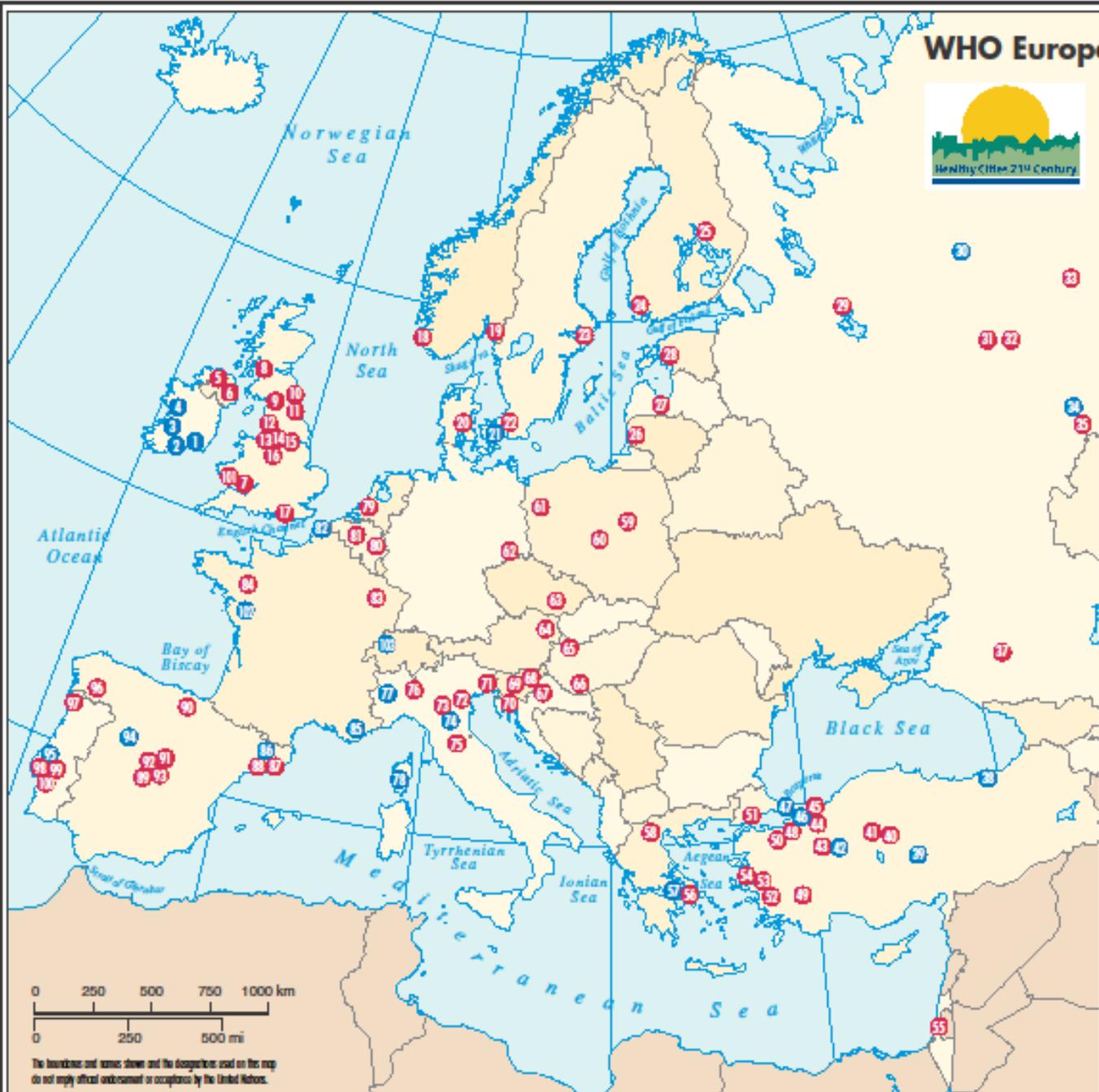


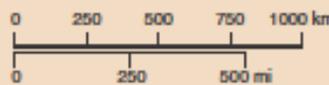
# Child Friendly Spaces

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Belfast Healthy Cities

# WHO European Healthy Cities network



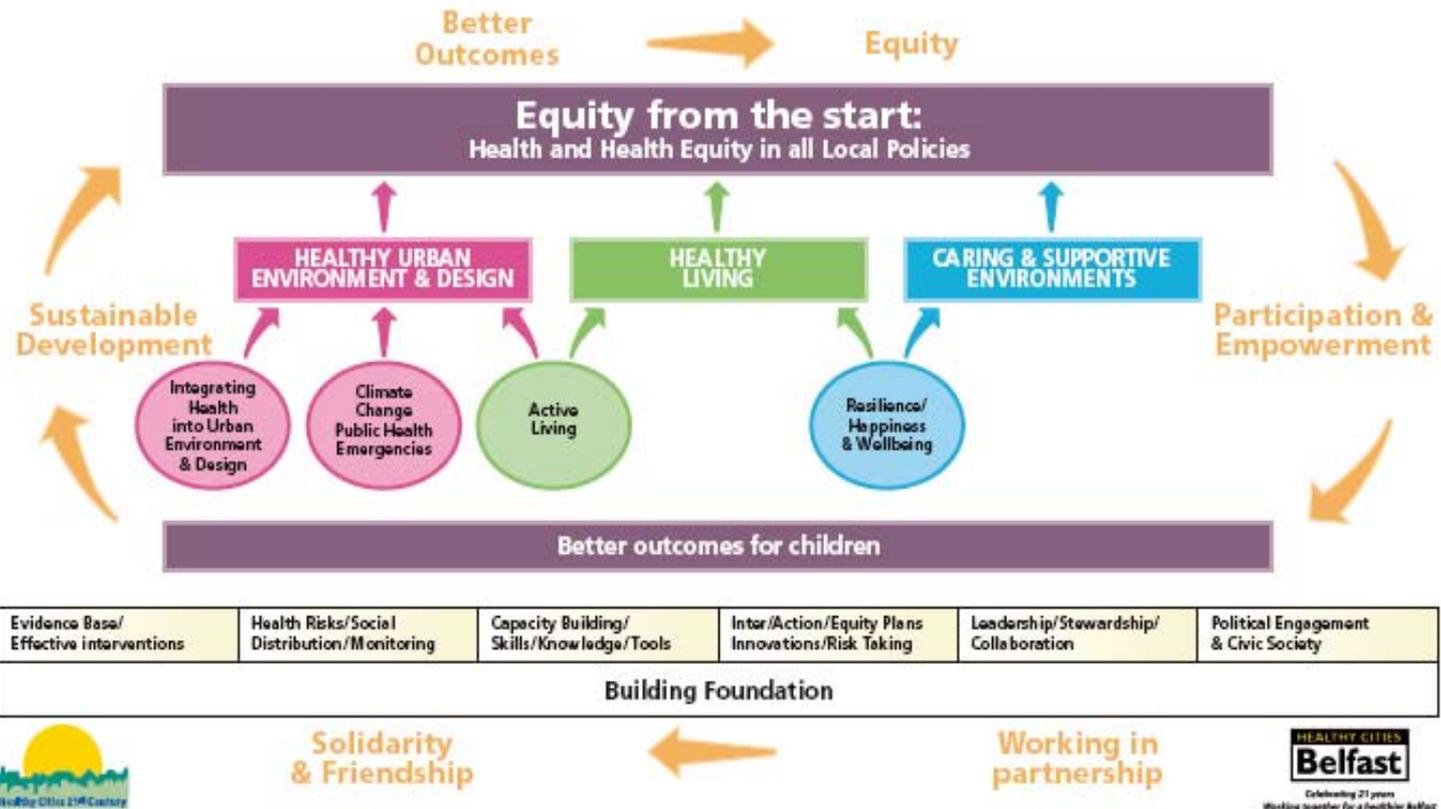
1	Waterford	IE	36	Jerusalem	ISR
2	Cork	IE	55	Anarostion	GRE
3	Limerick	IE	56	Athens	GRE
4	Galway	IE	57	Platanidos	GRE
5	Derry/Londonderry	UNK	58	Warsaw	POL
6	Belfast	UNK	59	Łódź	POL
7	Cardiff	UNK	60	Poznań	POL
8	Glasgow	UNK	61	Dresden	DEU
9	Cardale	UNK	62	Brno	CZE
10	Newcastle	UNK	63	Vienna	AUS
11	Sunderland	UNK	64	Győr	HUN
12	Preston	UNK	65	Pecs	HUN
13	Liverpool	UNK	66	Zagreb	CRO
14	Manchester	UNK	67	Collo	SVN
15	Sheffield	UNK	68	Ujibljana	SVN
16	Stoke on Trent	UNK	69	Rijeka	CRO
17	Brighton	UNK	70	Udine	ITA
18	Sandnes	NOR	71	Padua	ITA
19	Orkney Islands	NOR	72	Modena	ITA
20	Horsens	DEN	73	Bologna	ITA
21	Copenhagen	DEN	74	Arezzo	ITA
22	Helsingborg	SWE	75	Milan	ITA
23	Stockholm	SWE	76	Torino	ITA
24	Turku	FIN	77	Alpaccio	FRA
25	Kuopio	FIN	78	Rothbardan	NET
26	Kolpedo	ITH	79	Uge	BEL
27	Jurmalai	LVA	80	Brussels	BEL
28	Pärnu	EST	81	Denkerque	FRA
29	Cherapovsk	RUS	82	Nancy	FRA
30	Valky Ustyug	RUS	83	Rennes	FRA
31	Cheboksary	RUS	84	Grosse	FRA
32	Novochabovsk	RUS	85	L'hospitalet de l'Ilbergat	SPA
33	Izhensk	RUS	86	Barcelona	SPA
34	Dimitrovgrad	RUS	87	Sant Andreu de la Barca	SPA
35	Samara	RUS	88	San Sebastian	SPA
36	Novosibirsk	RUS	89	Vitoria-Gasteiz	SPA
37	Skopje	MKD	90	San Fernando	SPA
38	Trabzon	TUR	91	Villanueva de la Cañada	SPA
39	Avanos	TUR	92	Laganes	SPA
40	Kirikkale	TUR	93	Salamanca	SPA
41	Canikoy	TUR	94	Louses	POR
42	Eskişehir Odepaazarı	TUR	95	Ourase	SPA
43	Eskişehir/Tepebaşı	TUR	96	Viana do Castelo	POR
44	Gölcük	TUR	97	Ceiras	POR
45	Kocaeli	TUR	98	Montijo	POR
46	Yalova	TUR	99	Sotol	POR
47	Istanbul	TUR	100	Swansea	UNK
48	Bursa	TUR	101	Nantes	FRA
49	Dentzi	TUR	102	La Chaux de Fonds	SWI
50	Niğde	TUR			
51	Kadıköy	TUR			
52	Aydın	TUR			
53	İzmir	TUR			
54	Karşıyaka-İzmir	TUR			



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

# Belfast – A World Health Organization Healthy City Phase V (2009 – 2013)

Policies and actions are consciously developed from the start in a way that contributes to health and health equity.



# What is a child friendly space?

- Children are active agents; their voices and opinions are taken into consideration and influence decision making

# Children & the built environment

- Children are not always considered in the planning process for the built environment
- No mechanism for engagement
- Children sometimes play in less than ideal conditions

# Children and the built environment



# Benefits of a child friendly environment



# Benefits of a child friendly environment

- Encourages physical activity which may help to address obesity
- Supports mental and social development
- Degree of independence
- Healthy risk taking
- Natural meeting place
- Helps against anti-social behaviour
- Can help towns and cities economically

# Child Friendly Cities

- Shaping Healthier Neighbourhoods for Children – schools project (2011/2012 & 2013/2014)
- KidsSpace – Exploring Child Friendly Space in Belfast City Centre (2011 - 2013)

# Schools Project: Aims and objectives

- 100 children aged 9-11 from Schools in Suffolk and Lenadoon area of West Belfast & an afterschools club
- 4 main aims:
- Offer children an opportunity to express their views and wishes
  - Photography and art chosen to facilitate range of abilities
- Identify ways of engaging children in decision making process
- Generate information to support policy and decision making
- Create a model for engaging with children
  - Found to have relevance to NI curriculum

# Workshops

- **Workshop 1: Introducing the Issues,** healthy and unhealthy environments
- **Workshop 2: Picturing our Environment,** photographs, after thoughts and observations
- **Workshop 3: Imagining our Environment,** developed photos returned to children, presentations of what they like, don't like and want to change

# Workshops



# Findings: Clean, green, safe spaces

- Strong preference across groups for
  - Green space
  - Clean public spaces
  - Calmer traffic
- Resonates with academic literature
- Children's Charter: summarising views in policy relevant language



## Shaping Healthier Neighbourhoods for Children: A Children's Charter

**Maintain and strengthen green space.** Green space offers opportunities for free and active play, which supports children's healthy development. It also offers a natural meeting place for people of all ages, which support social cohesion. As outlined in this report, this project also indicates that access to green space is a priority for children. This includes even small areas integrated into residential neighbourhoods, as these offer children a meeting place and a sense of ownership within their immediate home environment.

**Enable active travel.** Walking and cycling allow children a degree of independent travel, while they also support healthy and sustainable lifestyle choices in adulthood. Good active travel connections and facilities – with high quality footpaths and safe crossing points in key locations – can contribute to children's mobility, not least by reassuring parents that children can safely access local services and amenities.

**Support traffic calming.** Traffic calming, for example through 20mph zones or interventions such as street trees and greenery further contributes to safety, and also makes the streets more attractive for all users.

**Emphasise and strengthen key local amenities and services.** Local amenities are important for children. Particularly important is access to green space and playable space, followed by access to youth clubs, leisure centres and other places with more formal leisure provision. This is important to consider in new residential development, but also in existing residential areas opportunities may be found to enhance provision, for example through supporting community gardens and initiatives by community organisations. Local amenities and services also encourage use by older age groups, and contribute to social cohesion and a sense of community, which significantly supports wellbeing. This, in turn, may support new economic opportunities.

**Maintain and improve cleanliness.** Children, like other population groups, value clean streets, while cleanliness encourages active use of the physical environment. It may be helpful to explore opportunities to build on existing engagement with schools and youth groups to capture this concern for the environment and encourage pride, for example through local competitions and 'best kept' initiatives.

**Support informal surveillance.** Children enjoy freedom from direct adult supervision, and feel that in particular local green space provides this. It has also been shown that such freedom contributes to healthy development. However, safety concerns are the main reason why parents, and also children themselves, restrict independent mobility. An important opportunity for reducing these concerns is developing environments with informal surveillance, for example green spaces in the middle, rather than at outskirts, of residential development. In existing areas, alternatives may be explored, ranging from improved lighting and street maintenance to 20mph zones. Good footpaths and cycle lanes also support informal surveillance, as they encourage life on the street. Active and strong communities also form a type of informal surveillance, and community development plays a role in this.

**Key steps to engaging children in decision making on the physical environment:**

**Identify children as a key user group:** highlights children as equitable with other population groups and helps shed light on special requirements. Shows children's views on proposals; key step in identifying what children's needs are, and how these might be met.

**Integrate children's priorities in evidence:** gives children a voice and helps identify unique as well as issues shared across population groups. Build engaging relationships with children: enable children to gain confidence in the decision making process and may be a useful tool for building ownership in the wider community. Schools, youth clubs and community centres may be suitable venues for this type of engagement.

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This is a living document and will change as opportunities build up on the work plans.

# What we did next

- Promote the Children's Charter
- Launched at event in City Hall Feb 2012 by then Lord Mayor & Junior Ministers with remit for children
- Children questioned a panel of senior decision makers
- Inform DSD Regeneration Initiatives



# Exploring Child Friendly Space in City Centres – KidsSpace

- What? – Large scale demonstration event, different venues across city
- Why? - intended to explore what child friendly space in a city centre could look like and how it might work
- Who? – collaborative approach, Active Belfast

# KidsSpace

- Shared family play key feature
- Active space – spin/smoothie bikes, sports coaches, Jump Jiggle & Jive
- Free space – adapted by children, snug kits, large games
- Creative space - sparked ownership and ideas, artists
- Age range toddlers to teenagers – key group 3-11 years olds
- Over 1000 children and families attending events
- Consultation opportunity – feedback to decision makers



# Feedback/evaluation

- Showed what child friendly space might look like
- Much can be done with the existing space through new approaches and attitudes
- Key ingredient – permission to take ownership
- Inform DSD regeneration initiative's

# Feedback from parents & children

- *‘Much more of this kind of activities – art and gardening workshops, juggling workshops, roller blade hire’*
- Interactive street art and play structures dotted around – support street play
- *‘Use what we have effectively’* – e.g. fountains in Custom House Square, play areas in big shops, pocket parks
- *‘Child friendly spaces and events would attract us to the city’*



# What next?

- Similar event potentially for teenagers
- Engagement with children in the New Lodge Area to redevelop an unused space – Long Streets (NIHE, Ashton Community Association, Newington Housing Association)
- Work with DSD to inform their Regeneration Initiatives across the city
- Continue to work towards bringing the work to Strategic level

# Thank you

- Reports are available at [www.belfasthealthycities.com/publications](http://www.belfasthealthycities.com/publications)
- Further info: [laura@belfasthealthycities.com](mailto:laura@belfasthealthycities.com), 028 9032 8811

