Summary Report

Connecting People & Places

Workshop

September 26th, 2012
Jigsaw, Fair Green Road, Galway

Galway Healthy Cities Project
Gaillimh Tionscamh na gCathracha Sáiníthiùla
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Introduction

Galway Healthy Cities Project is part of the World Health Organization (WHO) Healthy Cities Programme. The primary goal of this WHO programme is to put health high on the social, economic and political agenda of the city. In Galway City, the Healthy Cities programme is part of the Galway City Development Board and is led by the HSE Health Promotion Service and overseen by a multi agency group¹.

Galway Healthy Cities is concerned about promoting and protecting the health and wellbeing of its citizens. It recognises that Health is the business of all sectors and requires a comprehensive approach. A key focus of the Galway Healthy Cities work programme is on healthy urban environment and design.

Following on from a workshop held in February, which reviewed “Infrastructures for Health”, a key area that was identified to enhance the environment and design of Galway City for the benefit of all, was “connecting people and places”. The aim of this workshop, “Connecting People and Places”, was to provide the space and opportunity to learn about, and participate in community collaboration techniques that are designed to improve urban connectivity (Appendix A). There were a total of 27 participants from various agencies and disciplines (Appendix B). The evaluations returned from this workshop indicated that participants found the day either excellent (28%), very good (45%) or good (27%).

Engagement Strategy

To engage with local communities, the proposed collaboration technique was a 6 stage engagement strategy (Appendix C). The stages included

- **Stage 1:** Connecting People and Places Workshop (26.9.2012 - this report)
- **Stage 2:** Community Design Workshop 1
  - Listen and learn, community mapping
- **Stage 3:** Community Design Workshop 2
  - Walkscores, community mapping exercise
- **Stage 4:** Community Design Workshop 3
  - What could exist, identify pilot project locations, establish community advisory working group, volunteers
- **Stage 5:** Community Street Festival
  - Install temporary pilot installations, community art project, community planting, community street party event
- **Stage 6:** Community Design Workshop 4
  - Feedback on temporary project, what should/could we do?

For the purposes of this workshop (Stage 1), the discussion focused on Stage 3, with a run through of the walkscores and community mapping exercise.

¹ Galway HealthyCities Forum is a multi agency group with representative from HSE (Public Health, Environmental Health, Galway University Hospital), Galway City Community Forum, City Councillor, Galway City Council, Galway City Sports Partnership, Galway City VEC, An Garda Siochana, Galway Mayo Institute of Technology, NUI, Galway, Trade Union Sector and Galway Chamber of Commerce. Further information on [www.galwayhealthycities.ie](http://www.galwayhealthycities.ie)
“The Walkability Game”

To illustrate the process of connecting people and places, a Walk Score* based game was devised and tested with stakeholders. This game involved dividing participants into four groups and assigning each group an estate on the West side of the city. Each participant received a flyer (Appendix C) inviting them to the community workshop and also a leaflet indicating the Walk Score of their estate (example of 2 estates - Appendices E and G). At each group table there was an enlarged map of the area showing the desire lines, which are natural pathways people use e.g. across a field or over a wall and also impediments to walking such as walls between estate, steps etc.

Participants were then given leaflets showing the Walk Score of the estate if these impediments were removed, i.e. if a hole was knocked in the wall, if the path was paved etc (example of Measures Set “A” - Appendices F and H). This process of identifying areas to change and recalculating the Walk Score was repeated 3 times. The purpose of the game was, firstly, to illustrate to participants how such impediments can dramatically increase walking distance to facilities, thereby reducing walkability as expressed in the estate’s Walk Score. Secondly, the game challenged participants to brainstorm on possible solutions to these impediments and how community-based design could work. Finally, participants were asked to comment on the effectiveness of this approach for connecting people and places and the potential for such an approach to be successful if rolled-out to a community.

*Walk Score, as the name suggests, is a method for scoring the walkability of a neighbourhood. The method is based on the walking distance of an estate to certain important amenities, e.g. shopping, schools, banks. The Walk Score is calculated by weighting each distance according to the importance of the amenity (e.g. shopping is ranked first due to the frequency of shopping trips) and gives a score out of 100. The closer the amenities are, the higher the Walk Score, the more walkable the community is!

A Walk Score of 90-100 is described as 'Walker's Paradise', 70-89 is 'Very Walkable', 50-69 is 'Somewhat Walkable', 25-49 is 'Car-Dependent' and 0-24 is 'Very Car-Dependent'. Walk Score has been calculated for addresses in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the US and is used by real-estate agents to rank neighbourhoods for walkability. In Galway Healthy Cities, Walk Score has been calculated for some estates in Westside as an indicator of walkability and connectivity, with a view to highlighting potential impediments to walking and active travel. An improvement in Walk Score can lead to higher property prices and a more connected community. For more information on Walk Score, please see www.walkscore.com.
Feedback from Workshops

Participants were asked to discuss the community collaboration process, and give feedback on how to improve the process and identify any other possible techniques. Below is a compiled list of feedback, under key questions, from each of the group discussions.

1. Do you think community involvement is important to decision making? Why?
Yes, it is very important to get community involvement to get their input and also provide the space and opportunity for people to ask questions. This is essential for helping to get buy in, raise issues of concern and identify how things can be improved. However, the process needs to be made easier and also be shown to be worthwhile and get results.

2. How can we improve upon the process as outlined today?
- Analyse the communities or areas being selected in advance
- Consider the timing of meetings to facilitate as many people as possible
- Consider an online forum or other methods of facilitating those who cannot attend
- Use community contacts to get a feel for the mood amongst the community
- Simplify the proposed 6 stage consultation process
- Communicate the concept of connectivity using common language
- Sell the benefits associated with improved connectivity
- Rather than having a list of items (shop, café etc), have a centre of gravity
- Aim for success by picking areas that are less controversial
- Anticipate potential problems in advance by considering the impact on others of proposed changes and have answers for likely questions

3(a) Is the walkscore, as demonstrated, a useful communications tool?
- The walkscore is useful as it quantifies an intangible concept, however, there are concerns:
  - The ‘Walkability’ concept and walkscore needs to be explained more clearly
  - The flyer needs to be improved through better use of language and avoiding trying to explain complicated concepts. Main focus should be an invitation to participate in the workshops.
  - Calculations and evidence base of walkscores can be background information and accessed if required. These are not required on the maps
- Introduce interactive or experiential communications tools e.g. corkboard maps using flags for locations and string for routes, cardboard models, site visits etc.

Note of caution: Walkscore is only one measure. You also need local knowledge about the other factors that will influence people willingness to walk e.g. safety, landscape etc.

(b) Are there any other methods we might use?
- Potential for crowd-sourcing and rating of connections
- Develop other communication tools other than maps, as not all people can relate to maps
- Use a 3D model / streetscape to illustrate ideas, use flags for blockages
- Have blank maps/overlays for people to draw on
- Walk through an area with people from the community
- Initiate projects in schools, e.g. An Taisce walkability audits
4. Who should we invite to participate?

- Need to identify key stakeholders and engage with them
- The communications strategy should be multifaceted and used according to stakeholder group. E.g.
  - Those engaged with social media - use emails Twitter, Facebook and lack of relationship with social media e.g. door to door visits.
  - The ‘silent majority’ - should be targeted through gathering information on a one-to-one basis.
- Also need to consider not just people living in the area but also people who’s destination is that area for whatever reason i.e. “destination stakeholders”.

- People and groups identified include
  - Residents
  - Local Champions
  - End destination stakeholders
  - Community Groups
  - Mobility Groups
  - Tidy Towns
  - Residents
  - Priest
  - Community Development Projects
  - Political Representatives
  - Sports Groups
  - Youth Clubs

Discussion & Next Steps

The workshop was beneficial for both communicating the proposed collaboration technique to key stakeholders and also receiving feedback from the trial undertaken in the workshop. The information received will form part of the review of the process and which may include changes in the language used, increase in the various channels of communication, increase in options used to present the information (e.g. maps, lay out street profile in community hall etc), removal of some the technical elements (i.e. the walkscore calculations), and the importance of engagement in an appropriate way with a range of people.

As part of the Mobility Team in Galway City Council, which has representatives from all disciplines, pending funding, we are planning to have trial this community consultation process in the Westside area of Galway City early next year.
Appendix A: Programme

Connecting People and Places Workshop

Galway Healthy Cities: Healthy Urban Environment

Wednesday 26th September, Jigsaw, Galway @ 9.30am

When: Wednesday, 26th September 2012

Time: 9.30am – 1.00pm
Walking bus to depart from City Hall entrance at 9.10am

Location: Jigsaw venue, Fairgreen Road, Galway

Programme

9.30 Welcome,
Kevin Swift, Director of Environment Parks and Cultural, Galway City Council

9:35 Introduction – Connecting People and Places
Rosie Webb, Healthy Urban Environment sub group of Galway Healthy Cities

9.45 The Walkable Neighborhood- The case for Urban Connectivity
Kevin Leyden, Centre for Innovation and Structural Change, NUIG

10.15 Implementing Urban Connectivity- The Fingal Experience
Joe Corr

11.00 Discussion

11.15 Coffee

11.30 Connecting People and Places Workshop
'The Walkability Game'- proposed methodology for community collaboration
Gary McMahon, Communications, Galway City Council
Rosemarie Webb, Senior Executive Architect Galway City Council
Richard Manton, Ph D Candidate, College of Engineering NUIG
Kevin Leyden, Prof. of Political Science and the Centre for Innovation and Structural Change (NUIG)

12:15 Feedback and Discussion

1.00 Close
Appendix B: Participants List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Agency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bernadette Divilly</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cathy Joyce</td>
<td>City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Cuddy</td>
<td>City Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diane Egan</td>
<td>City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eleanor Hough</td>
<td>Community Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evelyn Fanning</td>
<td>HUE Team/ HSE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona Donovan</td>
<td>HUE Team/ HSE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona Falvey</td>
<td>Health Promotion, HSE West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frances O' Kelly</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garda Alan Regan</td>
<td>An Garda Siochana, Westside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garda Marcus Flynn</td>
<td>An Garda Siochana, Headford Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gary McMahon</td>
<td>City Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joe Corr</td>
<td>Fingal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joe Tansey</td>
<td>Galway City Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Doody</td>
<td>City Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Karen Dooley</td>
<td>NUIG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate Howard</td>
<td>Galway City Community Forum Recreation, Amenity &amp; Culture SPC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin Leyden</td>
<td>NUIG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin Swift</td>
<td>City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maire Ni Chionna</td>
<td>County Council</td>
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<td>Richard Manton</td>
<td>NUIG</td>
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<td>Rosemary Webb</td>
<td>City Council</td>
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<td>Shane Foran</td>
<td>Environment</td>
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<td>Sharon Carroll</td>
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<td>Sinead Johnstone</td>
<td>City Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Therese Carroll</td>
<td>Housing Estate Liaison Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiarnan McCusker</td>
<td>An Taisce Green Schools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Apologies

Greg Power (NUIG), Stephen Walsh (Parks, City Council), Hildgarde Naughton (Councillor), and Anne Marie Cusack (City Council).
Appendix C: Engagement Strategy

Engagement Strategy: Connecting People and Places Workshop
Galway Healthy Cities: Healthy Urban Environment

**Stage 1** Stages 1 - 20 September 2012
Connect People and Places Workshop
(Galway Healthy Cities – Galway City Council)
GCC Personnel, SPCs, Invited guests

**Stage 2** Stages 1 - October 2012
Community Design Workshop - Westside
(Listen and Learn, Community Mapping Exercise)

**Stage 3** Stages 1 - November 2012
Community Design Workshop - Westside
(Walkscopes Quiz, Community Mapping Exercise)

**Stage 4** Stages 1 - January 2013
Community Design Workshop - Westside
(What could exist, Identify Pilot Project Locations,
Establish community advisory working group, volunteers)

**Stage 5** Stages 1 - March 2013
Community Street Festival
(Install Temporary Pilot Installations, Community Art Project,
Community Planting, Community Street Party Event)

**Stage 6** Stages 1 - June 2013
Community Design Workshop
(Feedback on Temporary Project, What should/could we do?)
Appendix D: Flyer

Connecting People & Places Workshop

We invite you to attend the Connecting People and Places Workshop.

When? Wednesday, 14th November 2012 from 7 pm - 9.30 pm

Where? Westside Community Resource Centre

Who?

How Walk Score Works:

Walk Score is a number between 0 and 100 that measures the walkability of any address.

Walk Score:

90-100
Walkers' Paradise. Daily errands do not require a car.

70-89
Very Walkable. Most errands can be accomplished on foot.

50-69
Somewhat walkable. Some errands within walking distance.

25-49
Car dependent. A few errands within walking distance.

0-24
Car Dependent. Almost all errands require a car.

How can we improve the walkscores in Westside?

We need to identify where existing natural links are located and to identify where linkages can be made to make it easier for people to walk or cycle in their neighbourhoods.

Why we need you:
We would like to hear your views to help us identify potential areas for action and to see how we can help work together to achieve our goal of a better connected community in Westside.

You will find your walk score on the back of this pamphlet.

Come along to the Westside Community Resource Centre and help us find ways to improve your score!

Please RSVP to archibech@galwaycity.ie
Appendix E: Sample of Walkscore Maps – Laurel Park
Appendix F: Sample of Walkscore Maps – Laurel Park Post Measure Set A
Appendix G: Sample of Walkscore Maps – The Bailey

![Walk Score Analysis: The Bailey (No. 36)]

**Existing Walkscore:**

- **Walk Score:** 6/100
- **Rating:** Very Car Dependent

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Destination</th>
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<th>Time (mins)</th>
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<td>Grocery</td>
<td>2200</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant/Bar</td>
<td>2100</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>1400</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping</td>
<td>2200</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cafe</td>
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<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banks</td>
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<td>Parks</td>
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<td>Medical</td>
<td>2900</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Facilities</td>
<td>2200</td>
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Appendix H: Sample of Walkscore Maps – The Bailey - Post Measure Set A