

Enabling collaborative design in placemaking at an urban scale



Sophia de Sousa
14 October 2020

About The Glass-House



We are a UK national charity that connects people with design and design with people

www.theglasshouse.org.uk
info@theglasshouse.org.uk
[#GlassHouseCLD](https://twitter.com/GlassHouseCLD)



What we mean by collaborative design



We think of collaborative design as a journey:

- identifying local needs and aspirations
- understanding the local context in physical and socio-economic terms
- unlocking local knowledge, talent and assets
- developing a shared vision and design brief
- creating an inclusive, engaged and transparent process for design decision-making

Underlying principles



Make great places a reality for everyone
(place QUALITY and EQUALITY)

Enable people to play an active role in
shaping where they live, work and play

Empower people and organisations to work
collaboratively through design

Unlock potential in people and places



Design engagement at an urban scale



Challenges



Image: The Northern Echo

Skills gap among design and placemaking professionals on civic engagement

Limited experience among citizens of exploring or applying design principles, language and process

Tension between hyperlocal and city-wide conversations and strategies

Raise awareness & build capacity



In schools

Embed dialogue around people, design & place into school curriculum



Walkabouts

Get young people looking at and reflecting on the spaces around them

Creative projects

Link design to creative subjects and activities

Technology

Connect with the interests and skills of children and young people

Raise awareness & build capacity



In communities

Make design and placemaking feel more relevant and accessible



Study visits

Raise ambitions by showing people interesting projects



Mapping

Use mapping as a way to understand a place and what happens there



Design Training

Build skills and confidence in design language and process

Raise awareness & build capacity



In professions

Help emerging and practicing professionals build skills



Higher education & qualification

Build civic engagement into degree courses for design and placemaking professionals



Professional development

Update and enhance engagement skills among practicing professionals

Use tools



Get to know the strengths and weaknesses of different tools



Guidance

Distils information

BUT

hard to get tone and content right for diverse audiences



Toolkits

Useful and accessible prompts

BUT

can be too either prescriptive or too superficial



Training

Builds skills & confidence

BUT

difficult to deliver consistently at scale

Embrace complexity



There is no one simple solution to effective design engagement

Use a variety of different approaches and tools

Don't be afraid to experiment and adapt as you learn



Be strategic



Understand **who** you want to engage and **why**

Be clear about **how** the people you engage will contribute to shaping design decisions

Make it **relevant** - integrate the place agenda with other conversations

Make it **empowering** - embed opportunities to build confidence, skills and social capital





Be playful!



MEANINGFUL
PARTICIPATION

REAL, MESSY DEMOCRACY

STRONGER PEOPLE,
STRONGER PLACES

SHARED PROBLEMS
SHARED SOLUTIONS



The Glass-House
COMMUNITY LED DESIGN

www.theglasshouse.org.uk
info@theglasshouse.org.uk
#GlassHouseCLD