Report from

Creating Active Spaces for All Workshop

19th June 2013

Organised and funded by Galway Healthy Cities Project as part of National Bike Week

Partners included Galway City Council (Planning, Architecture and Transportation Unit) and Health Promotion, HSE West

Report Prepared by Ms. Maria Faney, Galway Healthy Cities
Introduction

This report provides a summary of the Creating Active Spaces for All Workshop which was held on June 19th, 2013 in Jigsaw, Galway City. The aim of the workshop was to provide a space to learn, network and create tools to enhance the healthy urban environment and design of Galway City in relation to creating active spaces for the benefit of all.

Overview

Galway City is a designated World Health Organization Healthy City. This means that Galway as a city, has signed up to implementing the goals and requirement of Phase V of the WHO European Healthy Cities Programme (2009-2013). This includes a commitment to an overall target of health equity in all local policies as well as striving to address three core themes – caring and supportive environments; healthy living; and healthy urban environment and design.

The workshop topic “Creating Active Spaces for All” was selected as a means of developing capacity in Galway City in relation to the issue of Healthy Urban Environment & Design. A healthy city offers a physical and built environment that supports health, recreation and well-being, safety, social interaction, easy mobility, a sense of pride and cultural identity and that is accessible to the needs of all its citizens.

The Healthy Urban Environment & Design sub group of the Galway Healthy Cities Project, which is made up of representatives from City Council (Planning, Architecture and Transport) and Health Service Executive West (Health Promotion), organised the workshop. The workshop was held during National Bike Week and the target audience was a mix of public, community and voluntary groups, and professionals and policy makers whose works impacts on issues such as housing, planning, transportation, health, community and environment. Thirty four participants from a range of organisations and disciplines attended the workshop. A full list of participants are outlined in Appendix 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector/Department</th>
<th>No. of Participants</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Galway City Manager</td>
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<td>Sports Partnership</td>
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<td>Healthy Cities</td>
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<td>Galway Cycling</td>
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<td>Social Inclusion</td>
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<td>Housing</td>
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<td>Community</td>
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<td>NUIG</td>
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<td>GMIT</td>
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Content & Messages:
The event programme, which is outlined in Appendix 1, included both presentations and opportunities for discussion through workshops. Some of the key messages highlighted at the event through the presentations included

- Refocus of road design documents from catering for traffic in urban areas to increasing connectivity and “efficiency” of space
- Consideration for quality of life which includes economic, environmental and social elements
- Increased emphasis on place and connectivity
- Emphasis on multi-disciplinary approach
- Support for a Universal Design approach for shared space design
- Need to be aware of the challenges of shared spaces, in particular for more vulnerable road users
- Undertake a comprehensive quality audit which includes not only safety, but also walking audit, cycle audit, visual quality, place check audit and an access audit

Evaluation:
Participants were invited to complete an evaluation sheet at the end of the workshop (Appendix 4). Overall the evaluation determined that the workshop was successful. Some of the key evaluation findings include the following:

- All of the participants who completed forms rated the event as excellent (34%), very good (53%) or good (13%).
- The visual displays used in the workshop were rated very positively and very practical to the workshop (see Appendix 2).
- Participants found the day very interesting and informative and made some useful suggestions on topics of further interest.

Conclusion
The interest and relevance of the workshop was demonstrated through the level engagement of participants. The workshop provided a valuable space to reflect and discuss developments and issues in relation to creating active spaces for all. The ideas and suggestions from the workshop will be integrated and used where relevant to engage with key stakeholders and develop innovative and effective projects to create active spaces for all in Galway City.
Appendix 1: Programme

Creating Active Spaces for All Workshop

Galway Healthy Cities: Healthy Urban Environment

Wednesday 19th June, Jigsaw, Galway @ 9.30am

When: Wednesday 19th June, 2013
Time: 09.30am – 1.00 pm
Walking bus to depart from City Hall entrance at 9.00am
Location: Jigsaw venue, Fairgreen Road, Galway

Programme

9.30 Welcome

9:35 Local Context:
Mr. Jim Molloy, Senior Executive Engineer, Galway Transportation Unit

9.50 Implementing the Design Manual for Urban Roads & Streets:
Mr. Eddie Conroy, County Architect, South County Dublin

10.35 Shared Space from a Universal Design Approach:
Dr. Tom Grey, Research Fellow at TrinityHaus, School of Engineering

11.20 Discussion

11.30 Coffee

11.45 Workshop

12:45 Feedback and Discussion

1.00 Close
Appendix 2:

Workshop

The aim of the workshop was to provide a space and opportunity for participants to discuss and apply the concepts and information of the morning session to actual scenarios in Galway City. The focus was on the Universal Design Process (as outlined in the diagram below). Currently, City Council seeks the public's input prior to preparing plans/projects. This workshop enabled participants to build on this and discuss best practice and ways to improve the consultation processes.

![Diagram of design processes]

There were three groups of 9 participants involved in the workshop with each group being given a different area of Galway City to examine in terms of consultation on the design process of a possible shared space. The three areas selected were:

1. Woodquay
2. Eglington Street
3. Middle Street

Each group was provided with a visual map, which included photos of the streetscape (see below). Feedback from the discussion is outlined below.
Feedback from Discussion

Consultation

1. How would you best engage with stakeholders and the public to (a) come on board and (b) gather knowledge on a shared space project for this area?

   - From the offset defining the objectives and the language used is important
   - Understand the profile of your specific area e.g. older generation, students etc
   - Link with groups that represent multi-organisations (e.g. Access for All have representatives from all the disability groups.)
   - Surveys are required to get baseline data and assess existing conditions on the street e.g. traffic counts and can also highlight opposition e.g. loss of car parking
   - Need to ask people and business their requirements, go out to talk to them
   - Critical not to present a ready made plan as this is counterproductive
   - Important to have good advertising of consultation events, use different media formats and give good notice
   - Facilitate individual submissions through “open” sessions in City Hall or “on street” conversations
   - Consider other users such as taxi drivers who travel through the streets,
   - Consider that there are different users at different parts of the day and we need to engage with these
   - Consider also that the change may affect other streets and current users
   - Link with groups that represent multi-organisations (e.g. Access for All have representatives from all the disability groups.)

Considering options

2. As part of the design process, how would you test various options for designing the space?

   - Develop a pilot project as part of the consultation process e.g. test different options. With this pilot project, it is important to have baseline data detail for comparison
   - Use events such as World Health Day or Car Free Day to test options
   - People need to identify with the design so as part of testing process it would be beneficial to display examples of other schemes e.g. at a vacant shop
   - Could get people to give a talk on the impact of pedestrianisation on a business
   - Important to have delineation in shared space, this provides choice and is of benefit to users with a disability
   - Set up a regular programme of temporary use, could be on rotating Sundays or just in the evenings.
   - Ask shopkeepers to offer promotions/coupons for those days
   - Create a toolkit for Streets e.g. moveable street furniture, moveable treeplanters, temporary signage, platforms, street surfaces/ roll out grass
Communication

3. How would you advise the public on the aim of the project?

- Important to have good advertising of consultation events, use different media formats and give good notice
- Present good examples - local and international - of other schemes that highlight benefits to people and of universal design
- “Do it” – develop the concept and live the concept as opposed to explaining the concept
- Set up relevant events to highlight the benefits e.g. intergenerational event with games on the street
- Engage with shops to communicate and promote
- Create a conversation – you need a feedback loop
- Have visual examples of other places – good and bad
- Brand the project about winning back space, get a slogan for the project, provide marketing budget

4. And how would you keep the public updated on how the project is progressing?

- Newspaper, community slot on radio, internet, at local centres - e.g. library, church
- Important to give feedback to consultees to prevent disillusionment

Monitoring

5. Please give suggestions for monitoring success in achieving objectives...

- Measure against objectives set after public consultation
- Identify measures prior to undertaking pilot project
- As part of monitoring consider
  - pre project users such as visually impaired users
  - feedback from business, e.g. impact on a restaurant
  - consider also displacement of traffic e.g. for taxis
  - consider safety
  - consider impact of users of street now - has the type of user changed
- Take a before, during and after measurement/ data collection
- Introduce the “Quality Audit” which is more comprehensive
- Take photos, before/during/ after as evidence to record and track progress
## Appendix 3: List of Participants

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation / Agency</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Galway City Manager</td>
<td>Brendan Mc Grath</td>
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<td>Galway City Council Architecture</td>
<td>Rosie Webb</td>
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<td>Sinead Burke</td>
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<td>Paul Kane</td>
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<td>Galway City Council Planning</td>
<td>Caroline Phelan</td>
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<td>Diane Egan</td>
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<td>Helen Coleman</td>
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<td>John Doddy</td>
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<td>Kathy Keane</td>
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<td>Liam Blake</td>
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<td>Michele Bierne</td>
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<td>Galway City Council Transportation Unit</td>
<td>Cathy Joyce</td>
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<td>Joe Tansey</td>
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<td>Jim Molloy</td>
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<td>Martin Mc Elligot</td>
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<td>Sharon Lawless</td>
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<td>Billy Dunne</td>
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<td>Galway City Council Housing</td>
<td>Anne Marie Cusack</td>
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<td>Colm O’Riordan</td>
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<td>Jason Craughwell</td>
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<td>John O’Connell</td>
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<td>Marian Maloney Nolan</td>
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<td>Roisin O’Connor</td>
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<td>Simon Le Brun</td>
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<td>Galway Cycling</td>
<td>Shane Foran</td>
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<td>Galway Healthy Cities</td>
<td>Fiona Donovan</td>
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Appendix 4: Evaluation Form Creating Active Spaces for All 19th June 2013

Question 1: Your overall impression of the workshop

Excellent = 10   Very Good = 16   Good = 4

Question 2: What I found most helpful about the workshop?

- Very good Speakers with key experience
- Meeting & interacting with key individuals and dealing with current projects
- Increased awareness on the many issues arising in design
- Good opinions, energy and debate from all participants
- All helpful- good mix of presentations(visual displays), workshop and presentation of recent guidelines
- The change process of changing people, using the behavioural change model
- Discussing real urban design proposals in a brainstorming way.
- Good idea that groups looked at different areas in Galway City and everyone got to express their own views.
- New Shared approach design.
- Open discussion and review of process and identifying that particular solutions were place specific.

Question 3: What I found least helpful about the workshop?

- Would have helped if we all introduced ourselves at the table during the workshop section.
- No framework per implementation
- A little to short. Perhaps more interaction and experiential (problem-solving) process needed.
- Break in between talks. More of a chance to talk about experience.
- One of the presentations was too long. He was dismissive about people with disability on shared spaces.
- Over focused on Consultation
- Knowledge on the ban for shared streets provisional

Question 4: How could the workshop be improved?

- More input from stakeholders before program is fixed.
- Allow to a specific project would give real learning
- Encourage or promote a broader participation, maybe let people know afterwards as well
- Allow two way communication
- Need to ensure that everything is verbally described to a person with visual impairment.
- Be more clear on the overall goal of the workshop from the beginning
- Longer discussion. More visual Topics in consultation, where appropriate.
- More on changing mindsets
- Longer Q&A session
- More concrete information on examples given in workshops e.g. engineering and funding available.
- Broader spread of other stakeholders, More diverse speakers and mix it with other groups
Question 5: What topics do you think would be useful for future seminars under the theme of Healthy Urban Environments & Design or other themes?

- Pedestrian safety, speed limitation, & cycle safety how to decrease the office flow
- Open space & Universal access
- Negative impact at street furniture
- Climate adaption
- Look at roads designed to DMRB and compare with new thinking
- Community spaces/projects
- How to battle with peoples wishes to go door-to-door in cars, provide distances walked in 10-20 mins similar to cycling posters on poles
- Complete the streets: neighbourhood consultation process to raise awareness of what issues need to be considered
- Bring older people, people with a disability together to discuss universal access. Also an idea to do this on all topics. Also take into account children.
- Creating healthy environments- area we want to change e.g. reduce prominence of cars in Salthill
- Developing walking and cycling cities- see new book- Berlin Experience
- Community design of infrastructure. Redesign of large roads e.g. Headford Road, Urban Green Areas
- Implementation of policies- key steps
- Community Gardens, Horticulture in the shared environment
- Use of lining/home spaces. Think would link to this workshop. But in division of areas of play as part of home space rather than something people have to travel to.

Question 6: Any other comments/suggestions?

- New urban design vision needs a new approach to consultation, feedback and proposed solutions
- More of the same and more workshops
- Promoting healthy living with infrastructure, greenways, playgrounds, roadside gyms ect.