

Community Empowerment & Challenging Greenspace Inequality, a Glasgow case study

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Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland www.ercs.scot

Greenspace Scotland www.greenspacescotland.org.uk

Outline

- National Outcomes & strategies
- Glasgow, greenspace & environmental injustice
- Greenspace aspirations & activities
- Enablers and constraints
- Towards empowerment and justice

National Outcomes & Greenspace (rev 2018)

accessible & multifunctional?

➡ Purpose

'Increased wellbeing, and sustainable and inclusive growth'

➡ Environment

'We ensure all communities can engage with and benefit from nature and greenspace'

➡ Communities

'We believe that access to greenspace, nature and other leisure activities positively enhance our lives'

➡ National Indicator: access to green and blue space

% Adults who live within a 5 min walk of their nearest greenspace = 42%

Key Strategies & Greenspace

Legislation/policy	Reference to greenspace
Getting the best from our land. A Land Use Strategy for Scotland 2016-2021	‘Sustainable land use’ principles.
Climate Change Plan. The Third Report on Proposals and Policies 2018-2032	‘Increasing natural capital and ecosystem services’
Scottish Planning Policy & Ambition, Opportunity, Place. Scotland’s Third National Planning Framework (2014) <i>(to be replaced by NPF 4 September 2021)</i> Planning (Scotland) Act 2019	‘Valuing the natural environment’. ‘Maximising the benefits of green infrastructure’. Outcome 3: ‘A natural and resilient place’. LA Open Space Strategy
Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 Part 1: duty on SG to review Outcomes; Part 2: community planning	Part 9: Allotments Part 4: Community rights to buy land
Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016	Part 5: Right to buy land to further sustainable development

Introduction to Glasgow



City Development Plan: *'A green place: resilient, accessible & attractive'*

Our Dear Green Place: *'A vision for Glasgow's Parks and Greenspaces'*

Community Plan: *'Seeing a better way of working between organisations & communities'*

Glasgow: 'A dear green place'?

- Poorer health and die younger
- 60% living < 500m from derelict land
- Least % publicly accessible greenspace p.1000
- Council cuts -> quality
- Psychosocial impacts on health & social cohesion



Neighbourhoods of highest deprivation & worse health, spatially correspond with proximity to derelict land = Injustice

(Maantay, 2013)

Colvin & Environmental Justice

- 1% most deprived neighbourhoods
- 97% living < 500m from derelict land

'Consultation fatigue'

'Fragility of organisational partnerships'

'Being forgotten...what's the point'



- ✓ Decent facilities, Quality greenspace, Youth activities
- ✓ 'Pressing need for collaboration' on uses for derelict land
- ✓ Health & wellbeing context for resilience

Participatory Action Research (PAR) June 2017-19

How do we improve our greenspace?

- MarigSpace outside a multistorey block of flats

'To create an outdoor community space for people to come out and chill for a bit'

- Heckley Path Action Group – 'canal photoshoot'

'To improve the canal path from Heckley to Marig for all the community'

- Arden Play Campaign

'We just want a play park like everyone else'

- Make Marig Muddy

'To create a community nature space for muddy play'

- Colvin Greenspace Network

'Working collaboratively to share resources and expertise'



Greenspace Network

'Banish no hope!'

'Safer & nicer places'

'Outdoor play!'

- < 5mins/ 400m from quality greenspace
- Reduce impacts of child poverty and social isolation



Vision: 'to have quality outdoor spaces for the community – working collaboratively to share resources and expertise'

Greenspace Network & Empowerment

***‘A community’s capacity to make effective choices, and then transform these choices into desired actions and outcomes’
(GoWell, 2011)***

- Greenspace as natural asset
- Colvin Greenspace Plan!



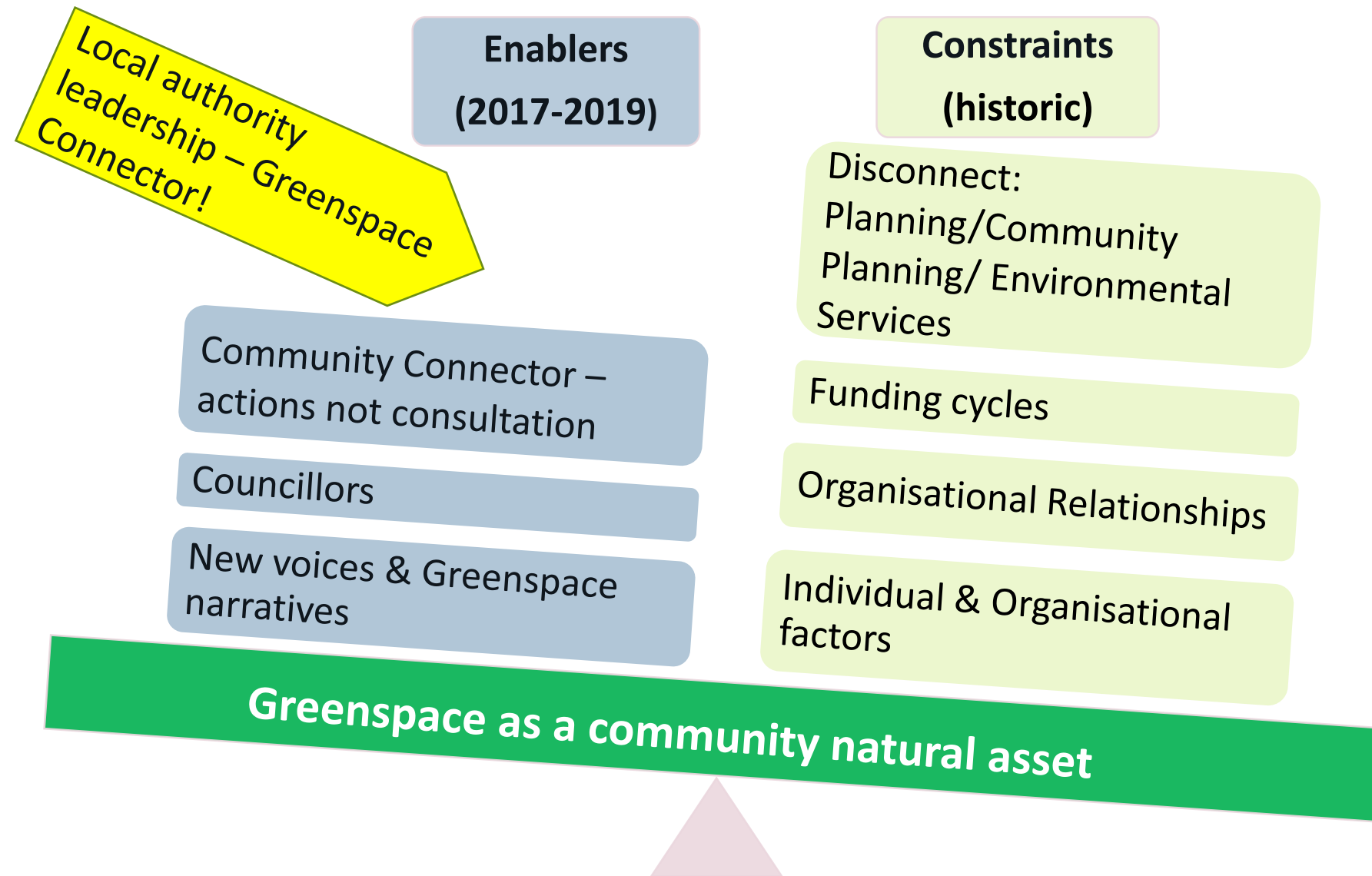
Access to
decision-
makers

Actions to
strategies?

Grants &
coordination?

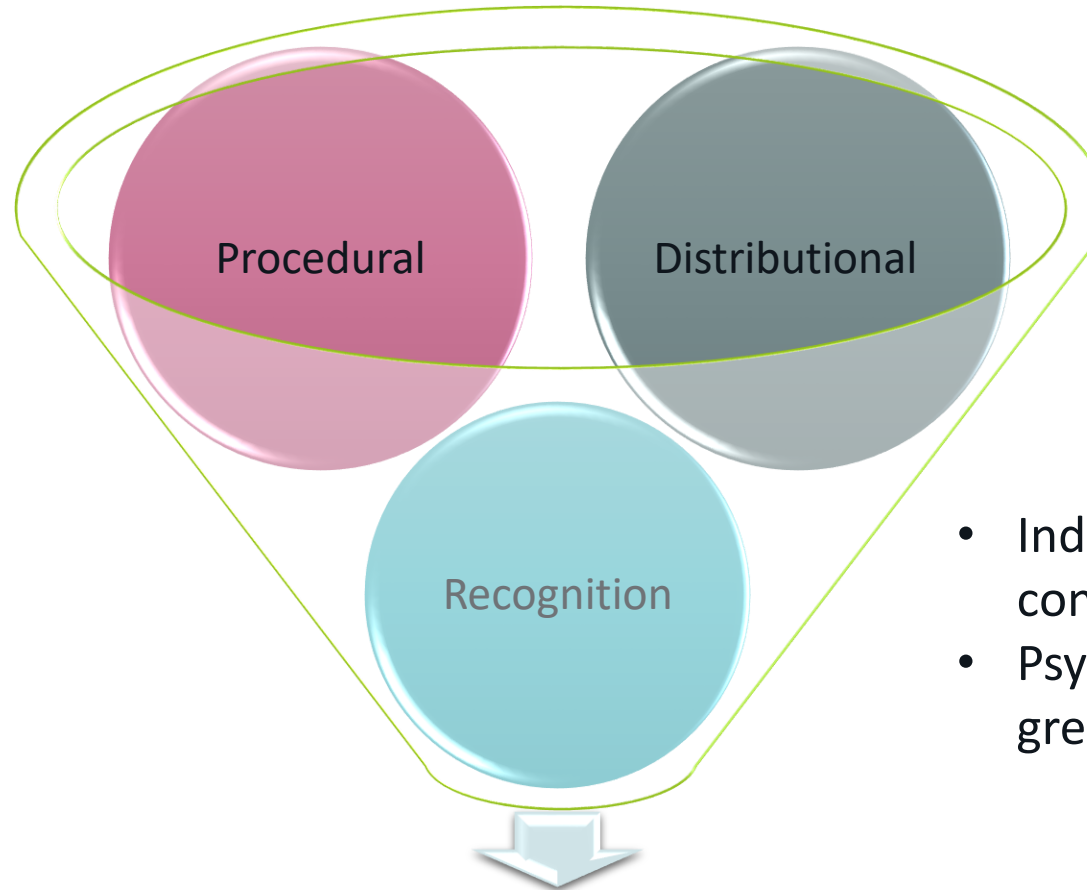
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Enablers & Constraints to Greenspace Aspirations



'Generalised social injustices are manifest in environmental conditions' (Schlosberg, 2013)

- Improve structures & communication
- Inclusive decision-making



- Accessible, quality greenspace < 5mins walk
- Proximity & extent of derelict land

- Individual & organisational constraints
- Psychosocial stressors of poor greenspace

Improve the quality of existing greenspace
Improve greenspace accessibility
Reclaim derelict land for community benefit

Greenspace Aspirations, & Community Empowerment

- Greenspace inequality
- Greenspace aspirations mobilises action
- Situated constraints
- Greenspace Network -> local authority leadership
- Community empowerment
- Environmental justice frame

Questions

What are the enablers and constraints to more JUST urban greenspace?

- ➡ Who are the powerful actors/interests and who are marginalised?
- ➡ How can procedural rights be improved?
- ➡ Implications and impacts of Covid-19 on urban greening priorities?