What are the social benefits & issues of NPPF?

Presentation to HBF Annual Planning Conference
11th September 2012
Saffron Woodcraft

Social Life is a new venture set up in 2012, with a strong heritage.

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We continue to build neighbourhoods that fail to thrive as flourishing communities and struggle finding ways to revive failing areas.

We believe we can learn from both the mistakes, and the hopes, of the past.

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What is social sustainability?

"A process for creating sustainable, successful places that promote wellbeing, by understanding what people need from the places they live and work. Social sustainability combines design of the physical realm with design of the social world – infrastructure to support social and cultural life, social amenities, systems for citizen engagement and space for people and places to evolve."
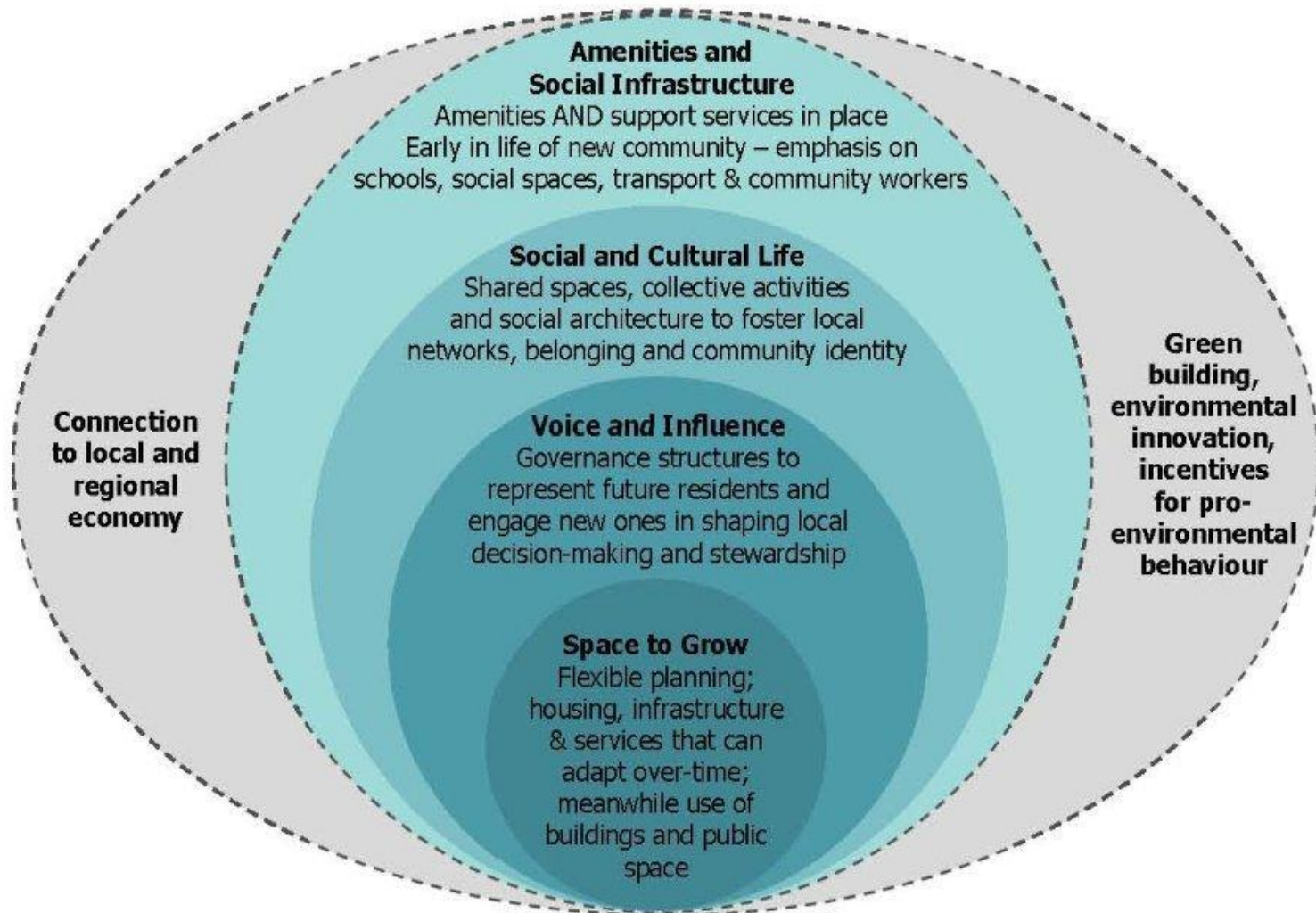
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Table 1: Urban social sustainability: contributory factors, Dempsey *et al.*, 2009.
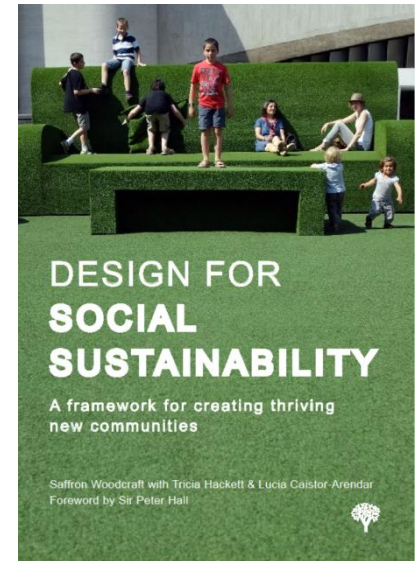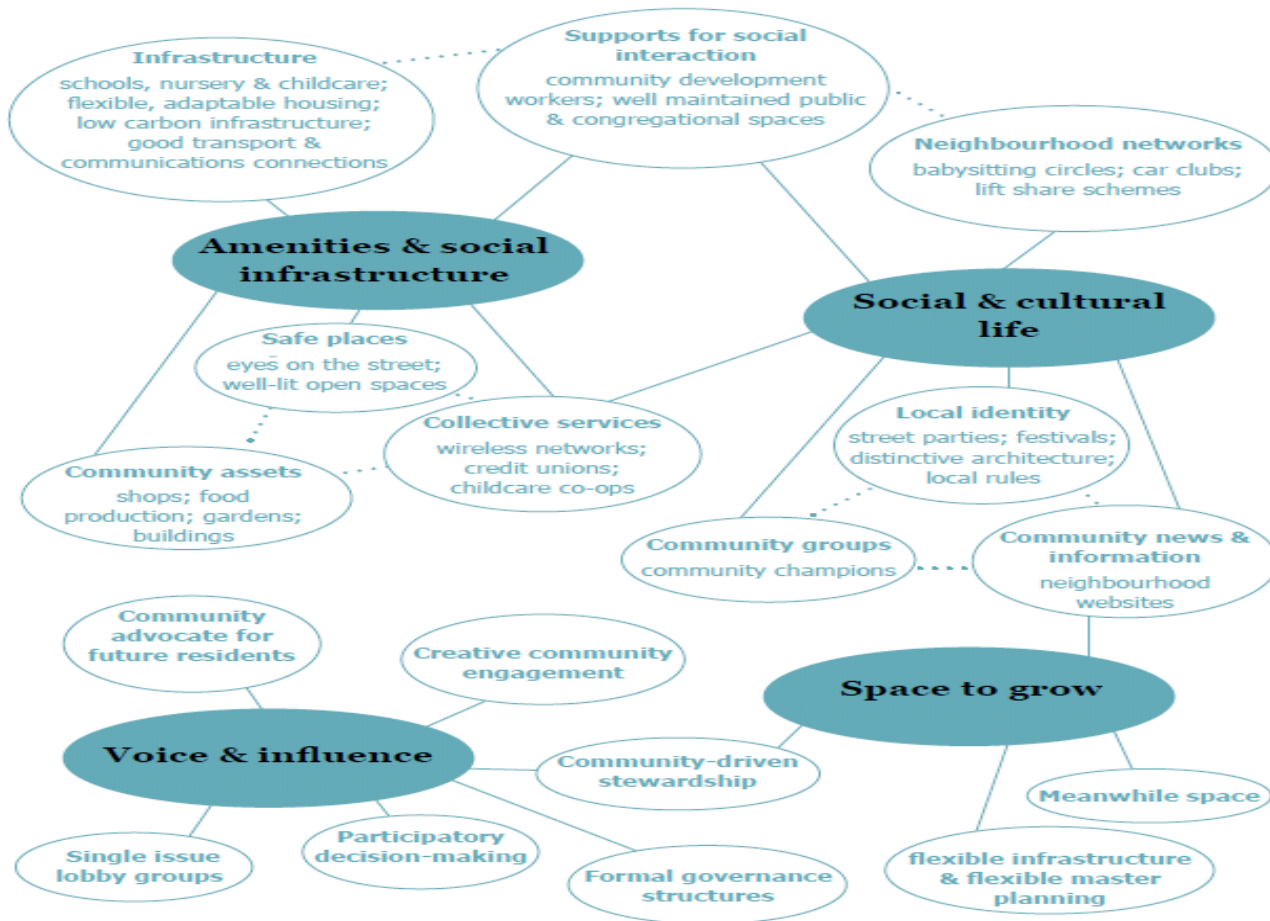
Non-physical factors	Predominantly physical factors
• Education and training	• Urbanity
• Social justice: inter- and intra-generational	• Attractive public realm
• Participation and local democracy	• Decent housing
• Health, quality of life and well-being	• Local environmental quality and amenity
• Social inclusion (and eradication of social exclusion)	• Accessibility (e.g. to local services and facilities/employment/green space)
• Social capital	• Sustainable urban design
• Community	• Neighbourhood
• Safety	• Walkable neighbourhood: pedestrian friendly
• Mixed tenure	
• Fair distribution of income	
• Social order	
• Social cohesion	
• Community cohesion (i.e. cohesion between and among different groups)	
• Social networks	
• Social interaction	
• Sense of community and belonging	
• Employment	
• Residential stability (vs turnover)	
• Active community organizations	
• Cultural traditions	

Source: Dempsey, N. et al., 2011. The social dimension of sustainable development: Defining urban social sustainability.

What is social sustainability?

Building blocks for social sustainability

Infrastructure
schools, nursery & childcare; flexible, adaptable housing; low carbon infrastructure; good transport & communications connections

Supports for social interaction
community development workers; well maintained public & congregational spaces

Neighbourhood networks
babysitting circles; car clubs; lift share schemes

Amenities & social infrastructure

Safe places
eyes on the street; well-lit open spaces

Social & cultural life

Collective services
wireless networks; credit unions; childcare co-ops

Local identity
street parties; festivals; distinctive architecture; local rules

Community assets
shops; food production; gardens; buildings

Community groups
community champions

Community news & information
neighbourhood websites

Community advocate for future residents

Creative community engagement

Space to grow

Voice & influence

Community-driven stewardship

Meanwhile space

Single issue lobby groups

Participatory decision-making

Formal governance structures

flexible infrastructure & flexible master planning

DESIGN FOR
SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY
A framework for creating thriving new communities

Saffron Woodcraft with Tricia Hackett & Lucia Caistor-Arendar
Foreword by Sir Peter Hall

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What are the social benefits (and issues) of NPPF?

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Reasons for optimism:

1. Emphasis on housing need

2. Focus on social dimensions of sustainable development

3. Local plans and community influence

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NPPF: "A social role"

" ... supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being"

Three issues:

1. Housing & strong, cohesive communities

2. Putting social sustainability into practice

3. Supporting neighbourhood planning & community empowerment

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1. Housing & strong, cohesive communities

- Cohesion & integration are <u>local</u> issues

- Affordable housing is crucial part of creating strong communities

- Implications of Montague Review:
  - Move away from mixed communities
  - Greater segregation between tenures
  - Less affordable (and social) housing

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1. Housing & strong, cohesive communities

"Integration is achieved when neighbourhoods, families and individuals come together on issues that matter to them, and so we are committed to rebalancing activity from centrally led to locally led action and from the public to the voluntary and private sectors.”

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2. Putting social sustainability into practice

- Social sustainability is complex and context specific

- Requires more than provision of community facilities

- Practical tools and resources not yet available?

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3. Supporting neighbourhood planning

- Presumption in favour of SD

- Support for communities to plan?

- Capacity within local authorities?

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