



Glasgow's Healthier Future Forum 21

Resilience in Glasgow: Where next?

Event report

Thursday 19th April 2018

200 St Vincent Street, Glasgow



This report is a summary of the presentations and discussions from the GHFF20 event and does not necessarily represent the views of the GCPH

1. Welcome and introduction

Dr Pete Seaman, Acting Associate Director of GCPH opened the event and welcomed attendees. He described the Forum as an opportunity to reflect on where the resilience perspective has brought us, how we can collectively build on the momentum established and what the future challenges and opportunities may be. Participants were encouraged to be reflective, open to new perspectives and committed to working together. A programme for the event is provided as an appendix.

2. Presentations

Presentations were provided by Pete Seaman, Duncan Booker, Sustainable Glasgow Manager and Chief Resilience Officer at Glasgow City Council and Sarah Toy, Chief Resilience Officer for the City of Bristol. A link to the presentation slides and a summary of each presentation is provided below.

Pete Seaman

Resilience in Glasgow: where next?

Pete opened his presentation by explaining how resilience has become embedded in everyday language. He highlighted the challenge of using the term in certain contexts before explaining where he felt there can be value in applying a resilience perspective. Pete described resilience as a multi-dimensional term which could be applied to people, places, networks and infrastructure. To illustrate this wide application he described resilience as being *'within us, between us and beyond us'*. He then described the emergence of resilience in national and city-wide strategies, notably through the Resilience Strategy and Community Plan in Glasgow and the Scottish Government's current Programme for Government. Pete then described a challenging context of welfare reform, in-work poverty and the rise in food bank use. Food banks were described as an example of a resilient community response to a situation caused by structural fragility (i.e. the failure to tackle inequality). Pete finished by challenging the audience to think carefully about where resilient perspectives can take us next in light of the changing nature of the challenges we face.

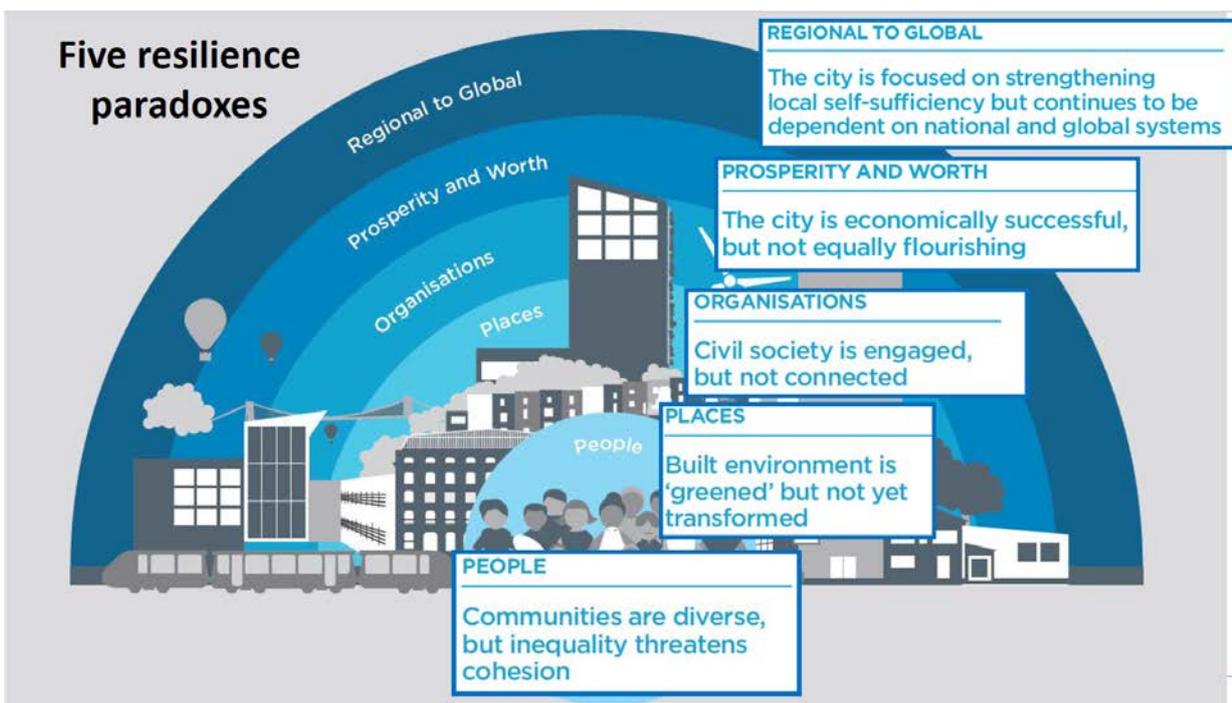
[View the presentation](#)



Sarah Toy

Can a focus on urban resilience help to tackle inequality? Reflections from Bristol

Sarah Toy, Chief Resilience Officer for Bristol presented on how a focus on resilience had enabled city partners to tackle inequality in the city. Rather than using the term resilience, Bristol had opted to frame their efforts around the notion of flourishing in the face of uncertainty. Bristol’s resilience strategy was built around five themes: fair, liveable, sustainable, agile and connected. Sarah described some of the important qualities of a resilient city before highlighting some stark city contrasts (i.e. aspects of the city that were doing well and were being celebrated alongside systemic challenges and inequalities). These differences are illustrated in the five paradoxes diagram below.



Beyond the creation of a resilience strategy for the city, Sarah explained that the term had been widely used in various city strategies. While this was described as an indication that resilience thinking was being mainstreamed, linking up resilient approaches was reported to be a challenge. Sarah highlighted the intention to create a 'one city plan' which could bring together various interests. She finished by reflecting on why the resilience agenda had been a useful approach to tackling inequality, notably because it has a cross-party appeal, enabled a long-term view to be taken and encouraged innovation and new ways of thinking and working.

[View the presentation](#)

Duncan Booker:

People make Glasgow resilient – where next?

Duncan Booker presented on Glasgow City Council's approach to building resilience, including the delivery of the city's first resilience strategy, which involved engaging with 3,500 Glasgow citizens. Duncan described the strategy as having a strong emphasis on people, place and empowerment, using a quote by Urbanist Jane Jacobs to highlight the importance of community participation: '*Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.*' Duncan then highlighted loneliness as a challenge to resilience in Glasgow, which although not new, is being exacerbated by demographic shifts and changes to the way we live. Looking to the future, Duncan highlighted climate change and technological advancement as representing both a challenge and opportunity for the population.

[View the presentation](#)



3. Breakout workshops

Participants were asked to sign up to one of six workshops covering different aspects of resilience. The workshop themes were: community planning; climate change; social protection; early years; community resilience; and volunteering. A summary of each workshop is provided below.

Workshop 1: Community planning and resilience

Karen McNiven, NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde

This workshop focused on how the community planning priority areas can be used to support resilience in Glasgow. Three questions were posed for discussion:

- How do you think community planning partners work together to make Glasgow resilient?
- What examples of good practice can you share on resilience?
- What three priority areas we should focus on going forward?

Positive examples of how Community Planning Partners are supporting resilience were:

- The flexible use of libraries.
- Future proofing buildings.
- Placing services in the same place and signposting people to the third sector and 'soft' offers.
- Using a range of options and approaches to support people's needs – offering smaller initiatives to combat food poverty e.g. 'come dine with me' instead of 'free lunch'
- The use of the Place Standard.

Suggested priorities for the future:

- Relationships and understanding
 - Understanding and addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences
 - Encouraging better relations between local people and service providers
- Understanding communities and places
 - Geographical place is not the only way to look at communities
 - Balancing neighbourhood identity versus a city identity
 - Ensuring neighbourhood centres have everything people need to be healthy
 - CPPs need to be mindful of how migrants are integrated
- Approach is important
 - Embrace assets and encourage kindness and neighbourliness
 - Organisations need to work responsively, honestly and flexibly
 - Community engagement needs to be adequately resourced
 - Engage positively with the private sector

Workshop 2: Community resilience in the face of climate change

Frankie Barrett, Glasgow City Council & Gregor Yates, GCPH

This workshop covered learning from Weathering Change – an action research project delivered by GCPH, Sniffer, greenspace scotland and Glasgow City Council which explored how to support community resilience in the face of climate change. A short presentation on the project broadly covered the following:

- Community perceptions of climate change in areas where immediate local challenges persist such as poverty, unemployment and poor health.

- How public sector and third sector organisations can work together more effectively to meet the challenges presented by climate change.

The group were then asked to reflect on a set of statements relating to how climate change may be addressed in a community setting. Some reflections from this discussion were:

- Rather than being tackled directly, climate change can be addressed indirectly through subjects that are relevant to people's everyday lives.
- Collaborative funding opportunities between third sector and public sector organisations should be explored for climate-related projects.
- Vacant land is an ongoing issue across the city. Community organisations need to be constituted and understand the commitment involved in taking on land.
- Vacant land should be treated as a matter of environmental justice; people living in the most deprived areas of the city are exposed to it the most and should therefore be compensated for this blight.
- Arts-based projects can be an effective way of supporting climate-related projects.
- Local authorities can be brokers for community groups to work together on climate-related (or sustainability) projects.

[View the Weathering Change research report](#)

Workshop 3: Resilience through social protection?

Katharine Timpson, University of the West of Scotland, Rachel Hewitt, Glasgow Caledonian University & Ida Norberg, University of Glasgow

This workshop opened with a presentation on the positive and negative ways in which resilience and social protection interacted. This was followed with an overview of the different types of social protection. An activity followed in which groups were asked to consider what types of social protection a group of hypothetical people might need. Participants were then asked to consider how social protection could impact their resilience.

The wider idea of social protection was discussed in terms of the need to base the system on investment and respect. The group discussed the need for individual, tailored and needs-assessed social



protection. Barriers to innovation discussed included power relationships and the need to prevent protection of existing professions and policies.

[View the presentation](#)

Workshop 4: Building resilience in the early years

Heather Douglas, Glasgow City Council & Val McNeice, GCPH

This workshop provided an overview of key mechanisms that support the development of resilience in early childhood. It gave participants an opportunity to consider the contribution that a range of children's services can make and the challenges that such services face. The discussion covered relationships and the importance of placing childhood experiences within the context of family, community and service engagement. A summary of the key points raised in this discussion is provided below:

- The group felt that male role models are currently not as visible as they could be in the lives of young children. This is reflected in the early years workforce (96% female nationally; 99% female in Glasgow). Male role models play an important role in supporting young men to develop emotional literacy and to grow relationships that support their resilience.
- A focus on language development and emotional literacy is vital for every child.
- Despite some long-standing ongoing challenges, opportunities were identified to build resilience in young children across a range of services and systems.
- The issue of short-term funding, particularly for the third sector, makes it difficult to embed early years within services and systems.
- In a child's early years, human relational responses that consider a child's context and circumstances are needed.

The discussion closed with recognition that people need to be better connected if we are to create a more resilient population.

[View the presentation](#)

Workshop 5: Community resilience

Rosie Robertson, Calton Community and Learning Centre & Russell Jones, GCPH

This interactive workshop focused on the concept of community resilience. Rosie Robertson, Manager of the Calton Heritage and Learning Centre kicked off the discussion with a reflection on

her personal journey and some of her ongoing work to build community resilience in Calton. Participants then had the opportunity to share experiences and explore the processes and resources that enable communities to experience positive outcomes in the face of challenges. Some of the points that were made during the session included:

- Many people living in deprived areas are socially conditioned through messages and behaviours from family, peers, educators, employers and service providers that they have a certain lot in life and should not aspire to rise above that.
- Interventions have improved aspects of the physical environment in which people live, but overall the inequality gap remains.
- Community resilience builds on individual resilience, in that it requires individuals to have an internal belief that they can make things happen, to know how to access information and to have the resources to act. Whether communities adapt successfully or not depends on having individuals within the community with these characteristics.
- Often the needs of communities do not align with the requirements of funding bodies. The current institutional structure of Scotland is not set up to facilitate meaningful successful community engagement. Community-based organisations compete for funding for short-term projects.
- It would be useful to identify people who were able to break through social conditioning and to capture the characteristics and support that allowed this and the hallmarks of success. Another interesting study would be to capture the story of community organisations that have lasted 20-30 years and how they have adapted in order to continue to secure funding.

Workshop 6: Volunteering: how do People make Glasgow?

David Maxwell, Volunteer Glasgow

This workshop aimed to (a) ensure participants have an increased understanding of the importance of volunteer contributions to many aspects of the city through volunteering in the context of resilience, and (b) pose some questions for discussion of a wider process for refreshing the city's [Volunteering Strategy](#) and deciding on priorities for shared action.

The main ideas/topics discussed were:

- Common definitions of volunteering include the following: being unpaid, having the freedom to choose to undertake it, having an impact outside of the immediate family.

- Volunteering should be valued in its own right and as a type of resilience-building, not simply as a route into paid work.
- The full scope and scale of volunteering is underestimated by official figures – volunteers are ‘an army hiding in plain sight’.
- Consideration needs to be given to what happens to those who are rejected (i.e. didn’t make it onto a large volunteer programme). Linked to this is the question of how to target those who would benefit most from volunteering, such as people with mental health issues and other vulnerable groups. This requires a move from rejection to redirection to more suitable volunteering opportunities.
- There are consistent inequalities in volunteering uptake – 17% in SIMD areas as opposed to 29% in less deprived parts of Glasgow.
- Inequalities are at the heart of barriers to volunteering (costs involved, ‘hostile’ policy environment, bureaucracy involved etc.), as well as the fact that if basic needs are not being met and people work multiple jobs then they have no time for volunteering.
- Digital methods are becoming increasingly important for sharing information on volunteering.

4. Feedback and discussion

Following the workshops, participants were asked to reflect on what they had learned and how it could be applied to their future work. Three questions were posed to capture this feedback. The main discussion points from each question are summarised below.

Q1. From your experience and from what you’ve learned today, what do you see as the persistent and emerging challenges?

Engagement

- Make sure that people who are ‘easy to ignore’ are included in consultations and work more generally.
- Engage more effectively with marginalised groups. Move from an academic event (which is interesting to the people in attendance) to something that actually starts influencing people.
- More work is needed to understand the circumstances of young males living in difficult circumstances and the stigma that surrounds mental health for young men.
- Talk to everyone, not just the usual suspects, otherwise only the already resilient voices are heard.

- Currently there is a disconnect between community planning, community engagement and local communities.

Resources and capacity

- Increasing staff workload is preventing meaningful engagement and subsequent change.
- Important services are being shut down – these not only provide people with important information that they need but also provide opportunities for socialising and neighbourliness.
- Volunteering opportunities are not always realised due to the fear of sanctions.
- Austerity, a lack of funding and inequality are a key challenge for resilience. However, a lot can still be done with limited resources.
- Addressing structural inequalities is challenging, it is easier to talk about all the things individuals should be doing.

Transformation

- Resilience isn't just 'bouncing back' from challenge; it's also about having the capacity to flourish.
- Many of the actions required to achieve resilience require a leap of faith to commit to long-term outcomes.
- There is a need for compassionate responses. Third sector organisations do this very well but are hindered by sustainability challenges e.g. short-term funding.

Policy and strategy

- There are too many strategies and not enough action.
- Accountability for delivering strategy commitments is needed.

Q2. What new and/or existing ways of working could be developed as potential solutions?

Welfare and affordability

- Stop cuts to welfare services.
- 'Benefits' are not sanctioned because of volunteering or other community commitments.
- Public transport is made cheaper and more accessible for people in hardship.

Environment

- There should be more diversity in the physical environment in terms of amenities and the type of housing available. More robust planning measures are needed to ensure there are good quality developer contributions to public amenities.
- More collaborative funding opportunities are needed to improve the quality of physical environments.

Engagement and meaningful participation

- Have conversations about the kind of communities we want to live in.
- Capacity building at a community level.
- Community workers should have the freedom and flexibility to follow their intuition and act on opportunities as they arise without rigid tick-box requirements. Staff time needs to be freed up for doing the things that really matter.
- People need to have confidence and belief in their own abilities.

Organisational responsibility

- Personality is important in hiring staff.
- The third sector is able to be more creative than the public sector.
- More grassroots organisations should be supported / securely funded and allowed to get on with it without unnecessary bureaucracy.

Q3. What would need to happen to support this?

- Consultations should be more democratic and enable people to have a real impact on change.
- Stop a putative approach to benefits/welfare systems.
- Stop austerity.
- Find other ways of raising more income for people and give them more financial resources.
- Statutory organisations and bodies need to better understand and respond to local needs.
- Make better use of 'go between' organisations that understand community needs – housing associations already have good relationships with people.
- Good leadership across all systems and not just highly paid managers in place of leaders.
- Ensure that people on committees actually represent the community.
- Resources to provide opportunities.

- Funding needs to be easier to access with fewer restrictions. Currently there are too many barriers for community groups to access funding. The skills required in successfully completing applications are often missing in community groups.
- The imbalance of power in decision-making between community needs and what organisations deliver needs to be addressed.

5. Next steps

GCPH's Healthier Future Forum events are not explicitly part of any decision-making processes, instead they are an opportunity for a wide audience to explore important societal issues. In sum-up Pete encouraged participants to carry forward ideas from the forum into their own organisation and networks.

For more information about the event or about GCPH's work on resilience, please contact Pete Seaman at peter.seaman@glasgow.ac.uk.

Programme

9.00 – 9.30	Coffee and registration
9.30 – 9.50	Welcome and introduction Pete Seaman, Glasgow Centre for Population Health
9.50 – 10.15	Can a focus on urban resilience help to tackle inequality? Reflections from Bristol Sarah Toy, Bristol City Council
10.15 – 10.40	People make Glasgow resilient – future challenges Duncan Booker, Glasgow City Council
10.40 – 11.00	Questions and discussion
11.00 – 11.30	Refreshments
11.30 – 12.30	Workshops <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Community planning and resilience – Karen McNiven, NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde2. Community resilience in the face of climate change – Frankie Barrett, Glasgow City Council & Gregor Yates, GCPH3. Social protection and resilience – Katharine Timpson, University of the West of Scotland, Rachel Hewitt, Glasgow Caledonian University & Ida Norberg, University of Glasgow4. Building resilience in the early years – Heather Douglas, Glasgow City Council & Val McNeice, GCPH
12.30 – 12.40	5. Community resilience – Rosie Robertson, Calton Community and Learning Centre & Russell Jones, GCPH
12.40 – 1.30	6. Volunteering: how do People make Glasgow? – David Maxwell,
1.30	Volunteer Glasgow

Running refreshments

Feedback and discussion

Closing remarks, lunch and close

