

SUITE – The Housing Project

Thematic Meeting Newcastle Report

1 & 2 December 2009





SUITE – THE HOUSING PROJECT

ECO THEMATIC MEETING MEETING - 1 & 2 DECEMBER 2009

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

NEWCASTLE CITY COUNCIL – CIVIC CENTRE

Housing in Newcastle upon Tyne, by Brian O'Doherty, Head of Housing Development and Partnership Management, Newcastle City Council

The housing market

Since Newcastle's 2006 Housing Strategy the UK (and the global) economy has received an unprecedented series of shocks, the scale, nature and consequences of which are still not fully understood.

For housing this has meant:

- A fall in house prices
 - Sales lower than at any time since records began
 - New starts at the lowest peacetime level since the 1920s -
 - Loans to first-time buyers at the lowest ever recorded
- Newcastle's housing market has not escaped the downturn. Market, activity has fallen significantly:
- House moves are down two-thirds on last year
 - New houses completed are down by one third
 - New houses started are down to a quarter of the figure a year ago (NCC, 2009)

Policy

At the same time, the policy demands on housing have increased.

Nationally, the government has called for:

- A step change in the delivery of new homes – 2 million from 2008 to 2016, with a further 1 million carbon neutral homes by 2020
- A new expanded role for social housing – up to 70,000 new homes
- Higher design and environmental standards
- New governance arrangements for the funding of social housing through the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and its regulation through the Tenant Services Authority (TSA)
- A greater emphasis on making better use of existing housing
- Better engagement on identifying priorities via the Home and Community agency's 'Single Conversation'

But housing should contribute to the government's and the council's overall agenda as laid down by the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS). Growth has been the priority,

but not for growth's sake – growth that supports other ambitions for our communities:-

- design must help deliver reductions in carbon emissions;
- the mix of different types of housing must support balanced communities;
- housing and support must promote individual independence;
- the housing “offer” must promote quality of place and economic growth.
- the housing offer should also contribute to promoting health and well-being e.g. promoting access to training and employment

Summary highlights the role of housing in relation to:

- Supporting the strengthening the city's different neighbourhoods
- Supporting mixed communities and different stages of life
- Helping people to access and sustain employment
- Managing environmental impact
- We are now planning to develop a joint Housing Strategy with Gateshead

New strategy will provide a basis to change the manner in which housing initiatives are instigated

New strategy will adopt a whole market, whole city approach to have a sustained impact on housing market across the city with monitoring and review arrangements in respect of:

- The action plan
- Outcomes
- The housing market
- Stakeholder and community engagement

Analysis of the Thematic Factsheets, by Darinka Czischke, Thematic Expert

1. How is ‘affordable housing’ defined and measured:

- ! In most cities ‘affordable’ housing has a **different meaning** from ‘social housing’
- ! Housing costs as share of total household expenditures cluster **around 25%**, ranging between 16% (Tallinn) and 26% (Santiago)

2. How big a problem is it, and for whom?

- ! Most cities declare affordability has **always** been a problem
- ! **Low income households** experience greater affordability problems in most cities, followed by **young families**.

3. Who provides affordable housing in these cities?

- ! Municipal and non-profit housing predominate in most cities as providers of affordable housing.

4. What actions have been implemented and what is their effectiveness?

- ! **Housing programmes** have **improved affordability** for the **poorest** in their city
- ! **Housing remains affordable** in their city compared to other cities in their country
- ! Increasing **supply of social housing**
- ! Supporting **affordable home-ownership**

5. How has the economic crisis impacted on affordability?

- ! **Home-buyers** unable to afford mortgage payments
- ! **Private developers** stopped building
- ! **Tenants** cannot afford to pay rents in four cities

6. What types of affordability actions have been implemented to tackle the crisis?

- ! Support access to the **private rental sector**

- ! Support **affordable home-ownership**
- ! **Mortgage rescue scheme**

Case 1: Creating Great Places to live - Renewal and Growth by Anne Mulroy, Director, Bridgning Newcastle Gateshead

The Vision

NewcastleGateshead 2030: the renaissance of our twin cities will have moved beyond our shared quayside to the communities beyond. We will have transformed our housing offer: providing quality, range and choice at the heart of the city region. We want to reestablish Gateshead and Newcastle as a place of housing choice, creating better physical, social and cultural links between places, helping to drive economic improvement and a thriving high-skill economy.

Key Elements of our Strategy

- Reinforcing the role of NewcastleGateshead as the urban core of the City Region
- Improving the quality of our Residential Offer
- Commitment to Sustainability
- Locating new homes in the Heart of the City Region : Building on BNG
- Maximising private sector investment
- Delivering Renewal and Growth together through an effective Partnership

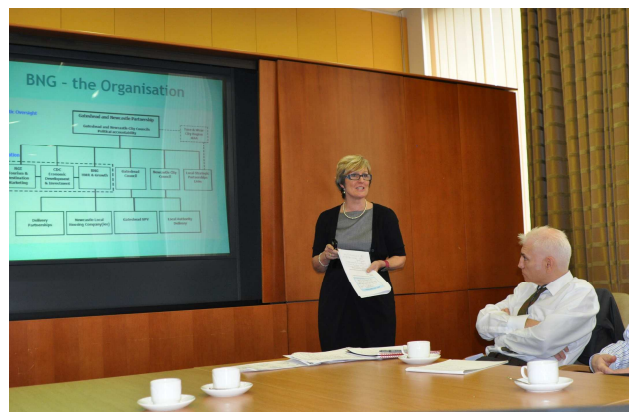
What we already have

- The larger Urban Core spreading outwards from the success of the Quaysides has:-
- A distinctive Tyne Gorge setting with variations in topography
- Stirling built heritage
- Quality parks and open land
- Distinct and accessible neighbourhoods in the urban core, some ‘walk in’, some only 5 minute bus or metro leading outwards to a range of suburbs and the green belt

What will it be like in 2030?

A Special Place and Places

- Population up from 467,000 to 500,000
- Households up from 203,000 to 238,000
- City Development Company and its Economic Masterplan will drive Growth in specific areas
- Two special locations:-
- The Growing Centre
- The Rediscovered River





Case 2: Support and Care Services: Pathways to Independence for young People in Newcastle by Martyn Burn, Head of Support and Care, Your Homes Newcastle

Overview

The Pathways to Independence is a whole system approach aiming to help people reach their optimum level of independence, (within the “Integrated Chain Concept”). The process is based on support workers intervening at the earliest opportunity.

The aim behind this process was to make it easier for the supported housing sector to support their clients to achieve independence. In theory this is the essence of their business. However in practice this is not so easy or necessarily what the client wants. Independence with its attendant responsibility and costs is hard to envision and can be harder to achieve. People who have been homeless are, understandably perceived as being a higher risk by mainstream landlords.

The Pathways process is about helping people see their goal of independence and then support them to overcome the risks and obstacles to achieve their goal. It also creates an explicit link between the supported and general needs housing sectors. Which include commissioned services to

- Assess the clients’ capacity to live independently
- Address any weaknesses e.g. budgeting
- Apply for housing
- Jointly plan transition to independence with the general needs housing provider
- Increased priority for people waiting longer than 2 months
- Maintain support once the person has moved to independence.

There are **two possible routes for a young person looking for accommodation**, Route A for those not in crisis, B for those in crisis.

Route A: the young person completes a YCH application which is sent to YHN Young People’s Service to register within 5 days. YHN Young People’s Service arranges verification checks to be carried out. All applications from 16 & 17 year olds are assessed by YHN Young People’s Service and appointments are given within 7 days to establish if there is a need to access accommodation and check that any floating support needs can be met and a support package put in place.

For both Route A and Route B, where a home visit is to be made by YHN Young People’s Service, it involves an assessment of the following:

- Whether mediation is an option, or if the person can return home without any further input.
- If not, the outcome wanted by the family and young person.
- How long the young person can remain at this address (family/friends/extended family)
- Whether young person needs to be referred to supported accommodation or supported tenancy, or could manage a tenancy unsupported.
- Assessment of support needs and referral are made to the most appropriate organisation or the provider.

Outcomes - The young person and family are provided with a written outcome and advised what they can do if they disagree with the decision. The range of outcomes is:

- No Further Action: when the reality of living independently is explained it often leads to the young person reconsidering. They may make a later application to YCH.
- Family mediation can be offered for up to four appointments, including with parents. If the situation is resolved, they will also be advised that they can contact YHN Young People’s Service directly if their situation changes.
- Referred to supported accommodation. The young person and family receive a written explanation why this route is offered, what to expect from providers and what planned move on would be. The supported housing provider will complete a Support Plan with the young person within 28 days of moving in including all areas deemed essential and possible timescales for moving on.
- Floating support in a YHN or RSL tenancy with support until the young person can live unsupported making them aware that an accommodation offer depends on their engagement with the level of support agreed.

The Fontiñas Case – Construction of protected housing by EMUVISSA

Legal framework

- ☑ Urban Plan (Plan Xeral de Ordenación Urbana(1989))
- ☑ Modification and adaptation of Partial Plan (Plan Parcial de Fontiñas (1999))
- ☑ Protocol of intervention from Municipality of Santiago and the Autonomous region of Galicia (2001)

General conditions

- ☑ Coordinate the bylaw for the sites in relation to the already existing
- ☑ Integrate old nucleus with a rural origin (Outeiro and Vieiro)
- ☑ Prepare plots suitable for development of publicly protected housing

Commission

- General basis
 - ☑ Planning works: Municipality of Santiago de Compostela
 - ☑ Judicial and material execution: EMUVISSA according to stages of planning
 - ☑ Competences and authority: Municipality of Santiago de Compostela and the Autonomous region of Galicia
 - ☑ Buildable plots: construction of protected housing

- Expropriations
- ☒Procedure: mutual evaluation
- ☒Edition: EMUVISSA
- ☒Processing and approval: Municipality of Santiago de Compostela
- ☒EMUVISSA justify before the municipality their disposal of economic and financial resources necessary for an expropriation

- Assignment of protected housing schemes
- ☒Public development: 10%
- ☒Official protection: minimum 20%
- ☒Protected: maximum 70%

- Adoption
- ☒Municipality from EMUVISSA: road works, infrastructures and public facilities anticipated by the Partial Plan, free of charge
- ☒EMUVISSA from municipality: 10% of the use of the area distributed to maximize the viability of the development

- Collaborations with third parties
- ☒Facilitate and incorporate into the development those entities who anticipate the fulfillment of the public and social objectives pursued

Urban planning

- General objectives
- ☒Coordinate the Strategic Plan with the public site already executed
- ☒Adapt a new ring road
- ☒Integrate the planned bylaw for the urban areas of Outeiro and Vieiro

- Specific criteria
- ☒Formalize the new façade relating the public site with new accesses to the city with general facilities from stream of de Brañas de Sar
- ☒Consolidate the façade of Lugo avenue in convergence with the ring road
- ☒Relate the buildings and the access road, the building mass and the open green spaces

- Green areas
- ☒Formalize the two areas, close up the road axis of the grid of Fontiñas
- ☒Support to the rings road, visual back curtain from the interior
- ☒Environmental and landscape integration of Fontiñas with the ring road

- Building mass
- ☒Close up Lugo avenue with a line of open blocks
- ☒Joint building with the road infrastructure (Periférico-Avda.Lugo)
- ☒Southern facade together with PERI Outeiro bordering the ring road
- ☒Finalize the opening of Dublin road, a great road axis through the site

- Public areas
- ☒East sector liberated for extensive public use
- ☒Integrate rural nucleus of Vieiro

- ☒Graduate building intensity towards the urban park of Fontiñas

Urbanization Project

- General structure
- ☒Infrastructure Project integrated the site and surrounding areas
- ☒Individual budgetary definition of the allocation of costs
- ☒Temporary priority to site 6-7
- ☒Reference document for the municipality to other urban environments

- Phases of the project
- ☒1st phase
- Give infrastructure to site 6-7 according to Partial Plan
- Exterior connections
- ☒2nd phase
- Areas of intervention adjacent PERI de Outeiro
- Areas of intervention adjacent PERI de Vieiro

Economic and financial management

- Objectives
- ☒Economic and financial equilibrium in management
- ☒Possibility to generate profit which can reattribute to the investment
- ☒Stability in order to be able to front a commission management for the municipality
- ☒It is NOT an objective to achieve a business profit

- Income from the protected intervention
- ☒Exchange sale or in-kind payment: 73% of urban use
- ☒Transfer in public competition: 27% of urban use
- ☒Other income: secondary activities of the infrastructure (complementary connection to services and restitution works)

- Costs of the protected intervention
- ☒Acquisitions of plots and compensations
- ☒Execution of construction: infrastructure, restitution and connections

Results

Make viable the development of an area with problems of integration of its environment and difficulties developing due to inactivity of private initiative, promoting participation in the management of the environment through the philosophy of “mutual agreement”.

Fill in the urban texture in an area situated between an area of new development and the consolidated city, completing the urban structure, on the outskirts of a principal road access, with an extension 53.000 m². Incorporate to the city 29.700 m² (56% of the total area of intervention) of public facilities and green areas.

Complete the road in the northern area of the city with 12.500 m² (23,6%) with surrounding space which increase the permeability between the north and the centre and facilitate the communication between sites.

Offer plots with infrastructure for 332 units of protected housing at accessible prices for the demand from low and medium income groups, fulfilling the municipal objective in residential land policy.

Social Housing in Iasi, by Catalina Lucaci, Iasi Municipality

SOCIAL HOUSING

- They belong to the public property of Iasi Municipality
- They are only for rent
- Target groups are people with a net monthly salary of 300 Euros
- monthly rent rate must not exceed more than 10% of their income/ family
- 220 request of social housing in 2009

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- They belong to the private property of Iasi Municipality (that means they can be sold)
- Target groups are people with a Net monthly salary bigger than months' average salary
- must not exceed more than 25% of their income/ family
- Around 2500 requests for affordable Housing

Accessible programs for housing

The Government strategy for housing construction is aimed at a better quality of life by ensuring the access of Romanian citizens to a decent dwelling, by developing programs of building social housing or programs of a social nature, in order to help the categories of people with modest income, especially young people, thus achieving stability for young specialists.

It also addresses the need to provide housing for tenants evicted from nationalized houses.

Programs of the Ministry of Regional Development and Housing

Program for the construction of rental housing units for young people – carried out by the National Housing Agency.

- › Program for Mortgage-financed housing
- › Program for the construction of social housing in accordance with Law no. 114/1996
- › Program for the construction of social housing and housing for tenants evicted from nationalized houses
- › Program for finalizing the construction of blocks of flats started from state funds before 1989, in accordance with the provisions of Government Ordinance no. 19/1994
- › Program for retrofitting blocks of flats built in localities from disfavored areas
- › National Program supporting the construction of private housing in accordance with Government Emergency Ordinance no. 51/2006
- › Program on the provision of state premiums in accordance with Law no. 541/2002 on collective saving and lending for housing
- › Program of building emergency housing run by the National Investment Commission.

Present situation regarding social and affordable housing in IASI

They were built until now 188 social housing and this year another 224.

- › 96 apartments were finalized for housing tenants to be evicted or removed from buildings restored
- › another 128 will be finalized intended to be as social housing and affordable ones.

As a future project it will start construction of over **500 social housing, affordable housing** in an area where already have been build up a numerous social housing
Until now in Iasi they were delivered ~2000 affordable housing to people

Field visits

- The Science Central (inner-city urban and social infrastructure center)
- Cruddas Park housing estate in reconstruction



Affordable Housing – responses to the recession, by Heidrun Feigelfeld

Heidrun Feigelfeld presented the Crisis Report and then asked for round table of the partners to give the status of their situation:-

Newcastle:-

- Received a Green flag award on our approach to the crisis from the Audit Commission
- We have looked at people in crisis and the longer term development
- Crisis response – City approach looking at retail, housing, welfare, land assembly etc
- Coordinated on a higher level – investment, debt and housing advice
- National Government – lending protocols –nationalisation of banks etc
- Funds increased for the renting scheme and created a landlords scheme
- Marketing increased to the people
- Pilot in place for Northern Rock (nationalised) – pro-active response
- Long-term holding land – public sector grants available looking at training and apprenticeships

Medway:-

- Same processes as described by Newcastle
- Audit Commission inspection on the Housing Plan to be carried out this week
- Report on the position produced – plans in place already for housing
- Continued process
- Looking to buy up land for future housing development – affordable housing
- Targets are set by Government one scheme needed 177 units by end of 2008

and this was overbuilt to 420 units and these were affordable / mix tenure

- Negotiations ongoing for varying tenure, private / rental

Tallinn:-

- Two projects – social housing units
- Social units – increase in bed spaces – homeless based on existing model
- General response – document produced
- 42 support measures with 6 directions – document produced
- Employment, benefit, council services, reduction in housing expense, businesses and consumer protection
- Employment – jobs important then pay for housing – social housing important
- Reduction in housing expenses – help with heating, water costs
- Link on the internet

Hamburg:-

- Long term strategy called the ‘Growing City’
 - Demographic change – lot more older people in the future
 - Hamburg – Younger families strategy – ongoing and successful
 - Lack of new build housing – target of 5 to 6,000 new flats per year but only 3,500 built so there is a lack of affordable flats
 - Future – several aspects – strengthening projects, self-build, private projects, mixture community / cooperative / privately owned property
 - Development - two parts Town – economy, attraction and opera house. Villamsburg – works quarter looking to attract young families – high value housing
 - Crisis hit Hamburg but did not affect the housing in Hamburg.
- Hamburg has policies in place to prevent decline and help aid growth.

Iasi:-

- Major affects on construction, real estate, employment, economy with unemployment being a particular problem.
- Elections are being held due to the crisis – hope it will then settle down and go in the right direction
- Hoping for strategies and actions to come from Central level then disseminate to regional / local level. However, do need additional measures centrally to address the crisis.
- Looking at an integrated strategy

Krakow:-

- Crisis has not been a major problem of separate cities but a problem to the country as a whole.
- Construction of new housing continuing although always had a long term problem in constructing new properties.
- Programme implemented – to aid young families buy houses and the Government pays 50% for 8 years
- Economic crisis impacted on rent reduction

Santiago:-

- Spain badly affected by crisis
- Santiago not as bad
- Initiatives in place – no changes directly due to crisis
- Social housing is long term place and is continuing
- Spain has various initiatives

Housing Affordability at a time of crisis (wrap-up workshop).

Moderated by Darinka Czischke

Darinka presented:

- Three questions were posed to the partners for discussion:-

1. What are the main challenges in terms of affordability that your city is currently facing?
2. What lessons have you learnt from the other partner cities on how to tackle these challenges?
3. Local Action Plans – what do other partner cities think of the proposed LAP’s?

Group One: Hamburg, Nantes, Krakow and Newcastle

Group Two: Iasi, Medway, Tallinn, Rennes and Santiago

Group One Feedback

Challenges Affordability:-

- Capital Issues – access to credit by individuals and businesses, lack of new housing to cross subsidise, need private housing and lack of confidence in the market
- No sustainable land for private projects - Hamburg lack of affordable land the crisis is helping as the Government sells the land
- Various models – new / refurbishment of buildings in Hamburg and people want to live in defined groups
- Heidrun Feigelfeld in Vienna they run competitions / strict conditions based on Social Sustainability
- Krakow opportunities for PPP’s – learning from other cities, private investor builds on land owned by municipality. Have had new investment but only from previous years.
- Newcastle – housing allowance factors, PPP’s demand higher rents which outstrip peoples earnings

Lessons from Other Cities:-

- Prevention from conviction, case management (Krakow)
- Newcastle joined up services
- Hamburg – social aspect, refurbishment of towers in Newcastle, challenging areas, creative art, lighting, living quality other people
- Refurbishment depends upon the site, Riverside Dene it has worked
- Nantes – policy on homeless in Newcastle interesting, social work / young people / homeless, specific housing the Urban Village interested to see how Newcastle will mix homeless, artists, graduates etc



Group Two Feedback

Challenges Affordability:-

- Capital issues – available credit for individuals and developers.
- Medway – Lack of available land. Land that was available expensive.
- Tallinn and Iasi – Lack of social housing generally and need to increase supply.

Financial difficulties, lack of funds or access to funds. Limited local budgets.

- Tallinn – Issues around unemployment.

Lessons from Other Cities:-

- Newcastle joined up services and strategies which link housing and communities. Good development framework
- Iasi and Tallinn – have learnt many interesting things during the meeting however there is a severe lack of funding to put anything in place.
- Medway – felt a PPP for both Iasi and Tallinn would benefit and help increase the levels of affordable and social housing in the cities.
- Iasi – have a house building project which involves young people, those under 35, who finance the construction costs in order to acquire a property. It was not certain at this early stage, however, what tenure would be acquired.

Local Action Plans from Other Cities:-

- Bit of a Chicken and Egg problem
- Information is not explicit enough to judge each others LAP's
- Tallinn and Iasi – political leadership problems impacting on overall housing sector delivery.



Key lessons learned from Newcastle meeting

- ! Despite the impact of the global economic crisis, housing affordability / housing exclusion has been and continues to be a problem in most cities. Therefore, sustainable solutions are needed, which go beyond contingent factors.
- ! From the Newcastle (NC) meeting, interesting examples were: NC case management in prevention from eviction; NC joined-up services and strategies linking housing and communities; emphasis on the social aspects of regeneration.
- ! Policy on homelessness in Newcastle was considered a good example by partners, as well as the social work carried out with young people.
- ! Some partners (in particular, those from new member states) recognized that, while learning many interesting things during the meeting, they face a severe lack of funding to put anything in place.

CONTACTS

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MORE INFO ON THE PROJECT:

www.urbact.eu/suite

Facebook: SUITE URBACT

Agenda for URBACT-SUITE Meeting

“Housing Affordability”

Newcastle, 1 and 2 December 2009

| PROGRAMME, DAY 1 | | |
|--------------------------|--------------|--|
| Tuesday 01 December 2009 | | |
| TIME | VENUE | DESCRIPTION |
| 9:15 | Civic Centre | - Short welcome - Basic Intro to Newcastle plus NC housing programme (affordability) |
| 9:45 | Civic Centre | The ECO focus in Social Housing |
| 10:00 | Civic Centre | Case 1 Affordable Housing Presentation from Bridging Newcastle Gateshead |
| 10:30 | Civic Centre | Case 2 Avoiding Evictions Presentation Your Homes Newcastle |
| 11:00 | Civic Centre | <i>Break – Tea and Coffee</i> |
| 11:15 | Civic Centre | Case 3 Cruddas Park Presentation |
| 11:45 | Civic Centre | Short round of inputs & discussion |
| 12:45 | Civic Centre | <i>Lunch – Buffet, including coffee/tea</i> |
| 14:00 | Civic Centre | Presentation Focus on innovative concept / programme of managing social housing by a municipal enterprise with regards to affordability, plus ideas for the Local Action Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-defined and pre-informed discussant to react shortly |
| 15:15 | City | Presentation Focus on main problems, first concepts, ideas for the Local Action Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-defined and pre-informed discussant react shortly <p>Common discussion and summing up</p> <p>Field visits proposed by NC (2 to be selected out of these):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walker Regeneration Future Plans |

| | | |
|-------|---------------------|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Byker – Housing Manager Cruddas Park |
| 17:15 | Hotel | End visit |
| 19:00 | Meet at Hotel Lobby | Dinner at Black Friars Restaurant |

| PROGRAMME, DAY 2 | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|--|
| Wednesday 02 December 2009 | | |
| TIME | VENUE | DESCRIPTION |
| 9:00 | | <i>Arrive, Tea and Coffee</i> |
| 9:15 | Live Theatre, Quayside | Presentation of Newcastle proposal for their LAP (+ TBC: Case 4 Access to Private Rented Sector <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rent Deposit Scheme Landlord’s Incentive) |
| 10:00 | Live Theatre, Quayside | Affordable housing – responses to recession <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short presentation by LE of URBACT annual conference Crisis report Short tour de table amongst partners on the status of their situation/responses to the crisis from the perspective of affordable housing Common discussion |
| 10:45 | Live Theatre, Quayside | <i>Break – Tea and Coffee</i> |
| 11:00 | Live Theatre, Quayside | Steering Committee meeting Project agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future activities AOB |
| 11:15 | Live Theatre, Quayside | Housing affordability at a times of crisis (wrap-up workshop) Moderated by the TE |
| 13:30 | Live Theatre, Quayside | Final remarks (LP, TFEC lead (NC), LE) |
| 13:45 | Live Theatre, Quayside | <i>Lunch</i> |
| 14:45 | End | |

URBACT II

URBACT is a European exchange and learning programme promoting sustainable urban development.

It enables cities to work together to develop solutions to major urban challenges, reaffirming the key role they play in facing increasingly complex societal challenges. It helps them to develop pragmatic solutions that are new and sustainable, and that integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions. It enables cities to share good practices and lessons learned with all professionals involved in urban policy throughout Europe. URBACT is 181 cities, 29 countries, and 5,000 active participants

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