

# recommendations summary

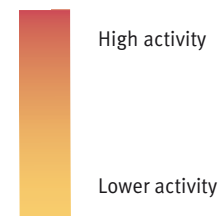
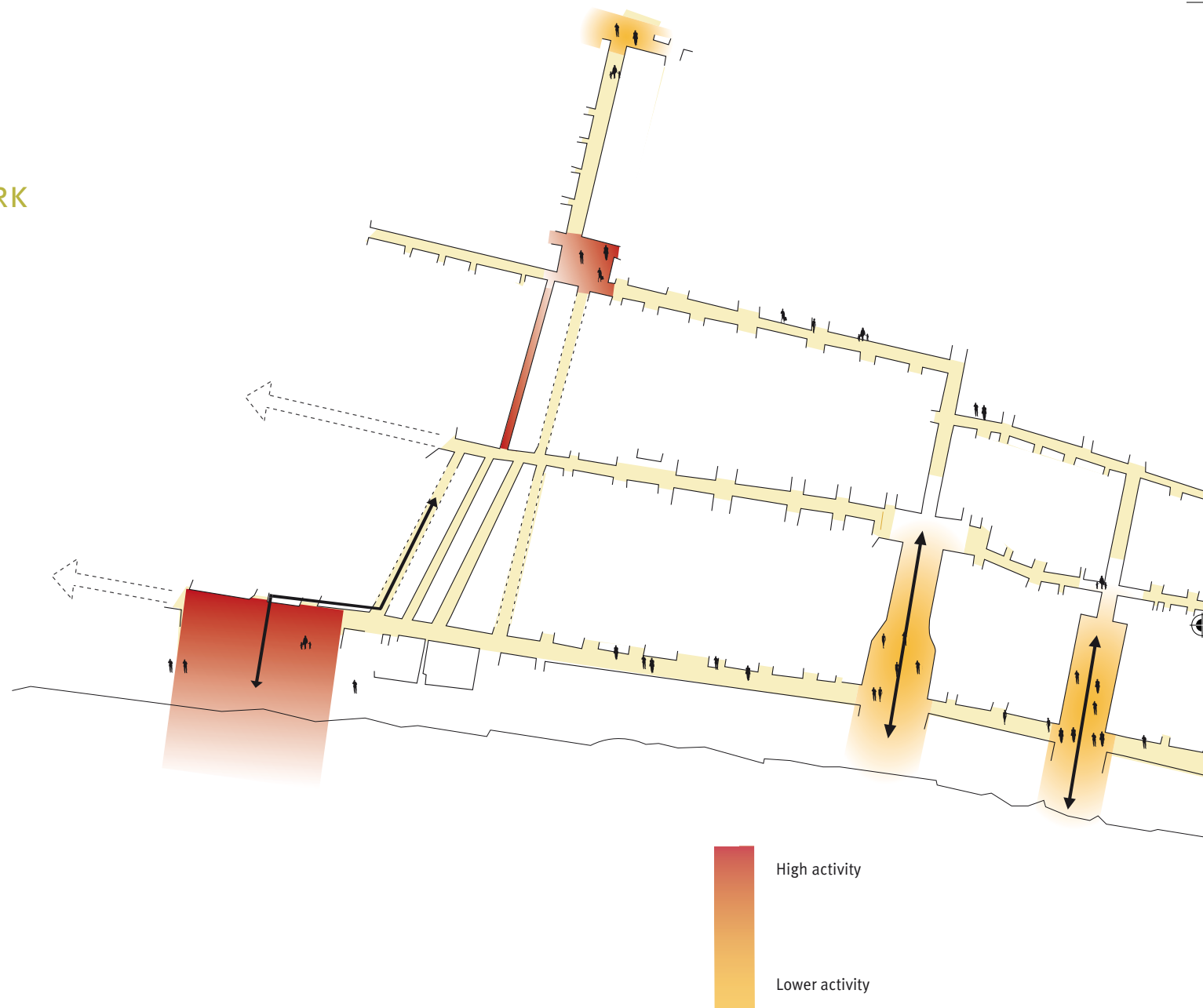
## A HOLISTIC PUBLIC SPACE NETWORK

### A new network

This section outlines recommendations to create a series of destinations along high quality links. The overall quality of the city will be improved by considering the most heavily used areas as parts of a wider network rather than individual spaces.

The diagram to the right illustrates such a holistic network of links and destinations based on pedestrian movements observed in the city. A well-connected network, however, does not mean that activity is spread equally throughout the city. The diagram to the right illustrates possible locations of activity hot spots. Hot spots are nodes that create a series of invitations, attracting a higher intensity of activity.

Each one of these “people magnets” is connected to the next, thus creating an accessible and sustainable public realm. This diagram focuses on the main pedestrian routes, linking important destinations such as transport interchanges, cultural facilities and commercial city areas. However the streets omitted from this diagram should not be forgotten. On the contrary, these streets are subject to a similar quality criteria as those shown.



All the spaces highlighted in the diagram are ‘hot spots’ (people magnets), but some spots are ‘hotter’ (will attract more people) than others...

## THE FUTURE HOT SPOTS

The people magnets indicated here either already act as hot spots today, or are oriented so as to easily attract greater activity in future. Suggestions for new hot spots are based on the potential of the space to attract activity.

Simply creating a wider network, however, is not enough to create a series of lively public spaces. Spaces must also invite people to utilise them. By identifying the types of user groups and activities that take place in cities, as indicated previously in this section, public space can be designed to attract users.

Research from around the world indicates that when spaces are carefully designed, well placed, and inviting, people will use them. Brighton & Hove, with its numerous attractions and cultural amenities, is already an attractive place to be. But subtle interventions, designed with the needs of people in mind, can go a long way towards making the city even better.

This section has shown some internationally successful best practice methods. In the next section, Space Programmes have been developed that give guidance as to how these overarching principles can be applied to specific sites in Brighton & Hove.



## PROCESS – HOW TO TAKE THE STRATEGIES FORWARD

### New ways of thinking

Issues concerning the public realm are often dealt with by numerous different departments in a municipality. Such is the case in Brighton & Hove. Traffic issues are dealt with by one department, planning issues by another, conservation by a third etc. If Brighton & Hove is to develop public spaces of high urban quality, a much more holistic approach to developing the public realm is required.

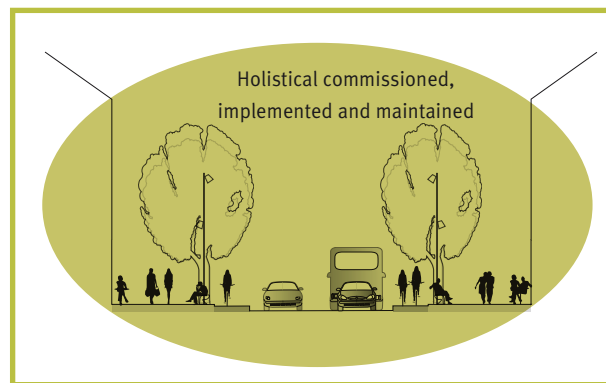
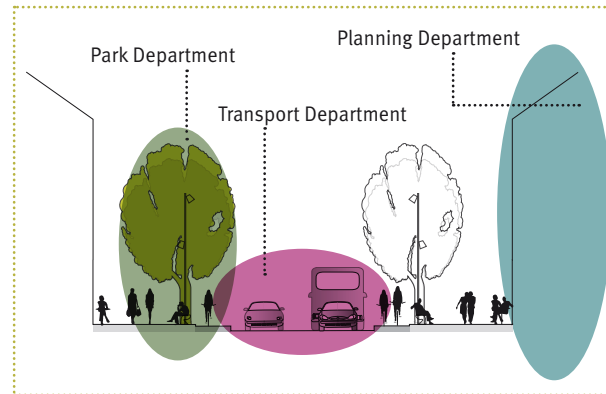
### A people oriented methodology

The introduction and analysis sections in this document present a new way of thinking, derived from a much more people oriented approach to planning.

Traffic issues are currently given first priority at all levels of scale despite the fact that in some streets there are more than twice as many pedestrians as vehicles.

“People qualities” and pedestrian desire lines are not prioritised in the design of streets and spaces. The result is an environment in which people make their way over guard railings and outside pen crossings. This is because people act like people – and not necessarily as the traffic planners would like them to do.

Brighton & Hove has the image of a city with a diverse and inclusive population. But the use of the city’s public spaces shows another picture. In fact many age groups are excluded, especially children, teens, families and the elderly.



The numbers of young people visiting Brighton on holidays and at weekends further sustains a rather singular and youthful use pattern within the city’s spaces.

These are just some of the problems identified. But Brighton & Hove has so many qualities. The traffic through the city is not the problem in itself – rather the design of streets and the lack of spaces for people activities. And this problem can be dealt with.

The strategies and space programmes in this study illustrate ways to deal with these issues. They introduce a new methodology which will prioritise people when future public realm improvements are planned.

### Internal process and change

If the strategies and projects illustrated in this document are to be realised, a new mind set needs to be introduced. Creating change for the better in Brighton & Hove has to start with change from within the Council.

At a final internal workshop, participants reviewed the three main project processes: Commissioning, Implementation and Management. The workshop resulted in initial recommendations in three categories.

- Education
- Communication
- Internal process.

A very brief summary of these initial discussions follows:



**01. Education**

The fundamental change in the way of understanding problems and working towards people oriented design and city development has to be revealed to everyone within the organization through educational activities.

Education can take place at all levels of the city and the organization: At the level of regular staff, managers, steering committee and councillors.

The project managers are a key to success.

The project managers are both running the day-to-day development of the projects based on internal dialogue with the staff, at the same time ensuring approval with steering committees and councillors.

Depending on the level of ambitions the education could be stretched to groups of citizens, representative and stakeholders.

Through education and a thorough introduction of quality criteria and toolkit – a good practise checklist, the regular staff would be enabled to handle small scale projects with very little management or involvement of outside consultants.

Finally, the message needs to reach committee members ensuring political buy in and long term investments.



**02. Communication**

In future, new strategies and projects need to be communicated throughout the organisation to ensure a much more co-ordinated approach to delivery. Communication needs to be improved at two levels:

1. Within the individual project team, there needs to be clear and well coordinated communication between the implementation team, the management team and the steering group.
2. Across departments improved communication is required to ensure that the ongoing activities and efforts of different departments are coordinated towards the same goal, and all relevant parties are involved in the process. Communication across departments is especially important for medium to large scale projects.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN 3 CATEGORIES



**03. Internal process**

For medium to large scale projects an improved internal process was discussed.

1. Firstly, a clear client or owner of each project is required.
2. A proper public life and public space analysis should illustrate current problems and potentials
3. A project brief / space programme needs to be developed for each project

The brief should contain the following:

- Primary and secondary aims – what is the vision?
- Clear problems and potentials – what should be achieved?
- Ambitions for life and activities within the space – what should take place?
- Spatial strategies and links to the overall strategies of this document – how is it organised?
- A budget – what are the economic limits?
- Goals for sustainability – how is sustainability ensured within the project?
- Levels of management – how will the project be managed after completion?

4. Designs should prioritise the needs of people and draw on the good practice checklist.
5. Building projects should be implemented and delivered ensuring finely-detailed elements proportioned in human scale.
6. All schemes should be evaluated and reviewed after completion, and if necessary amended to resolve problems identified.

## A BETTER CITY EVERY DAY

### Urban Design on the agenda

To realise the recommendations, the need for both physical and organisational changes were discussed.

- Siting relevant departments closer to each other would ensure more dialogue. However, to ensure the involvement of the right departments at the right time a more formal process still needs to be initiated.
- It was suggested that a central urban design unit should be established to deal with all medium to large scale urban design projects.
- Individual departments should be able to contact a future Public Realm Officer for advice at various stages of a project, from commissioning to implementation and management.
- The potential benefit of an Enforcement Officer, to make sure management and repair in the streets and public spaces takes place was also discussed

These suggestions arose from creative and positive dialogue amongst participants from departments across the council. The discussions dealt not so much with what the internal process is like today, but more about what a future process, delivering people-oriented designs, may look like.

The consultant strongly recommends that the council should build on the outcomes of this initial debate by setting up an internal working group, which can consider and present a more detailed proposal for improving education, internal communication and processes in 2007.

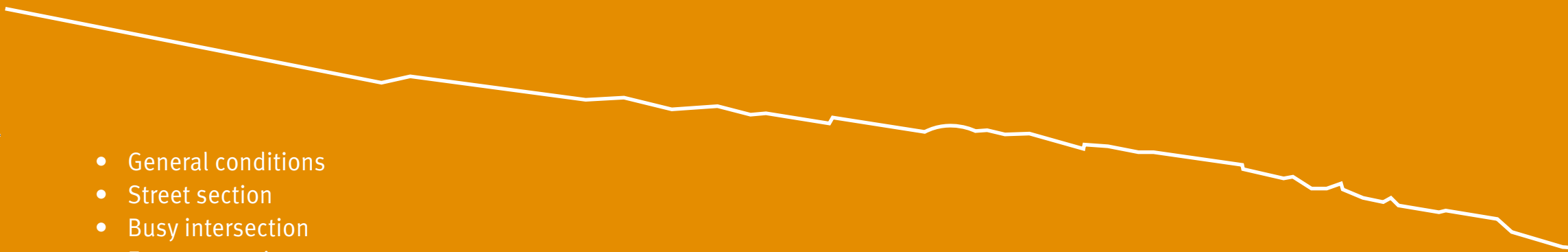
This will help ensure that the study brings real benefits and the strategies it contains can be taken forward!

Brighton & Hove has many traffic issues, a lack of life in many places and certainly a lack of quality spaces. But it also has the opportunity to start developing spaces that will not only improve the legibility of the city but more importantly improve its liveability!

This would be based not on a politically impossible grand master plan, but by consistently applying the methodology, general quality criteria and overall strategies presented in this document. In the future, every project – small or big – can steer the city in this direction, ensuring that Brighton & Hove be a better place to live.

## NEW WAYS OF THINKING

- a **people oriented** methodology
- **Holistic approach** to the development of the public realm
- The council should focus on:
  - **education**
  - **communcation**
  - **internal process**
- Create a **methodology, general quality criteria** and **overall strategies** to make Brighton & Hove a fabulous city for people

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- General conditions
  - Street section
  - Busy intersection
  - Entrance to city area
  - Link the city to the seaside
  - Inviting green space along the sea front