

their environment. The continual engagement of residents as users and customers was the favoured approach, hand-in-hand with improvement in communications between city administrations and their citizens. Cultural issues seem to play an important role in determining the nature and extent of participation, and the public attitude generally to public space. Apathy of some local populations towards public spaces might be addressed through a far greater emphasis on proactively educating local citizens about the benefits of public space, and by involving them more directly in public space decision-making processes.

5. DELIVER ADEQUATE AND RELIABLE RESOURCES

Not all of the successful case study cities were generously funded, but all were funded to a level that allowed them to at least meet their ongoing management responsibilities. A key lesson was therefore that there is not only a need for adequate funding, but also for reliable sources of funding over the long term. Long-term rolling funding plans, for example, allow administrations to commit themselves to projects spanning several years. This means that the constraints of annualised budgetary rounds need to be overcome in order to ensure longer-term planning for public spaces, whilst the capital and revenue funding available for public space management should be clearly published at both local and national levels to allow adequate local scrutiny of available resources. As the most successful case studies suggested, the need to protect revenue funding streams is paramount in order that maintenance can be prioritised across existing public space networks. The value of exploiting all potential supplementary income streams was also demonstrated. However, these funds should be collected and spent directly by public space management departments and need to be viewed strictly as additional funding over and above core income streams.

6. MAKE THE CASE INTERNALLY

Winning resources against other competing claims represents a key and increasing skill amongst public space managers. This requires strong leadership and the strength of conviction and ability to present public space issues to key political and organisational audiences. Publicising public space successes to both internal and external audiences may be an important part of this process in order to secure political support and a willingness to spend. Public space managers therefore have to be advocates for the benefits of high-quality public space, not least of their soft economic benefits. Public space managers need also to understand that half the battle lies in repeatedly demonstrating the value they add

through their work, in so doing garnering cross-political and public support. Indeed, the most successful international examples are founded on this ability to continually make the case for resources to a wide range of audiences.

7. INVEST IN THE SKILLS BASE

The key to success in some of the case studies was a well-trained and engaged staff that knew how to combine political, economic, organisational and design skills and how to take advantage of the variety of opportunities available to them. This requires a stable staff in order to build up detailed knowledge and expertise of the diversity of public spaces. This also requires a continual renewal and investment in skills, not just at management levels, but also at the operational end of public space management. In this regard, departments staffed with marginalised, low-status staff were never found in the successful cities. Elsewhere, the transformation of public space management services from the Cinderella service of local government to a first division service will require a similar and continual investment in staff. The creation of dedicated degree programmes and continual professional development opportunities in the sector may offer a valuable starting point. The aim should also be to create long-term stability in organisational structures so as to nurture staff stability and commitment and the building of internal links.

8. CONSISTENTLY FOCUS ON QUALITY

The case studies illustrated both the dangers of an emphasis on quantity over quality, resulting in the provision of standardised public spaces with little regard to the needs of surrounding communities, but also the benefits of a long-term commitment to high-quality public space for generating lasting economic, social and environmental value. The latter requires high-quality, robust design solutions designed to reflect positive aspects of the original character and context. Public space managers need to be involved from the start in the design and planning of new public spaces, as do skilled landscape designers in the ongoing management of existing spaces; particularly as and when new interventions are planned. A key lesson is that designing high-quality, resilient public spaces can not only save on public space resources through the proper consideration of lifetime costs, but can ensure that local communities engage more fully in their ongoing management through the provision of the spaces they want, rather than simply the spaces that policy says they need.