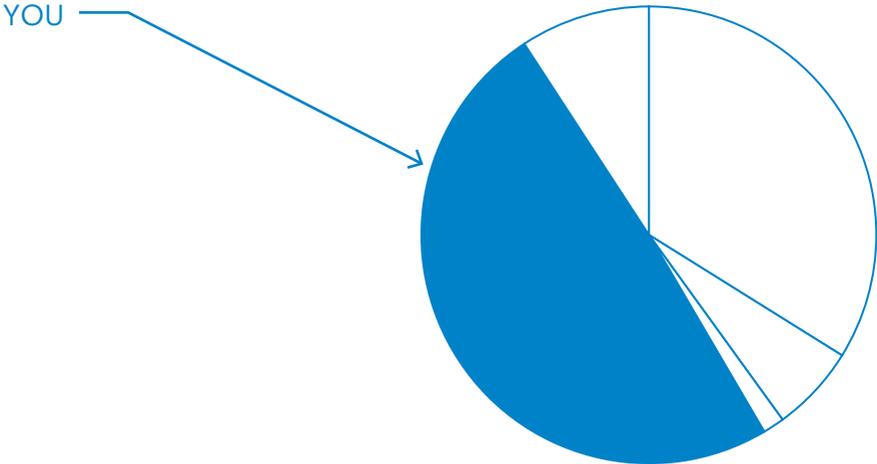


Urban Reasoning



Foreword

As practitioners in architecture and urban design invited to participate in the Creative City Limits workshops in 2011, we were fascinated by the wide range of perspectives on urban development encompassed within the network.

Exploring new areas of interdisciplinary discussion, we discovered whole fields involved in the urban realm that we had only dimly been aware of previously. Eyes widened, we were surprised by the intensity and vehemence of the views expressed by those across the fields of policy-making, art, academia and beyond.

As designers enthusiastic about the urban realm as well as the policy that shapes it, the series of workshops led us to question some of our assumptions about our own respective practices and about the relationship between theory and practice.

Are the discussions within our own disciplines skewed by unquestioning self-interest, or is it almost impossible to find common ground between academic research and bringing things to fruition? Does a bias towards action reduce our time for careful thinking? Has academic debate become marginalised, or are we as practitioners unconsciously complicit in 'shoot first, ask questions later' behaviour?

The Urban Reasoning project aims to engage with these unanswered questions and expand on discussions meaningfully, critically and playfully.

— William Haggard & Oliver Goodhall

The Context

Set against a backdrop of the Creative City Limits workshops, a series of events supported by the Commission for the Built Environment (CABE), the Arts and Humanities Research Council and UCL Urban Laboratory, the Urban Reasoning project aims to open up new questions about the parameters of regeneration policy, and the links between ethics, research, and practice.

Urban Reasoning Survey

Exploration began with a short survey of 'urban reasoning' and logical links based on traditional verbal reasoning, aptitude and logic tests.

All network participants were invited to partake the Urban Reasoning survey, which was devised to shed some light on the complex conundrums of city development that were discussed throughout the workshops.

The survey involved multiple choice questions to investigate the value judgements we make when considering urban economic growth. It has been used as a research tool to build a picture of the thinking at large within the network which has brought together academics, artists, planners, architects, policy-makers and other key stakeholders.

Consensus, Correlation, Connection

Over 150 responses to the survey were received from participants in the Creative City Limits network, on which we have based this study.

The survey responses have been assessed with an eye out for consensus, correlation, connection and association.

Whilst based on gathered data, this is not a wholly empirical study. Rather, in a move counter to one-dimensional methodologies, our approach is one of speculation designed to stimulate discussion and debate.

Urban Reasoned Profiles

As an outcome of this study we present a series of personality profiles.

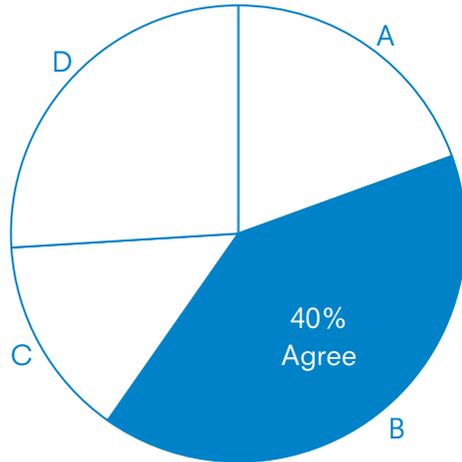
These have not been determined from psychometric tests, business aptitude scales, nor teenage magazine questionnaires — but 'reasoned' and extrapolated from the survey and from our participation in the series of Creative City Limits workshops.

Urban Reasoning Survey

Respondents selected a single option that best reflected their view.

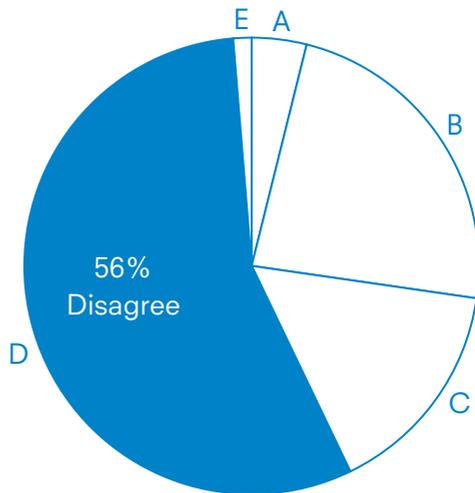
#1
My primary interest is in the implementation of ideas.

- A. Strongly Agree
- B. Agree
- C. No Opinion
- D. Disagree
- E. Strongly Disagree



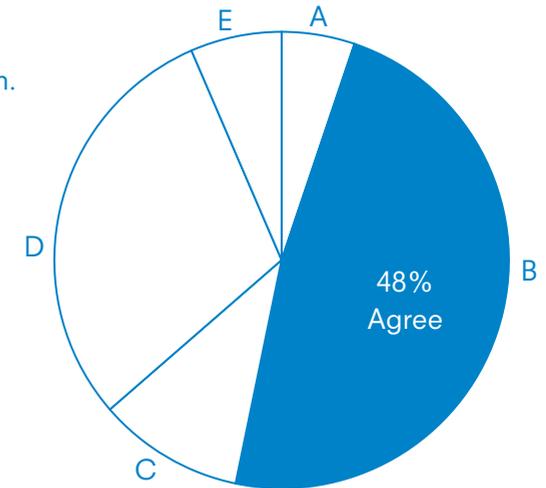
#2
I am inclined to trust more in the results of improvisation than in the results of careful planning.

- A. Strongly Agree
- B. Agree
- C. No Opinion
- D. Disagree
- E. Strongly Disagree



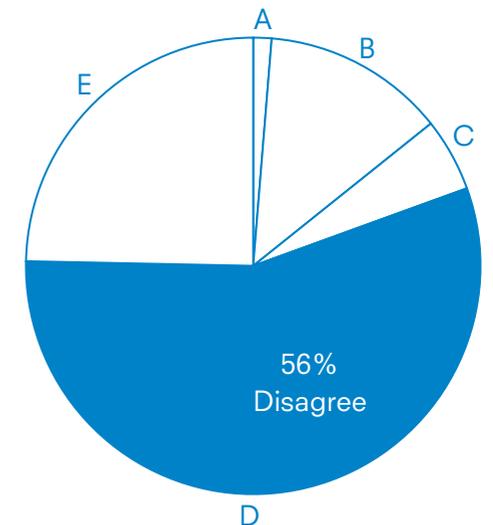
#3
I am an agent of gentrification.

- A. Strongly Agree
- B. Agree
- C. No Opinion
- D. Disagree
- E. Strongly Disagree



#4
It is better to do nothing than to do something which might be wrong.

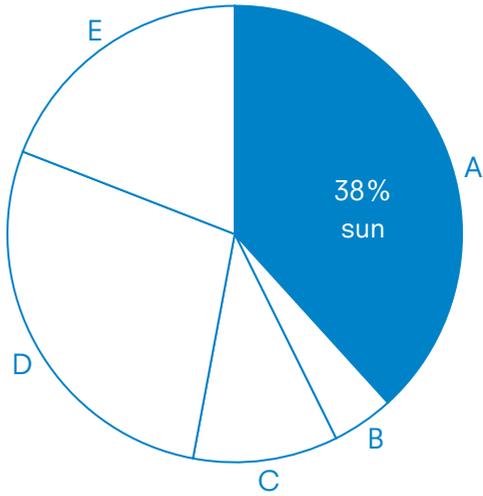
- A. Strongly Agree
- B. Agree
- C. No Opinion
- D. Disagree
- E. Strongly Disagree



Respondents completed the statements by selecting one of the possible options.

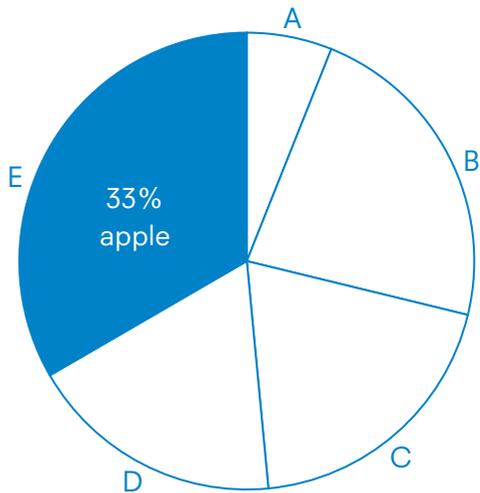
#5
Social benefit is to economic profit as _____ is to rain.

- A. sun
- B. flood
- C. drought
- D. umbrella
- E. orchard



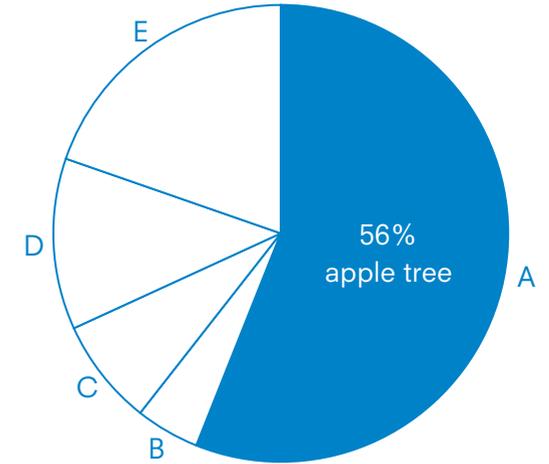
#6
Compromise is to effective action as _____ is to orchard.

- A. drought
- B. sun
- C. rain
- D. worm
- E. apple



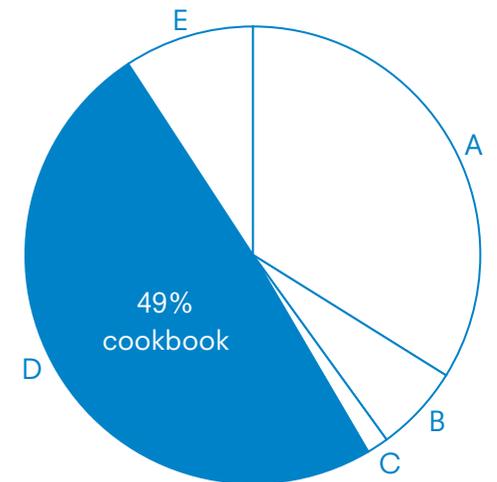
#7
Regeneration is to gentrification as _____ is to apple.

- A. apple tree
- B. worm
- C. apple picker
- D. orchard owner
- E. apple crumble



#8
Theory is to policy as _____ is to apple crumble.

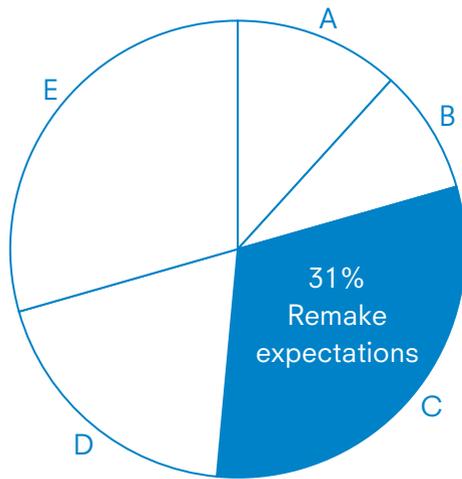
- A. apple
- B. orchard owner
- C. worm
- D. cookbook
- E. washing up



Respondents identified which one of these is most different to the other four.

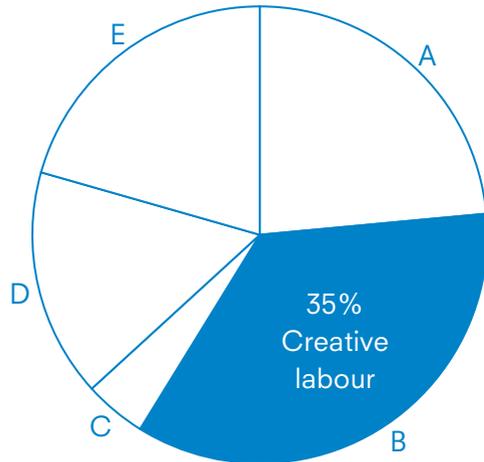
#9

- A. Remake places
- B. Remake economies
- C. Remake expectations
- D. Remake political outlook
- E. Remake societal structure



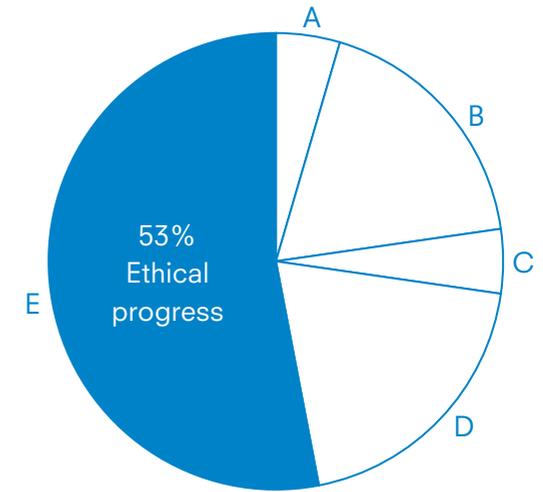
#10

- A. Creative place-making
- B. Creative labour
- C. Creative entrepreneurship
- D. Creative economy
- E. Creative leadership



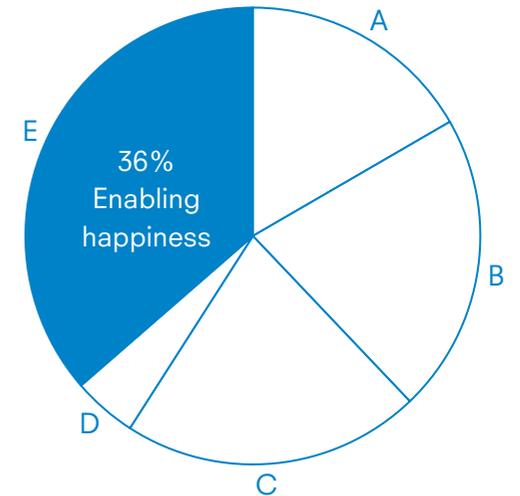
#11

- A. Social progress
- B. Economic progress
- C. Environmental progress
- D. Technological progress
- E. Ethical progress



#12

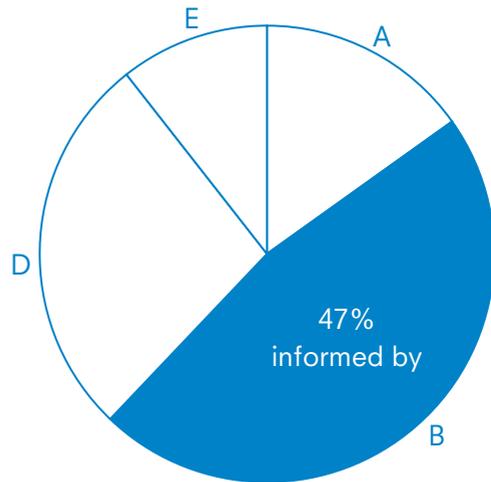
- A. Enabling equality
- B. Enabling prosperity
- C. Enabling progress
- D. Enabling creativity
- E. Enabling happiness



Respondents selected one of the words or phrases below that best fits the statement.

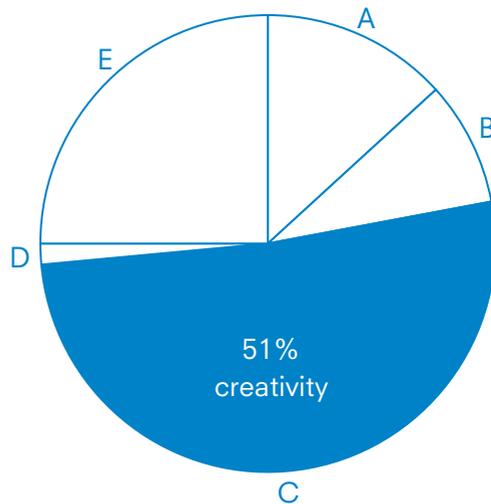
#13
The production of ideas is _____ the implementation of ideas.

- A. independent of
- B. informed by
- C. superior to
- D. safer than
- E. more difficult than



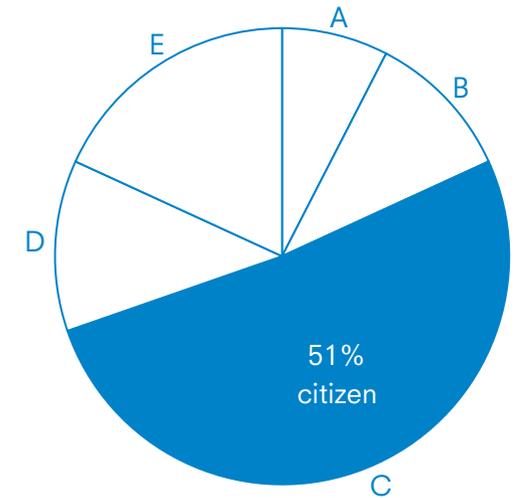
#14
New cultural economies cannot be developed without _____.

- A. governance
- B. capital
- C. creativity
- D. control
- E. cheap space



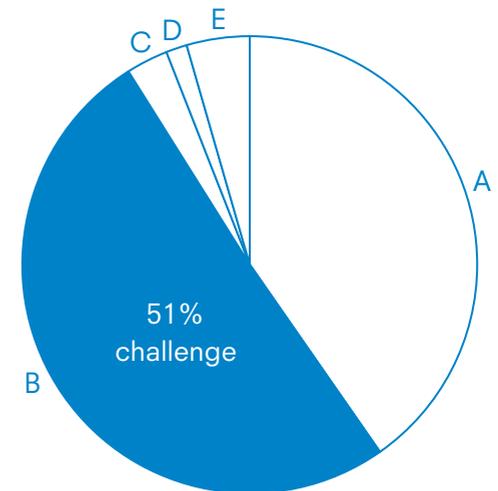
#15
Urban regeneration should harness _____ power to create value.

- A. financial
- B. political
- C. citizen
- D. spatial
- E. creative



#16
Progress should offer the opportunity to _____.

- A. change
- B. challenge
- C. consider
- D. commodify
- E. consult

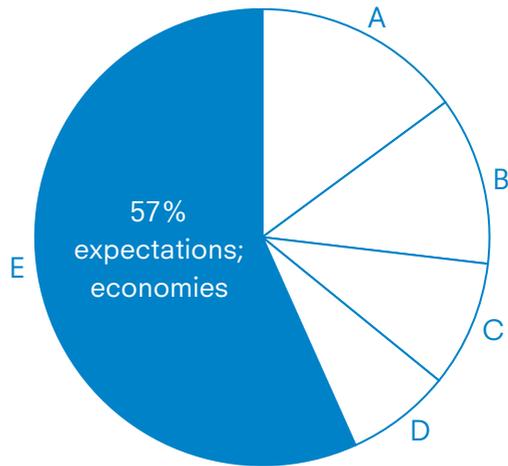


Complete each of the following sentences by selecting one of the pairs of words that best fits the statement.

#17

It is more important to remake _____ than to remake _____ .

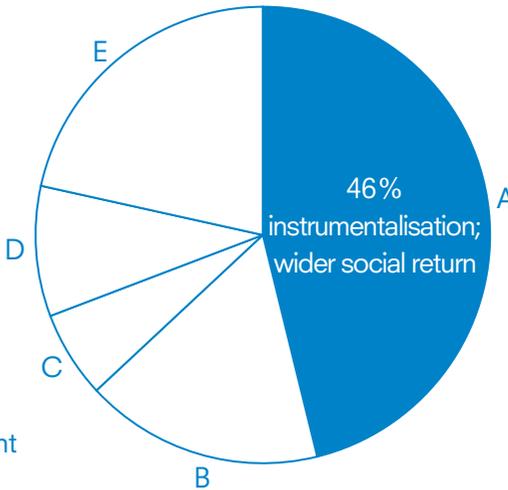
- A. expectations; economies
- B. economies; political structures
- C. political structures; neighbourhoods
- D. neighbourhoods; an equal society
- E. an equal society; places



#18

The _____ of cultural production is acceptable if it can create _____ .

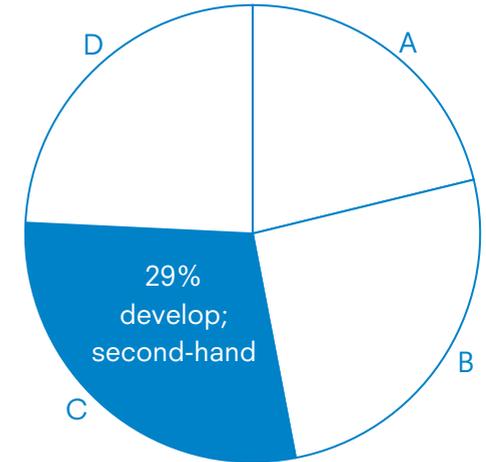
- A. instrumentalisation; wider social return
- B. commodification; greater equality
- C. exploitation; desired social innovation
- D. financial restriction; a creative working environment
- E. planning; long-term growth



#19

It is essential that we _____ a new _____ economy.

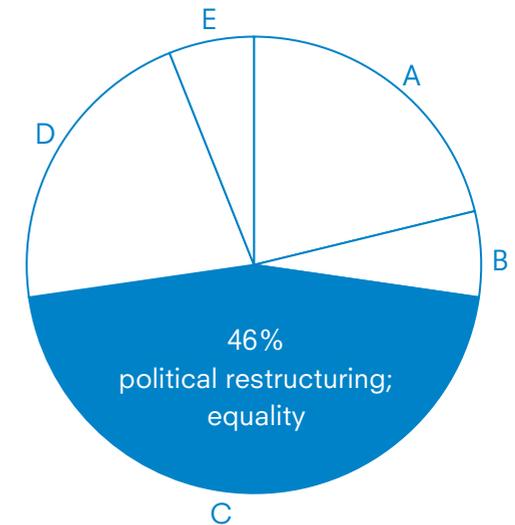
- A. finance; creative
- B. popularise; cultural
- C. develop; second-hand
- D. legislate for; civic
- E. restrict; knowledge



#20

Directing urban investment successfully will require some _____ measures to achieve _____ .

- A. policy; a burgeoning creative industry
- B. financial; urban growth
- C. political restructuring; equality
- D. social innovation; a civic society
- E. fiscal; public willingness



Urban Reasoned Profiles

* NOTE: These profiles should not be used to determine your role in urban, economic and social development. This information should be used with caution, and more detailed Urban Reasoning tests may be necessary to clarify your profile more precisely before you are able to implement this information.

Dynamic Compromiser



You would prefer to do something which might be wrong than to do nothing. (#4, Answer A or B)

You suspect that theory may be helpful for making policy, but only for those with little practical experience. (#8, Answer D)

You might suggest that the production of ideas is safer than the implementation of ideas. (#13, Answer D)



You are prepared to accept compromised implementation over abstract perfection. You have a bias towards action over inaction. You may relish the ambiguities and contradictions associated with "making things happen" to the point where you question the value of the idea altogether.

Conflicted Gentrifier



You fear that despite your best efforts, you are an agent of gentrification. (#3, Answer A or B)

You believe that social benefit and economic profit rarely coincide. (#5, Answer A)

You suspect that it is more important to remake an equal society than to remake places (#17, Answer D)



You have become aware of a contradiction between your theoretical position and the position that you occupy in the urban economic structure. The opening of a grocery shop near your home selling high quality organic produce causes a complex range of intellectual and emotional reactions.

Visionary Pragmatist



You trust the results of careful planning more than the results of improvisation. (#2, Answer D or E)

You might suggest that social benefit and economic profit are both necessary for healthy urban development. (#5, Answer A)

You believe that the greatest challenge is to remake expectations. (#9, Answer C)



You seek to attain your social goals through all pragmatic means at your disposal. You feel that your time is poorly spent in questioning the limitations of your power; you would rather achieve concrete results than attempt to change the process.

Ethical Profiteer



Your primary interest is the implementation of ideas. (#1, Answer A or B)

You regret that there is no shared framework for understanding ethical progress. (#11, Answer E)

In your opinion, political restructuring measures are required to direct urban investment fairly (#20, Answer C)



You have a fierce drive to maximise ethical outputs. You are happy to sacrifice other concerns in the pursuit of social and political benefit and will withdraw your investment if the benefits are insufficient.

Multilateral Integrator



You believe in a delicate balance between improvisation and careful planning. (#2, Answer C)

You feel strongly that the role of creative labour should be more widely recognised. (#10, Answer B)

You suspect that it is more important to remake an equal society than to remake places. (#17, Answer E)



You are always ready to open the door to constructive alliances. You engage with topics across professional boundaries. You are passionate about the ideas which shape our environment, with results that cannot be communicated in a glossy picture.

Active Commodifier



You would greatly prefer to do something which might be wrong than to do nothing. (#4, Answer A)

You would accept that regeneration leads inevitably to gentrification. (#7, Answer A)

You feel that urban regeneration should harness financial power rather than citizen power to create value. (#15, Answer A)



You regard the city as, amongst other things, a framework for financial transactions and economic benefits. You respect the role of economic profit as a historic driver for urban development. You believe that a creative city will lead to social benefit without requiring specific policies to do so.

About

The Urban Reasoning project has been developed through a collaboration between Oliver Goodhall and William Haggard and in response to participation in the series of Creative City Limits workshops.

The project is part of the Creative City Limits network, supported by the Commission for the Built Environment (CABE), the Arts and Humanities Research Council and UCL Urban Laboratory.

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