Lessons from a SATLE-funded project: Exploring teaching methods and tools for enhancing healthy places

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Project Overview

This poster presentation provides a description of a workshop that included a world café with students on 11th May 2026 in UCC. The workshop was undertaken as part of a collaborative SATLE-funded project entitled *Creating Healthy Places: Exploring teaching methods and tools for enhancing healthy places* (*Healthy Places*). The aim of the *Healthy Places* project was to test teaching approaches for enhancing healthy places, bringing together expertise in planning and public health, using collaborative tools including Health Impact Assessment (HIA), the Place Standard Tool and the Health Map. *Healthy Places* involved an international expert on healthy urban environments, Marcus Grant, in the workshop preparation and delivery. Two research partners were also involved in the project, namely Emer Keane (public health) and Caroline Costello (planning).

The goal of *Healthy Places* was to test established tools for creating healthy places with students across public health and planning, with a view to creating an evidence-base for informing future curricula on healthy place-making. This curricula would be developed by the project co-leads, Monica O'Mullane and Jeanette Fitzsimons in UCC. Three tools were tested in the project, namely Health Impact Assessment (HIA), the Place Standard Tool, and the Health Map.

Workshop & World Café

A workshop, including a world café, took place on 11th May, 2026, in the O'Rahilly Building in UCC. 21 students participated on the day, 9 from the public health discipline, 12 from the planning discipline. Ethics approval was attained from the Social Research Ethics Committee in UCC (log # 2026-016). Presentations were delivered by Jeanette, Monica and Marcus on the Place Standard Tool, HIA and The Health Map, as well as an overview of the workshop test site and tasks for the world café. The World Café methodology was used to enable students to work together and foster dialogue in testing the three tools on a real-world example of a site in Cork city currently undergoing development. The site is located in a transitionary space at the junction of the city centre and the Docklands.

The room was set up into three tables for group work, with students spending 20 minutes at each table that was focused on HIA, the Place Standard Tool, and the Health Map. The students were asked to apply the tools with the test site in mind. Each table included both planning and public health students at each round, with three rounds completed for the three tools. Marcus, Monica and Jeanette rotated across the tables, supporting groups and answering questions. The two students partners, Caroline Costello and Emer Keane, participated also in the world café and noted observations from the groups tasks, with a focus on capturing themes from group discussions and how students found testing the three tools.

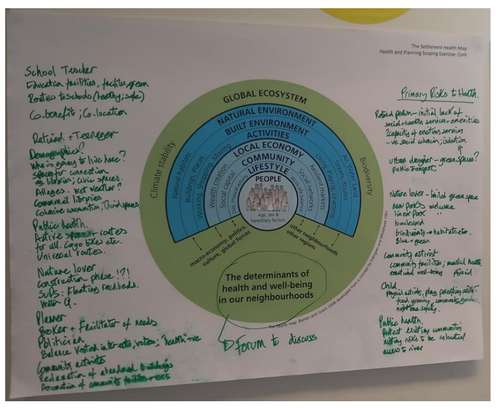
Place Standard Tool



Health Impact Assessment



The Health Map







Click on the QR code to read a news item on the workshop on 11th May, 2026!

Findings

Group feedback from the world cafe highlighted that there is an appetite amongst students and staff across the two disciplines for collaboration, and that using interactive tools together deepened insights into the place and how others view and experience places.

Students were keen to learn with and from other disciplinary perspectives and demonstrated an openness to collaboration and new ideas. For instance, for planning students, they felt that public health is often covered indirectly through active travel or provision of green space, whereas they learned from public health students that there are health equity implications in planning, such as accessibility of active travel means and routes.

Next Steps!

Stay working together! An important outcome is that Monica and Jeanette will continue to work together and forge stronger interdisciplinary collaborations, as well as working with Marcus Grant beyond the project lifetime.

Peer-reviewed article: Currently writing a manuscript on the workshop findings.

Plan a **co-coordinated module and microcredential** in Healthy Places.

Conference dissemination will continue for us, hopefully next sharing our findings at the Association of European Schools of Planning Annual Congress –AESOP- conference in Birmingham, UK in 2027.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Enormous thanks to the funders and supporters of this project, without whose support we could not have completed this work: UCC Office of the Vice-President for Learning and Teaching, the Centre for the Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning (CIRTL), the HEA National Forum, UCC Collective Social Futures and the HRB HIA-IM project. We are also hugely grateful to the students who participated in the workshop, and to Marcus Grant for collaborating with us on the project.