Sustainability in a climate of austerity: responses from UK city-regions

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Aim today:

- why focus on city-regional retrofit
- City-regional boundaries and governance
- Retrofit in GM & in Cardiff
- Comparison between the two city-regions
Why focus on city-regional retrofit

- Retrofit as incremental and disruptive improvement to the existing built environment and infrastructure through a combination of technological and social changes that is critical to the achievement of ambitious carbon reduction targets;

- Growing population within urban centers and cities are responsible for 70% of global carbon emission and 75% of energy consumption make cities a vital part of the retrofitting process;

- Increased concentration of population offers opportunities for scaling up

- Cities as ‘hub’ of innovative social practice and learning for a more sustainable pattern of resource use;

- Pressure for city regional retrofit responses in UK
The two case study regions: boundaries

Greater Manchester

Cardiff City Region
Governance in the City-regions: Greater Manchester

- GM established in 1974 - two tier governing arrangements
- GMCC abolished in 1986; 10 LAs and AGMA
- Statutory City regional Pilot in 2009 & GMCA in 2011
- Emergence of urban growth coalition
- Metropolitan level: political and governing power in hands of agencies and coalitions of political elites and business
- But no elected formal governing structures
- Embedded capacity to act is limited
- National priorities remain an important shaper
Welsh Government

Government of Wales Act 1998 provided two statutory obligations
- inclusive governance & equal opportunities
- requirement to pursue Sustainable Development

extensive partnership working

11 Local authorities

Collaboration among service providers
Greater Manchester: Retrofitting ON and IN

- Dominant Urban retrofit
  - A concerted attempt to make retrofit markets
  - Positioning GM as leader in an emerging UK retrofit Market
  - GM Low Carbon Housing Retrofit
    - A framework for addressing the application of bundles of retrofit packages
    - Technology-based responses
    - How to finance it?
    - Creating standards
  - Green Deal

- Community actors
  - Embedded in the local contexts
  - But limited in their achievement
  - Range of motivations
    - Economic Development
    - Sustainability
    - Education
    - Making communities relevant again
Cardiff city-region: Retrofitting as Alternative to National Strategy

Retrofit in the city-region:

- climate change; low carbon economy goal; fuel poverty

Role of WG & LAs:

- SD in Wales ‘a central organising principle’
- LAs delivery mechanisms and support from ‘below’
- Historical development of the city-region
- Poor housing quality & hard to treat homes

- From planned and responsive maintenance programmes
- to targeted energy efficiency improvements
- major refurbishment programmes (e.g. Arbed) for retrofitting at scale

- but focus on social housing and more than 440,000 SW properties in Wales
## A comparison

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<th>Understanding retrofit</th>
<th>Greater Manchester</th>
<th>Cardiff city-region</th>
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| **Drivers and Pressures** | A means to position the city-region externally to attract investments  
- ‘retrofit markets’ | A means to deliver SD  
- Economic, environmental and social benefits |
| **Governance and cultural context** | Emergent metropolitan governance at GM scale:  
- top down up and less inclusive  
- limited capacity to act and shaped by national priority  
- mainly *aspirational*  
Grassroots approach:  
- a range of communities and embedded activities  
- tackle issues that are specific to the local context  
- can be piecemeal and isolated | Inclusive governance and partnership  
- SD organising principle  
- Governance by government  
- HAs/ RSLs/ LAs /private sector |
| **Social organisation of responses** | Ambitious targets and plan to retrofit at scale  
Driven by businesses and elite politicians  
- hierarchy of responses  
- dominant technological approach  
- raise funding from private and public sector  
‘cherry picking’  
Little coordination between the two styles of governance | Area-based approach:  
Focus is on vulnerable communities and households  
- ‘targeting the right area first’  
- ‘Worst performing stock’  
Alignment of interests  
Establishing links with community groups and existing organisations |
Thank you

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