



International Making Cities Livable (IMCL)

Highlights of the “Ecology of Place”

Conference

Poundbury / Dorchester, UK

October 10-14, 2023

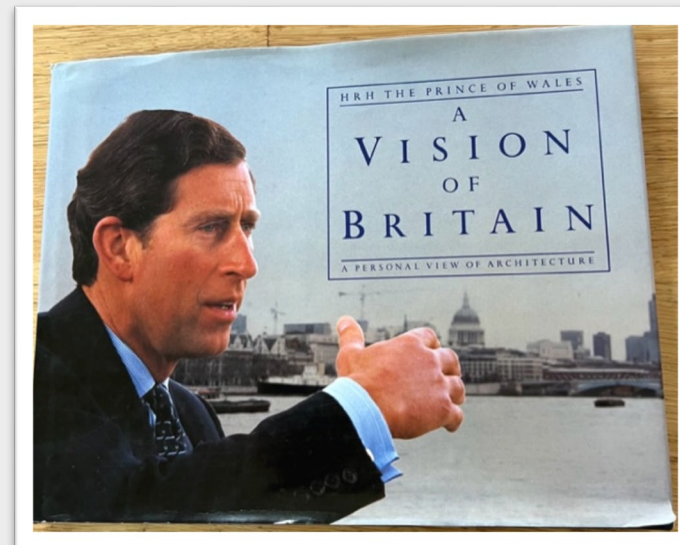
International Making Cities Livable



- The International Making Cities Livable organization was founded by English architectural scholar, Suzanne Lennard, and her husband, a Viennese medical sociologist, Henry Lennard. Together they studied how people use space, and the qualities and characteristics that make a city livable.
- Since the mid-80's they have been bringing people together from all over the world—decision-makers, academics, planners, urban design professionals, architects, and landscape architects—to share research and offer best practices for making our cities more livable.
- While Suzanne and Henry are no longer living, IMCL's traditions and commitment to humanistic design are carried on by Executive Director, Michael Mehaffy, and the organization's group of IMCL stewards.

Prince of Wales, now King Charles

- On a similar timeframe, the then Prince of Wales, now King Charles, was concerned about the effect of modern architecture on people and the environment.
- His concerns, first voiced in 1984, led him to write and present his first TV documentary: *A Vision of Britain* in 1988.



It was a reaction to Post World War II modern architecture (Bauhaus / International Style) which in many cases made big statements, but lacked more humanistic qualities that create comfortable places to live, work, and gather.





London's skyline is a mix of old and new—



The then Prince of Wales emphasized the need to preserve the character of towns and cities and the desirability of human scale architecture and urban design, that uses local materials and creates a sense of place.



Ten Principles of Town Planning

- **Place** - Respect the land and create architecture that respects nature.
- **Hierarchy** – Consider the size of the building in relation to its importance, and the relative significance of the different elements of the building.
- **Scale** – Buildings must relate to human proportions and then respect the scale of the buildings around them.
- **Harmony** – The playing together of the parts. Each building that goes beside another must be in tune with its neighbor.
- **Enclosure** – Cohesion, continuity and enclosure create a kind of a magic.
- **Materials** – Use of local materials helps to create a sense of place.
- **Decoration** – Use of repetition and pattern to add interest to the form.
- **Art** – While decoration usually includes repetition, a work of art is unique.
- **Signs and Lights** – Avoid the proliferation of corporate images and plastic signs.
- **Community** – People should be involved willingly from the beginning in the improvement of their surroundings.

1. Poundbury as a Laboratory for Town Planning and True Urbanism

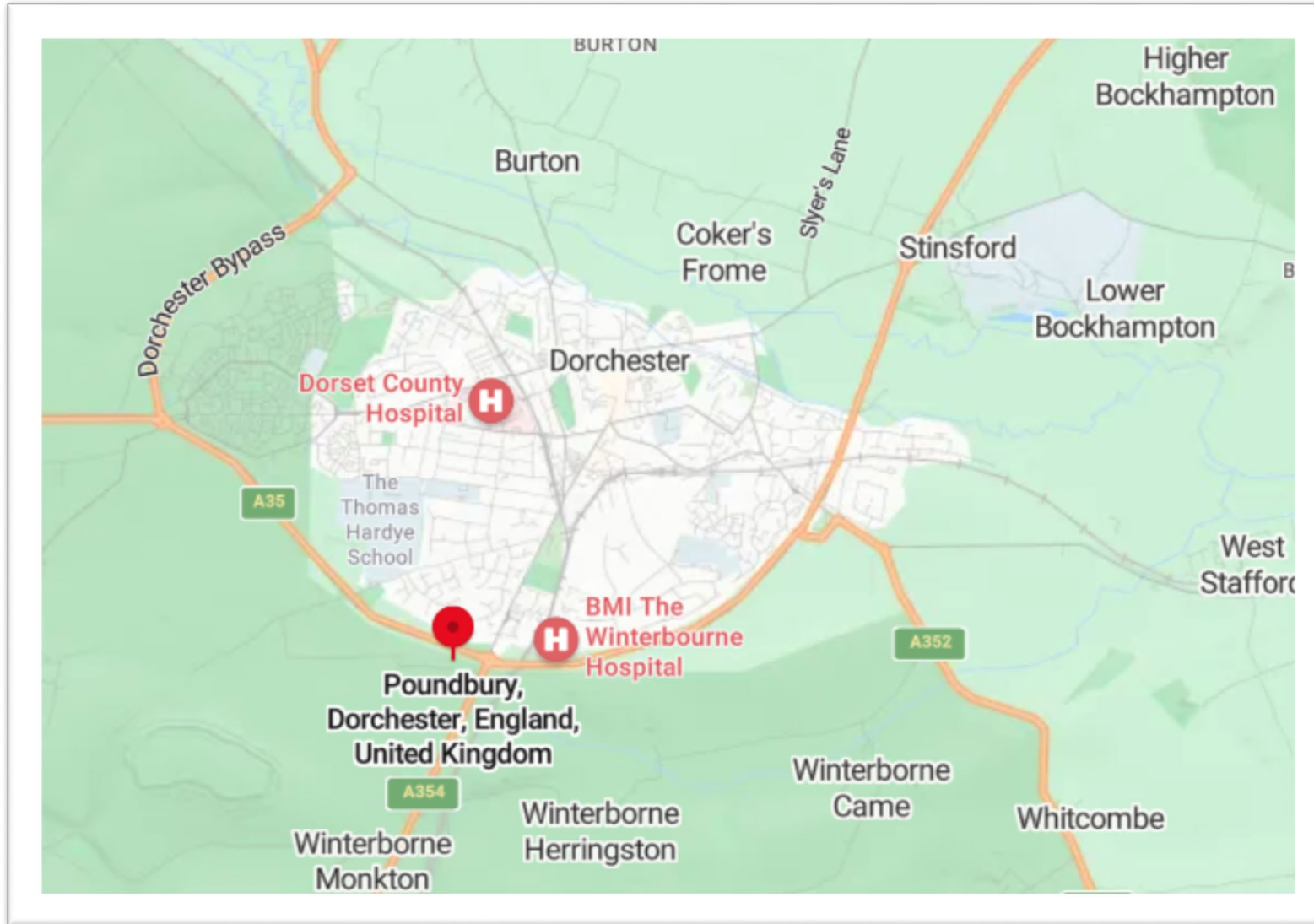


- Poundbury was the first town where, with the Prince's guidance, these principles were put into action.

Where is Dorchester / Poundbury, UK?



Dorchester/Poundbury



Dorchester

- Historic market town dating back to Roman times
- The Romans defeated the local tribes by 70 AD and established a garrison that became the town the Romans named **Durnovaria**.



Poundbury

- Experimental urban extension on the western outskirts of Dorchester, in the County of Dorset, England. It was founded in 1993 by then Prince of Wales, Charles III, now King Charles.







Mixed Use



DUCHY of CORNWALL



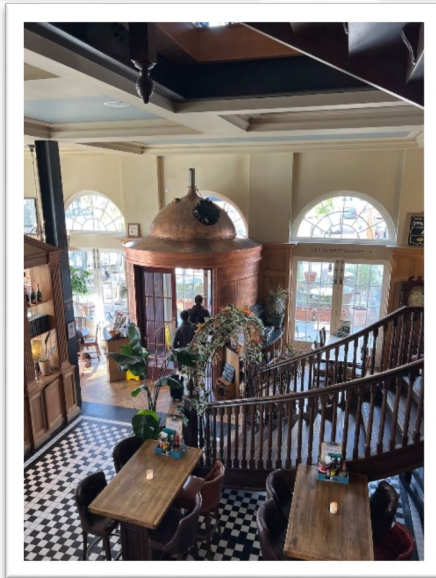
- Integrated through the development
- 229 businesses
- 2,329 jobs
- Independent artisan businesses through to established professional services
- Workshops, retail, offices and manufacturing

Beautiful Architectural Design



- Public buildings should be beautiful.
- There should be a hierarchy that allows the public buildings to stand out.
- Housing is less dominant and utilizes a variety of mostly vernacular (locally based through time) architectural styles.
- Use of local materials from specified quarries

Examples of Civic Spaces and Downtown Hotel



Examples of Commercial Development –



Examples of Residential Development –

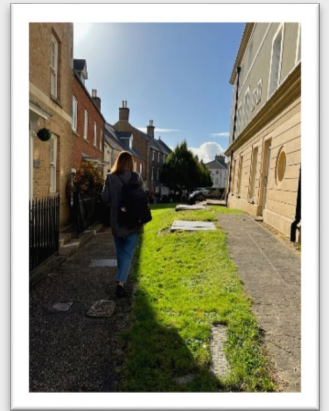


Building Walls

1. Building Walls may be built of stone from the Hamstone, Purdeck, Portland or Beamester quarries.
2. Building Walls may be built of brick from the Swanage, Ipstock or Butterly kilns. The type and colour is to be approved by the P.A.R.C.
3. Building Walls may be built of cement block and render.
4. Building Walls of Accessory Buildings may be built of the above listed materials and additionally of jointed boarding.
5. Lintels over openings shall be built of stone, brick or hardwood.

Connection to the Street

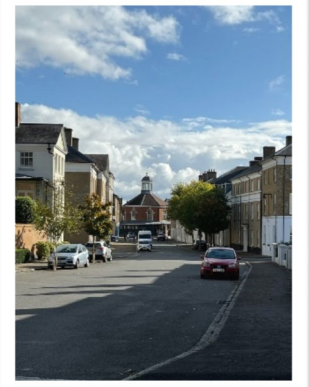
- All doors connecting to the street. Some have garages. Some garages have been built to the rear.
- A series of sidewalks and pathways.
- The buildings do not include porches and other features—in general, residential areas lacked some vibrancy that comes with more interaction and connection with the street.



An Inviting Public Realm



- Squares and public buildings
- Trails and sidewalks extending through the neighborhoods and leading to the City Center.



Jobs / Affordability

- Population of about 4,600
- Approximately 2,329 jobs
- Mixed Income Neighborhoods 35%
Social Housing (Affordable Housing)
spread throughout the community



Active Transportation

- No 10 and No. 6 Bus routes connected to nearby Dorchester
- About a 10-minute drive
- In Town—car, bicycle, pedestrian travel



Sustainability / Resilience / Biophilia

- 1/3 of the community is open space
- Net Zero Carbon community
- It is walkable but there is still a lot of car use
- Guidelines on local building materials and plant materials



Poundbury Design and Community Code 2019

...planting of **appropriate indigenous species**, should be preceded by arboricultural advice on height, rate of growth, spread of canopy and roots.

Hedges should be of an appropriate indigenous species, and be trimmed regularly to avoid loss of light to neighbouring properties. Cypresses, Leylandii, or similar fast growing species are not appropriate.

One citizen's only criticism of the Town was the requirement for wood trimmed windows that tend to become drafty over time.

He said others would like more flexibility about the colors they can use to paint their doors.



Critical Success Factors



DUCHY of CORNWALL

**Single landowner
and/or vision: patient
approach to profit**

**Consortium – all
parties committed to
the same quality
outcomes**

**PM oversight of
infrastructure &
and construction
quality**

**Ongoing oversight by
quality and
experienced
Masterplanner**

**Maintaining quality –
Code, Covenant
Controls and Estate
Man Co's**

**Landowner controls –
development to
commercial lettings**

**Progressive,
supportive (at least
receptive) local
planning authority**



2. Major themes from the Conference



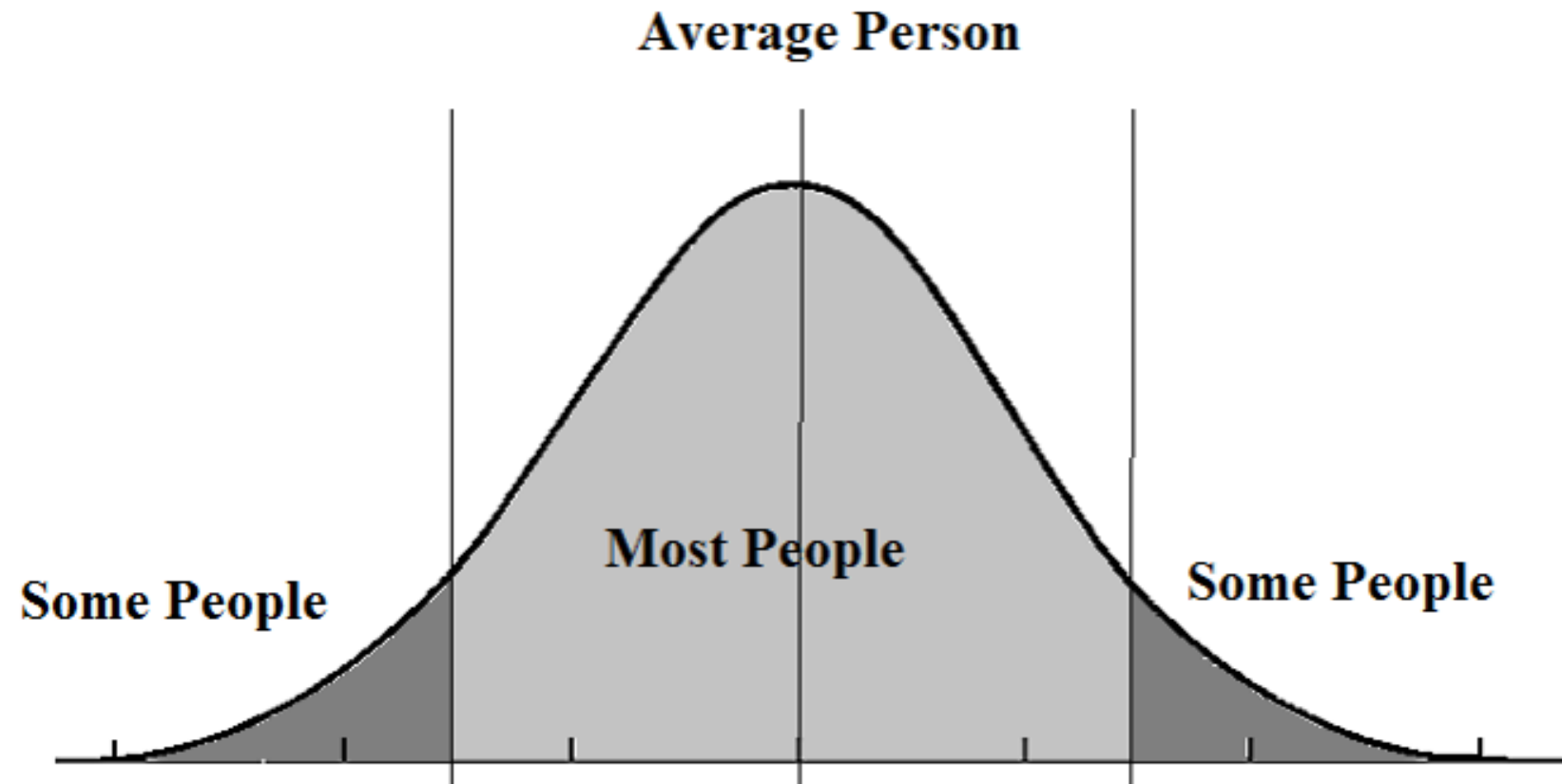
- Beauty matters.
- The Public Realm is the connective tissue of our cities.
- Civic spaces can create a sense of vitality and belonging. Resilience is also social resilience.
- Many of the same characteristics that encourage a connection with nature also support sustainability and resilience.

Beauty matters!!



- Beauty is subjective in some ways, but not in others.
- Researchers are using scans to see how beauty affects the brain.
- Buildings that are not constructed with a human scale tend to create stress and are therefore harmful to human health.
- Beauty nourishes the emotional brain. It is a necessity not a luxury.
- People retreat from ugly surroundings.
- ***We shape our buildings and our communities and then they, in turn, shape us.***

Response to beauty in our environments tends to follow a bell curve – across all cultures



Connected Spaces are the Connective Tissue of our Cities



- Public Space should be the new frame for any urban design.
- Public Space / Public Realm is where people who do not know one another can interact.
- In these spaces, we all begin to become familiar and comfortable with different people from an early age.

Civic Spaces can Create a Sense of Belonging / Vitality



- One of the reasons a town square should be beautiful is that it draws people to it and provides emotional nourishment and a sense of belonging.
- Spaces that have features that people relate to, helps give them a sense that their story is part of the city's story and it helps to provide a sense of belonging and community.
- Civic spaces / city squares help create norms of behavior. They are a place to learn to negotiate conflict and interact in positive ways.

Sustainability and creating connections with nature

- Locating farms at the edge of cities creates a nearby food supply, which supports sustainability and resilience.
- Irrigated croplands at edge of communities also helps protect them from wildland fires.



Photo credit: Francesca Jones for The New York Times







With thanks to Michael Mehaffy, the IMCL Board Stewards, the Dutchy of Cornwall, and all who made the conference possible! – Nancy and David Woltering