

Social sustainability Plan for the Norwich High Street of 2050

“How am I, living in a bedsit with a small kitchen and no outdoor space and no access to growing my own vegetables, meant to find tomatoes when my local supermarket keepings running out during this lockdown?”. A question posed to myself and many others in the UK during the peak of the pandemic lockdown, particularly in urban or compacted environments.

My visual interpretation submitted of Norwich high street, paints a realistic picture of an everyday scene of the high street. Tightly packed streets, imposing architecture and lacking integration of nature.

My vision for a redesigned high street for the world of 2050 interweaves community, food, re-integration of the natural environment with the intention to maintain social cohesion and sustainability. Creating a holistic approach to communities mental & physical health both individually and collectively; differing to the visual representation of the current reality submitted in my application of closed down high street shops and homelessness.

The plan of intended action would be multi-faceted. For infrastructure, using rooftops as urban farms, allotments, gardens and solar panels to provide energy for the community for access to everyone in secure environments including greenhouses. Also, creating open gardens and parks within the city centre.

This leads on to my next level of the intended action I am proposing - funded education for outdoor spaces and hands on practical teaching within new urban farms, allotments and large open spaces for gardening, food, nutrition. Horticulture therapy creates positive affects for people to learn how to garden and plant vegetation for themselves promotes the therapeutic aspects of being in nature that money cannot buy, but invested instead.

Creating environments where people with no access to gardens, to be equipped with local urban farms & allotments to hands on grow their own fruit and vegetables keeps inclusion of groups that cannot access this due to inequality such as people living on the streets or in inadequate housing.

The future of social sustainability in 2050 and beyond has to rely on integrating nature back into cities - particularly with the impending climate crisis and the effects on resources, poverty and food inequality. Open spaces allow community and socialising in case of any further pandemics - using areas for recreation, health, wellbeing and civic bonding for future communities.