



Resilient Places through Place-Making: The Experience of Ireland's Coastal Towns

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Overview

1. Our Changing Coastal Places
2. Place-making and Resilience
3. Coastal Community Resilience – characteristics and challenges on the island of Ireland
4. Mobilising community resilience through place-making

Youghal, Co. Cork

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A New Era for Coastal Towns?

Downward spirals or adaptive cycles...

Opportunities

- a growing events and leisure tourism sector (e.g. golf);
- an increasing appreciation of coastal heritage (e.g. piers);
- increasing entrepreneurial activity and diversification into 'new' alternative industries (e.g. marine renewables).

Requirements (include):

- accessibility and infrastructure improvements,
- enhancement of skills and learning
- adaptation to coastal hazards
- crafting new relevance and identity.



A New Era for Coastal Towns?

Proceed with caution...

"...the coast is not easy managed because it means so many things to so many people. In whole or in part, it is simultaneously a protected landscape or habitat; a deprived community; a place to work in or retire to; ...and a regeneration priority; and a gateway to other shores or the end of the line"

(SQW, 2009, p.i)



A role for 'place-making'?



Place-Making and Resilience

“...the bottom line for sustainability is that any proposal for sustainable development that does not explicitly acknowledge a system’s resilience is simply not going to keep delivering the goods (or services)”

(Walker and Salt, 2006)



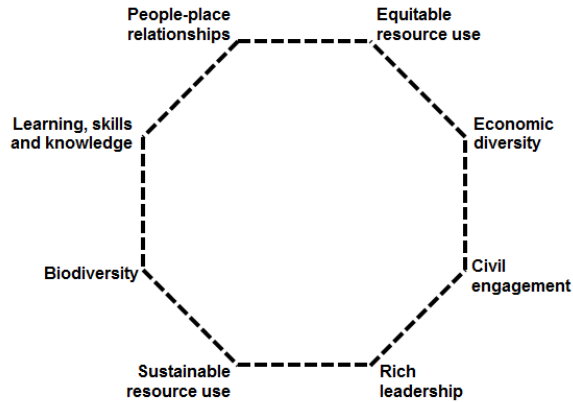
Articulations of resilience should be rooted within spatial contexts and must account for spatially specific distinctions and peculiarities.

- The art of place-making as a *demonstration* of community resilience at work?

Community Resilience

“the ability of a community to cope and adjust to stresses caused by social, political and environmental change and to engage community resources to overcome adversity and take advantage of opportunities in response to change”

(Amundsen, 2012, p.45)



Small coastal resorts on the island of Ireland: Models of community resilience?



Why are some resorts striving while others are prospering...?

Utilising coastal assets and resources

- ‘Seasideness’
- Resources underpin local economy
- Assets for their regeneration: E.g. heritage – Youghal; marine resources - Killybegs and Kilkeel.
- Coastal hazards poorly understood and integrated into wider regeneration goals.
- Differing perceptions, attachments and values

- Development of niche markets.
- Entrepreneurialism.
- Economic inheritance – path dependency?
- Inability, or unwillingness, to diversify.
- Tensions between industries.
- Physical and political isolation.



...it's good that people go away from the town and think it's lovely...but on (the other side) it is a really disadvantaged area” (Youghal, regeneration leader).

“There’s a complete lack of focus on maritime areas or coastal areas through government policy anyway to look at any form of regeneration or alternative industries” (Killybegs, local political representative).



Supporting learning skills and knowledge

- Help foster local pride and attachment
- Leads to collective action.
- Increases local people’s ability to adapt.
- Platforms for facilitating learning.
- Skills/knowledge may already exist in the local community - these should be valued and utilised in a meaningful way.



“...the actual heritage of the town was forgotten about, even by the local residents themselves. So there was a re-education process to be undertaken” (Youghal, regeneration driver).

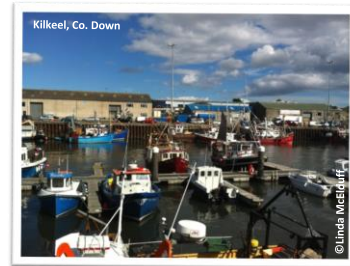
Enhancing Local Leadership and Engagement

- Need for strong, influential drivers.
- Vary in their role and remit; local authority, business sector, community.
- Inherently difficult...

*“Sometimes it’s just a catalyst within the community, there might be somebody who is a real driver and keeps pushing it”
(Youghal, local authority).*

- Resistance to change and apathy
- Legacy of past ‘mistakes’.
- Temporal aspect.

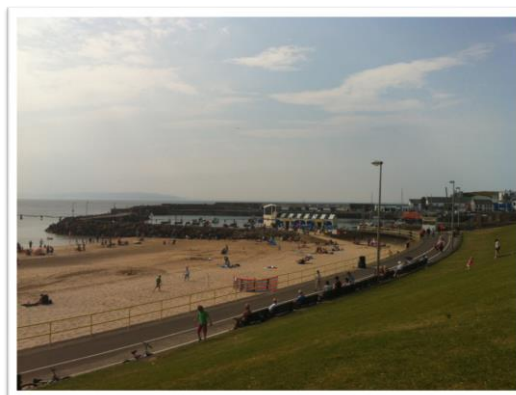
- Facilitate shared understandings, enhance trust and wider consensus around devising particular interventions.



*“There’s always key people in a community that push and make things happen”
(Killeel, regeneration driver).*

Towards Mobilising Resilience Through Place-Making...

1. Recognise/Acknowledge
2. Use
3. Grow
4. Reconcile



Some Final Reflections...



PEOPLE

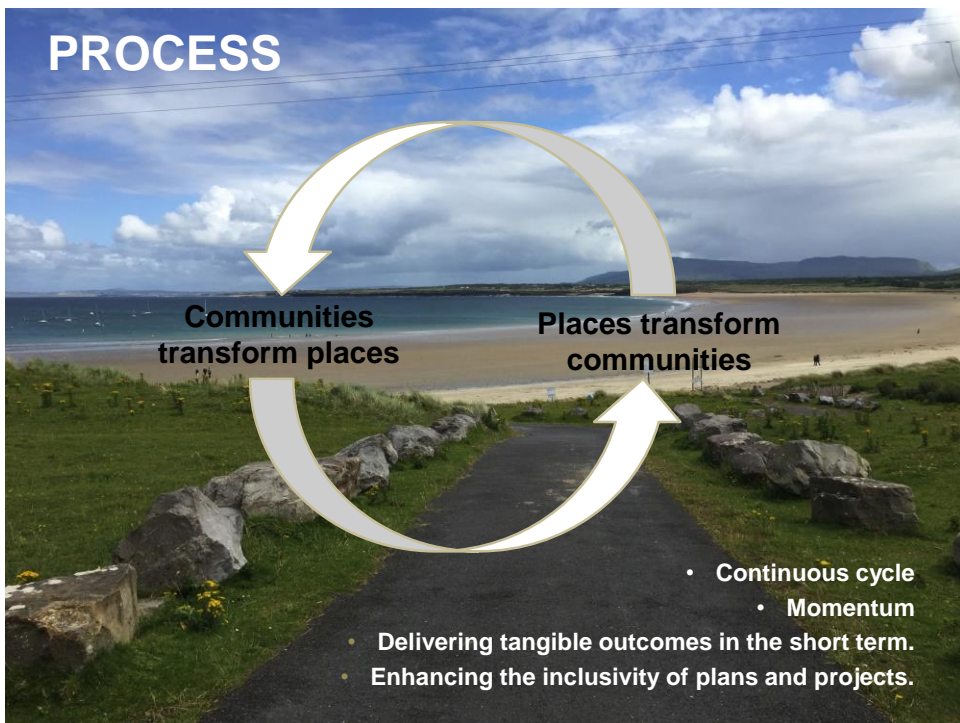
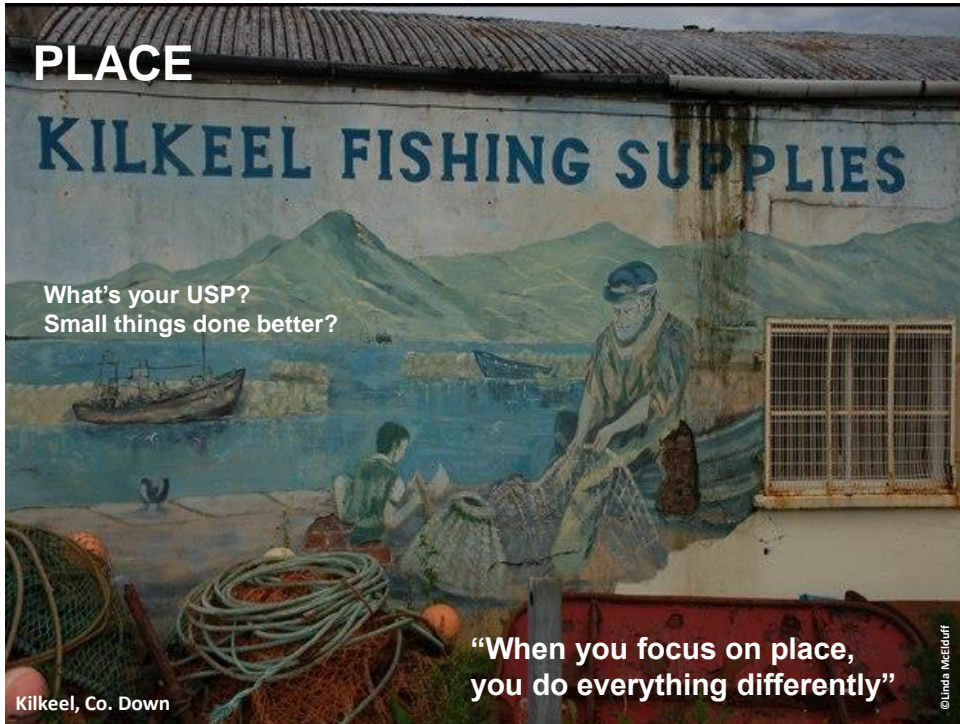
- Reconciling Interests and Priorities;
- Leadership;
- Knowledge/Enthusiasm/Skills are out there;
- Value of 'grassroots talking'.

"It's all about communities working together themselves and for local authorities to come in and help them..."
(Killybegs)

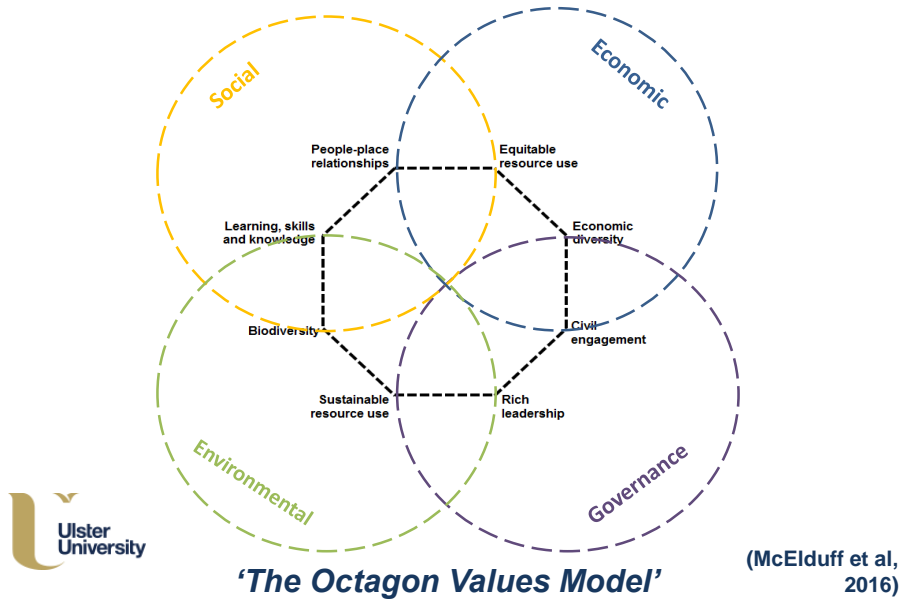
"Tell me and I'll forget.
Show me and I may remember.
Involve me and I learn"
Benjamin Franklin

Killybegs, Co. Donegal

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“It is the combination and interaction of the various dimensions of community resilience together which shapes community resilience”
(Amundsen, 2012, p.46)



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