

Newsletter, 01 August 2018

URBAN REGENERATION: A MANIFESTO FOR TRANSFORMING UK CITIES

CCI Professor Steffen Lehmann was recently invited to present a keynote lecture to Brighton & Hove City Council and a group of city planning leaders.

Steffen spoke to the local audience in Brighton and Hove at the 'Growing our living city 2030' meeting in July 2018 (which was part of a series of excellent events organised to examine the possible urban future of Brighton & Hove). The meeting was joined by over 70 people from a variety of organisations and the group developed a vision and gathered valuable feedback in four areas: Seafrost, City Centre, Neighbourhoods and Urban Fringe

By 2030 another 20,000 people are forecast to move to Brighton & Hove, and this modest population growth will provide further opportunity for high-quality urban regeneration.

Steffen's new forthcoming book on urban regeneration will be published at the end of 2018. *Urban Regeneration — A Manifesto for transforming UK Cities* (Palgrave Macmillan: London, 2018). It provides an urban manifesto and clear guidance to city councils, architects and decision makers on how to maximise social and environmental benefits from the urban regeneration of UK cities. It explores and offers guidance on the complex process of how to transform cities, continuing the unfinished project of the seminal 1999 text 'Towards an Urban Renaissance'.

It is a 21st-century manifesto of ten urban principles developed over the last two years for the regeneration of UK cities, focusing on the characteristics of a 'good place' and the strategies of sustainable urbanism. How can we best transform the derelict, abandoned and run-down parts of cities back into places where people want to live, work and play?

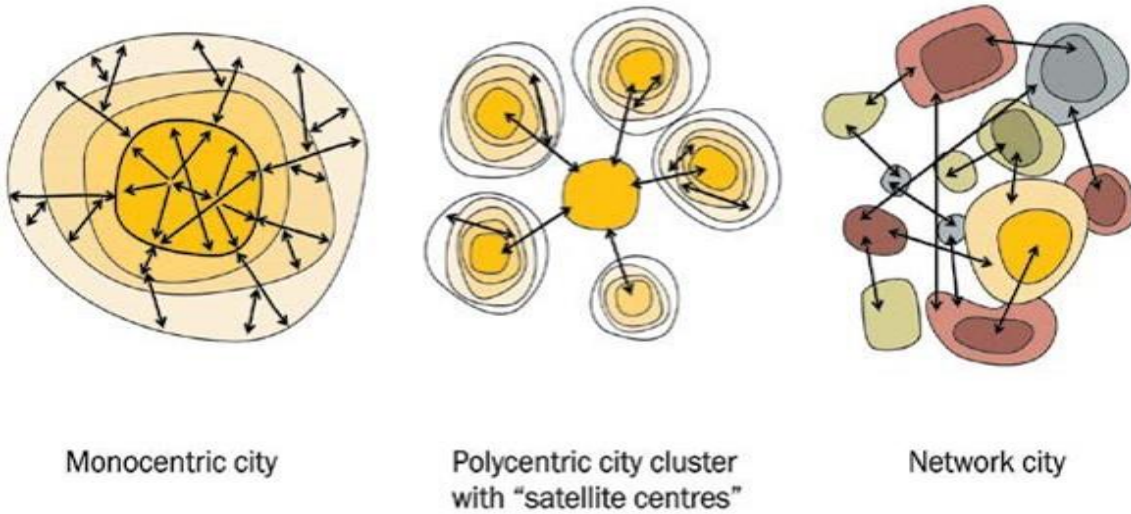
The *Urban Manifesto* builds on Steffen's 30 years of reflective practice in urban design and sustainable architecture, and his extensive advisory work with cities worldwide, where he advocates health and well-being as the main policy driver. It provides a synthesis of knowledge across different disciplines.

This *Urban Manifesto* frames an architecture of re-use that translates and combines the complex 'science of cities' and the art of urban and architectural design into actionable and practical guidance on how to regenerate cities. Fascinated by the typology and value of the compact UK and European city model, Steffen introduces the concept of 'high density without high buildings' as a solution that will make our cities compact, walkable, mixed-use and vibrant again.

This book was written to fill a much-needed gap and offer guidance on the complex process of how to transform and regenerate existing post-industrial cities in the UK, where attention is turning to the regional cities. It will be an important resource for practicing architects (and students), town planners, urban designers, urban decision-makers, geographers and engineers taking an active role in developing urban strategies and adaptation solutions to ensure our cities are resilient, resource-efficient and sustainable in the face of intensifying global warming. More information can be found here:

Growing our living City: <https://spark.adobe.com/page/sjfNsJ0ecWZSF/>

City Leadership: www.city-leadership.com



A mono-centric city has many limitations. The model of the poly-centric network city is of particular interest, for example Brighton & Hove could focus on developing other higher-density areas around railway stations



Prof Steffen Lehmann leading the debate in Brighton and Hove at the 'Growing our living city 2030' meeting in July 2018



Collecting comments and feedback at the public event in Brighton & Hove in July 2018

Here are extracts from the public debate that followed Steffen's keynote. Questions asked at the public forum, with a summary of the responses from Prof Steffen Lehmann (SL):

Q: In your experience of successful projects around the world is there a pattern of key drivers that made it happen? (from Jess Price, Sussex Wildlife Trust)

SL: Citizen participation and co-production is key. Singapore is heralded as a great example of successful urban regeneration, but under a non-democratic system it is relatively easy to make top-down decisions. Actually, the reality is disappointing: billions have been invested in developing public space, but because citizens weren't really involved in their planning, things aren't nearly as effective as they should have been. Short-termism creates difficulties and this is perpetuated by term limits and political cycles. The reality of elections every four years creates a window of two years for real decision-making and action. There is a misalignment with environmental, which operates best on a much longer term basis.

Q: Where will the money come from? Paris has been doing participatory budgeting for years, should we look at this? (from David Greenfield, SOENECS and Brighton Eco Dinner Club)

SL: There is a real economy from natural capital that we are not discovering, or accounting for. We are getting the benefits but not recording the value. A new Seattle study looked at whether having a bench/tree or a car parking space in front of a shop yields more value, which found the value of benches and trees to be significantly more (because more shoppers are attracted by the amenity). Furthermore, there is funding out there available through the EU and government and we need to ensure we are tapping into it.

Q: Most cities have a centre of gravity like a bullseye on a target, the centre of gravity for Brighton is the Palace Pier. Multi-centric centres would be a fantastic thing to do in

our city (a recent Gehl report gave some ideas for how the city can do this). How can we connect the city up more without just building more roads for cars? (from Matt Eastal, Communities Team, BHCC)

SL: Short routes between centres, which need to be bikeable and walkable. There are trends already emerging towards a natural polycentric approach.

Q: We do lots of work around participation and citizen engagement. How do we encourage politicians and decision makers to participate in citizen engagement, when they can't guarantee the results they may want? (from Victoria Williams, Food Matters)

SL: Politicians are very aware of the backlash if they do not engage, and social media encourages this. Engagement needs to be authentic and honest and start at the very start of strategy development, and remain open-ended, not driving towards a prescribed outcome.

TW: Politicians tend to slip back into a traditional mind-set; don't let them!

Q: I was pleased to hear you say that health and wellbeing should be at the centre of policy making. What are some strong examples of this? (from Katie Cumming, Public Health Consultant, BHCC)

SL: Scandinavia: Helsinki, Copenhagen, Oslo. These cities have had huge successes encouraging walking, and all in a climate where there is snow for half the year. They have had great impact despite less favourable climate conditions than we have in this country. Online shopping is changing retail. In order to survive, retail needs to reinvent itself as a new attractive centre of social and community activities. This can also address loneliness and isolation and contribute to wellbeing.

Q: Is there an example of anywhere that has been regenerated without gentrification? This seems to be an inescapable trend. (from Cheryl Finella, Economic Development, BHCC)

SL: This trend is very deep rooted. A Liverpool development project: Granby Four Streets by Assemble Architects has been very successful at managing to keep housing affordable, and is community driven. However, even here we are seeing a prevalence of academics in their 40s and 50s moving in and diversity is disappearing. Everyone is searching for the silver bullet to keep it under control (we can't eradicate it completely) but it's not clear what this is.

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