Barriers to a Better Bristol:
Diagnosing city strategic sustainability challenges using systems, co-production and interdisciplinary approaches

Presentation by

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UWE Bristol | University of the West of England

Barriers to a Better Bristol

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http://www.urban-id.co.uk/

Introduction:

Bristol has set out to transform itself by 2065 into a vibrant place that empowers and enables its citizens to 'flourish', and creates long-term wellbeing in a sustainable and equitable way
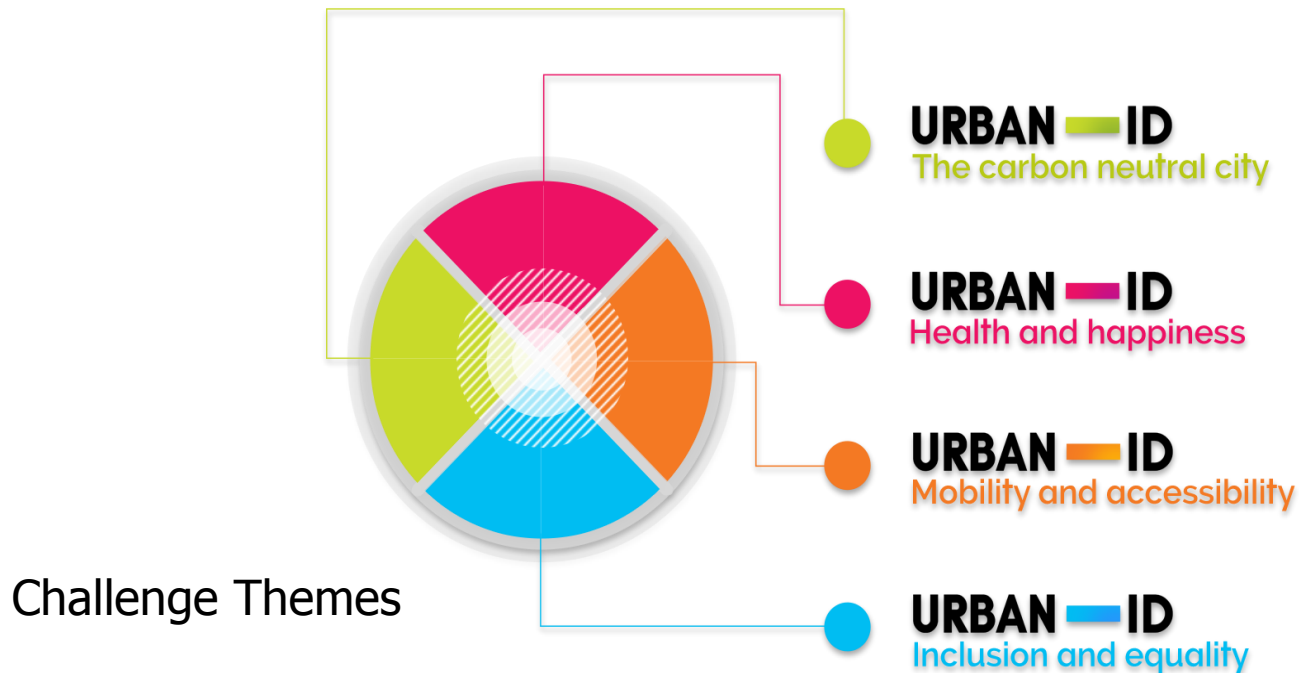
- European Green Capital 2015 and one of the Rockefeller 100 Resilient Cities
- International collaborations, city-wide partnerships and stakeholder engagement programmes
- "Best-place to live", vibrant and creative arts and cultural scene, and lowest unemployment claimant rate of the UK's core cities
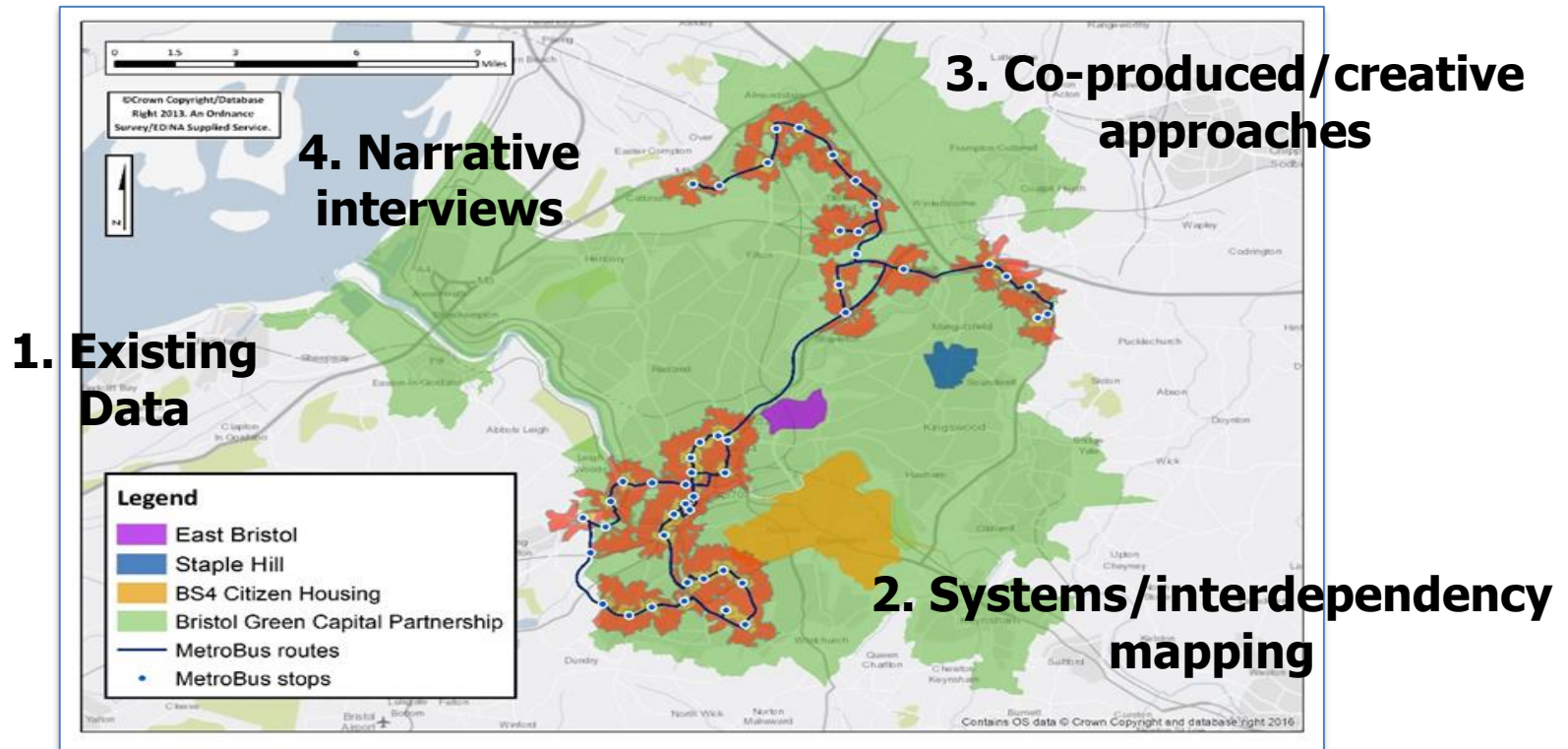
But... continuing inequalities

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Background: an integrated diagnostic tool

The project's aim is to synthesise existing domain-specific diagnostic methodologies and tools to create a novel Integrated Diagnostic Framework with co-creation and co-production at the heart.

Challenge Themes

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The carbon neutral city

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Health and happiness

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Mobility and accessibility

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Inclusion and equality

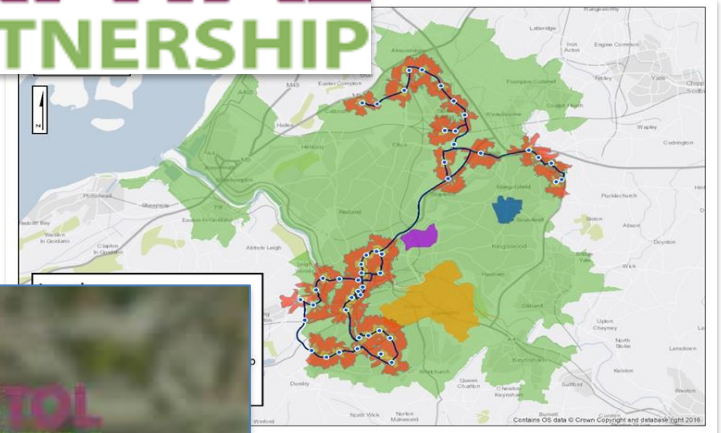UWE Bristol | University of the West of England

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Method: exploratory case studies and a diagnostic framework

Case study: BGCP Sustainability Community

1) How are the spatial boundaries of the BGCP and partnership defined?

2) How can Urban ID and BGCP CIC successfully engage with the diverse range of members?

3) How much do the four Urban ID themes resonate with BGCP members and what are the issues?

4) In what ways can breaking down silos (including the "green" silo) have advantages?

Case study: BGCP Sustainability Community Mapping Exercise

"We're a member of BGCP as it's helping to represent the city in green issues, not just nationally but internationally as well"
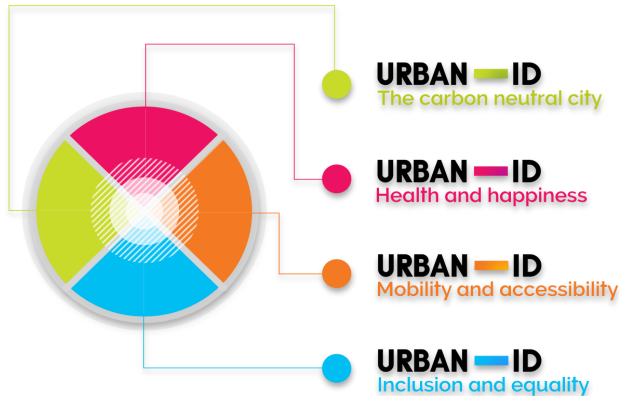
"I think environmentally too, everyone gets very excited by the idea of green cities… but of course practically speaking they do not exist in isolation …food, power, water … come from outside."

"*It's the support you get, it's being around like-minded people and it's the information that flows through it too. It's good to be a part of that.***"**

"I think we're acutely aware of an issue around diversity…, we know we are representing a white middle class group a lot"

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Case study: BGCP Sustainability Community Interdependency and systems analysis

Carbon neutrality: Limited commitments to emission reductions. Carbon neutral buildings require careful design but could 'spill over' into healthier, happier buildings. BGCP facilitator of links between energy use and health.

Health and happiness important aims. Physical and mental health important to employee performance and attendance, and society. Relationship - workplaces and homes, and active travel. Local employment hubs? Bristol/Bath Railway Path.

Mobility and accessibility: Vital people get to work and staff to communities. Active travel, and cycling - convenience, the perceived motivations for companies, and rain and hills as barriers.

Inclusion and equality: For public facing organisations to be legitimate, maintaining a representative workforce is important.

Extra themes: The group identified 'wildlife in the city and greenery' and 'food' as additional challenge themes areas.

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Case study: BGCP Sustainability Community Interdependency and systems analysis

Energy   Being unable to afford energy can lead to poor health. Unhealthy people are expensive, using more resources. People are encouraged to have wood burning stoves, seen as green but are contributing to poorer air quality!

Food   There is a relationship between food and health that starts with breast feeding. Being able to make better lifestyle choices and better decisions leads to better health.

Nature   Parks and green spaces can be considered as resources and are under threat as local authority resources are reduced.

Transport   Congestion in the transport system has an impact on businesses but also on air quality. It badly needs to be a modal shift where people challenge whether they need to make a journey.

Resources   A reduction in council spending means more work for BGCP organisations. Cuts will impact on provision of mental health and obesity programmes and the population will be unhealthier – higher cost.

The group identified 'health', 'education', 'built environment' and communications/digital environment as other potential themes interlinked with sustainability.

Conclusions:

- The boundaries of sustainability communities are not easily defined if you want to avoid siloing and Business-as-usual, or a lack of focus

- It is important that sustainability and sustainability communities are accessible and inclusive

- Health and happiness is important to, and integrated with, sustainability

- Initial case study research shows the potential for the Urban ID (Integrated Diagnostic) methodology

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Next steps:

BGCP case study:

- 10th anniversary event – timeline and BGCP audio stories
- Survey of members
- Analysis and mapping of membership data
- Carbon Neutrality Round Table
- Festival of Future Cities

Urban ID:

- Work progresses on other case studies
- Integration of research findings and challenge themes
- Project findings

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Other Projects:
ClairCity (H2020)
Upstream (Wellcome Trust)
Replicate (H2020)

Any Questions?

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