Article:

eprints@whiterose.ac.uk
https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/

1   **TITLE: Defining place-keeping: the long-term management of public spaces**

2   **Introduction**

3   *Place-making* has long taken centre stage in urban planning and design, where capital funding is spent on

4   the *shaping* and *making* of high-profile places in towns and cities all over the world (Roberts, 2009). Such

5   places encompass a wide range of areas including parks, civic squares, waterways and open/ green spaces

6   in housing estates, both publicly and privately owned and managed. Through place-making, the resultant

7   high-quality public spaces are argued to be economically and socially beneficial for local communities

8   and contribute positively to residents' quality of life and wellbeing. In light of these benefits, it is perhaps

9   unsurprising that large-scale capital is spent on creating such places. However, what is surprising is the

10   lack of priority given to the *place-keeping*, or long-term management of such spaces, once *place-making*

11   has occurred. This paper will show that in the planning and design process, inadequate thought is given to

12   place-keeping, often manifested as an insufficient pool of resources made available for the long-term

13   maintenance and management of such places. Without place-keeping, public spaces can fall into a

14   downward spiral of damage, disrepair and inadequate maintenance. This can potentially lead to

15   manifestations of the 'broken window syndrome' where even 'cosmetic damage can invite more serious

16   anti-social or even criminal behaviour' (Wilson and Kelling, 1982, cited in Nash and Christie, 2003, p.

17   47). This can lead to residents feeling unsafe in places which become unused in favour of others. Trying

18   to restore such places to their former 'glory' can be a costly exercise, not just in financial terms, but also

19   socially to regain users' confidence to use the place safely and comfortably.

20   This paper argues that this lack of focus on place-keeping is not only due to a lack of resources but also a

21   lack of understanding of the concept, its complexity and the wide implications it has for users,

22   practitioners and policymakers. The paper aims to address this gap in knowledge by providing:

23   •   an outline of the research and policy context within which place-keeping sits;

24   •   an in-depth and critical review of the concept of place-keeping within the urban context;

25   •   a detailed definition of place-keeping as a combination of physical and non-physical dimensions;

26   and,

27 • recommendations for further research.

28 **The wider context of place, place-making and place-keeping**

29 In Europe it can be argued that there is an ongoing policy shift back towards the aims of the mid-19th and

30 20th century social reformers who fought for good-quality living environments for all residents which

31 included the provision of publicly accessible green space. Place continues to be an important part of the

32 discourse on urban social life, constituting a renewed interest in the concept (Roberts, 2009). While

33 today's context may be very different politically, environmentally, economically and socially, there is

34 growing consensus in theory and policy that open and green spaces are vital to urban life because of their

35 significant contribution to urban dwellers' wellbeing (e.g. Newton, 2007). This perspective acknowledges

36 that public open spaces 'provide a range of social, aesthetic, environmental and economic benefits'

37 (Caspersen et al., 2006, p. 7). These benefits emerge from the perceived value that public space has for

38 everyday quality of life, serving as 'a stage for urban publicness, sport, art, and cultural activities...for all

39 members of society when they go about their daily business' (BMVBS und BBR, 2008).

40 The profile of place-making as a means of creating good-quality environments has been raised

41 considerably since the late 1990s when area-based initiatives were adopted to address concerns with local

42 and neighbourhood-scale social problems in deprived neighbourhoods throughout Europe (Carpenter,

43 2006). Put simply, it was claimed that urban regeneration in a deprived area can combat urban poverty,

44 the ensuing environmental degradation, and promote economic growth (Urban Task Force, 1999). Belief

45 in such claims continues today within the broad context of sustainability: in 2005 all EU-member

46 countries endorsed the Bristol Accord and agreed to create more attractive places – or '"sustainable

47 communities" – where people want to live and work, both now and in the future' (ODPM, 2006, p. 9). As

48 part of this focus on the quality of the environment is the liveability agenda adopted in cities around the

49 world which endorses the provision of clean, safe and green public spaces and streets (Carmona, 2007,

50 Jonas and McCarthy, 2009). In the UK for example, there is a plethora of prescriptive urban design

51 guidance on 'the art of making places for people' (CABE Space, 2005a, Urban Task Force, 2006, Homes

52 and Communities Agency, 2007).

53 While tastes and habits have clearly changed dramatically since the advent of the public park in the mid-

54 eighteenth century, particularly in the last half-century in terms of leisure pursuits, publicly accessible

55 public space continues to play an important part in people's everyday lives. Recent research and policy

56 focus on encouraging people, particularly children and teenagers, to do more exercise and to do it

57 outdoors. Urban green and open space is considered a means of combating obesity, getting fresh air and

58 using green space more passively as a restorative environment in which to 'unwind' and cope with

59 everyday stress and mental illness (Abraham et al., 2010, Pretty et al., 2005, Mitchell and Popham, 2008).

60 A growing body of research from around Europe shows that encouraging people to spend time in local

61 green spaces can be help improve mental health problems such as depression and work-related stress

62 (Newton, 2007, Hansmann et al., 2007, Ulrich, 1979). Studies show that the closer people live to green

63 space, the more likely they are to use it (Schipperijn et al., 2010) while other social benefits relate to sense

64 of place, identity and spirituality with green space (Irvine and Warber, 2002, Konijnendijk, 2008). Further

65 social benefits of open spaces include the opportunities for social interaction and engagement with people

66 who might not be encountered elsewhere (Gehl, 2001, Whyte, 1980). Considerable literature focuses on

67 the importance of spaces that all members of society can use with equal rights (Amin, 2008). There are

68 also claims that urban open spaces can contribute positively to civic pride, sense of community and sense

69 of place (McIndoe et al., 2005). The belief in such a relationship partly informed the creation of the public

70 parks in the 19th-20th centuries around Europe as healthy places for all residents to spend time in and be

71 proud of (Conway, 2000) alongside the long-standing premise, supported by recent empirical research,

72 that urban open space can provide residents with respite from the daily pressures (Barbosa et al., 2007).

73 Such benefits are however achieved only if people use the spaces: and key determinants behind use

74 include the safety and comfort of all potential users (Luymes and Tamminga, 1995).

75 Green spaces have also been identified as providing critical habitats for biodiversity and form an

76 important part of the ecosystem in urban areas (Gaston et al., 2005, Barbosa et al., 2007). Trees and green

77 spaces provide shade and cooling (CABE Space, 2005b, Davies et al., 2006) which, in light of growing

78 concerns about environmental change, explains why urban green space is highlighted as an important

79 asset for climate change mitigation and adaptation. There is consensus that natural environments can

80 contribute to aspects such as good air and water quality which bring environmental, social and economic

81 benefits (ODPM, 2004). Empirical research findings by Irvine et al. (2009) on soundscapes in green

82 spaces suggest that opportunities to access quiet, natural places in urban areas (highlighted above to be a

83 benefit for mental health) can be enhanced by improving the ecological quality of urban green spaces. In

84 this way, it is argued that ecological environments in a range of settings – urban, peri-urban, suburban and

85 rural – must be provided, protected and maintained (Haughton and Hunter, 1994). However, conflicting

86 demands on these settings – including pressure to create more housing and commercial development and

87 with it the encroaching urban infrastructure – can endanger the existence and quality of such

88 environments and have detrimental effects on biodiversity and habitats (Barber, 2005).

89 An obvious question emerges from the discussion above: if the importance of open and green space for

90 urban social life is clearly shown in a growing body of evidence, why are some places left to deteriorate

91 through lack of maintenance and investment in place-keeping? There is a disproportionately large body of

92 urban design and planning guidance which focuses on the importance of place-making. Such guidance

93 encourages well-designed, safe and inclusive places which are well-connected, environmentally sensitive

94 and built to last (DCLG, 2006b, McIndoe et al., 2005, Burton and Mitchell, 2006). Such 'assets' should

95 be managed 'effectively and appropriately' but guidance is often lacking in providing evidence of how

96 this can be achieved in practice beyond having 'the right skills and resources in place to manage...for the

97 foreseeable future' (Homes and Communities Agency, 2007, p. 180). This is due to a paucity of empirical

98 research testing the effectiveness of place-keeping approaches. It can be argued that this prescriptive

99 design guidance tends to do two things when considering place-keeping. Firstly, place-keeping is often

100 discussed as a postscript of place-making, which is underpinned by, secondly, an unsubstantiated

101 assumption that effective place-keeping will simply happen which in practice is not always feasible or

102 realistic, particularly when funding is limited. This reflects the prevailing view that the creation of places

103 in the place-making stage of the design and planning process is, while perhaps not simply considered to

104 be *more important* than long-term management, place-keeping as part of this process is certainly *less well*

105 *understood*.

106 Examples of this lack of understanding and clarity are often found in practice relating to funding: the

107 costs of maintenance of new or refurbished public spaces become apparent to local authorities only once a

108 scheme had been implemented (Carmona et al., 2004b), a phenomenon encountered around Europe

109 (Gallacher, 2005). There is also a disparity in practice, but invariably not highlighted in the literature,

110 between the need to spend monies allocated for place-making (and any associated place-keeping) within a

111 limited time-period, which hinders a long-term approach to place-keeping. In practice, this is manifested

112 as an over-emphasis on the capital funds that often accompany place-making which, for accounting

113 reasons, cannot be allocated against long-term care and maintenance. There are exceptions: for example,

114 in Wellington, New Zealand, ongoing maintenance budgets are separated from one-off capital projects

115 and managed over a 10-year financial planning system, allowing public space managers to plan ahead and

116 invest consistently (Carmona et al., 2004a). However in the UK, the situation is unclear. When a public

117 open space is created (or refurbished or regenerated with, for example, new features, planting, and/ or

118 play equipment), the maintenance and management of that space is likely to fall under the remit of the

119 local authority, which invariably does not receive supplementary funding to maintain and manage this

120 extra public space, or support any extra skills or equipment required to maintain features (Burton and

121 Dempsey, 2010). While national priorities may increasingly focus on the importance of maintaining the

122 quality of parks and green spaces, it is local priorities which dictate how non ring-fenced resources are

123 spent (CABE Space, 2006c). The local political context of trying to keep council tax low have been

124 shown to influence directly (and negatively) the financial support for parks and green spaces (Woolley et

125 al., 2004). At times of economic recession (such as the present moment), investment in public space tends

126 to be precarious and disproportionately subject to tight fiscal pressures set by central government (CABE

127 Space, 2005b).

128 The next section directly addresses the lack of consideration given to place-keeping by providing a

129 detailed definition of the concept with reference to its constituent dimensions.

130   **Defining place-keeping**

131   As there is no one definition of *place*, it is little wonder that there are different interpretations of

132   associated concepts which, this paper argues, constitute *place-keeping* (DCLG, 2007, Roberts, 2009).

133   This stems from the multi-faceted nature of the concept of place which encompasses:

134   •   the spatial environment in which one lives or spends time;

135   •   the social environment, made up of residents and other users of a place; and,

136   •   the political and cultural context, where decisions made and trends can directly influence a place

137   – for example in terms of the provision of particular services and facilities.

138   Place can be described as a socio-spatial construct within local political and cultural contexts (after Jenks

139   and Dempsey, 2007) which is underpinned by the 'new institutionalist' theoretical framework

140   (Madanipour, 1996). New institutionalism provides a view of place-keeping which focuses on the

141   institutions, or structures and mechanisms, which govern the ensuing relationships, process and

142   interactions (Cohn, 2008, Smith et al., 2009, Healey, 1998). It permits a wider understanding of the urban

143   environment by focusing on the physical and non-physical dimensions of space, (economic, social,

144   cultural and organizational) and the interrelationships therein (Smith et al., 2009, Carley et al., 2001). In

145   this way, place-making and place-keeping can be described as ongoing processes which comprise

146   physical and non-physical dimensions within a local context. Figure 1 outlines how *place* is

147   multidimensional, providing physical and non-physical functions for a diverse set of users, and has a

148   combination of characteristics contributing to the essence of 'place' (as opposed to 'space') (after

149   Carmona and de Magalhães, 2007, CABE and DETR, 2000).

150   Place-, or area-, based responses to social problems emerge from the policy stance that the physical

151   environment can positively influence wellbeing and quality of life. Examples of social problems

152   increasingly experienced in urban Europe include rising crime rates and anti-social behaviour with an

153   associated reduction in perceived safety (Carpenter, 2006). These are partly attributed to social and spatial

154   disparities between rich residents in affluent and high-quality areas and poor residents in generally poorer

155   quality of housing and environments in less affluent areas (Hastings et al., 2005). For example, fear of

156 crime tends to be higher where there is a poorer quality environment with litter, graffiti and anti-social

157 behaviour (Kullberg et al., 2009). It therefore follows that there is a clear need for place-making and

158 place-keeping in socially and economically deprived areas.

159 **Figure 1 here.**

160 The concept of 'place-keeping', first coined by Wild et al. (2008), is defined here as long-term

161 management which ensures that the social, environmental and economic quality and benefits the place

162 brings can be enjoyed by future generations. Place-keeping relates to what happens after high-quality

163 places have been created. It means maintaining and enhancing the qualities and benefits of places through

164 long-term management. Many aspects of place take time to develop and mature: for example, increased

165 benefits (e.g. biodiversity) are experienced when trees grow to maturity, or when a place is used for

166 particular events (e.g. community festivals), this can contribute to a growing sense of community and

167 place attachment over time.

168 The aspirations of place-keeping are clear: the overriding goal is to create a high-quality, sustainable

169 space which is valued by users who want to visit it again and again. The issue with determining the extent

170 to which a space fulfils this aim is the subjectivity involved in defining *high-quality, sustainable* and

171 *value* (Burton and Dempsey, 2010). Furthermore, the specific context within which place-keeping occurs

172 is highly variable, indicating a wide variety of interpretations and definitions of the underlying aim. It can

173 be shown however that place-keeping forms an increasingly important part of 'green plans' to preserve

174 and sometimes create green space that are often developed at the city-scale and can be found in the UK,

175 Denmark, Australia and Sweden among other countries (Carmona et al., 2004a).

176 Place-keeping encompasses dimensions of long-term open space management – maintenance,

177 partnerships, governance, funding, policy and evaluation – which have not been considered before as part

178 of a holistic concept (Figure 1). These dimensions are inter-related and can be applied at a number of

179 different scales such as site, neighbourhood, city and region. *Maintenance* encompasses a range of land

180 management techniques and the day-to-day operations required to ensure the 'fitness for purpose' of a

181 place (Barber, 2005, Welch, 1991). It relates to a place's condition and cleanliness – how well it stands up

182   to everyday use – and is incorporated within a longer-term process of management. It also relates closely

183   to the design of the place: for example, specific features and landscaping may require particular

184   maintenance equipment and expertise: e.g. high-pressure water cleaning for natural stone, a range of

185   mowing equipment for grassed amphitheatres or specialist knowledge for particular planting.

186   The term *partnership* describes an association of two or more partners which has been developed here as

187   agreed shared responsibility for place-keeping. While no particular partnership model is prescribed in this

188   paper, third sector and local/ community organisations should be involved in place-keeping, as it has the

189   benefit of ensuring the exchange and sharing of knowledge within the local context forms an integral part

190   of the long-term management of the space (Wild et al., 2008). *Governance* is closely related to

191   partnership and reflects a shift from government or the executive role where the state acts as the primary

192   governing body (Smith et al., 2009) to describe the relationship between and within the range of

193   stakeholders, usually governmental and non-governmental, involved in the decision-making process, a

194   part of the state's enabling role (Lawless et al., 2010, Bovaird and Löffler, 2002). *Community engagement*

195   is an aspect of governance particularly relevant in forms of participatory governance (Murdoch and

196   Abram, 1998). It describes models of working with communities and encouraging appropriate long-term

197   use, and engagement in the management, of the space through e.g. community programmes, events and

198   activities.

199   *Investment, finance and resources* describe the range of financial models used for efficient long-term

200   management. Ideally, funding is in place for place-keeping from the outset of the project and may come

201   from a range of sources. This also relates to resourcing in more general terms and includes staffing,

202   training and skills. However, it is clear that funding and resources for place-keeping is a contentious issue

203   as the discussion below shows.

204   *Policy* can relate to place-keeping at different scales – national, regional, local, site-specific – and aims to

205   embed best practice into local planning, urban design and other related disciplines. Place-keeping is often

206   written as policy guidance and not statutory legislation, however related aspects may be covered by

207   specific legislation (e.g. health and safety regulations). Rules and regulations can also be employed (e.g.

208   through signage) in an attempt to overcome potential conflicts of use with the aim of long-term positive

209   use of and behaviour in the space.

210   Place-keeping *evaluation* monitors the process and product of place-keeping by assessing the economic,

211   social and environmental benefits. The underlying aim is to improve place-keeping and deliver the

212   associated benefits more effectively and efficiently with fewer resources. This may be evaluated through

213   regular surveys of public use, satisfaction and attitudes towards the space and the use of award schemes to

214   improve the quality of the space (e.g. Green Flag in the UK). Evaluation may also be used to monitor

215   procurement options, staff development and retention to challenge existing practices and raise standards

216   (Barber, 2005, Carmona et al., 2008).

217   It is critical to *coordinate* the overlapping dimensions of place-keeping. For example, the day-to-day

218   maintenance of the space will involve various land management techniques, a range of stakeholders and

219   varying levels of available resources; there will also be a need to follow specific regulations and

220   undertake ongoing evaluation. All of these require coordination, which may manifest itself in a long-term

221   public space strategy document or management plan. These dimensions of place-keeping are discussed in

222   more detail later in the paper.

223   It is helpful to consider place-making and place-keeping as part of a dynamic and continuous process: the

224   ongoing *process* of place-keeping maintains and enhances the *product* of place-making as a valued,

225   sustainable and high-quality place within a particular local context. It is important to note the difficulty of

226   divorcing the process from the product when considering the dimensions of place-keeping. For example,

227   maintenance can be described as both a process (e.g. a cleaning service provided by a stakeholder) and a

228   product (e.g. a wall cleaned of graffiti) (Carmona et al., 2008). Community engagement can likewise be

229   considered an ongoing process of involvement in a range of programmes and events, or leading to a

230   tangible outcome such as the decision not to erect a mobile phone mast (Bovaird and Löffler, 2002,

231   Dempsey et al., 2009). Conceptually, this dynamic relationship might be considered as: a) place-making

232   which leads to place-keeping as distinct activities; b) place-making which is influenced by place-keeping

233   which can be manifested (and conceptually modelled) in different ways, e.g. the use of high-quality

234   materials to help reduce maintenance over time; and c), ideally, a two-way inter-dependent relationship

235   between the two where place-keeping is considered from the outset as integral to place-making (Figures

236   2a-c). The inter-relatedness of the concepts mean that it can be argued that place-making encompasses

237   place-keeping as management forms an integral part of the creation or making of a place. However this

238   paper takes the position that place-keeping focuses on the long term when considering place: place-

239   making can therefore be considered as the creation, or re-creation, renewal or regeneration of place that

240   occurs within the longer-term process of place-keeping. As outlined earlier, there tends to be a clear

241   distinction between place-making and place-keeping in practice, which stems from specific activities on

242   the ground as well as the funding streams. This emerges in the discussion later in the paper.

243   **Figures 2a-c HERE.**

244   **Maintenance activities in place-keeping**

245   There is a clear link between maintenance and the perceived quality and use of public spaces (Dempsey,

246   2008). Although the term 'quality' in relation to landscape is subjective (Burton and Dempsey, 2010)

247   potential public space users are very clear about what they expect from a good-quality place. This

248   includes variety, opportunities for play, sensory stimulation and provision for young people (Dunnett et

249   al., 2002). People are hesitant to use spaces which are poorly maintained and are more likely to use spaces

250   free from litter, dog mess and are equipped with good-quality facilities such as bins, toilets, play areas and

251   sports areas (ibid., Shoreditch Trust and OISD, 2009). The level of maintenance can also strongly

252   influence the image of an area as a place in which to invest. Creating a 'neat and tidy', 'cared-for'

253   immediate and wider landscape setting was found to be an indicator of the perceived 'quality' of potential

254   office locations (Burton and Rymsa-Fitschen, 2008).

255   The level of maintenance required is related to the type and characteristics of the space as well as its users

256   and its social, economic and environmental context. A higher level of maintenance may be expected of a

257   civic square with clipped hedges and rows of annual bedding than of an urban nature park where grass

258   may be allowed to grow long and shrubs grow into their natural shape. Standard management practices

259   aim to maintain landscape elements of an open space such as grass and shrubs in the same condition

260   (CABE Space, 2006a), however the maintenance requirements of a space may change over time reflecting

261   seasonal use and plant growth, changing user requirements or site context as the site matures. This

262   indicates that a standardised regime, which lacks the flexibility to respond to change over the long term,

263   may not be effective. It may therefore be more a question of 'whether the right work is done at the right

264   time' rather than of how much work is carried out (Carmona et al., 2004a). While it is most often the local

265   authority which oversees the maintenance and management, local residents and community groups are

266   increasingly becoming involved in the process. This may be prompted by local concerns that standards

267   are not high enough and organised to access more resources, such as the 'Friends of Group' which can

268   access funds not available to the local authority.

269   **Partnerships and governance in place-keeping**

270   Achieving place-keeping depends on strong partnerships and effective governance/ decision-making. The

271   *state-centred model* is identified as the typical starting point for many public spaces where a local

272   authority plans, delivers and maintains the place in question with minimal external input (Burton and

273   Dempsey, 2010, de Magalhães and Carmona, 2009). It is often argued that this model can suffer from

274   inertia where processes have remained unchanged for decades and may be subject to excessive

275   bureaucracy and lack of responsiveness (de Magalhães and Carmona, 2009). Different urban management

276   partnerships have emerged due to what Broadbent and Laughlin call a 'liberalisation in thought' and a

277   liberalisation of rules governing who provides and delivers public services (2003, p. 332). Public-private

278   partnerships (PPPs) are increasingly widespread in open space management (Loader, 2010) as examples

279   of what is described as a *market-centred model* (de Magalhães and Carmona, 2009), such as large-scale

280   town centre management programmes (England and Sweden), and Business Improvement Districts (UK

281   and Germany). Place-keeping PPPs involve a private, profit-driven organisation employed by the public

282   sector, often in a contractual relationship which can (but not always) call on resources from outside the

283   public sector (Carmona et al., 2008). The *user-centred model* is another example of devolved

284   responsibility from the state where user-based organisations such as 'Friends of...' groups, local interest

285   and community groups, charities and other non-governmental organizations are involved in place-keeping

286   (Jones, 2002). These organisations are not-for-profit and have a 'direct interest in the quality of the public

287   spaces and related services primarily for their use value' (de Magalhães and Carmona, 2009, p. 125).

288   Networks are very important in this model, with hierarchy abandoned for a more horizontal approach

289   using formal and informal networks and contacts, making use of local knowledge and enthusiasm (Wild

290   et al., 2008). There is widespread consensus in theory and policy that a partnership approach to public

291   space management is an effective one (Bovaird, 2004, Carpenter, 2006) and it is suggested that a

292   combination of the state-, market- and user-centred models could prove most advantageous for effective

293   public space management (de Magalhães and Carmona, 2009).

294   *Governance* describes the relationships between and among the range of stakeholders, governmental and

295   non-governmental, involved in the decision-making process. This reflects the conceptual and policy shift

296   in Europe, North America and elsewhere (Geddes, 2006) from government where the state acts as the

297   primary governing body to a new local governance with a strong focus on community engagement

298   (Bovaird, 2004, Delgado and Strand, 2010).

299   There is no consensus on the definition of governance: it is a contested concept (Smith, 2004). For

300   Jenkins (2004), it is based on government working with non-governmental sectors, including the private

301   sector, and the processes of interaction between them. A less neutral definition of governance describes it

302   as a form of negotiation used to formulate and implement policy that looks to actively involve

303   community, voluntary and other non-governmental stakeholders with the public sector (Garcia, 2006).

304   Democracy underpins these ideas of governance, although it is argued to imply 'a wider "participation" in

305   decision-making than representative democracy or other forms of government...[accepting] a wide

306   spectrum of actors other than the state, and thus, varying governance contexts and processes' (Smith,

307   2004, p. 64). The traditional public-sector led approach to governing is technocratic in nature, where the

308   'experts' are in control of the place-keeping decision-making: the polar opposite to a democratic approach

309   (although this depends on the definition of democracy) (Irwin, 2006, Cohn, 2008). These technical

310   experts solve place-keeping issues using their specialist knowledge and expertise, which is at odds with

311   the identification of complex social 'wicked problems' which are claimed to be solvable only when taking

312   a democratic approach (Bovaird, 2004). It therefore follows that values of good governance in place-

313   keeping include 'openness, accountability, transparency and inclusiveness' (Delgado and Strand, 2010, p.

314   145).

315   Carmona et al (2004b) advocate an integrated approach to decision-making in public spaces which

316   involves multiple agencies. It is claimed that new types of urban governance adopting a partnership

317   approach are required for area-based initiatives dealing with urban deprivation around Europe due to its

318   multi-faceted nature which demands a multi-agency approach (Carpenter, 2006). Therefore the need to

319   carefully coordinate such a group (with different and potentially conflicting aims, resources and priorities)

320   is critical. Despite the core ideas underpinning governance being based on inclusiveness and democracy,

321   Irwin (Irwin, 2006) argues that, in practice, a fundamentally technocratic approach is often taken to place-

322   keeping. He claims that a dated assumption is made about the public being insufficiently knowledgeable

323   and who must therefore be educated by more knowledgeable experts in government. However, local

324   residents can bring local, rich knowledge to the decision-making process via, for example, 'Friends of

325   Groups' and local trusts, which can contribute to effective place-keeping (after Jones, 2002).

326   **Funding place-keeping**

327   Funding is fundamental to place-keeping. In the UK between 1979 and 2000, there were significant

328   funding cuts for public space management, estimated at £1.3 billion, dramatically reducing numbers of

329   skilled, experienced (and perceived to be expensive) workers which adversely affected the quality and use

330   of local authority-managed parks and public spaces (CABE Space, 2006b). This move was attributed to

331   the fact that such spaces do not constitute a service that local authorities are legally obliged to provide and

332   so are not as important politically as other areas such as health, education or safety (Barber, 2005). Such

333   budget cuts do not necessarily equate to efficiency gains, which may not be measured as place-keeping

334   evaluation is not often prioritised or effectively funded so the resultant impact of such cuts may not be

335   measured (CABE Space, 2006c). Such precariousness of funding allocation is encountered around Europe

336   and elsewhere (Carmona et al., 2004a). While the importance of long-term funding is widely

337 acknowledged in the literature, how to secure it in practice is often not addressed which points to a critical

338 gap in knowledge.

339 Generally speaking, funding for the creation/regeneration and maintenance of public spaces mainly comes

340 from the traditional public sector model through funding allocations via the relevant local authority

341 departments. Funding is also provided through public sector-led specific projects and initiatives. These

342 include the Local Democracy and Self-Government programme in Sweden led by social housing provider

343 Poseidon (Castell, 2010) and the Big Cities regeneration programme in the Netherlands (Dekker and van

344 Kempen, 2004). At the more localised scale, other examples of public sector monies might include rental

345 income as well as revenues from parking, road charging and events (Carmona et al., 2004b).

346 In the UK, to ensure that adequate public space is provided for residents, open space creation is in part

347 funded by Section 106 obligations (recently amended in policy as the Community Infrastructure Levy)

348 (DCLG, 2010). Planning permission for (housing, commercial, retail) development is contingent on such

349 an agreement, which is increasingly used to support the provision of infrastructure such as public space

350 (Living Places, 2010). Practice guidance states that contributions for the long-term management and

351 maintenance of public space should take into account the time lag between the initial place-making costs

352 and 'its inclusion in public sector funding streams' or when costs are recovered: 'pump priming

353 maintenance payments should be time-limited and not be required in perpetuity by planning obligations',

354 indicating that long-term management is not funded beyond the short-term establishment costs (DCLG,

355 2006a, p. 11).

356 The private sector is also called on to contribute to public space place-keeping when they engage in

357 contracts for the public sector (Lindholst, 2009), or PPPs such as town centre management and business

358 improvement districts (Coca-Stefaniak et al., 2009, Schaller and Modan, 2008). The contracting-out of

359 services to the private sector can have an impact on how funding for place-keeping is earmarked.

360 Lindholst (2009a, p. 6) discusses the negative impact that contracting-out to the lowest bidder can have on

361 the quality of place-keeping, because 'payments [are] relatively independent of performance'.

362 Furthermore, he finds that in practice there are examples of underpriced contracts which are essentially

363 under-resourced and where maintenance and management are not implemented. Warnings are made

364 elsewhere that contracting-out should not be considered as an exercise in cost-cutting, but can be effective

365 if an outcome-based approach is taken (Carmona et al., 2004a). This is particularly suitable for increasing

366 biodiversity in open spaces, as there would not be an annual cycle of work and funding which may

367 potentially hinder progress over the longer term (CABE Space, 2006a). Sustaining funds for maintenance

368 and management of the space over the short-, medium- and long-term is therefore critical and a major

369 challenge for practitioners and policy-makers. With hindsight it is easy to see how landscapes age and

370 change but it is sometimes not possible to anticipate future changes when the space is first created or

371 developed. With this in mind, it seems clear that an effective long-term management plan should include

372 the renewal of facilities etc. and not focus solely on the day-to-day maintenance, which is the case with

373 current grounds maintenance contracts (Carmona et al., 2004a).

374 Place-keeping partnership models such as private finance initiatives (PFI) and PPPs can reduce the

375 pressure on the public sector to finance large-scale projects, often with investment based on debt finance

376 (Adair et al., 2000), while passing the responsibility to the private sector for an agreed set of

377 specifications. Payments are typically made by the public sector based on performance or throughput after

378 the competitive tendering process designed to ensure transparency and value-for-money (Zitron, 2006).

379 However, there are negative aspects: in the case of housing, PPPs and PFIs have been criticised for

380 putting economic interests ahead of the social wellbeing of all prospective residents, particularly those in

381 social housing (Minton, 2009).

382 Other funding models for place-keeping include endowments which can provide monies through the

383 interest gained on a large initial investment (CABE Space, 2006b). Endowments form the basis of the

384 operations of the UK's Land Trust (previously the Land Restoration Trust) which provides long-term

385 sustainable management of public spaces across England in perpetuity as part of community-led,

386 environmentally-informed regeneration (Land Trust, 2010).

387 An increasing proportion of funding for place-keeping is provided by the charity sector, such as the UK's

388 Heritage Lottery Fund, which allocates monies via independent distribution bodies (Grimsey and Lewis,

389   2005). Monies can come from funds open to the community sector to which public sector bodies do not

390   have access. While conservation and restoration logically form part of long-term place-keeping activities,

391   it should be underlined again that such funding tends to be primarily for place-making projects and not

392   place-keeping. However, funders increasingly require assurance that resources are in place for place-

393   keeping to secure the initial grant. In practice, however, this may only be achieved by compromising the

394   level of maintenance of other open spaces as funding cannot be ring-fenced in this way over time.

395   **Evaluation of place-keeping**

396   It is widely acknowledged that there are many benefits to the provision and use of public space in urban

397   areas (Baycan-Levent et al., 2009, Mielke, 2008), as outlined at the beginning of this paper. It therefore

398   follows that this value afforded to public space has to some extent been measured, in different ways such

399   as access to green space and indicators of health and recovery from illness (Kaplan and Kaplan, 1989,

400   Mitchell and Popham, 2008). There is indeed an extensive and broad literature on the evaluation of public

401   space and the underlying need for such measurement. However, many of these indicators measure aspects

402   and factors which are associated with place-making and place-keeping, or partly measure them but do not

403   directly measure these concepts per se. This points to a critical gap in knowledge.

404   There are many existing awards, competitions and measures of quality in open, green and public spaces,

405   including international 'Nations in Bloom' award, the Entente Florale, the international Blue Flag Award

406   for good-quality beaches and marinas, the UK's Green Flag Award and the Nordic Green Space Award

407   for good-quality parks, public and natural spaces. Such award schemes represent good practice in

408   maintaining and managing public space (Barber, 2005). Other indicators include the measurement of

409   attitudes and satisfaction, the actual provision of services and facilities, community involvement

410   (Carmona et al., 2004b), surveys of public space use, staff retention and skills development (CABE

411   Space, 2010) and evaluation of procurement and contracting-out processes (Barber, 2005).

412   Value-for-money is an important consideration for all sectors, and is assured only if taken into account

413   early on in the place-keeping process to ensure fair competition (Grimsey and Lewis, 2005). It is argued

414   that insufficient attention is given to the long-term evaluation of value-for-money (Broadbent et al.,

415   2003). While exactly how long-term place-keeping is considered to be is unclear, some PPPs and

416   contracts can extend to as long as sixty years, indicating the importance of evaluation both throughout the

417   process and once a project is operational (Grimsey and Lewis, 2005).

418   There are clearly many aspects of place-keeping that can be measured, but others that are less simple or

419   tangible to evaluate. The quality of landscape, for example, is a complex concept which is difficult to

420   measure, in part due to its dynamic nature and relationship with the seasons (Burton and Rymsa-Fitschen,

421   2008). These can include benefits such as aesthetic beauty and air quality that cannot be captured using

422   traditional financial valuation methods (Choumert and Salanié, 2008). To some extent this is because such

423   aspects are subjectively assessed on the part of the person experiencing the space (Dempsey, 2008). There

424   is a small but growing body of research which looks to apply a monetary value to public space and its

425   associated social, economic and environmental benefits (Mielke, 2008, Allin and Henneberry, 2010). A

426   significant challenge to achieving this is how to quantify in financial terms non-physical and indirect

427   aspects of public space and the place-making/ place-keeping processes underpinning them (Bell et al.,

428   2007). For example, health benefits might be quantified as savings made to a hospital's budget (ibid.)

429   while anti-social behaviour reduction might be measured as savings to fly-tipping budgets; but it is less

430   clear how biodiversity might be measured financially (Chevassus-au-Louis et al., 2009). It is therefore

431   often the case that one is not able to measure a number of place-keeping aspects. This may also due to

432   lack of skills, but also because of time and cost constraints. It should also be noted that benefits

433   experienced in a space as well as user needs may change over time alongside the changing nature of the

434   space itself, which adds further complexity to evaluating place-keeping (Mielke, 2008).

435   **Policy: contextual frameworks**

436   It is clear from the literature that the political context has a profound influence on place-keeping, how it is

437   manifested, who is involved and how it is funded. Within the dominant paradigm of sustainability which

438   increasingly underpins policy, research and practice, a conceptual link (albeit as yet not fully tested) has

439   been made between increasing the quality of the physical environment and improving social disadvantage

440   in neighbourhoods (Walsh, 2001). This link is manifested as the 'area-based initiative' which has been

441 applied to deprived neighbourhoods throughout Europe (after Carpenter, 2006). Put simply, the argument

442 is that urban regeneration in a deprived area can combat urban poverty and the ensuing environmental

443 degradation, and promote economic growth (Urban Task Force, 1999).

444 An example of an area-based initiative is the widespread adoption around Europe of 'urban renaissance'

445 policies which aim to promote economic growth and combat urban poverty and decay' (Urban Task

446 Force, 1999). Government policy, e.g. in the UK and the Netherlands, promote urban living and working

447 in vibrant, compact and sustainable communities (Stead and Hoppenbrouwer, 2004, VROM, 1997). In the

448 UK, this has been translated into policy focus on liveability which has been described as a necessary

449 ingredient of a sustainable community (Brook Lyndhurst, 2004). Liveability policies impinge on place-

450 keeping because they 'focus on people's perception and use of their local built environment within their

451 everyday lives, and how well that local environment serves a range of human needs' (Stevens, 2009, p.

452 374). Thinking about place-making and place-keeping, relevant aspects include how a space is designed

453 to attract people to come and use it, and also how durable and robust is the physical environment.

454 However, regeneration funding on the whole does not focus on the long-term management of places:

455 current interpretations and applications of urban regeneration (certainly in the UK) appear to be

456 synonymous with place-making, with no provision for place-keeping. Rare exceptions to this rule include

457 the UK's 5 year Single Regeneration Budget and 10-year New Deal for Communities programmes,

458 providing initial public funds to create third sector organisations that might be involved in place-keeping

459 over a longer period of time to become self-funding (Lawless et al., 2010).

460 Such area-based regeneration is argued to be a powerful political tool as it reinforces the perception that

461 deprivation is bounded within particular areas and, as such, funding in these areas can seem to have a

462 greater impact (after Carpenter, 2006). This comes with the caveat that such area-based regeneration can

463 have unsustainable consequences such as a rise in property prices, the displacement of local communities

464 (who may be priced out of the market) and potential gentrification (ibid., Walsh, 2001). Furthermore,

465 following this paper's contention that place-keeping does not necessarily follow regeneration efforts once

466 the funding is spent, it is clear that there is a need to examine how effective such regeneration is in the

467   long term or if only *temporary liveability* is achieved. It may be possible to turn around disadvantaged

468   areas but only if a long-term support mechanism is in place, which is incompatible with short-term

469   political goals and funding streams (Hull, 2006).

470   Historically, for the most part, public space in many parts of Europe is state-provided and state-managed

471   (Carmona et al., 2004a) although this is increasingly changing. There is growing acceptance of the need

472   for alternative service delivery, or 'any form of public provision other than direct delivery by the state to

473   the public' (Cohn, 2008, p. 32). This has been attributed to a new regime of benchmarks and best practice,

474   propelled by what Cheung describes as the 'ascendancy of New Public Management' (NPM) (Cheung,

475   2009, p. 1034). This is exemplified by the freeing up of the market to improve the quality of public

476   services and the performance of public agencies (Taylor et al., 2001, Lindholst, 2008) emphasising the

477   decentralisation of responsibilities (Carmona et al., 2004a).

478   A dominant manifestation of NPM is the public-private partnership, mentioned earlier. The PPP is based

479   on financial investment from both parties; the project is carried out by the private stakeholder with

480   ultimate responsibility held by the public stakeholder. PPPs are widespread in some European countries

481   such as the UK, France, Netherlands, Italy and Germany (Bovaird, 2004) but less well-known in others

482   such as Denmark. The PPP emerged in the UK and Germany as part of the respective governments' drive

483   to modernise, reorganise and improve public services by harnessing the skills of other sectors (Bovaird

484   and Löffler, 2002). An important example of the PPP in the urban context is the Business Improvement

485   Districts (BID), a model which finances capital and maintenance improvements to a designated area

486   through by mandatory taxes/ fees paid by the private sector (Kreutz, 2009). BIDs are supported in policy

487   in Germany (Section 171f of the Federal Building Code (BauGesetzbuch BauGB)) (ibid.) and the UK

488   (Local Government Act, 2003) (HMSO, 2003, Hogg et al., 2007).

489   NPM critics point out that the top-down bureaucratic nature of NPM-led public service provision and

490   delivery can lead to inflexible and inefficient processes that are difficult to speed up or change when there

491   is a need to adapt to, for example, economic recession (Cohn, 2008). It has also been pointed out that this

492   approach can generate conflict between service funders and providers when public and private interests

493   are not compatible (i.e. public good versus profit-driven interests) (Taylor et al., 2001). There is also a

494   danger of interests becoming overly-compatible, where long-term partnerships 'may be suspected of

495   undermining competition between potential providers' of management services (Bovaird, 2004, p. 200).

496   **Coordinating place-keeping: bringing the dimensions together**

497   Alongside these inter-related dimensions, the contextual variables at play in place-keeping point to the

498   need for taking an holistic approach to place-keeping through close coordination and good leadership,

499   especially where ownership and management of spaces become divorced (Carmona et al., 2004a,

500   Westling et al., 2009). Such coordination should aim to ensure that high-quality place-keeping is

501   delivered by skilled service providers competitively to a high standard which is evaluated regularly. It has

502   already been pointed out that all three sectors should be involved in place-keeping – public, private and

503   voluntary –to make the most of a wide range of necessary skills, knowledge and resources which would

504   be missing in a unilateral or bilateral partnership.

505   Effective place-keeping coordination can be achieved when collectively stakeholders have both a strategic

506   and a local focus on long-term quality and efficiency, which is underpinned by reliable resources with a

507   monitoring process in place. There is also a need for knowledge transfer among and between stakeholders

508   which can help raise the profile of place-keeping. In this way, it is hoped that such an approach to place-

509   keeping can bring about political commitment and real policy change.

510   Coordinating place-keeping in practice can however be difficult. For example, stakeholders often have

511   different underlying interests: for example, different sectors may not be able to commit time and

512   resources to place-keeping activities depending on the varying short- or long-term economic interests in

513   the project (Adair et al., 2000). Another barrier to place-keeping coordination relate to fragmented

514   funding streams which have conditions attached for funding to be allocated within a limited time period,

515   which can undermine the long-term approach required for place-keeping (Burton and Dempsey, 2010). In

516   practice, this is manifested as an over-emphasis on the capital funds that often accompany place-making

517   which, for accounting reasons, cannot be allocated against long-term care and maintenance. A further

518   barrier relates to the management approach taken: 'over-management' can create commodified and

519   homogenised spaces, while 'under-management' can result in unsafe and unused spaces (Carmona, 2010).

520   To address these barriers and the overriding gap in knowledge about place-keeping, it is necessary to

521   examine examples of place-keeping in practice in a rigorous way to analyse the effectiveness of different

522   approaches taken in practice.

523   **Implications of place-keeping in practice: scope for empirical research**

524   While this paper provides an important first step, to understand the concept of place-keeping fully, it is

525   necessary to examine it empirically and in practice. This calls for an identification of different place-

526   keeping approaches, which, as this paper suggests, are diverse and numerous, particularly in light of the

527   number of inter-linked dimensions and the potential stakeholders involved. It also calls for evidence to

528   test the extent to which engaging in place-keeping brings about social, economic and environmental

529   benefits for users over the long term. Furthermore, in light of the current economic downturn, there is a

530   clear need for finding innovative and low-cost ways of implementing long-term maintenance and

531   management, particularly when, as this paper has indicated, in practice place-keeping is low down on the

532   political agenda.

533   The 'MP4: Making Places Profitable, Public and Private Open Spaces' project goes some way to

534   addressing some of these gaps in knowledge. This is an EU INTERREG-funded project which brings

535   together urban and rural landscape practitioners from the North Sea Region countries of England,

536   Scotland, Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium with academics to explore place-

537   keeping in practice. The research aims of the MP4 project are to:

538   •   explore the extent to which positive socio-economic impacts of open space improvements are/

539   can be maintained in the long run;

540   •   provide workable solutions to address maintenance and management requirements with a view to

541   mainstream best practice in place-keeping across the North Sea Region; and,

542   •   explore how place-keeping innovations can be embedded into policies at every level.

543   The MP4 project explores examples of place-keeping practice in seven European countries to engage in a

544   process of transnational learning in a range of public and private open spaces within different political,

545   social, economic and environmental contexts. It also examines and evaluates innovative place-keeping

546   practice, both existing and occurring as part of the project itself in a number of 'test-bed' pilot projects.

547   More information can be found at www.mp4-interreg.eu .

548   While this project focuses much-needed attention on place-keeping, this discussion in this paper also

549   points to a wider need for place-keeping practitioners to engage in processes of post-occupancy

550   evaluation to ascertain the extent to which long-term open space management does and should achieve

551   project aims and supports users. To date, this has not been conducted with any critical appraisal (see

552   Gallacher, 2005 for a notable exception). This points to a significant gap between place-making and

553   place-keeping, which runs parallel to the perennial problem of how to secure funding over the long term:

554   there is no requirement for open space designers and managers to conduct an evaluation of a space once it

555   has been created or regenerated, and there is certainly no mechanism in place to assess the extent to which

556   a space is successful over the long term. Along with the non-statutory status of open space provision and

557   management, this highlights the precariousness of place-keeping in practice. Having said this, the

558   importance of local open space cannot be underestimated, nor can the attachment felt by residents and

559   users, indicating that a community-oriented place-keeping approach may be a particularly effective one.

560   Research is clearly needed which examines and evaluates the practice of place-keeping if the social,

561   environmental and economic benefits of open space are to be fully understood and harnessed for all

562   residents and users.

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Figure 2b. A process is influenced by the type of product required.

Figure 2c. A two-way relationship between process and product where place-keeping is considered at the beginning.