



# Placemaking. Education

the online place to learn about placemaking

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PLACEMAKING X



## Placemaking: Making it happen in local governments Online Course Guide

[www.placemaking.education](http://www.placemaking.education)

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## Welcome!

### Why Do This Online Course?

This course is written for local government professionals and elected representatives by people who really know the opportunities and challenges of working in local governments. We know it is not always easy, but placemaking is an important and practical process for creating positive changes, both within your organisation and in the community.

### Who is it written for?

Whilst it is primarily written for an Australian context, it may be relevant for local governments around the world. It does not cover legislative and regulatory requirements in any detail. It provides principles, ideas and approaches for making it happen in any country, plus practical, street-level secrets from placemakers with decades of experience.

### What will it help you with?

This course will enable you to:

- **Think** like a placemaker
- **See** the opportunities for placemaking in a local government context
- **Learn** the placemaking mindset and key concepts used

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- **Communicate** the opportunities and benefits of a placemaking process
- **Confidently** lead a placemaking project
- **Deliver** amazing results, even with a small budget

## Testimonials from local government officers

*"The Placemaking Course was amazing and gave me a much greater understanding of what placemaking is, how it can be achieved within local government and how to take the community on the journey of placemaking. The course has inspired me to think outside of the box when it comes to placemaking and how I can pass on this knowledge and enthusiasm about placemaking to others within my community and organisation."*

*"A fantastic resource. Full of inspiration, ideas and tips on making placemaking happen in local government from people who clearly understand the trials and tribulations of the sector. Working through the lessons/modules was easy to do at my own pace. Highly recommend."*

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## Course Description

"Placemaking is the single most important strategy that Governments can adopt to build community and citizen capacity over time".

Peter Smith, CEO, City of Darebin

This course has been prepared for local government professionals and elected representatives to provide practical placemaking guidance, lessons learned and examples.

Learn when you want from your office, study or even the lounge room!

## Objectives

It aims to help you to:

- Think like a placemaker
- See the opportunities for placemaking in a local government context
- Discover the ideas and insights from placemaking professionals with years of experience
- Build the confidence and skills to give it a go yourself

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- **Communicate** the opportunities and benefits of a placemaking process
- **Confidently** lead a placemaking project
- **Deliver** amazing results, even with a small budget

We hope you enjoy it!

## Placemaking

Placemaking is an inclusive and collaborative process, a mindset, an attitude that brings people, disciplines and organisations together to create positive changes to an area (small, medium or large).

Our definition of placemaking for this course is:

"Placemaking' is a philosophy and an iterative, collaborative process for creating public spaces that people love and feel connected to."

This also includes improving existing spaces to make them more comfortable, accessible, active and attractive.

Our definition above is aligned with the founders and custodians of the global placemaking movement - [Project for Public Spaces](#) (PPS), based in the United States, and the global network for placemaking leaders and advocates - [PlacemakingX](#).

Placemaking aims to improve not only the physical elements of a space, but also the way people think about and connect with the world around them.

It's about winning "hearts and minds", as well as physical outcomes you can see.

It seeks empower people to act because it is a real way to improve the way a person relates to themselves, their neighbours and their community.

Placemaking is not a buzzword nor a brand. Using "placemaking" in reference to a process that isn't really rooted in public participation dilutes its potential value.

Placemaking is a process, not a destination and it is never finished.

"Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody."

Jane Jacobs

## Town Team Movement Overview

Town Team Movement enables local communities and governments to **connect, organise** and **act** to regenerate the fabric of their neighbourhoods and to create better places.

We're an underarching, non-profit social enterprise. We help positive 'doers' to improve their community.

Our key activities include:

1. Inspire, support, connect and promote local [Town Teams](#)
2. Provide [place consultancy services](#), often around creating a positive, 'can do' culture
3. Host interactive and inspiring [events](#)
4. Provide [education and training](#), particularly on [placemaking](#) and community-led action

Find out more at [www.townteammovement.com](http://www.townteammovement.com)

## Content Curator – Dean Cracknell

Hi!

I am a Co-Founder of social enterprise Town Team Movement, a Place Enabler and I curate the Placemaking.Education platform.

I am a **passionate placemaker** with 12 years of experience in local government, and a total of 17 years in community volunteering and helping many groups and community leaders with their projects. I'm honoured to be one of the [100 global PlacemakingX People](#).

I live in beautiful Launceston in Tasmania (Australia). Email me at [dean@townteammovement.com](mailto:dean@townteammovement.com) or connect with me via [LinkedIn](#).

## PlacemakingX Overview

PlacemakingX is a **global network** of leaders who together accelerate [placemaking](#) as a way to create healthy, inclusive, and beloved communities.

Our vision is to make the spaces we live into places we love. Create a thriving, equitable, and sustainable world through the convergence of values, passion, and action around our public spaces.

We are a network of placemaking thought leaders, public space activists, regional network leaders, and professionals from all over the world. We have diverse experiences and backgrounds but share a common purpose. PlacemakingX is currently formed by [100+ leaders](#) and [1,300+ advocates](#) from [80+ countries](#) around the world.

Find out more at [www.placemakingx.org](http://www.placemakingx.org)

## Course Content Overview

The following is a high-level summary of the main topics covered in the course.

<b>Module 1 - What is placemaking and why is important for local governments?</b>	
<b>Module 1 – Aims</b>	<p>The first module will explain what placemaking is, why it is important for local governments and explore the placemaking mindset.</p> <p><b>What you will learn in this module:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what placemaking is and is not</li> <li>• the Place-led approach</li> <li>• why placemaking is important for local governments</li> <li>• the placemaking mindset and why it is different</li> </ul> <p><b>By the end of this module, you will be able to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clearly explain what placemaking involves</li> <li>• better understand the placemaking mindset and how it could be applied</li> </ul>
<b>Lesson 1 – What are placemaking and the Place-led approach?</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduction</li> <li>2. What is placemaking?</li> <li>3. Definition of placemaking</li> <li>4. What placemaking is and is not</li> <li>5. <u>Video</u> – streets markets example from Showcase Moonah</li> <li>6. <u>Video</u> – Lucinda Hartley – why are you a placemaker?</li> <li>7. What makes a great place?</li> <li>8. <u>Quick Activity</u> - Design It to Fail</li> <li>9. Turning problems into opportunities</li> <li>10. <u>Example</u> – Ravenswood bus stop murals</li> <li>11. An overview of standard practices and place-based approaches</li> <li>12. From a focus on projects to a focus on places</li> <li>13. <u>Videos</u> – Jo Taylor explains the Place-led approach and why it is different from Business as Usual</li> <li>14. <u>Example</u> of the Place-led Approach applied in the Town of Victoria Park</li> <li>15. Placemaking is not a brand!</li> <li>16. <u>Video</u> – Paint by numbers community mural</li> <li>17. What is placemaking trying to achieve?</li> <li>18. Summary</li> </ol> <p>Additional - A very brief history of placemaking, including William H Wyte and Jane Jacobs.</p>

<p><b>Lesson 2 – Why is placemaking important for local governments?</b></p>	<p>Placemaking provides a powerful set of ideas and tools to improve outcomes, build a positive, collaborative culture within the organisation and potentially save money. It provides a practical, cost-effective and implementable approach that can be tailored for each context and community.</p> <p><u>Video</u> – Lucinda Hartley – why placemaking is important for local governments</p> <p>Ten key reasons why it is so important are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The 'epidemic of loneliness' is killing us and isn't good for individuals, nor societies</li> <li>2. Trust in governments, institutions and broader society is in serious decline</li> </ol> <p><u>Video</u> – David Engwicht – Why is placemaking important?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. The growth of complex, wicked social, environmental and economic problems</li> <li>4. The need to find a better balance to the roles of the State and citizens</li> </ol> <p><u>Video</u> – Example of collaborative and inclusive placemaking - Erica Lane, Minto, Sydney</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. The decline in formal, traditional volunteering</li> <li>6. Placemaking as a way to mitigate strategic and project risks</li> <li>7. Great places are good for business</li> <li>8. Place partnerships and teamwork are more likely to create successful places</li> <li>9. Placemaking is a collaborative innovation process</li> <li>10. A focus on 'place' helps everyone to concentrate on what's really important</li> <li>11. <u>Video</u> – Brooke Williams – placemaking as part of reimagining the roles of local govts and citizens</li> <li>12. Summary</li> </ol>
<p><b>Lesson 3 - The placemaking mindset</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mindset and culture</li> <li>2. <u>Video</u> – Jo Taylor – It starts with the culture and mindset of the organisation</li> <li>3. Are you managing the place to life?</li> <li>4. What do we assume?</li> <li>5. Places as machines versus places as systems</li> <li>6. Places as machines</li> <li>7. Complicated and complex are not the same</li> <li>8. Systems thinking and places</li> <li>9. Places as complex systems</li> <li>10. Getting into the Enabling Mindset</li> <li>11. <u>Video</u> – Brooke Williams – creating a 'Safe to Fail' culture</li> <li>12. The permissions-based approach</li> <li>13. <u>Video</u> – David Engwicht - the permissions approach</li> </ol>

	14. Example of the permissions-based approach 15. Summary
<b>Acknowledgements and Additional Reading</b>	

<b>Module 2 – Key concepts, important skills needed, engaging the community and setting up a project for success</b>	
<b>Module 2 – Aims</b>	<p>The second module will examine placemaking's key concepts, discuss the skills required and the importance of community engagement, plus provide you with suggestions on how to set up and manage a place-based project.</p> <p><b>What you will learn in this module:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• key placemaking concepts</li> <li>• why involving the community is so important to placemaking</li> <li>• the Placemaking Participation Spectrum - from Regulate to Empower</li> <li>• the skills needed for effective placemaking</li> </ul> <p><b>By the end of this module, you will be able to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• speak like a placemaker</li> <li>• understand the important skills required</li> <li>• see how the community can be proactively engaged</li> <li>• compare two places to assess Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats</li> </ul>
<b>Lesson 4 – Key placemaking concepts</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Turning spaces into places</li> <li>2. Enabling places that people love and feel connected to</li> <li>3. Placemaking has various components, including place storytelling, designing and constructing, place managing, place activating or place organising?</li> <li>4. The 'hardware' and 'software' of places</li> <li>5. Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper</li> <li>6. Tactical Urbanism</li> <li>7. The Power of 10</li> <li>8. Top Down vs Bottom Up</li> <li>9. The important skills needed for successful placemaking.</li> <li>10. <a href="#">Video</a> – Brooke Williams – Top 3 tips for placemaking in local governments</li> <li>11. <a href="#">Video</a> – The story of Holly and Wally</li> <li>12. Let go of the need to control</li> <li>13. <a href="#">Video</a> – David Engwicht - Being spontaneous and trusting the process</li> <li>14. Optional Task – Recruiting for a placemaker role and choosing your top 3 skills required</li> <li>15. Summary</li> </ol>



<p><b>Task to compare two places</b></p>	<p><u>Task to compare two places</u></p> <p>Your mission is to compare two places – one that seems to be working and another which has some challenges.</p> <p><u>Video</u> – Mike Fisher explains the task and how he would compare two places. There is also a task template/worksheet.</p>
<p><b>Lesson 5 - Engaging the community and the Placemaking Participation Spectrum</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Building on strengths rather than fixing problems</li> <li>2. Tahnee's story of leading change</li> <li>3. Teamwork and partnerships</li> <li>4. The Placemaking Participation Spectrum</li> <li>5. Stages of the Placemaking Participation Spectrum</li> <li>6. Breaking out of "The Council needs to ..." loop</li> <li>7. What kind of relationship are you going to have with your community?</li> <li>8. <u>Video</u> – David Snyder - The "one-night-stand" vs the long-term relationship</li> <li>9. Statutory consultation compared to place-based engagement</li> <li>10. More innovative engagement beyond the 'usual suspects'</li> <li>11. Some of the ingredients for success in Tahnee's Story</li> <li>12. Exercise - the Placemaking Participation Spectrum in your area</li> <li>13. <u>Case Study</u> - Combining a Youth Changemaking Program with the Placemaking Approach</li> <li>14. <u>Video</u> – South Hedland Youth Placemaking</li> <li>15. <u>Case Study</u> – A story of innovative community engagement</li> <li>16. <u>Video</u> – Leanne McGuirk from Shire of Murray</li> <li>17. Summary</li> <li>18. Bonus Example – the Wigan Council Deal</li> </ol>
<p><b>Lesson 6 – Setting up and managing a placemaking process</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Using the placemaking mindset to inform your project</li> <li>2. <u>Video</u> – Lucinda Hartley – important tips for a placemaking process</li> <li>3. The Place-led approach in a process diagram</li> <li>4. 2 tips for before you start.</li> <li>5. Project delivery approaches compared. The conventional project management approach compared with the agile, place-based approach.</li> <li>6. Time, Cost or Quality. You can prioritise 1 or 2, but it's unlikely you will get all 3!</li> <li>7. Masterplanning compared with place enabling</li> <li>8. The first step in a place enabling approach</li> <li>9. <u>Video</u> – Mike Fisher – start by building relationships with local people</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. <a href="#">Video</a> – Mike Fisher – tips for facilitating a placemaking process</li> <li>11. Mike Fisher's Placemaking Checklist</li> <li>12. The Place Game by Project for Public Spaces</li> <li>13. <a href="#">Video</a> – Mike Fisher – what do you look for when you go on-site?</li> <li>14. <a href="#">Video</a> – Mike Fisher – continue to build the relationships</li> <li>15. Creating a Place Action Plan</li> <li>16. A 5 step Place Plan process</li> <li>17. Prepare a principles-based Placemaking Framework instead of detailed strategies or masterplans</li> <li>18. Example of guiding principles - City of Charles Sturt</li> <li>19. Example of guiding principles - Shire of Nillumbik</li> <li>20. Think about what success might look like</li> <li>21. <a href="#">Video</a> – Lucinda Hartley – measuring placemaking success</li> <li>22. Tangible versus intangible place outcomes</li> <li>23. Summary</li> </ol>
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<b>Module 3 – Implementation and making it happen</b>	
<b>Module 3 – Aims</b>	<p>The third module looks at making it happen on a small budget, common mistakes and tips for implementation.</p> <p><b>What you will learn in this module:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• creative placemaking ideas on a budget</li> <li>• placemaking tips for residents and business</li> <li>• 11 common mistakes to avoid</li> </ul> <p><b>By the end of this module, you will be able to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use the placemaking process to help you get started with your next great placemaking project</li> <li>• work with a small budget and still get results</li> <li>• use the free tools and resources to help you get your first placemaking project off the ground</li> </ul>
<b>Lesson 7 – Placemaking on a small budget</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Placemaking on a small budget is possible</li> <li>2. The number 1 rule in placemaking</li> <li>3. The importance of stories</li> <li>4. <a href="#">Video</a> – Mike Fisher – the importance of stories</li> <li>5. Turning negative stories into positive actions</li> <li>6. <a href="#">Video</a> – David Engwicht – turning a negative place story into a placemaking action</li> <li>7. Start with what you have</li> <li>8. <a href="#">Bonus Worksheet</a> - Creating a bank of skills, resources and connections</li> <li>9. Setting a project budget</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. <a href="#">Video</a> – David Engwicht – advice for local governments on setting a placemaking budget</li> <li>11. How can you achieve a lot by not doing much?</li> <li>12. <a href="#">Video</a> – David Engwicht – make it easier for businesses and residents to be placemakers</li> <li>13. <a href="#">Video</a> – David Engwicht – businesses as placemakers</li> <li>14. <a href="#">Video</a> – David Engwicht – residents as placemakers</li> <li>15. Slowing the flow of people</li> <li>16. Examples of placemaking on a budget</li> <li>17. <a href="#">Video</a> – David Snyder – the South Freeo Porch Fest Story</li> <li>18. Summary</li> </ol>
<p><b>Lesson 8 – 11 common mistakes to avoid</b></p>	<p>Mistake are almost guaranteed, no matter what you do in life. The biggest mistakes are not doing anything or not trying to improve. These are 11 common mistakes to be aware of and either try and succeed where others have failed, or avoid!</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Relying on a new report or masterplan to make the changes happen. It can help to guide implementation, but collaborative and ongoing actions are what counts!</li> <li>2. 'Plonk placemaking' means 'plonking' a potentially good idea in a space without consideration or just because it worked somewhere else.</li> <li>3. Over-promise and under-deliver. This leads to unrealistic expectations in the community and then frustration when those lofty expectations aren't realised. It also erodes trust.</li> <li>4. Doing too much or doing too little. It's a tricky balancing act, particularly when you are in a professional role.</li> <li>5. Over-investing in 'place hardware', with little to no investment in 'place software'.</li> <li>6. Too much planning, not enough doing. 'Strategic Doing' is a better alternative!</li> <li>7. Incentivising negative behaviour. Making things very difficult dissuades positive action, fosters apathy and/or encourages the 'committed complainers'.</li> <li>8. Car parking dictating places outcomes. Car parking is an obsession that seems to take precedence over any other consideration.</li> <li>9. Forgetting or misusing tactical urbanism. Designing a big infrastructure upgrade without using a tactical urbanism to test it first is very risky. Short-term pop-ups with no follow-up can be a waste of time and money.</li> <li>10. Not spending time upfront to build relationships and trust. Excellent projects can still be a failure if external stakeholders are not engaged.</li> <li>11. Allocating too much funding can result in large, capital works-intensive projects that focus on place hardware improvements.</li> </ol>

<b>Lesson 9 – Tips for making it happen</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Four simple questions</li> <li>2. <a href="#">Video</a> – Three implementation tips from Lucinda Hartley</li> <li>3. Trial and test new ideas</li> <li>4. Suggestions for how to build relationships and support across your organisation</li> <li>5. "Not more work ..."</li> <li>6. Rethink existing projects and approaches</li> <li>7. <a href="#">Video</a> – Brooke Williams – Fewer, but more integrated projects</li> <li>8. Well ... another local government has already done it</li> <li>9. Removing barriers to action</li> <li>10. Examples of making it easier to act</li> <li>11. Embrace the risk discussion</li> <li>12. A strategic approach to place improvement - Place Improvement Districts</li> <li>13. Tell the stories and celebrate successes</li> <li>14. <a href="#">Video</a> – Ben Kent discuss why he is a placemaker in his community</li> <li>15. Passion is a powerful force!</li> <li>16. Establish a 'Place Champions' group</li> <li>17. Do not give up!</li> <li>18. <a href="#">Video</a> – Lucinda Hartley talks about perseverance</li> <li>19. Summary</li> </ol>
<b>Task to complete an action within 7 days</b>	<p><u><a href="#">Task to complete a placemaking action within 7 days</a></u>  Complete 1 placemaking action within 7 days to help make people in your community feel like they belong.  <a href="#">Video</a> – David Engwicht sets the task and how it could be done  There is also a task template/worksheet.</p>

## Comments and Suggestions

We want to make this course relevant and beneficial. Please let us know if you have any comments or suggestions for improvement.

What did you like and not like? We'd love to know.

Email us at;

[hello@placemaking.education](mailto:hello@placemaking.education)

Complete the 3 minute online survey

<https://forms.gle/DKH8mvtLL4jNsAxv6>

**Thank you for taking this course. Good luck on your placemaking journey!**