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Published in:
Heritage - New Paradigm

DOI:
10.5772/intechopen.99610

E-pub ahead of print: 01/09/2021

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Link to publication on the UWS Academic Portal

Citation for published version (APA):

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Chapter

From Preservation to Reuse. Seeing Possible Futures

Elizabeth Gardiner and Katarzyna Kosmala

Abstract

Appreciation of heritage by Scotland’s communities has been inextricably linked with activism since the 1970s. Since then, European artists and local cultural producers have campaigned for future spaces and places that respect local histories, identities and heritage. In parallel, a polarisation within the arts, culture and heritage establishments has downgraded socially engaged practices: collapsing arts development and heritage preservation with cultural planning. In Glasgow, local people have fought a decade-long campaign to save A-listed dry docks, Govan’s Graving Docks. We argue that the politics around saving the docks are superficially incontestable as a local community aspires to preserve an important heritage asset linked to their own cultural memory and pride. Moving beyond heritage preservation is more problematic. Post-industrial heritage is vulnerable to developer-led homogenisation and subsequently, gentrification. Artists, researchers and activists who, in good faith work with communities, fueling their aspirations and alternative visions for heritage futures, are in danger of becoming a part of the problem. We unpack some of the problems posed by the politics of power and ownership, exploring networks and new business models as keys to advancing a new paradigm for the future of heritage.

Keywords: community arts, regeneration, heritage futures

1. Introduction

In Scotland, a radical movement under the umbrella term of community arts that saw socially engaged interventionist artists working in partnership with local people to preserve their tangible and intangible cultural heritage mushroomed in the 1960s. The movement grew in sophistication as well as political impact and persuasion, and subsequently fractured by the end of the 1980s. Adapted and ‘sanitised’ by local authorities, it was brought ‘in-house’ to join community sports activity in learning how to paint or make sculpture.

Community arts as a radical movement has left various legacies that are visible today in a complex landscape of socially engaged arts, including participatory artists working with local people and groups, interventionist arts practice bringing art outside of the gallery spaces and public arts engaging public spaces to make political statements. All of these diverse practices continue to be applied across communities throughout Scotland and beyond.
Helen Crummy [1] and Owen Kelly [2] documented the impact community arts and activism had on arts, cultural and heritage establishments as well as local authorities, disrupting governmental attitudes towards the arts and culture, which hitherto had been regarded as quality only if espousing white, middle class values. The movement towards community driven arts practice got fractured in the 1980s; polarised between artists who regarded the art as a vehicle for political activism and those who believed the quality of the artistic practice to be paramount and would speak for itself without the need for a polemic.

A cultural planning-led movement born in the 1990s in Australia can be traced back to the Scottish community arts when a Scottish diaspora, including Grace and Kieren Grant of Easterhouse Festival Society and Mayfest [3] fled what they regarded at the time as the hostile, instrumentalist political environment of Labour-dominated Glasgow and established their practices in Australia. The cultural planning movement in Australia was documented by Colin Mercer [4] and others, and subsequently travelled back to Scotland via mainland Europe where it was championed by Franco Bianchini and Jude Bloomfield among others [5]. Cultural planning was explored as a method: borrowing from Geddes’ Folk Work, Place; embracing not just physical planning practice, but also cultural mapping and incorporating heritage to impact the socio-economic agendas.

Therefore, with origins in the community arts movement traceable back to the 19th century Scottish geographer and planner Patrick Geddes, cultural planning (as applied in Scotland) advocated bottom up cultural and heritage sensitive community development approaches in city planning [6, 7]. In the late 20th century (in spite of growing traction and lobby voices through the National Cultural Planning forum and the Scottish Centre for Regeneration) these community-centered approaches were soon challenged by local authorities and practitioners [8] who saw the potential in more top down cultural planning approaches from local and national governments. Like community arts before it, the cultural planning movement had fractured by the 2020s. Matthews and O’Brien [9] proposed that we are now in a ‘post post-industrial regeneration’ period. With regeneration as a discredited concept, new thinking is now required for citizen led co-creation and co-production. Once again however, the debate oscillated on political ethics and values, polarising positions along value based fault lines.

The 21st century continues to be regarded as the post-industrial era for river and port cities throughout Europe [10]. At the end of the 20th century, without awareness of what was being lost, derelict shipyards, foundries and textile factories from the Victorian era were demolished. There is scant mourning at the passing of mass industrialisation with all its attendant problems of environmental pollution and community exploitation at the mercy of dominant private sector employers. The heritage, diverse habitats (human and natural), local histories and ways of life continue to be swept away with the detritus, however, creating a mono-culture of non-places in their stead. We argue that in the 2020s, cities and towns throughout Europe are now grappling with the ‘how to’ intervene in futures based on homogeneity: how to make space for distinctiveness and production; how to reimagine places where alternative histories can be heard and local visions not just imagined, but delivered.

2. Govan graving docks, Glasgow, Scotland

Govan in Glasgow, Scotland is one of those post-industrial locations where, throughout the 20th century, shipbuilding defined the character of both the local
people and their place. With much of that post-industrial infrastructure demolished, it has been replaced with homogenous housing and retail, which is gradually eroding both ancient Viking heritage remains at the important Water Row river crossing and the 20th century industrial infrastructure. Govan is a unique location. The area has long been recognised for its historical importance. With its medieval heritage, including Water Row the site of an ancient Doomster, or Moot hill, Ting site where the mediaeval kings of Strathclyde were crowned. Outdoor debates and legal courts were conducted there. Armies and goods forded the River Clyde.

Artist interventionism, community arts, and participatory arts practice initiatives have been delivered in Govan over several decades. Artists have supported communities to engage with its unique history, landscape and people (including travelling show people who have made the site their own for over a century). Charrettes, community consultations and artistic projects (some commissioned by the local authority but mostly self-generated) have been enacted. The results of every consultation emphasised the need for more heritage-sensitive development than was proposed in the outline planning. Intensive open days run by the developers and appointed architects, celebrated (or appropriated depending on your point of view) the work of the artists working with local people to create their own alternative visions and ideas. Housing and forced removal of the show people were both deemed unacceptable. In 2019, planning permission was granted for final plans for the Water Row area which are almost identical to the plans that were proposed prior to the consultation. The plans continue to prioritise housing and advocate forced removal of the show people from their homes.

In the heart of Govan, the 20th century industrial heritage site Govan’s A-listed Dry Docks, commonly referred to as Govan Graving Docks, has been a prey to market forces for several years now. Land that was a common space with access rights for grazing of cattle pre 19th century was borrowed for industrial use. Shipyards respected those ancient access rights by laying boardwalks along the banks of the Clyde, which could be lifted and replaced allowing the launch of a ship. Access rights have, however, been conveniently forgotten in the 21st century and this common land is now being appropriated by developers for housing development. Sometimes, as in the case of Govan’s Graving Docks, the owners are housing developers: proposing mono spaces of homogeneous housing and retail. Since their closure in 1989, Govan’s Graving Docks have been in private ownership and subject of various top down planning proposals for their redevelopment. The common sense of the economic narrative dictates that the landowner (a housing developer) has the right to make a profit and a proposal for 750 high rise flats on this site was seriously considered. In parallel heritage sensitive, organic planning solutions were proposed by activists and artists together with local residents. These alternative proposals continue to nod to the ideas of 20th century geographer and planner, Patrick Geddes and were developed during a decade of interventionist, socially engaged community arts embedded in cultural planning practices. Local people dared to question why these rich, multilayered, heritage sensitive solutions are still not the default approach in planning.

Geddes worked with whole communities in Edinburgh and Kilmarnock, creating what we would now describe as community arts or participatory arts practice. Through the ‘outlook tower’ device, he encouraged thinking about a place as part of a neighbourhood, as part of a city and a whole region, as a complex ecosystem of heritages, including landscape, history, buildings, stories and its people that must all be respected and included when any new development is envisaged. Geddes referred to the city as being in evolution, as a natural, organic process. Meller admits, however, that Geddes is less clear on how local people can have power...
Heritage - New Paradigm

and voice in the planning process. Today, Geddes is acknowledged as the father of cultural planning in Europe [13] and there are clues in his organic approach to city planning for the reuse as well as new uses of important post-industrial heritage like Govan’s dry docks that would respect their heritage importance as well as incorporate the local social, economic and biodiverse cultures [14].

The authors of this chapter argue that despite the politics of planning practice, there is a role for the participatory interventionist artists in supporting local communities to create their future visions and challenge the vision resigned to homogenous housing and retail solutions. We argue that interventionist artists who embrace the radical community arts activism of the 1970s, prioritising both the aesthetic and social justice agendas, are best placed to open new dialogues, create shared future visioning and intervene in the default planning process on disputed areas, such as Govan Graving Docks. In spite of focused, artistic interventions around Govan’s Graving Docks spanning several decades, however, there have been obstacles to moving cultural planning from theory to implementation.

Cultural planning methods are now supported by the Scottish Government policies around heritage, sustainability and community ownership [15]. They are also supported by the UK’s Industrial strategy, which emphasises the need for re-industrialisation, as well as an emergent model for the post-industrial city. Cultural planning could possibly offer a solution, but like the community arts movement of the late 20th century, the cultural planning debate in the early 21st century lost its way. We argue that cultural planning impact was diluted by a confusion with arts development, cultural production and planning for culture. Therefore, cultural planning became embroiled in polarised positions about ‘top down’ versus ‘bottom up’ approaches. Although still potent and potentially a panacea, the potential for activation of its ingredients among decision makers has become marginalised.

In Govan artists, activists and local people continue their own reclamation processes, restoring the narrative of the commons over land ownership [16]. The ‘common sense’ narrative in Govan continue to be based on the dominant assumption that shipbuilding is gone forever and what is needed now are ways to preserve its memory. The assumption that this role is the preserve of museums and heritage-plaques is being challenged. Ships are being built all over the world, just not in Govan any more, in spite of having facilities, like its world class dry docks that could, indeed, be restored.

In 2020, a consultation process documenting local attitudes revealed that 90% of respondents wanted employment returned to the docks with an emphasis on heritage and tourism. By early 2021, the developer was working on new proposals for Govan Docks’ regeneration that prioritised heritage, historic ship repair, training and employment which (whilst attractive and mirroring community’s feedback) comes without guarantees of delivery. There is evidence that participatory artistic interventionism has been useful in the transformation of the overall narrative. There is little evidence, however, of what factors must be put in place if we are to move beyond the success of the artists as activist facilitators in creating new, compelling, shared-future visions and to be able to implement those alternative visions on the ground.

The fate of Govan’s Graving Docks remains with the private owners, the City Council (who have power over planning decisions) and housing developers, who are also the owners. Because of activism, participatory interventionism, transformation of the narrative and pressure on the developer from local community, the proposal for 750 high rise flats had been rejected and the developer has come forward with new plans which incorporate heritage, tourism and an employment-focused strategy. Further investigation, however, reveals that what is being proposed are temporary-use pavilions and containers rather than permanent
structures. This raises the question over ‘meanwhile use’ that can be swept away in favour of more profitable housing and retail. It is becoming clear to the local community that without actual ownership of the docks, their visions and plans will never be prioritised. In fact, the danger now is that the artists, who worked so hard to profile the importance of the site, have merely raised the land value, playing into the hands of the developers.

Following a year of community consultation, benchmarking with other European Cities, architectural competitions and artist residencies, a new paradigm for heritage is emerging in Govan that are not simply about preservation or even, restoration of the Docks. In dialogue with the local community, shipbuilders, artists, activists, academics, and wider national and international networks, new proposals from community activists emerged which include an interpretation centre, telling the story of shipbuilding in Glasgow, an engineering hub that encourages a new generation of engineers embracing all the skills required for 21st century shipbuilding, a park and walkway that links with the whole of the developing critical mass of attractions. It is a vision for a tourist destination that incorporates industry; including historic ships, the Riverside Museum, distilleries, and the Finnieston Crane, but also some housing to allow footfall and natural surveillance of the rest of the site. All of this sounds remarkably akin to Geddes’ Folk, Work, and Place.

3. The artists’ lens

For at least a century, there has been an understanding that artists are key to helping us interpret the world in language and discourse. Claire Bishop and Grant Kester have summarised the polarised, more than decade-old debate around different artistic approaches to transforming the hegemonic narrative through interventionist or socially engaged arts practice. Kester [17] explored the role of the artist as activist, describing the artist as a facilitator in a process of empowerment. Bishop [18, 19] regards the artist as the sole author in an engaged process with participants supporting the act of creation. Bishop cites the work of performance artists like Proletkult Theatre and the Situationists as disrupting forces, taking the artist from the gallery space into the public realm. Bishop’s examples show more genetic similarity to establishment art simply taken outside of the gallery as a disruptive force. Kester on the other hand, points to specific case studies exemplified for instance by work from the Austrian artist collective, Wochenklausur (an embedded discursive process involving key stakeholders in a given community over a whole week of being closeted from the real world). The origins of the work of Wochenklausur, Kester asserts, can be traced back to the activism of the community arts movement of the 1960s and 1970s. He identifies these approaches as having the ability to challenge social and political norms. The work of Kester and Bishop has both promoted and defined the contemporary debate around interventionism versus participatory arts practice, with polarisation implying there is a right or wrong approach. Where both Bishop and Kester agree is that each acknowledges the role of the artist in the process and each approach as having advantages and limitations.

We argue that there is room for the methods proposed by both Kester and Bishop as well as myriad of other socially engaged practices that engage, empower and transform diverse media and perspectives. Our question moves this debate further to ask: What is missing, the presence of which would allow intervention into the dominant narrative, alternative visioning and community-led alternative plans be taken from vision to realisation on the ground?

In Scotland, the tradition of artistic interventionism was highly influenced by George Wylie in the late 20th century. Inspired by European movements like Guy
Debord and the Situationists his question mark inside the straw locomotive that hung from the redundant, iconic Finniston Crane and the boat made of paper that sailed into the heart of New York’s World Trade Centre were designed to ask questions about the reasons for the decline of heavy industry on the River Clyde [20]. With his question mark constantly interrogating who has the right to make decisions about the city [21], another key influence on Wylie was Joseph Beuys whose idea of Gesamtkunstwerk was artistic interventionism designed to influence politics, society and planning. A whole generation of artists (inspired by Wylie and these international movements) was encouraged by, for example David Harding who, with Sam Ainsley, founded Sculpture and Environmental Art at Glasgow School of Art, using Bauhaus methods of the peer exploration and learning. The working practices of Wylie, Harding, Ainsley and others contain elements from the polarised positions adopted by Grant Kester and Claire Bishop.

The journey from the 20th century has involved a melding of interventionism with participatory learning and empowerment and it is these influences starting from the radical but aesthetically aware community arts movement of the 1970s and 1980s that have helped shape Scottish artistic participatory interventionism and activism. Like the positioning from within that fractured the community arts movement of the 1980s, perhaps the debate is unnecessarily polarised and the most powerful approaches in participatory artistic interventionism both borrow from myriad practices and invent new ones.

In the case of Govan’s Graving Docks, artists were joined by campaigning activists, local residents, community groups, private and voluntary sector enterprises, representing the existing cultural diversity to commission their own alternative plans for the place. They also engaged ‘glocally’ or ‘inter-locally’ with other post-industrial waterfront struggles across Europe. Mathews [22] argued that across the UK decades of regeneration schemes and partnership initiatives have actively mitigated against the organic growth of these passionate struggles.

What remains unclear is the outcome of the process from acknowledged small victories to real impact on physical planning that does not automatically lead to gentrification. As many artists and writers have discovered, there are limitations to artistic interventionism. The artist can facilitate new vision and aspiration but without ownership, power and economic capital, taking the next steps towards implementation are thwarted. We are mindful that in attempting to challenge the dominant agenda, artists can inadvertently be exploited by these same market forces (Sholette, 2010). Artists still have to pay bills, and a key challenge is how to avoid artists being appropriated to serve other agendas. How does the artist avoid ‘art-wash’ in service of those same market forces? (Pritchard, 2017).

4. Towards arts-lens based solutions

Organic cultural planning often begins with some sort of crisis or intervention [23]; it travels through the process of participation, creative engagement in uncovering and mapping resources, transformation from the inside out, celebrating history and tradition, with iterative community empowerment. Finally, this process supports new legal organisational forms to take ownership, to build their own micro exemplars of alternative future visions that build on what is already there in the landscape, its people and history. The iterative journey often starts with an interventionist approach. As in the case of Govan’s A listed heritage site, Govan Graving Docks, artists discovered there is no route map, however. The journey is messy, unpredictable and unique to the location, the people involved and the scale of the task.
Lorraine Leeson [24] for example discovered through years of engagement in regeneration battle over the London Docklands that community-led planning requires different approaches at different stages of the journey towards community empowerment, depending on levels of confidence and capacity of taking ownership and management of the land and its assets. Through artistic activism, Leeson and local people campaigned on issues of dispossession, relocation and gentrification in the Docklands area. Looking at London Docklands today, the question is how much impact those interventions made beyond the activism and arts practice. Was there real impact on the planning in the end? Leeson acknowledges the limitations of the artists working within a complex landscape of owners, developers, local authority and planners; all with competing agendas which are, whilst diverse, all located within market priorities [24]. Leeson’s decades of work have left however an invaluable legacy; documentary and celebration of what was there, but the impact on the physical planning and what exists there now is difficult to discern.

How do these utopian visions created by the artists, the arts collective or the artists working with the community translate into the lived experience of change? Kester [17, 25, 26] acknowledges that maintaining revolutionary energy in the long term is impossible. But how about the incremental sustained revolution from the grassroots, a creative social enterprise-based movement?

Collectives like Wochenklausur were criticised for confusing art and social practice. Have they been overstepping the mark by moving from intervention to delivery of the solution? Or are Wochenklausur, like artists and activists through Govan Graving Docks Regeneration Trust, delivering quality in both the intervention and in the subsequent practice which supports the creation of a fit for purpose governance structure that can continue to grow and deliver the solution independently? We argue that the expectation of these artists in the process is not only facilitation and creation of the intervention but finding a solution of how to underpin the process, embracing activists, planners and experts through inclusive governance structures involving local networks and key stakeholders, all working together in order to move from intervention to delivery.

Perhaps, as the narrative that overrides discourse co-created by artists and local people (or indeed from any social, heritage, cultural perspective) is that of the ownership and the economic rights of the owner to make profit. Ownership is simply another narrative with another competing set of priorities, but within the limitations of the 21st century global Capitalism, it appears all powerful and regarded as the common sense narrative. Within the Capitalist economic framework, therefore, ownership is perhaps the only solution. The problem remains, however, that even with ownership, these heritage gems, polished by passionate local people, remain individual examples of ‘flowers in the desert’ [27] that are vulnerable to passing trends, changes of personnel and competing political agendas.

5. Artist lens solidarity networks

Owen Kelly [2] long time ago now pointed out the need to ‘avoid collusion with the organisations providing funding’ by organising in financially independent groupings (p.154). He argued for networks; multi-disciplinary networks of independently financed groupings that include cultural activists. Kelly realised the danger inherent in the notion of sanctioned community control where groups are constantly seeking a mandate or an authorisation because they somehow have sufficient numbers of local residents on board and are therefore allowed to speak for the community. It is this pursuit of the ideal activist grouping with the right to speak for the community that has kept Govan’s community organisations at war for
decades with endless debates about who has the right approach, who has the right of influence and ownership over whose voice and whose community; leaving the movement off track and weakened.

Gregory Sholette [28] has analysed art collectives, arguing that these are the kind of structures artists need to have in place to ensure strength in numbers and the ability to avoid appropriation by other agendas. Looking to arts collectives across Europe (particularly Germany) he proposes twenty first century collectivism is a ‘key to understanding available forms of political resistance’.

One of the earliest international networks of artists experimenting with new forms of cultural interventionism under the umbrella of the community-centred socially engaged arts practice and cultural planning was Banlieues d’Europe [29]. In the late 1980s, with Socialism in crisis throughout Europe, Strasbourg based artist and artistic director of La Laiterie, Jean Hurstel was fascinated by the resilience of artists within the turbulent political landscapes of individual European nation states. The vision was born for a network that would support the activities of artists with shared ethics, provide a platform and forum for a debate, share experiences as well as promote learning with successful projects giving strength and support to those who were struggling to survive.

The aim of the Banlieues d’Europe network was to provide that space where socially engaged artists, arts organisations, academics and stakeholders with like minds could come together to debate and develop practice methodologies. Banlieues d’Europe believed that the individual projects on the ground, often taking place in apparently insignificant ghettos of insignificant neighbourhoods, were vital to creating the critical mass required for a rich, culturally diverse and transformed Europe. Banlieues d’Europe did not initiate projects, instead it facilitated the meetings and exchange of projects which prioritised the quality of the aesthetic and democratic social justice within the different European member states. The Banlieues d’Europe network supported the Scottish artists to make those international links.

If international networks are to continue bringing global perspective with learning and sharing of practice, there is also a need for a sustained local support. Evidence from across Europe today and beyond, however, suggests that artists’ collectives are tolerated by the owners of empty buildings just as long as they are useful. They animate and create a buzz by their presence, raise land value, and ruthlessly swept away as soon as the timetable for profitable construction opportunities dictates. Organisational structures must be more robust and sustainable if artists are to avoid becoming the agents of the developers and therefore ultimately letting the communities down that they fought to support.

In Scotland, a local network for social enterprise and social entrepreneurs was created to support social enterprises and their networks. Senscot is perceived as the network of networks, understanding the role of the individual within the group within the collection of groups that form the whole [30]. The network celebrates interdependence between individuals, groups and collections of groups. And it might be this interdependence that can facilitate flourishing futures for the post-industrial milieu.

However, Senscot grapples with the problem of trying to operate as a holistic model within the hegemony of the market economy. Although Senscot has populated the landscape with a support network of holons designed to deliver some aspect of the whole vision, within a market society, it is easy for these seedlings to be taken off track and become parts of the capital growth agenda instead; in other words, become part of the problem. When alternative forms start to mimic Capitalist competition, they become part of the problem. Social enterprises struggling to survive within the market economy are tempted to embrace ideals of
growth and expansion and the debate within the social enterprise movement in 2020, asks which model is preferable. In *Winners Take All*, Anand Giridharadas, as Mark Kramer [31] argued, calls out the hypocrisies of philanthropists asking whether the elites are hi-jacking social change? In a mirroring of cultural appropriation processes, the language of social enterprise is being used to disguise wolves in sheep’s clothing with Capitalist growth model aspirations.

In 2020, a new body was established in Scotland, a merger of Senscot, and Social Firms Scotland. This new body, SENscot, hopes to work ever more closely with other organisations and networks in the landscape who share ethics, values and aspirations of building the same utopias, including Development Trust Association for Scotland supporting all the community led organisations in their bids to own and develop land and heritage assets through trading. We argue that as with community arts and cultural planning beforehand, the social enterprise movement is now also fractured, divided between those bottom up advocates of organic growth from the grass roots networks and those who advocate organisational growth and personal gain as the access to power.

6. Community arts centered cultural planning 2.0

Over the last six years, there is a growing debate over Industrial City 2.0 with striking similarities to Geddes’ *Folk, Work and Place*, based on ideas of ‘coexistence, proximity, and synergy’. For instance, Nawratek’s vision for Industrial City 2.0 seems to echo Geddesean *Folk, Work, Place* descriptions of the synergy and proximity where the city can once again develop with all the elements of life included: the living, retail, tourism, heritage, learning and industry working together [32]. Is the Fourth Industrial Revolution based on amalgamation of digital, physical and biological systems into planning an answer to a new paradigm for heritage? Such planning requires a careful balancing between maximising profits with maximising well-being and dignity of life.

In a seminal text originally written for the Sustainable Development Commission in 2009, Tim Jackson revisited his publication *Prosperity without Growth*. Jackson redefined the meaning of prosperity, removing material wealth and economic growth as priorities in the definition, replacing them with what he calls ‘the economy of tomorrow’, evidenced factors that contribute to social, community and individual wellbeing. Work is redefined as participation and contribution; money conceptualised as social good [33]. What Jackson is describing are the values defined by the emerging social economy around the world, evidenced in Scotland through initiatives such as Senscot and Social Enterprise Networks. With recognition that between 2009 and 2017, these ideas, embracing sustainable employment, social investment, equality, ecological and financial stability are no longer seen as utopian, but have moved from fringes to mainstream, the question then becomes, how do we ensure their delivery? If the possibilities of a Fourth Industrial Revolution that values our history and heritage as well as social and economic priorities are utopian aspirations for which we must continue to strive, what can be the road to achieving it? Fractured between top down or bottom up positions in the 2000s, understanding of the potential of cultural planning lost impetus and direction. It also lost clarity of distinction, confused with the culture-led regeneration, planning for culture and strategic arts development.

A new approach to cultural planning, a kind of Cultural Planning 2.0 that is not about arts and cultural development or services, although it does involve artists engaging with communities and their heritage, is neither solely top down nor bottom up but rather, is more inclusive of all parties working in partnership could offer
some possibilities as a route map. Just as there may be a place for a refreshed cultural planning solution to delivering the transformation possibilities of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, so there are possibilities in a new approach in artistic interventionism that engages and galvanises communities, cities and governments as a network to deliver on the aspirations of communities and their heritage priorities. In short, to achieve this Geddesian aspiration, we could aspire to Cultural Planning 2.0, which acknowledges cultural planning is neither top down, nor is it bottom up but rather inside out and required the partnership grown from a shared value base that aspires as inclusive as possible.

7. Conclusions

Reflections from the regeneration process concerning Govan’s Graving Docks indicate that far from post-industrial, we are in fact poised on the cusp of a new epistemic era. There is an emerging new approach to industry, which moves beyond what we know to an industry fit for purpose in allowing delivering the what could be the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Govan’s Graving Docks, as other industrial heritage infrastructure on the River Clyde could be an exemplar in practice of that new potential; an example of practice, based on an organic city development, embracing Geddesian principles of Folk, Work and Place while incorporating new technology, learning, heritage, tourism, housing and recreation in a heritage-centred and culturally sensitive holistic framework.

Artists’ collectives and activists, working together can achieve community engagement and co-created visioning while in parallel lobby voice to intervene in the default direction and propose an alternative. On their own, however, they are vulnerable to being swept away when no longer ‘useful’ risking their work being repurposed to serve the central planning agenda. There is also a requirement for a new business model for delivery which advocates cross-sectoral but prioritising community aspirations, a model that achieves the balance of power, ownership and control.

We conclude that despite new directions, the successful transformation of narrative remains fragile. Artists have the skills to transform the network of conversations, but in parallel, there is a need for partnerships and appropriate governance structures that gives sustainable community power to move beyond the intervention into a delivery of the visions in planning terms. The question of ownership is crucial. Artists are skilled at engaging communities in participatory visioning towards utopian realities. Yet, if the created visions are to be adhered to then iterative creative mapping must underpin not only visioning phases, but every step of the way from inception to delivery. The possible way to ensure this happens is through community ownership of the assets.

A new paradigm is currently being developed for the heritage asset of Govan’s A-listed Graving Docks redevelopment. Govan Docks Regeneration Trust has formed as an independent community development trust with the board of trustees based on networks with the private, public, social enterprise, community and voluntary sectors as well as artists and local residents. There are examples in Scotland from the Easterhouse Festival Society in the 1970s and 1980s to Govanhill Baths Trust in Glasgow where Development Trusts governed by community representatives and led by artists are operating as social enterprises. They have bought their land or buildings and are expanding their vision and operations. These business models, initiated in the 1960s and revisited in the 21st century as community development trusts, are operating within networks of like-minded communities.
They have much to offer, giving structure and stability to the messy creativity and community responsiveness.

And Finally

As discussed in this chapter, cultural planning processes are messy by nature and there is no toolkit or route map that can be rolled out and replicated. Meller [34] some time ago criticised the vagueness in the Geddes’ legacy and it remains unclear how to translate that knowledge and passion into reality within a top down planning framework so that local people and heritage assets, including tangible infrastructure and intangible histories can reliably have power and voice in the planning process. We argue that, rather than imposing a toolkit, there is a need for better articulation of these messy unpredictable processes. And perhaps, the messiness is exactly the crunch point here. There are ingredients, there are underpinning values, but no toolkit because each situation is, of necessity, unpredictable and requires responsiveness to the heritage, the creativity, the people (and their imagination). In other words, the unique DNA and local circumstances of each place are all part of the plan. In fact, they are the plan: to be unveiled.

With thanks to

The Directors of Clyde Docks Preservation Initiative (CDPI).
The Trustees and members of Govan Graving Docks Regeneration Trust (GDRT).
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