

Live Works: active students, active citizens

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Live Works is The University of Sheffield's 'Urban Room' in Sheffield city centre. It is a place for students, academics, local citizens and organisations to collaborate in the design of our future cities.

Live Works combines research, teaching and practice to foster better citizen participation in the development of the built environment. It builds on Sheffield School of Architecture's pioneering Live Project programme, established in 1999, where every year around 200 architecture students work in collaboration with local community partners, in Sheffield, across the UK and internationally. Live Works then further develops relationships with our community partners in order to deliver long-term, sustainable projects that have a lasting social and physical impact on the built environment and local citizens.

Live Works has developed a hybrid model of project inception, collaboration and delivery that maximises the potential for cross-pollination between teaching, research and citizen engagement activities. We enable collaborations between students, graduates, researchers and community partners across all of these activities, enhancing our teaching and our research, employing graduates and improving citizen participation in the built environment as a result.

This presentation will focus on Live Works' methodology and recent projects and will trace how relationships between local citizens and wider stakeholders have been maintained as projects shift and time passes. It will place this work within the context of a growing emphasis on co-production and community autonomy within UK planning policy, coupled with a scaling back of central responsibility and austerity cuts to public funding.

Opportunities for a new research project 'Urban Education Live' will also be explored in the presentation. Live Works has just been awarded three-year's of funding from the EU's Joint Programme Initiative 'Smart Urban Futures'. In this project Live Works will work with academic and non-academic partners in Finland, Romania and Slovenia as they set up similar local hubs in locations across Europe. Each partner will use their local hub to work with communities, schools, non profit organisations, businesses and councils to imagine new and inclusive futures for our cities.

Through Carolyn Butterworth's role as Chair of the UK Place Alliance Urban Rooms Network, Live Works is setting the national agenda in place-based creative community participation and in this presentation the role of Live Works as an 'Urban Room' will also be explored. Live Works is a founder member of the 'Urban Room Network', a growing group of diverse organisations across towns and cities in the UK who are setting up Urban Rooms in their locale. Many public-facing groups, including local authorities, civic societies, arts organisations and housing associations, are beginning to appreciate the possibilities offered by using a physical space in the city as a active mechanism for creative place-based engagement. Live Works, as a leading example, aims to not only improve citizen participation in the production of the built environment but also build community capacity and identity, thereby fostering community resilience towards future challenges.

Links:

www.shef.ac.uk/architecture/people/academic/carolyn-butterworth/index

www.live-works.org

www.liveprojects.org

www.urbanroomsnetwork.wordpress.com

Downloads:

www.shef.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.519960!/file/ImagineCastlegate_25mb.pdf

www.shef.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.304156!/file/Live_Projects_Handbook_Med_Single.pdf

www.shef.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.504063!/file/Proceedings_27mb.pdf

