



The ISSUES Project

Implementation Strategies for
Sustainable Urban Environment Systems

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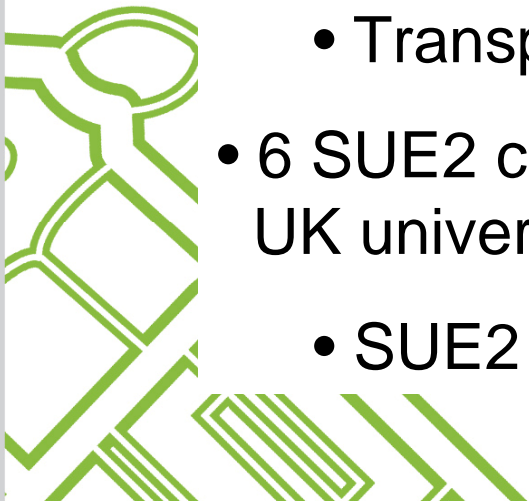
www.urbansustainabilityexchange.org.uk



The SUE Consortia



- 12 SUE1 consortia, £22m funding, over 30 UK universities, over 120 project partners
 - Now closed or concluding
- 4 clusters:
 - Urban and Built Environment
 - Waste, Water and Land Management
 - Metrics, Knowledge Management and Decision-making
 - Transport
- 6 SUE2 consortia and related activities, £16m funding, over 30 UK universities, 93 project partners
 - SUE2 consortia now starting work

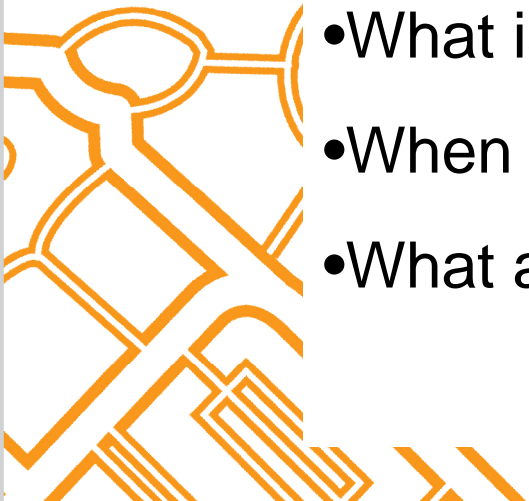


The ISSUES Project



The ISSUES project is charged with improving dissemination and knowledge exchange between SUE researchers and policy makers and practitioners

- What is knowledge?
- What is knowledge transfer / knowledge exchange?
- When should it happen and how can it happen?
- What are the barriers and what are the opportunities?



Levering Knowledge



“We are drowning in information but starved for knowledge.”

John Naisbitt

“A little knowledge that acts is worth infinitely more than much knowledge that is idle.”

Kahlil Gilbran



Knowledge – Michael Gibbons (SPRU, ACU)

Explicit knowledge	Implicit Knowledge
<p>“The world of scientific understanding and the triumph of the human intellect”</p> <p>Platonic – master-pupil ethos.</p>	<p>Concerned by contextualising knowledge in the world of reality and technology outside academia</p> <p>Socratic - peer ethos.</p>
Typical Characteristics	Typical Characteristics
Fragmentation of knowledge	Holistic, not reductionist
Internal referencing/peer review	External referencing
Subject driven, absence of context	Context driven, not subject driven
Objectivity taken to extremes, dehumanisation of science	Mission oriented not blue skies
Individually focussed, competitive.	Teamwork driven, co-operative
Dissemination by scholarly papers	Heterogeneous knowledge bases
Convergent to a theoretical solution	Divergent not convergent thinking
Objective, reductionist	Reflexive, pragmatic
Decisive criterion: Is it right?	Decisive criterion: Does it work?



KT/E Barriers

– a policy maker's view

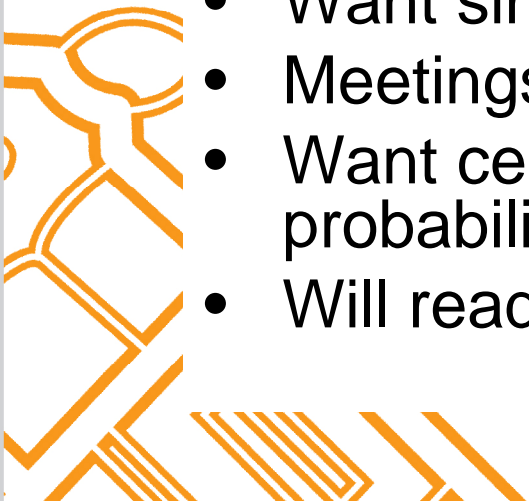


Policy Makers

- Often not scientists
- Move every 3 years
- Uninterested in technical or science stuff
- Interested in policy process
- Hate conferences, won't travel
- Want simple summaries
- Meetings last minutes
- Want certainty, not probability or doubt
- Will read 1 or 2 A4 sheets

Researchers

- Are scientists
- Have long tenures
- Fascinated by technical & scientific detail
- What is this policy process thing?
- Love conferences, especially overseas
- Want detailed explanation
- Meetings last days
- Delight in uncertainty and complexity
- Read a PhD before coffee



KT/E Barriers

- a practitioner's view



Academics

- Knowledge is the currency
- Seek new knowledge
- Have to deliver education & research
- Speak with precision
- Set high priority on discussion
- Speak to each other
- See funding as a means to a goal of doing what they want
- Bound by a rigid academic timetable
- Know time constraints in advance

Practitioners

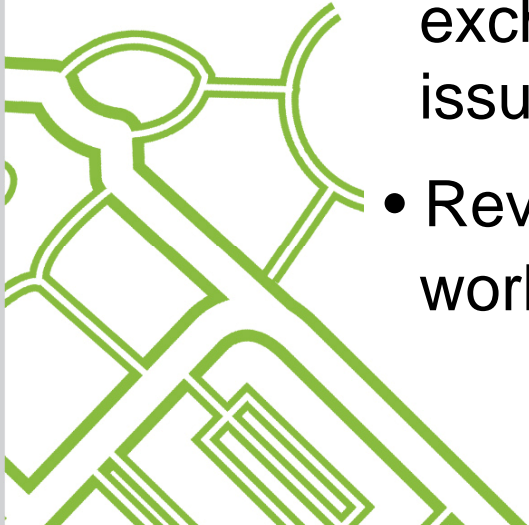
- Knowledge is a tool
- Seek current best practice
- Have a single focus and are driven
- Talk in a hurry
- Think discussion is delay
- Have to speak to clients
- Are in business which needs to be profitable
- Driven by client time scales
- Never know what is about to change - need knowledge and need it NOW

How did we start?



Research to inform project strategy

- Interviews with Principal Investigators and Researchers
- Interviews with a wide range of stakeholders
- Use of knowledge matrices to understand perceptions of KT / KE
- Events to bring researchers and end-users together to exchange knowledge and to bring out some of the issues surrounding KT / KE
- Review of experience and good practice used by others working in field of knowledge transfer / exchange



What have we found?



- Good knowledge transfer practice is often knowledge exchange
- KE is more likely to be effective if engagement starts early in the research cycle – even before the research questions are formulated
- It can be hard to involve end-users in research. However, ‘co-creation’ of knowledge can improve the relevance of the research and increase the likelihood that it will be used
- Some funding, institutional and evaluation structures make it harder for academics and researchers to resource dissemination



Routes to End Users



- Informal interactions are very important (make the most of coffee breaks – the power of social networking)
- Researchers can submit evidence to Government consultations, select committees, APPGs, POSTNotes, P/FMQs, scientific advisors, etc
- Get research into appropriate media, e.g. trade journals, New Scientist, the BBC, broadsheets, etc
- Secondments to government / industry
- KT/E networks
- Submit evidence to knowledge hubs
- Encourage researchers to be involved with NGOs, either through placements or volunteering

What is ISSUES doing at the Research / Policy Interface?



- Distilled key findings from all 12 SUE1 projects
- Through ISSUES steering group and contacts, drawn up list of key audiences to approach
- Set up face to face meetings through which to highlight SUE research and to signpost policy makers and other end-users to relevant outputs
- Ask policy makers their views about what needs to happen to make research more useful and more accessible to them



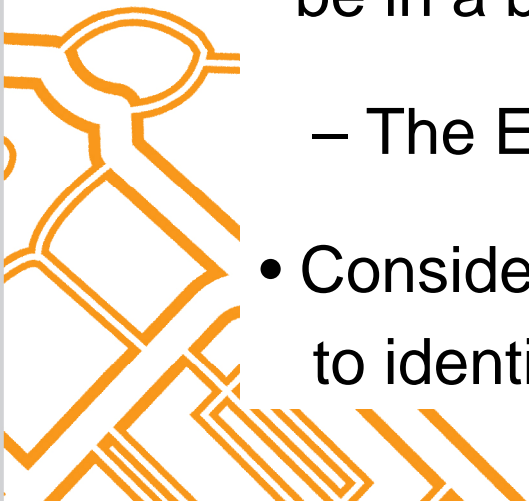
Knowledge Exchange is not an afterthought



- Advocacy and Dissemination of completed research outputs is an important start.

In addition ISSUES will:

- Work with the SUE community to enable them to share good practice in dissemination
- Work with end-users to understand what could enable them to be in a better position to access/make use of research findings
 - The Ebbsfleet Event
- Consider the whole ‘Funding – Research – Application’ cycle to identify what else could change to make it more effective



Connecting with Policymakers ???



- **Understanding:** appreciate their policy needs and direction
- **Familiarity:** find out how Government works, get to know the right people, be sure they know you
- **Relevance:** focus your research/information on their questions
- **Summarise:** plain English summaries of 2 A4s max.
- **Simplicity:** if in doubt, simplify, and don't complicate
- **Brevity:** you'll get minutes of their attention, not hours
- **Certainty:** they will want to know how certain your findings are
- **Reliability:** they will want to know your track record and standing
- **Timeliness:** understand political timescales may be shorter than research timescales (and sometimes much longer)



Are we heading in the right direction?



“The biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has been accomplished.”

George Bernard Shaw



What next?



- Talk to one of us here at this conference
- Find out more at

www.urbansustainabilityexchange.org.uk

- Help us by completing a short interview or survey
- Contact us to give your views on how to improve

KT / KE at the research / policy interface:

kt-sue@hw.ac.uk or 0131 451 8162

Thank you