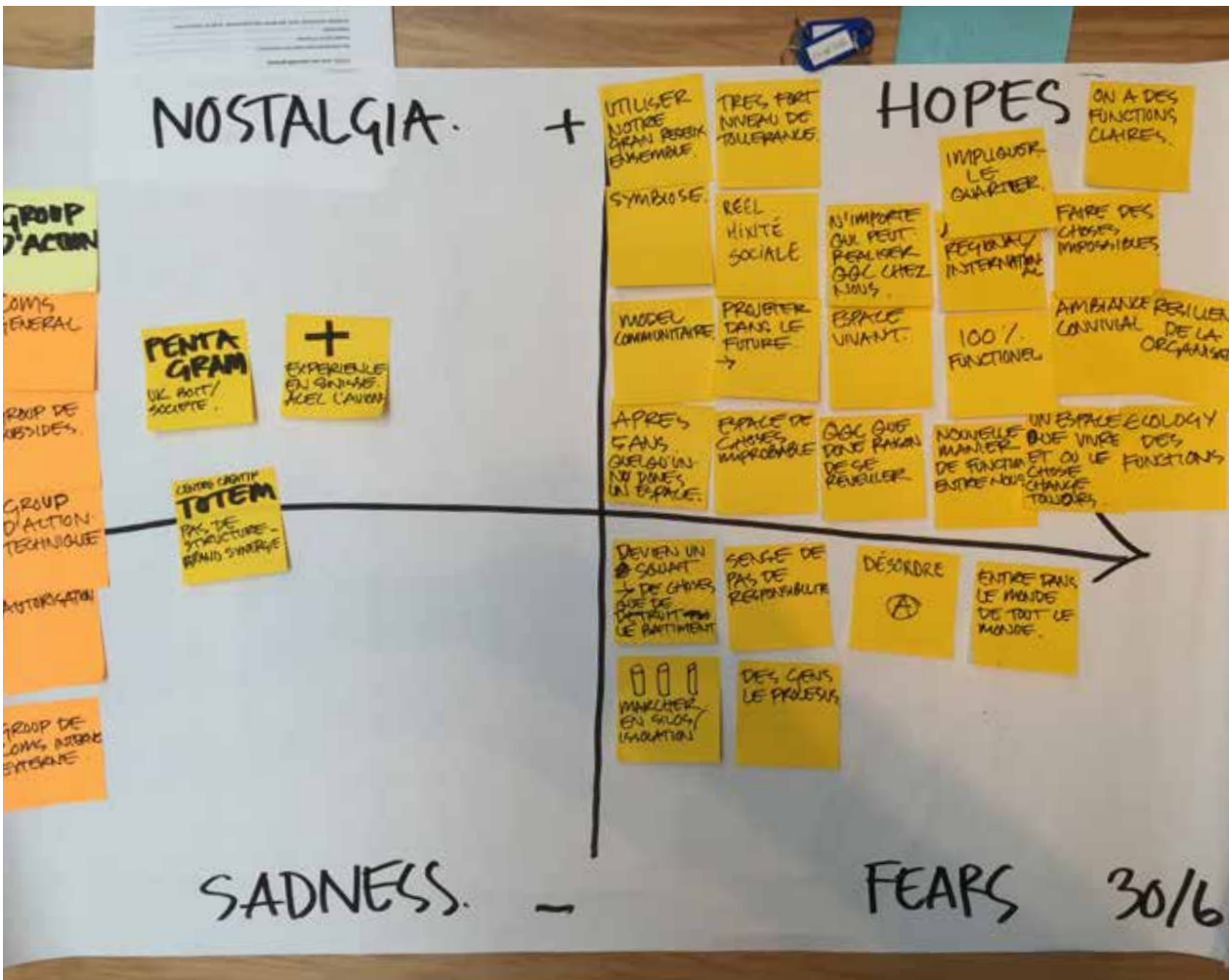


## TOOL 1: Stakeholder mapping - the penta-helix

**Overview:** The ‘Penta-Helix Model’ is based on five stakeholder types: businesses, public administration, local residents, the knowledge sector and capital. The model is very useful for multi stakeholder problem areas where stakeholders represent a range of interests on a site or problem. It firstly helps in analysing a mix of stakeholders; those that may be actively involved in the project (actors) and others that are involved due to the nature of the project (interest groups) such as public authorities or neighbours. Secondly, as this model deals with samples of stakeholders, it is not necessary to name stakeholders but rather explore the type of relevant stakeholder (for example small shop-keepers or regional environmental officers). Each type of stakeholder can be represented at different levels: the local (or micro), the regional (or meso) and the national/international (or macro) level. This can also change the type of interest.

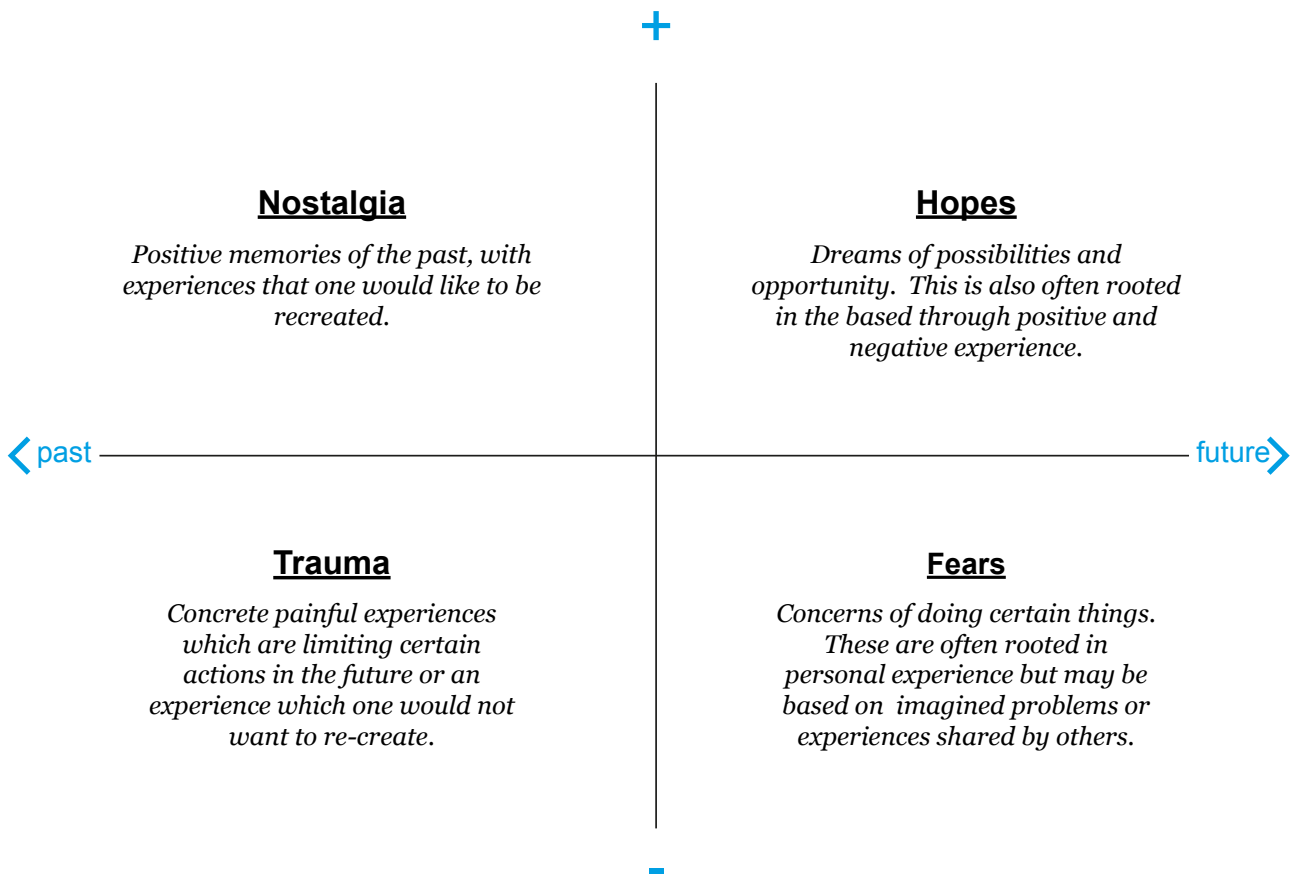
**Application:** The following scheme can be used to explore stakeholders within a group. Sketch the scheme on a sheet of paper and use post-it notes to explore where stakeholders fit into the general picture of the project/problem/site. It will quickly become apparent where the gaps lie or where possible conflicts may emerge through overlaps. Later explore their level of interest, power and commitment to help gain a better picture of the main actors and those necessary to be involved.

**READ MORE:** [osmosnetwork.com/research-stakeholder-management](https://osmosnetwork.com/research-stakeholder-management)



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Top: Mapping values in Brussels.  
 Bottom: A workshop step in Dublin.  
 Photos: A Hill.



## TOOL 2: Exploring emotions - back to the future

**Overview:** Emotions are a significant driver of decision making. One often makes decisions with the heart and justifies them with their mind. Even if decisions seem illogical, they are likely to be based on what people see or have seen. It is Plato's allegory of the cave\* – what you see (or have seen) is what you know. When dealing with groups, often there are very core issues that are capable of bringing people together and building trust, irrespective of one's world-view.

**Application:** Firstly draw the quadrant onto a board which is clearly visible by all the group. It is useful to note names of those that mentioned each topic so then it is easier to trace the discussion. Depending on the group dynamics, there are a number of ways to deal with the process. **Option 1** is to follow a circle, one person to the next, asking them to describe aspects of the four quadrants, either adding the comments to the quadrant as they are being described or do it once all of the group has had a chance to discuss. **Option 2** is to allow the group to discuss freely amongst themselves one corner at a time, while the moderator takes notes and add them to the quadrant as they are mentioned. **Option 3** is to get each group member to write down elements of the four quadrants on paper (post-its) and then allow the group to lay them out on the quadrant in groups.


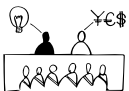



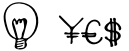


**READ MORE:** [osmosnetwork.com/tools-back-to-the-future](https://osmosnetwork.com/tools-back-to-the-future)



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The value canvas used in  
Manziana (IT).  
Photos: A Hill.



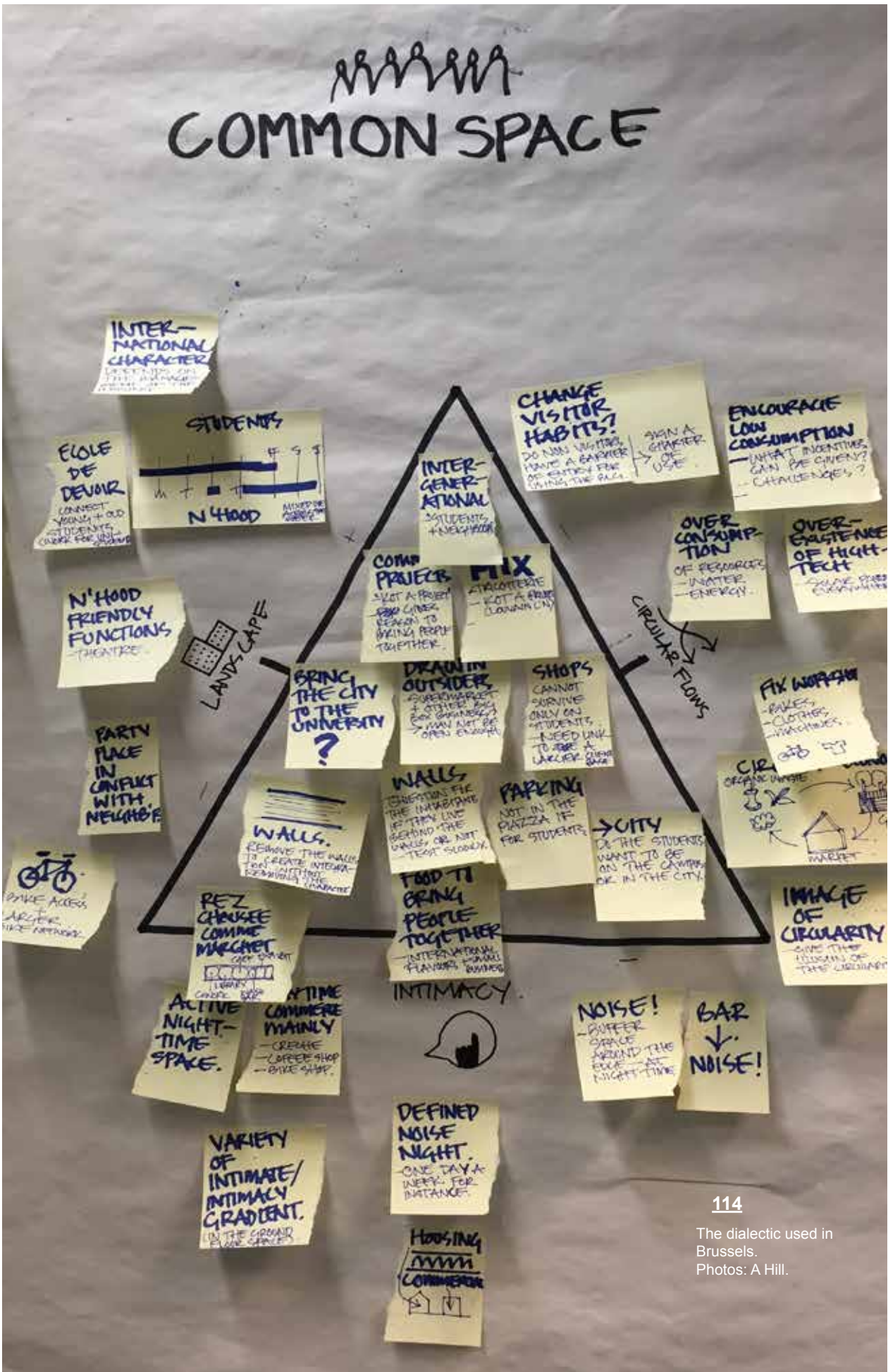
PROJECT				
	<p><b>Involved partners</b></p> <p><i>Who are the actors that will actively develop the output of this theme?</i></p>	<p><b>Values</b></p> <p><i>What are the underlying values that orient and guide the actions and decisions of the involved partners?</i></p>	<p><b>Actions</b></p> <p><i>What kind of activities will be carried out by the group of involved partners that will lead to the output of the theme?</i></p>	<p><b>Output</b></p> <p><i>What are the tangible outputs that the involved partners co-develop?</i></p>
<p><b>Synopsis</b></p>				
ENVIRONMENT				
	<p><b>Interest groups</b></p> <p><i>Who are the users, neighbours or other interest groups that will be affected by theme?</i></p>	<p><b>Needs</b></p> <p><i>What are the underlying values that orient and guide the actions and decisions of the involved partners?</i></p>	<p><b>Resources</b></p> <p><i>What are the material, intellectual and financial resources available and required for reaching the output of this theme?</i></p>	<p><b>Outcome</b></p> <p><i>What are the ultimate overall consequences for the partners and interest groups?</i></p>

### TOOL 3: The bigger picture - the vision dashboard

**Overview:** The ‘Vision Dashboard’ a simple discussion tool to facilitate constructive discussions within expert groups. It provides a useful platform to discuss certain specific aspects of a larger complex problem.

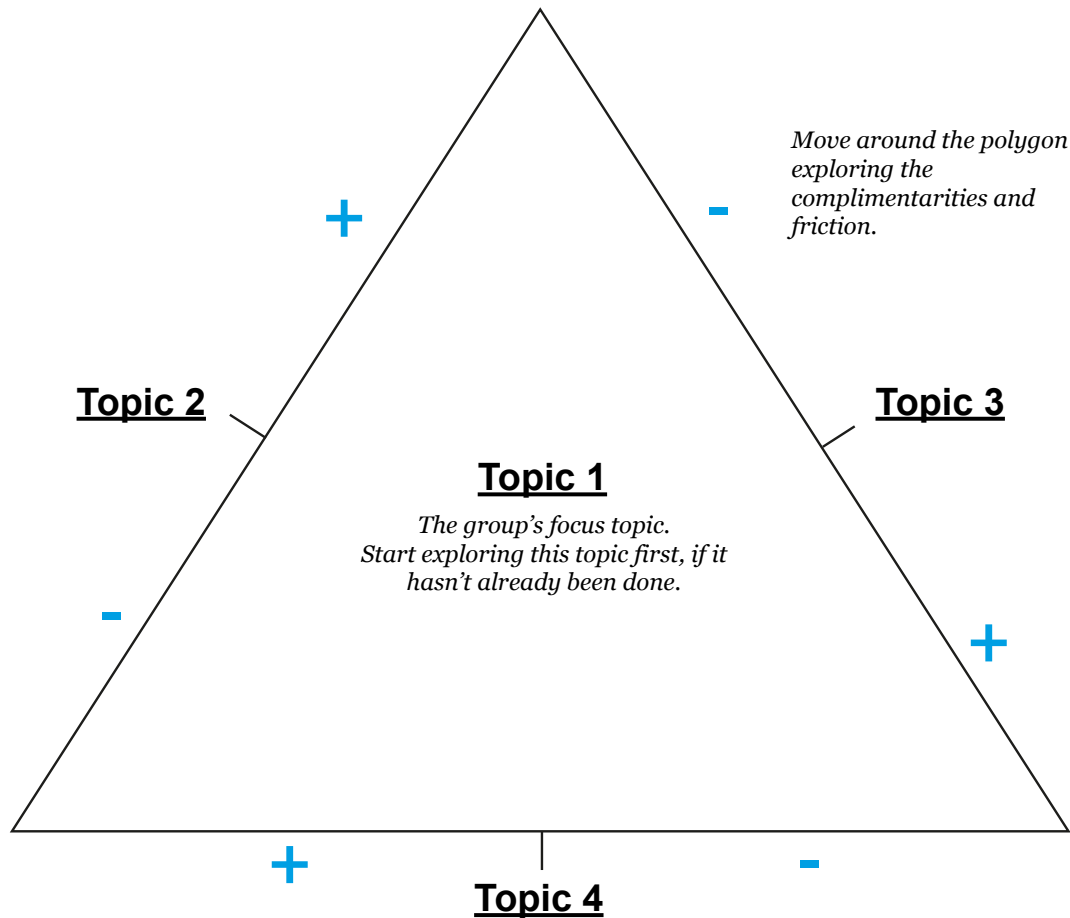
**Application:** A problem could be divided into various elements for instance: local jobs, water management or peri-urban agriculture. Each topic can be used as the basis of a discussion within a multi-disciplinary expert group, experts from very different backgrounds and disciplines that use very different vocation based language (refer to the Penta-Helix on the previous page for stakeholder mapping). A group of experts may be made up of engineers and technicians, financial specialists, sociologists, human resources personnel, builders and/or residents. The Dashboard helps summarising key components into limited but workable blocks of key words. One can start by filling in any part of the dashboard however ‘values’, ‘involved partners’ or ‘interest groups’ can be a good place to break the ice. Try to focus on the more concrete issues later, once the objectives have been clarified and the group is able to work together. Through discussion, informally add words or text as necessary. Allow the group to contribute through notes or post-its.

**READ MORE:** [osmosnetwork.com/tools-value-dashboard](https://osmosnetwork.com/tools-value-dashboard)



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The dialectic used in Brussels.  
Photos: A Hill.



*Move around the polygon  
exploring the  
complimentarities and  
friction.*

*Draw a polygon with the total number  
sides per themes, minus 1.*

## TOOL 4: Testing contradictions - dialectics

**Overview:** The richest part of an ecosystem is in the edge between one system and another. It is in this zone where the resilience and survival capacity of most species is tested and where there is also greatest competition. It is also the edge that is constantly in tension. In practice, it is common to avoid looking at the edges between one theme and another, problem and another or one world-view and another. Once we have explored tensions and synergies, we can apply this metaphor in exploring possible truths: thesis, anti-thesis and synthesis. This means that we accept that through understanding tensions, we can find a position between them.

**Application:** If a project explores a range of specific themes (say 3-6) use a large sheet of paper and draw a polygon with the total number of sides minus one – see photo above. For example for 4 topics draw a triangle. In the centre of the triangle, note a specific theme and then note the other three themes against, one per side. Divide each side into positive and negative. Finally in a group discuss the tension between one topic and the other three.

**READ MORE:** [osmosnetwork.com/tools-the-dialectic](https://osmosnetwork.com/tools-the-dialectic)



### **3.3 Competencies for bridging**

Local and regional authorities are in a privileged position to implement the different bridging activities outlined in this book, which is why we now explore implementation issues from their perspective. This being said, by no means we imply that they should be the only or even the most important bridging actor. In many European cities and regions, other institutional entrepreneurs, including civil society organisations or members of the business community, are successfully engaged in a series of important bridging activities that help transitioning local economies towards a more place- and community-based orientation.

It would arguably be futile to formulate a step by step to-do list on how territorial authorities can go about the practical implementation of the bridging strategies outlined in this book. A central conclusion of our research is that the transition to sustainable economic activities needs to be adapted to the specificities of local environmental and social configurations that are arguably impossible to capture in a checklist format. We have nevertheless tried to summarise our conclusions and use the account *Symbiopolis*, a fictive

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Participants young and old, discussing urban agriculture, in a workshop moment in Rome.

Photo: A Hill

city with what we consider as exemplary public authority governance, to provide guidance to territorial authorities on implementation issues.

Symbiopolis is an urban agglomeration whose local authorities have a long-standing and widely regarded reputation for their positive involvement in the governance of the Symbiopolitan economy and where local inhabitants have easy access to elected officials. We will describe how the public administration of this city successfully engages in different bridging strategies by describing the mindset, the habits and the skills of its local authorities.

## The mindset

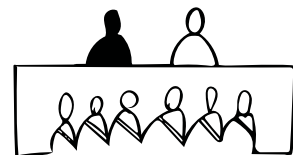
The local authorities of Symbiopolis do not frame the economy of their city in terms of the ideological cleavages of the 20th century. They neither see themselves as a governing body at the helm of a planned economy, but also not as a mere regulator of a liberal market economy. For them, the economy is a complex set of interactions between a variety of stakeholders and the physical environment of the city and its surroundings. The economy evolves as part of a wider evolving system that includes the natural and built environments. Their job is not to plan or regulate the economy, but to ensure that collective choices on the social-ecological trajectory of the urban system ensure the well-being of current and future generations.

To foster a climate for **constructive debates between different stakeholders**, the different territorial agencies of Symbiopolis overcome age-old, ideologically charged opposition such as “public vs private”, and instead started to frame planning issues in terms of particular and common goods. Indeed, they experienced that the economic well-being of inhabitants did not so much depend on whether an asset was publicly or privately controlled and managed, as long as it served the commons of the city.

The mindset of the **local administration and its employees** is not neutral: they all actively and personally care for the communities and the places that they are responsible for and involve them whenever this makes sense. Politicians also see themselves as responsibly “taking care of the city” rather than “running the place”.

◀ **Symbiopolis** - The city derives its name from the biological term of symbiosis, meaning “union for life of two different organisms based on mutually benefit”.

**Narratives** - The use of narratives to express desirable development paths is increasingly popular device in progressive economics. A pioneering contribution of this kind was the report “The Great Transition: A Tale of How It Turned Out Right” published in 2009 by the New Economics Foundation. More recently, several keynote speakers to the Biennial Conference in Ecological Economics in Leeds in 2015 argued that one of the most relevant contributions of economists is to help emerging initiatives to articulate narratives about desirable transitions.

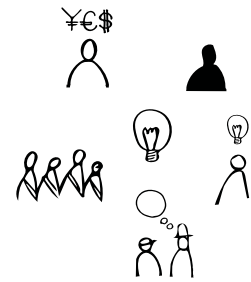


Foster conditions for constructive debates between stakeholders.



Do not bring a neutral mindset.

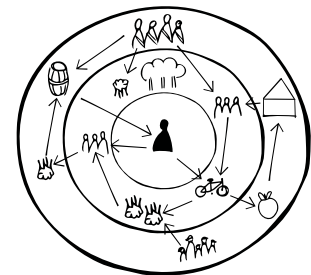
Another central feature of the general mindset in Symbiopolitan administrations is a **widely shared vision** of the economy and its future path. This vision is, however, not a monolithic doctrine but rather a patchwork of smaller, multifaceted visions at different scales. There is no one-size-fits-all economic policy, but many decentralised governance mechanisms that allow the administration to adapt policies to the specificities of places and communities, be it in a neighbourhood or at larger scales. The coherence of the economic system of the city does not derive from top-down decisions or coercion, but rather from a systemic pattern of using available assets to generate community value in a patchwork of polycentric economies.



Define a widely shared vision.

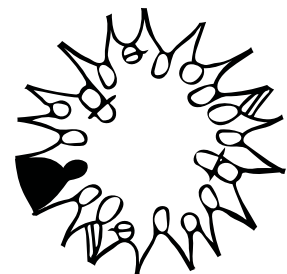
## The habits

Reflecting good practices of progressive local authorities all over Europe, the authorities of Symbiopolis are in the **habit of bridging between different scales, actors and types of knowledge** as this is a large part of their job. This habit comes with a fair bit of determination and most civil servants need to have thick skin: playing the role of a bridging actor is in generally not a very gratifying role as one is constantly caught up between competing interests and viewpoints. As one municipal employee working on neighbourhood revitalization in Brussels put it, “you are constantly defending other people’s arguments - wherever I go I also represent the other side of the debate”. So the local administration has become used to the fact that being a bridge builder is an essential part of envisioning, negotiating and implementing the transition to a place- and community-based economy, it is not a task that is very gratifying in most situations. It is the overall picture and the idea that someone has to do the job, even if it is a difficult and thorny one.



Bridging between different scales, actors and types of knowledge.

**Inclusive and meaningful participation** is another habit of the city’s administrations. They try to include as many stakeholders as possible in matters that concern the local economy, because they know that the goods and services produced in the local economy should provide quality jobs and valuable functions to the community. But they are also careful to keep the participation meaningful: this will not require the opinion of inhabitants if the community cannot realistically



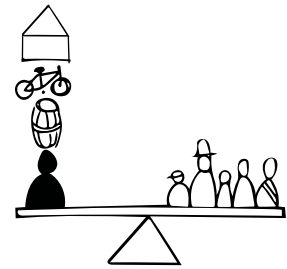
Inclusive and meaningful participation.

influence the choice between alternatives, or if the choice is a trivial or marginal one. They know that Symbiopolitans have other things to do than to attend participatory town hall meetings and that they trust the local authorities to make responsible choices, especially because they have participated in extensive consultations on the overall vision and strategy for the local economy.

Next on the list is **balanced networking**. They know that the implementation of effective bridging between competing interests or between start-ups and established actors requires having access to a diverse set of urban players. This is why they do not start contacting potential participants when they organise a round-table on the local economy, but are familiar with most of them through regular exchanges. The recruitment of personnel of the city administration reflects the socio-economic and cultural diversity of Symbiopolis because networking sometimes works best through informal channels.

The policies of local administrations are further **open for experiments and risks**, and therefore a crass departure of administrations in other cities that try to avoid every bit of initiative and uncertainty in lower strata of the administrative hierarchies. In Symbiopolis, the governance of the administration is organised in multi-levelled, polycentric units that allow civil servants to adapt city-wide policies to the circumstances in different neighbourhoods. This also provides a fertile field for experiments, and projects that produced encouraging results in one neighbourhood are soon imitated by others.

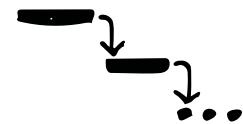
A habit that proved to be extremely valuable for the social-ecological trajectory is the practice of **going back and forth between different geographical or temporal scales**. While it is true that most policies are designed and implemented as close as possible to the local residents, it is crucial to also take a step back and look at things in the wider scheme of developments. This can help avoiding going down wrong paths and identify whether the economic success of one area does not come at the expense of another. This habit is also related to the habit of civil servants to avoid to only “clutter down” and think in terms of particular details but also to think in more general terms and look at the wider implications of their actions. Especially the role of resource scarcity as limiting factor has to be borne in mind and addressed at all scales of governance.



Balanced networking



Open for experiments and risks.



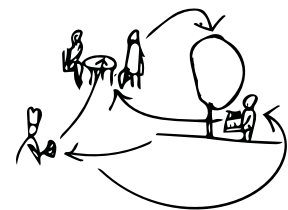
Moving between different geographical or temporal scales.

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Inclusive and participation oriented methods are a staple for Symbiotic governance. A constructive discussion in Dublin. Photo: A Hill



Finally, while the local administration does not take the lead in every project it embarks upon, it generally remains closely involved in all matters that it regards as being “**system-relevant**”, such as valuable common goods and strategic urban assets. This involvement can take the form of complete public control, public-private partnerships but also more innovative ways such as community-interest companies.



Remain involved in ‘system-relevant’ matters.

## The skills

Even the best mindset and habits do not make for an efficient local authority - it also takes skills to build bridges towards a social-ecological transition of the economy. So what are the skills that make the Symbiopolitan organisation so successful?

First, its civil servants are selected and trained for their organisation skills that are vital for setting up new hybrid partnerships with different actors, as well as fora for meaningful exchange at different levels of governance. The



habit of balanced networking is helpful in this respect, but has to be backed up with organisation and personal networking skills.

Second, rather than only possessing technical knowledge on different compartmentalised policy areas, the administration also values analytical skills. Especially thinking in systems and in long-term evolutions is a key element of the municipality's skill mix.

Thirdly, there is a range of interpersonal skills that are important for the type of bridging activities that Symbiopolitan administrations engage in. Its employees need to broker and negotiate transitions that will inevitably hurt vested interests; they also need the capacity to create the animated conditions for creativity and fun that are necessary to co-create visions and transitions with a wide set of stakeholders.

Thanks to the mindset, habits and skills of the local authorities of Symbiopolis, it is an altogether very different place compared to the city of Smartopolis that we presented in Section 1 of this book. Indeed, some of the unsustainable features of Smartopolis can arguably be “fixed” by good governance practices of Symbiopolis and the progressive local authorities all over Europe that already implement them: although constrained financially, Symbiopolis finds ways by working across silos and building bridges to external particular and common interests to develop a shared vision and strategy; it has beautiful parks that incorporate bio-diverse multifunctional ecosystem services and are co-designed by local people and managed by a local community interest company; it boasts a thriving local economy of skilled young people who work in sustainable industries, created by innovative collaborative processes, thriving local food hubs...

## **Is symbiosis coming to you?**

Surely no city or region in Europe can boast itself yet to have mastered the transition towards a local economy that is firmly embedded in its natural environment and its surrounding communities. The future role of public authorities is being rewritten, shifting from care-taker to facilitator.

This book has described conditions, tools and the role of public actors in embracing the role as bridging agents - however it will not occur on its own. Bridging agents, public actors must take on an active role in connecting stakeholders with local opportunities. In other words, bridging requires suitable conditions to build on. It requires an entrepreneurial approach to governance, based on networking, facilitating, guiding and capacity building. With this new perspective, indeed public actors have a central role in fostering symbiosis.



# PROJECT TEAM

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## Patrick Van Den Abeele (IBGE)

Patrick started his professional experience volunteering in various social projects in various Latin American countries for three years. After working for several years in the retailing and distribution industry he moved to the public sector. He currently holds a position within Brussels-Capital Region's environmental agency (in the "Economy in transition" unit) where he helps Brussels-based businesses transition towards sustainability. Patrick holds a master's degree in Business management and a master's degree in Environmental sciences.



In 2012, Patrick took the lead of the research group around "Resilient Economies" in the TURAS initiative. He coordinates a team of academic researchers and local authorities from various European regions. It is uncommon for research programmes to appoint a representative from the public authority with no research background to lead a research group. Nevertheless, Patrick in his role has taken to heart fostering the construction of a two-way and meaningful dialogue between local authority and academic partners.

## Dr Stephan Kampelmann (OSMOS)

Stephan is a social scientist with a PhD in economics. He has studied at the universities of Maastricht, Lille, Paris, Brussels and Berlin. He has authored numerous academic publications covering topics in socio-economics, urban economics and urban ecology. Stephan has worked as scientific consultant for the Fondation Danielle Mitterrand, the European Trade Union Institute and the regional governments of the Nord Pas-de-Calais (France) and Acre (Brazil), as well as several European institutions such as the European Commission, the European Research Council and the European Foundation for the Improvement of Working and Living Conditions.



Stephan is interested in the intersection between thought and action. Besides his research and consultancy activities, Stephan manages gardening projects for the Urban Ecology Centre and his own farm. Stephan will continue exploring the work developed in this document with the OSMOS Network.

## Dr Paula Vandergert (UEL)

Paula is a Sustainability Research Fellow at the Sustainability Research Institute of the University of East London (UEL). Her research focuses on adaptive governance and institutions in the context of urban resilience and sustainability, studying relations and linkages across scales, from local communities to strategic decision-makers.



Before joining UEL in 2011, Paula was senior sustainable design advisor at the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) - the UK government advisor on urban design, architecture and public space, where she developed and managed the sustainable cities programme. She has also applied her social science research skills in a variety of environment and society and environmental governance spheres, notably natural resource management and forest property rights. She was a director of the NGO Forests Monitor for 10 years.

Paula has a PhD from the London School of Economics and Political Science and a postgraduate certificate in urban design from the University of Westminster. She has worked across Europe, Canada, the Solomon Islands, South East Asia, Central Africa and the Russian Far East.

## Adrian Vickery Hill (OSMOS)

Adrian is a planner and designer in the broadest sense. He looks for a holistic and systems approach to problems, looking particularly for the spatial dimension of a problem. He is interested in strategy, communications, business models and capacity building for complex projects.



Over the last decade, Adrian has worked in a range of fields including; energy, mobility, urban form and density, public space, material cycles, agriculture, community planning and health, water and environmental systems. Having lived and worked on four continents, he is at home in multi-disciplinary and multi-cultural environments.

Most recently Adrian developed an 'Urban Scale Sustainability Compass', a tool for analysing and orienting project development in planning and design. Adrian will continue exploring local economies through the OSMOS Network.

## Jo Sinclair (LBBD)

Jo Sinclair worked for the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham between July 2001 and 2016. Her role has been to work with SMEs and larger companies to promote the health of the local economy. She has done extensive work on getting SMEs into supply chains. She has also worked on preparing SMEs for retrofit, for manufacturing into the off-site manufactured market and in greening SMEs. She has played a part in the development of the London Sustainable Industries Park. She latterly worked as the TURAS coordinator for LBBD.



## Luca Polizzano (BIC Lazio)

Luca is a project manager with BIC Lazio (IT) and has been responsible for developing a range of platforms such as the iAgri agricultural incubator, the Bracciano FabLab and helping establish the Local Action Group around Bracciano called Tuscia Romana. He has a background in agriculture and deals with European projects with BIC Lazio.

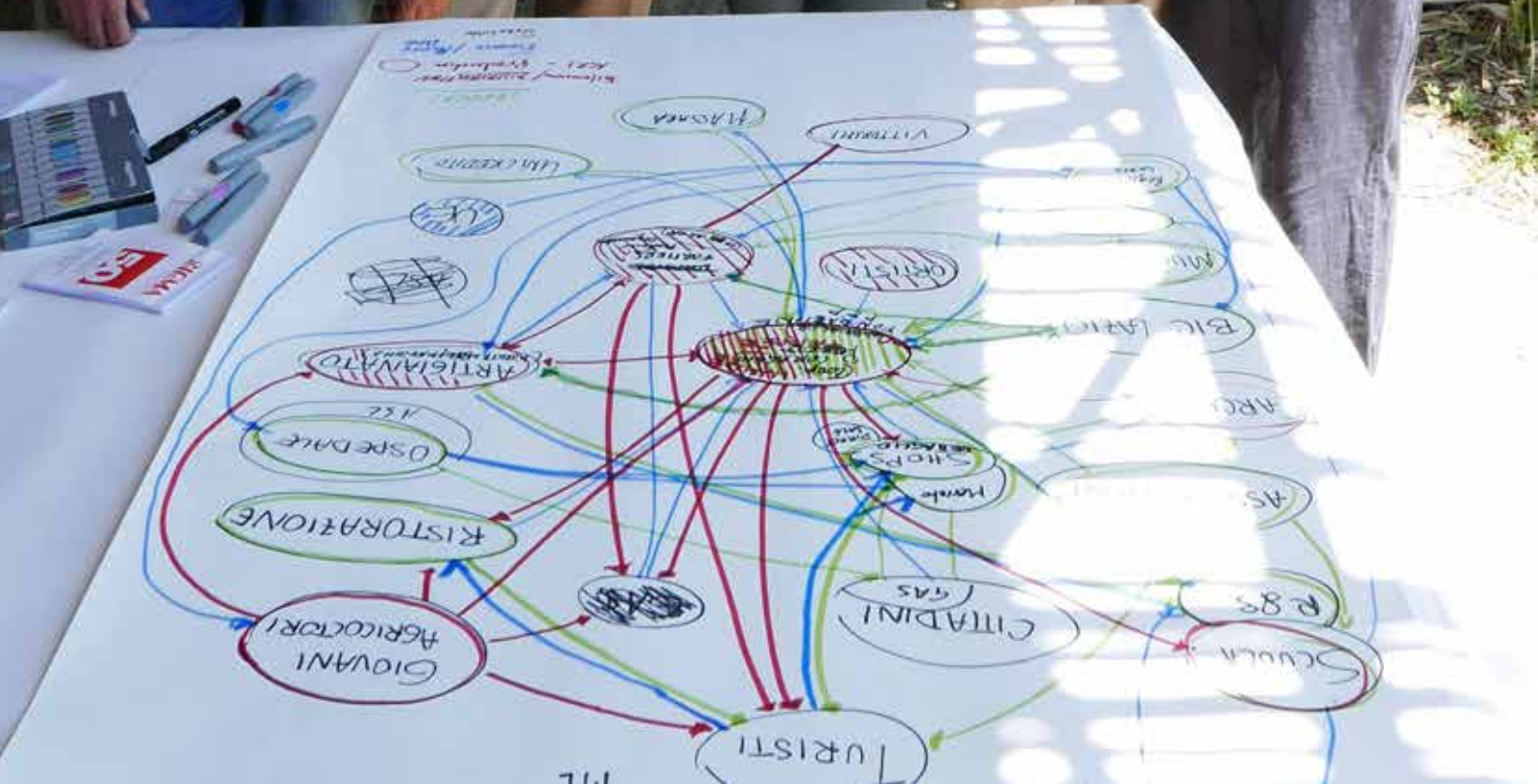


## OSMOS

OSMOS is a spin-off from the TURAS project to practice the knowledge described in this book. OSMOS' network of practitioners come from across Europe, and are involved in a vast range of project themes including rehabilitation of brown-field sites, re-industrializing urban areas, transitional land use, local economies for rural communities and urban agriculture.

**READ MORE:** - [www.osmosnetwork.com](http://www.osmosnetwork.com).





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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We are very grateful to Marion Courtois, Catherine Vanderstichelen and Cédric Chevalier from Brussels Environment for their input, contribution and critical look concerning the Employment Environment Alliance case study.

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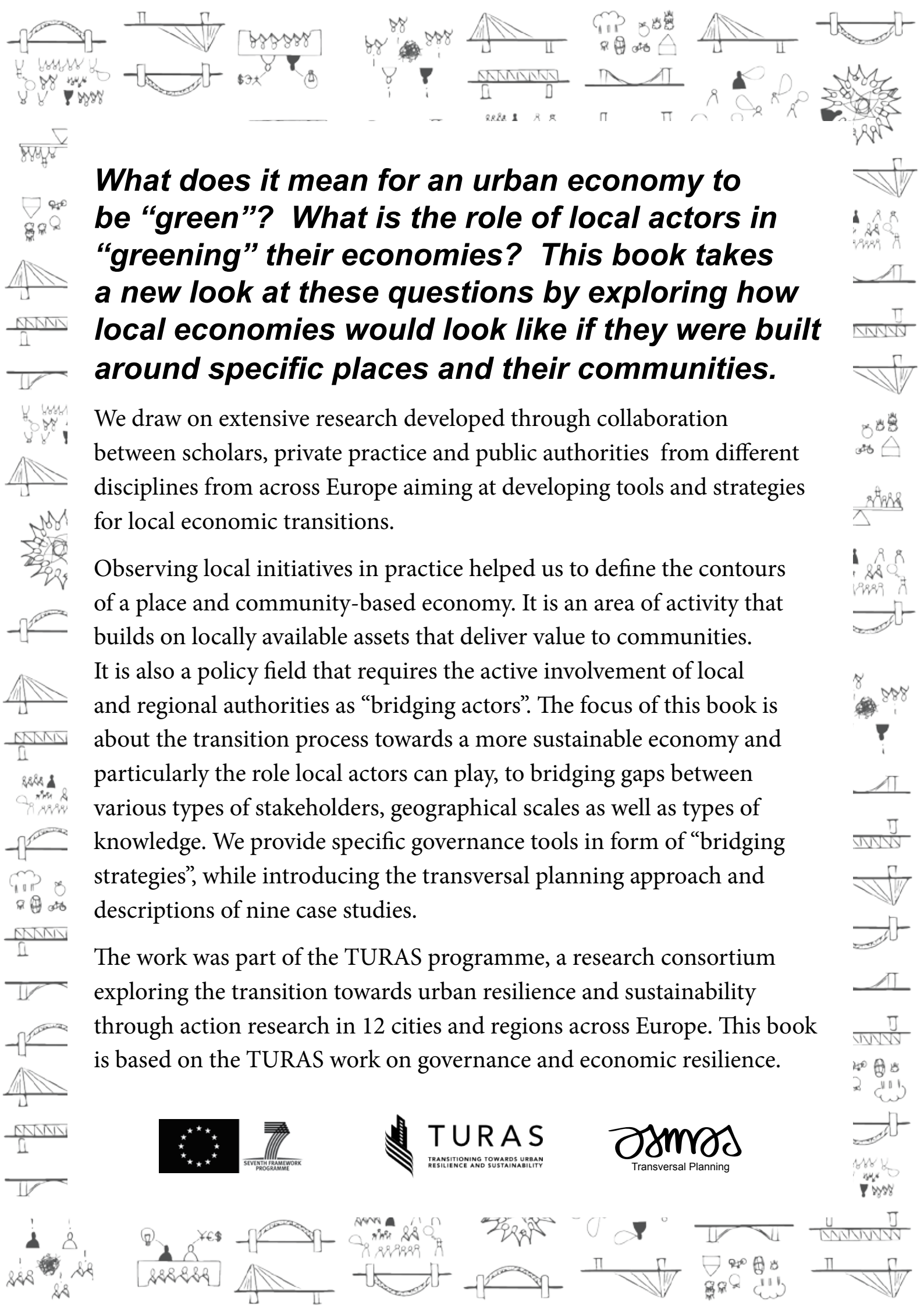
We further thank participants and organisers of workshops and events. While the contributors to the project are extensive, we especially like to name a few. In Rome it included the energetic team from Municipio XIV under the lead of Julian Gareth Colabello and the teams from Roma Capitale and BIC Lazio (Mariella Iunnissi, Ilaria Corsi, Raffaella Labruna and Massimo Feliceti). Clementina Gentile and Kristel Van Ael from Namahn helped formulate the structure of the workshop with their Systems Toolkit. Clementina also hosted the very complex workshop with great dexterity while support by five dynamic mentors from across Europe including: Xenia Abramovich (landscape architect), Stefan Doeblin (Network-Economy, entrepreneur), Jan Forsmark (Transition Movement in Sweden), Alessandra Manganelli (PhD researcher, KU Leuven) and Hélène Rillaerts (urban planner with BUUR). Behind the scenes, Michael Kaethler (KU Leuven) provided great encouragement and support for introducing art and creativity into the learning process while bringing in the curatorial. In Manziana (IT) we'd like to thank also Liana Simmons, Elena Maccioni, Eva-Maria Stumpp and Julia Hartmann who join us in Manziana. In Brussels we would like to thank Diego Luna Quintanilla (OSMOS) and Mirko Hänel (TTZ Bremerhaven / Bio Azul). In Malaga we would like to thank Isabel Pascual Villamor (ProMalaga) and Antonia Lorenzo (Bio Azul / Fundación Rizoma).

We're very grateful of Siobhan McQuaid from the European Business Innovation Centre Network (EBN) for her valuable advice to all WP6 partners.

We are also grateful for many others that also played a hand throughout the project.

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The conclusion of the governance strategy at a workshop in Rome.  
Photo: A Hill



***What does it mean for an urban economy to be “green”? What is the role of local actors in “greening” their economies? This book takes a new look at these questions by exploring how local economies would look like if they were built around specific places and their communities.***

We draw on extensive research developed through collaboration between scholars, private practice and public authorities from different disciplines from across Europe aiming at developing tools and strategies for local economic transitions.

Observing local initiatives in practice helped us to define the contours of a place and community-based economy. It is an area of activity that builds on locally available assets that deliver value to communities.

It is also a policy field that requires the active involvement of local and regional authorities as “bridging actors”. The focus of this book is about the transition process towards a more sustainable economy and particularly the role local actors can play, to bridging gaps between various types of stakeholders, geographical scales as well as types of knowledge. We provide specific governance tools in form of “bridging strategies”, while introducing the transversal planning approach and descriptions of nine case studies.

The work was part of the TURAS programme, a research consortium exploring the transition towards urban resilience and sustainability through action research in 12 cities and regions across Europe. This book is based on the TURAS work on governance and economic resilience.



**TURAS**  
TRANSITIONING TOWARDS URBAN  
RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY



Transversal Planning