

How to formulate and enact tactical urbanism to create events and spaces. This promotes an area's unique elements, and instils civic pride in the community.

This workshop will help you to consider how to create civic pride events and renovate unused spaces on a tight budget, through community cohesion and tactical urbanism. This also improves good practice in regards to outreach and attracts potential investors.

*Any text in **dark blue** denotes a facilitator driver.*

SLIDE: WELCOME SCREEN

Welcome everybody, today we'll be learning about how we can use tactical urbanism in our communities.

SLIDE: WHO I AM

Use this space to tell everybody who you (the facilitator) are.

SLIDE: WHAT IS RETHINK RE:PLACE?

Rethink Re:Place is a series of training materials that make radical placemaking understandable, straightforward and above all, fun.

It's important to begin conversations between local government or housing institutions and the community, to gather ideas on how to make their town, city or village a better place to live.

The project was born during the UK's coronavirus lockdown when civic innovation organisation New Union Director Nathan Coyle teamed up with friend and digital storyteller James Oliver Firkins to create a series of tools that makes placemaking accessible to everybody.

New Union works with governments across Europe, using community development and digital design to influence policy on a local and national level. You can learn more about Rethink Re:Place by visiting new-union.org

If you use Twitter, please post your progress from the day using the hashtag **#RETHINKREPLACE**

SLIDE: WHY ARE WE HERE?

Why are we here?

Today we are going to learn about how tactical urbanism can improve community spaces on little to no budget.

But before we begin, let's learn a little bit about each other.

SLIDE: ICEBREAKER

Ask for name and occupation/position. Then, feel free to select from one of the following suggestions, or devise one of your own:-

Bap, bread roll, balm, cob, the accent and all the rest, what is your favourite thing about where we live and why?

Make a note: This also works as a driver for Activity One: "Let's build upon what we answered for the icebreaker question"

SLIDE: TACTICAL URBANISM, WHAT IS IT?

Tactical urbanism - also known as Guerilla urbanism - is a form of social action taken directly into the community's hands. It usually does not involve the Local Council or Government.

It is almost always a grassroots initiative - it basically takes a place that could seem a bit run down or underused, and does something exciting to utilise or renovate the space. For example, turning an unused pathway into a small garden or cycle lane; creating pop-up eatery places or street food events; or turning an abandoned green space into a public park (that's called Guerilla gardening).

SLIDE:

Fun example: *Yarn Bombing* - Artist Magda Sayeg created a way to "cheer up" the grey architecture of her city, without causing any damage. This simple act, which Magda did just to brighten up her town, grew into an international movement. All at the cost of a ball of yarn.

This goes to show that no act of tactical urbanism is "too small".

SLIDE: PLACEMAKING - THE BASICS

What is placemaking?

Tactical urbanism is the cool, punk rock loving offspring of placemaking, but in order to understand it, we first need to understand what placemaking is.

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SLIDE:

Getting the decision maker on board - your local Council should be deeply engaged in the process, or even setting the agenda. It's not all about money, although it helps, and other support could involve maximising community assets or just intellectual backing to ensure plans happen. Let's say the community wanted a mural painted on a building: the Council could make that happen for little or no cost.

SLIDE:

Place intelligence - how is the place already used and what is missing? Who is going to know that, I hear you say? Yep, the local community. The people who use the space, know the space.

SLIDE:

Strategic placement - where is the best place to put amenities to maximise social interaction? How can you get the most from what you plan?

SLIDE:

Don't rush - as soon as you have an idea to change a place in your town or city, be patient. These things don't happen overnight. Also, placemaking is an ongoing issue, and the community will naturally want to make tweaks as things develop.

SLIDE:

People saying no - it's going to happen, but ignore them. Just because it hasn't been done before doesn't mean it can't. Ideas are free, and you should always strive to generate new ones - plus, if you hear that word too much, that's where tactical urbanism comes in...

SLIDE: TACTICAL URBANISM AND DIGITAL STORYTELLING

Tactical urbanism can be greatly enhanced through digital storytelling - after all, in the same way the local news might report on a charitable business or event, recording and sharing your TU through digital storytelling will allow it to reach a greater audience. More people, more support, more chance of attracting key investors for bigger projects. Simple, right?

By marketing your TU project correctly, it can become a means to lobby change in the places you live, but another good reason to document TU effectively is to raise awareness of a movement everyday people can become involved in.

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That unused square by the subway where nobody ever goes to? That park by the alley that's only ever used by dog owners to let their pets poo? That huge car park overgrown with weeds next to the industrial quarter that is never used? Do something with them! Then make sure you share what you've done across social media. Use your voice.

Remember, if you can make change a positive experience, it's easier to get what you want. Telling a good story ensures the media reports on what you are doing - after all, you'd be a local good news story and a safe agenda to report on. You won't struggle to find media interest once you really get going, but by utilising digital storytelling, however (such as blogs and vlogs), will build interest early on, and with you at the creative helm.

If there is a reason to invest in a place, be that financially or through resources, you'll find more agreeable noises - and later, success - if you can prove it works.

We'll go over some good examples of tactical urbanism projects who have used digital storytelling successfully, and hopefully by the end of the workshop you'll have a grasp of not only how to install your own project but also getting people talking about it.

SLIDE:

This workshop will guide you through how you could enact your own guerilla placemaking in the areas you walk past that have unused potential. Every idea - and its effectiveness - will come from knowing how unique the place you live is, which brings us onto our first activity...

SLIDE: ACTIVITY ONE: ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY - WHAT MAKES US UNIQUE?

Someone from America wants to visit and they have two weeks. As their unofficial guide, where would you take them? What would you say are the best parts of your area?

INSTRUCTIONS: As a group, begin by listing the most important parts of your area. What makes your place unique? Give each table a A0 sheet of paper to work on.

SLIDE:

Discuss and list your area's best aspects. Think about including:-

- culture (accents, dialect, events)
- locations of interest (natural / manmade)
- local artists and famous people
- notable history
- buildings of interest
- community groups

DRIVERS: What's your favourite park? What are the most important places to visit? What are aspects of your culture that people should know about? What is your favourite landmark? Do you have a local flag - do people know about it?

SLIDE: FEEDBACK

Ask each table to feedback on what they wrote down.

SLIDE:

Modular Dock - Izmir, Turkey

Here's an example of how innovative placemaking works on water. This is an out-of-the-box design from architecture firm IYI and Izmir University of Economics in Turkey.

The Modular Dock project came out of a discussion about the monotony of the Turkish coastline section. How the public is essentially cut off from the sea by high concrete walls and highways.

SLIDE:

The Municipality of Silistra, Bulgaria

Not everywhere has an old derelict airplane hanging around but if you do, why not turn it into a community space? That's exactly what The Municipality of Silistra did with a decommissioned TU-134 aircraft, which was donated by the Bulgarian civil aviation authority, by turning it into a recreation area for children and adults. The beauty of this is it's entirely volunteer led, but with backing from Local Gov.

SLIDE:

Biscayne Green, Miami, FL

In March of 2012, Street Plans used a small grant to demonstrate how parking lots could be transformed into a viable public space in Miami, FL.

Then in Jan 2017, Street Plans partnered with the Miami Downtown Development Authority and seed funders to make "Biscayne Green" a permanent feature.

Biscayne Green transformed 101 parking spaces – two car parks – into new public spaces, testing design ideas to inform the long-term re-design of Biscayne Boulevard. One car park included a new lawn, a dog park, a children's playground, and seating area.

SLIDE:

Dublin Parks, Ireland

During the Covid-19 crisis parks in Dublin painted temporary markings on public park walkways to remind people of social-distancing parameters.

SLIDE:

Vercorin, Switzerland

Every summer in the beautiful Swiss town of Vercorin, residents plan an arts festival to celebrate its cultural history. Tactical urbanism always makes an appearance - they literally paint the streets!

SLIDE: ACTIVITY TWO: IMPROVEMENT WITHOUT A BUDGET - WHAT CAN EVERYDAY PEOPLE DO?

You want to put on an event to celebrate your area and utilise its underused spaces, but you have no official budget. Using a group of volunteers from the community (artists, business owners, etc), what can you do to beautify your village/town/city?

SLIDE:

INSTRUCTIONS: Place all cards provided onto the table and have people read each one aloud to the room. After each one is read, discuss its merits (ease, cost, and impact).

(Even though the participant might not find all these suitable for their space, they still have the opportunity to learn about new processes by reading the cards.)

Finally, using the worksheets provided, each of the 3 groups must select:-

2x) Green space 2x) Pavement space

2x) Retail space 1x) Entertainment

In front of you, you'll also see a worksheet, simply write in the coloured boxes that correspond with the card.

Try to consider the various communities and willing businesses that are available to you, and think about how everyone can work together to transform spaces into areas that excite and engage the local populace - and which could gather the attention of investors...

Once every group has done this, they will explain to the room as a whole their choices. Feel free to refer to real life scenarios: "We chose Performance Corner, because there are a lot of quality musicians in our area."

Ideally, they'll have a narrative about how and why the seven choices come together to create a civic pride experience (such as a festival, a local pride day or fun weekend fair).

DRIVERS: What resources are in your area? What spaces do you have to use? Who can you get involved (artists, businesses, other volunteers)? How do/could your choices compliment each other?

SLIDE: FEEDBACK

Ask each table to feedback on what they wrote down.

SLIDE: EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS THAT UTILISED DIGITAL STORYTELLING

So what happens if your idea really gets traction, it'll get you some good press but sometimes it can even create a movement - like we saw earlier in the Yarn Bombing example.

Let's have a look at some more examples who have shined in the public eye thanks to shaping their narrative to create an easy-to-follow "story".

SLIDE:

La Ciclovía de Bogotá

In 1974, residents of the Columbian capital shut down the streets to promote general exercise. From running to skateboarding, the citizens came out into the streets, now free of the insanely busy roads that are usually full of cars.

To this day, every Sunday, it still happens. If you popped down to Bogota this Sunday you'll be sure to see runners, alongside even street yoga!

It didn't go down well with everybody. In 2007, a congressman in the Columbian government made a motion to end the practice due to traffic pile ups, but thankfully people-power won and it was not passed.

Ciclovía did not just get some amazing media coverage - it started a whole revolution that has now taken root in 15 different countries, across all continents on the planet.

A movement starts with a great idea, no matter how simple, and Ciclovía proves just that. Even with direct opposition they pulled through, and it makes for a great story.

SLIDE:

WalkRaleigh

Raleigh is a pretty hard city to walk around, so one person tried to help by making placards and putting them around the place so that walkers could easily find things around the city that they live in.

Where's the story in this? Sure, the signs are a big help, but the real story is that one person took it upon themselves to help others. The story element took hold, and it was featured by UK's BBC News and a host of others! This extra coverage prompted WalkRaleigh to turn into a not for profit business! So, if you have a good idea and can know how to tell the narrative, you never know where it might lead...

SLIDE:

Kit of Parks

When a movement is created, sometimes people from across the world answer. Kit of Parks is a product created by the architecture firm Boston Society of Landscape Architects (BSLA), in response to tactical urbanism activities seen across social media. They designed the low cost product to help planners place pop up parks in concrete areas. It's also important to notice that it's bright yellow - perfect for social media posts, where the community adds Kits of Parks into their own digital stories...

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SLIDE: ACTIVITY THREE: COMMUNITY COHESION - WORKING TOGETHER TO ACTION CHANGE

So far you've discussed how your area is unique, learned about tactical urbanism and the many ways that improvement can be conducted on a tight budget.

SLIDE:

You should still have your worksheets from activity 2 in front of you - a quick note here is that everyone has taken part in a tactical urbanism activity, and you all proved to be excellent at it. Beginning can really be this simple.

Take 10 minutes in your groups to pick one favorite from each colour, from the seven that you chose in activity 2.

Allow the groups 10 minutes to essentially choose one TU example of each colour. In a moment we will narrow them down further to the room's Top Four.

Each group will have four cards left, one of each colour, and will explain the reasons for their choices - hopefully they'll have a narrative about how and why the four choices come together to create a civic pride experience.

SLIDE:

Okay, now I'm going to ask you all to get up and come to the front of the room and bring the 4 cards you have chosen with you. Explain your group's choices.

So, now you have all proved to be excellent guerilla placemakers, let's come together as a room and pick our absolute favourites from each colour.

SLIDE:

We need to work together, to pick one of each colour (from those you've selected/narrowed down to), creating a civic pride event that everyone in the room can agree with. Respectful debate is healthy, and final decisions will be democratic.

INSTRUCTIONS: Focusing on one colour at a time - Green, Red, Blue, and Yellow - begin a healthy debate/conversation about which is the best example of the options selected, before using a show of hands to select one from each. This should take no more than 5 minutes for each colour. You will be left with four cards, which the room has collectively decided on.

This will demonstrate that there are many voices involved in placemaking conversations, and often any good idea needs to consider the thoughts and feelings of everyone. Make sure to allow the quieter voices in the room a chance to speak - don't just listen to the loudest!

So, are we happy with this? Let's have a quick conversation.

SLIDE:

That's it for today! Thank you all for coming and we hope you have a new found enthusiasm for placemaking, and for changing your places from the ground up by rolling your sleeves and upsetting the rhythm.

So what happens next?

From all of the discussion today I'll be putting together an informative blog and sharing it across our channels. This will help us to put together an engaging piece on this issue and maybe even influence how we do these types of events in the future. It may also influence possible town planning policies, and work as evidence when applying for grants.

The information you have given us today has been really useful to our work, but I also hope you have some meaningful training that will help you in the future. Perhaps you may even do some tactical urbanism yourself? If you do, please let us know, and/or share it across social media using the hashtag #RETHINKREPLACE

SLIDE:

If you enjoyed this session, there are also a range of other training resources available, from guerilla gardening, tactical urbanism in practice, digital storytelling deepdive, and many others. You can find out more at www.new-union.com

If you want us to run these sessions in the future, please let us know and we will try and make that happen, to provide further training for you.

SLIDE:

Thank you and well done

RETHINK REPLACE



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