

WORKING IN BIRMINGHAM

Date:
 Location:
 ASF Team:
 Partners:
 Donors:
 Project Type:

2009
 Birmingham, UK
 J. Burnell
 Multistory, 00:/, MADE & DNA
 Urban Living
 Live Project

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Sense of Place was an ambitious collaboration between art and architecture organisations to explore and capture the social assets of an area, or people's 'sense of place' to inform a master planning process.

The project contributed valuable knowledge to the current debate about the role and value of consultation in the regeneration process. The programme was developed in order to:

- * Reveal the richness of social, cultural and work networks;
- * Understand the perceptions and meanings people place on neighbourhood;
- * Activate new communities of interest that transcend ethnic, religious, age and economic backgrounds.



METHODOLOGY OF WORK

The programme was based on an action research approach culminating in a catalyst event, which aimed to trigger a scaling up of the process.

Throughout the six month project programme, the ASF-UK team carried out two community mapping exercises: initial community mapping activity; the Sight and Sound workshop, within the local school with year four students.

The aim of both was to explore mapping techniques in order to uncover key themes, which emerged from the process and contributed to the proposed master plan. Additionally, ASF-UK worked with the consortium team and professionals to explore practical ways to integrate information.



GOAL ACHIEVED



At the conclusion of the Sense of Place programme, the consortium had:

- * Piloted new methods of community action planning (social mapping);
- * Developed a toolkit of practice to share with other professionals and community;
- * Worked with the donors and development agencies in order to explore ways in which findings from the research could be included in the master plan.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVE

There is an aim to build on this initial programme by developing a longer project based on these findings, which can be further embedded into the community and planning process.

