

# Glasgow's Role in the Success of The Place Standard Tool



## Context

The origins of the Place Standard Tool are firmly embedded in Glasgow's role as one of the 8 Scottish Test Sites for the Equally Well Initiative created by the Ministerial Taskforce on Inequalities (2008-2010). Glasgow focused on bringing Public Health and Spatial Planning together, Currie's Healthy Sustainable Neighbourhoods Model (2008), as well as building on Glasgow's award-winning approaches to community engagement (scrap books; influencing PAS VOiCE programme; and influencing National Standards for Community Engagement). The final recommendation from the Scottish Government's Ministerial Taskforce for Inequalities was that the work done in Glasgow should be shared and developed across Scotland, and that a National Place Standard be developed. This resulted in Etive Currie from Glasgow's Planning Service being invited to join the national design team to develop a place standard for Scotland.



## What Happened

The National Team was made up of representatives from the Scottish Government's Architecture and Design Directorate (now Architecture & Planning); Architecture and Design Scotland; Public Health Scotland and Etive Currie from Glasgow City Council. From 2012 – 2014 there was a series of workshops, focus groups and individual conversations run by the National Place Standard Team establishing what was required to create a place and to change a place. The collaboration between the core team was what made design of the Place Standard Tool so successful, and it is the continued collaboration that makes the success of the tool, which continues 9 years after the launch in 2015. The Improvement Service joined the National Team after the launch. The Place Standard tool went on to win the UK+ Ireland RTPI for Health and Wellbeing Award in 2017 (the first time a tool has won any category in the history of the RTPI Awards). Etive was the only planning officer to be invited to develop the Place Standard Tool and has continued to influence policy and practice not just in Scotland but in the rest of the UK and Ireland, as well as Europe and America's through the Council's ICLEI partnership.

## Areas of Collaboration

From the beginning of the design process all the partners wanted to be as open and collaborative as possible. The team held a series of workshops where they would present thoughts and to sense check that the approach and contents were right. This included sessions with public sector organisations, private sector, third sector bodies, community organisations, consultants, and experts in the field of planning and urban design.

After the launch of the Place Standard Tool, the Chief Architect for Scotland wrote to all 32 Local Authorities community planning partnerships to ask if they would test the Place Standard Tool as part of their preparations for the Locality Plan process. The Improvement Service presented the Place Standard Tool to all 32 Councils. Almost all Councils used the tool in the preparation of their Locality Plans. Shetland Island Council and East Ayrshire Council were earlier adopters who took the Place Standard Tool and used it for community and stakeholder engagement when preparing their Local Development Plans and both councils shared the data collected across all their council services.

The National Team went on to create a Local Authority Place Standard Leads group, where they asked for 1 or 2 people from any service to be the place standard leads for their Local Authority. All 32 Local Authorities signed up and went on to create the Place Alliance which met 4 times a year and celebrated all things Place Standard as well as finding solutions for any difficulties any local authority was encountering.

## Overall Result

In 2017, the World Health Organisation (WHO) approached the National Place Standard team and asked if they could host their International Healthy Cities Staff and tell them about the Place Standard Tool. The National Team hosted a two-day introduction and



training session for the WHO. At this session, Glasgow's Etive Currie demonstrated in her presentation how the Place Standard Tool could be used to discuss at a very local level the UN-SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals), this was the main reason the WHO adopted the use of the tool across the European Network of Healthy Cities. Public Health Scotland have been the main partner involved in working with the Healthy Cities Network Promoting the Place Standard Tool. Etive Currie went on secondment to Public Health Scotland for a year to help with training the Healthy Cities network to use the Place Standard Tool. The tool is now being used across 16 different European countries and has been translated into 15 different languages. In Europe, Scotland, Ireland, and the rest of the UK, Etive has represented Glasgow City Council presenting and training thousands of professionals and communities to use the Place Standard Tool. In her international work she has influenced municipalities to use the Place Standard Tool as the main tool for Engagement. The Netherlands, Sweden, Norway and Denmark now use the PST as their main engagement tool across their municipalities.

The Place Standard Tool is used in Scotland regularly across all 32 Local Authorities, as well as third sector organisations, and by private sector planning and urban design consultants. To-date the Place Standard Tool has been used to influence community plans, spatial planning development plans, masterplans, planning applications and community action plans. It has been nine years since the launch, and it has now been embedded in the Scottish Government's National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) as the tool to be used to inform 20-minute neighbourhoods work and local place plans work.

The best quote about the Place Standard Tool was the one made by the WHO – "This is Scotland's gift to the World". The WHO have asked that the Place Standard Team consider taking the tool Global. Also, Public Health Scotland will become the host of a Scottish Collaborating Centre because of the Place Standard Partnership and our collaborative, place-based approach.

## Lessons Learned

The tool has been so successful because of the collaboration between the partners and the willingness of everyone to pick up any request and find time to help above and beyond members daily roles within their individual organisations. Glasgow initially did not use the Place Standard Tool for the preparation of their locality plans and could have done more to celebrate and promote the work that Etive Currie did for Glasgow Planning. The Place Standard Tool originally did not realise the need for a rural specific version of the tool. This work is now being undertaken by Etive and staff from Public Health Scotland. Including children and young people was also not being included in the early stages of the process. The children and young people's versions of the tool are now being used for the mandatory Play Sufficiency Assessments across the Scottish Local Authorities. The tool has been most successful in authorities where there has been senior officer and political support for the tool.

