A RESTORATIVE CITY FOR NEW SOUTH WALES – COULD NEWCASTLE BE A MODEL?

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INTRODUCTORY THOUGHT PROVOKER

- **WHAT IS YOUR NOTION OF A RESTORATIVE CITY?**

- *Introduce yourself to someone you don't know and take up to two minutes to discuss your notion of a restorative city.*

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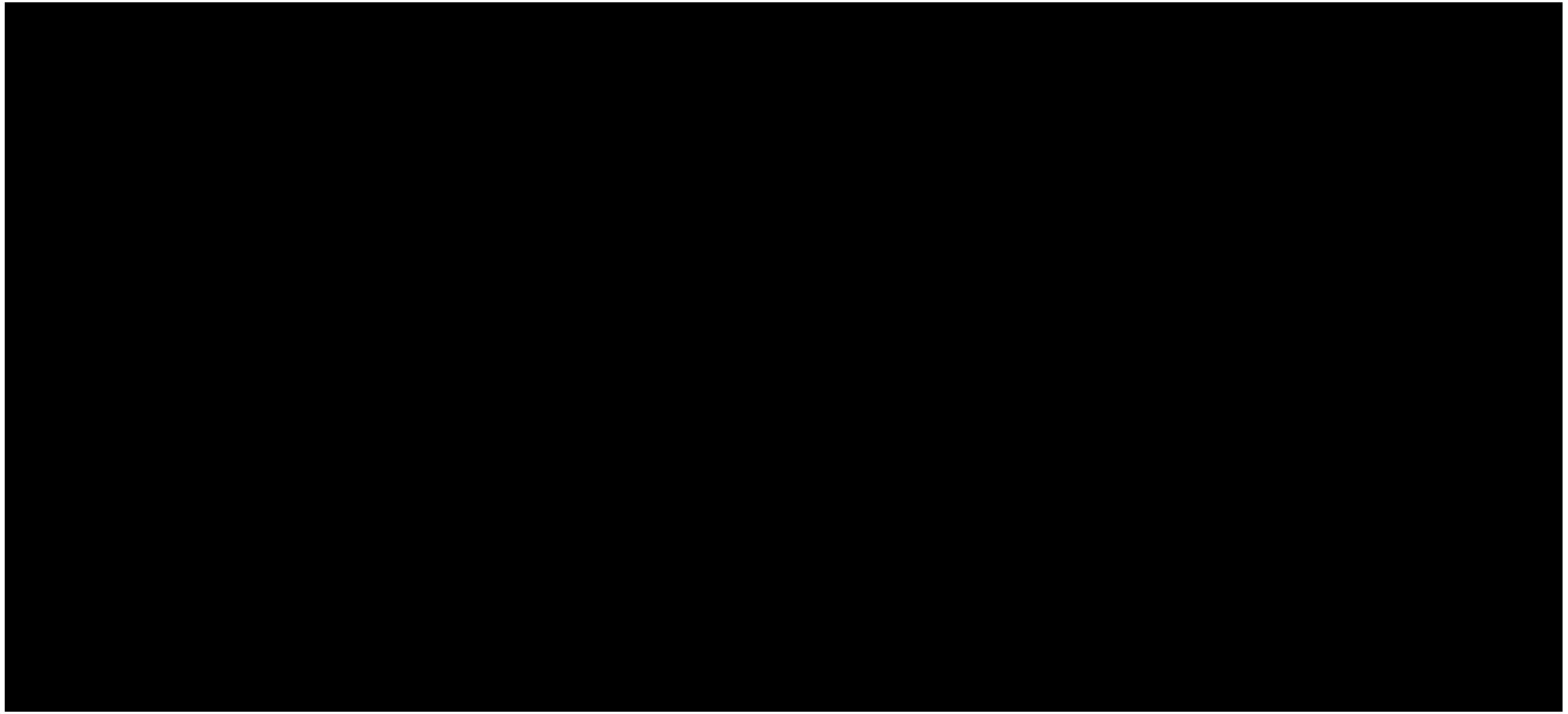
HULL, UK: THE WORLD'S FIRST RESTORATIVE CITY



Source: International Institute for Restorative Practices, 'Restorative Practices in Hull: The First Restorative City' (25 September 2012). Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s4tpmantqeI& (accessed 31 March 2017).

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A RESTORATIVE CITY

- Further than the introduction of restorative justice and restorative practices – involves transforming the culture and social fabric of a city to embed restorative practices so that they become second-nature
- Models and Experiences of Restorative Cities
- Hull UK - world's first restorative city
- Leeds UK
- Oakland, California USA
- Whanganui, NZ
- Canberra, ACT Australia

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NEWCASTLE AS A RESTORATIVE CITY

- **Why Newcastle?** moderate size, availability of services, potential for expansion on regional basis.
- **Demographics** - population size with approx 30% in 10-19 and 20-29 yr age groups, socio-economic data with areas of advantage and disadvantage, crime rates, Indigenous offending, high out-of-home care rates for children and young people.
- **Urban renewal** - recent movement from heavy industrial city to a service oriented and innovative city - new and different employment opportunities - revitalisation of the CBD: transport, culture, education.
- **Need for social and cultural renewal** - role for restorative principles and practices.

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NEWCASTLE AS A RESTORATIVE CITY

- **Experience and experiments in restorative justice and restorative practices in Newcastle** - focus on children and youth - conferencing, schools, Youth on Track (encouraging results), Hunter Drug Court, MERIT program in Local Courts.
- **Ad hoc arrangements** - co-ordination, information sharing and central organisation to work together to promote restorative principles and practices underpinning the life of the city (Hull Centre for Restorative Practice)
- **Strong candidate** for transformation into a restorative city through a long term project - A restorative region?

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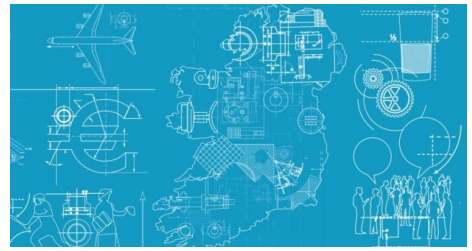
BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE OF NEWCASTLE AS A RESTORATIVE CITY



- Ambitious cultural and social change project – time commitment
- How have other Restorative Cities started this transformation?
- Processes include developing networks, trusts, conferences
- Identification of key stakeholders (champions) to develop and take idea forward
- NGO sector, victims, youth, City Council, schools, local State MPs, police (youth, domestic violence) indigenous sector;
- Task Force - role of university, government, community organisations & steering committee. Igniting interest in diverse sectors under one umbrella, via networking & initial conference.
- Co-ordinating and supporting services and practices

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BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE OF NEWCASTLE AS A RESTORATIVE CITY

- Expansion of Restorative Justice and Restorative Practices
- Still identifying active restorative programs active in Newcastle:
    - Justice sector: conferencing, Youth on Track, Hunter drug court and MERIT
    - Community sector: FGCs/mediation in child protection,
    - Schools (bullying)
- Children and youth central in this process - education, youth justice, Indigenous and community services
- Transforming culture to focus on inclusion
- Restorative City conference planned for March 2018 in Newcastle with array of international speakers experienced in restorative practices and from other restorative cities together with local champions from Newcastle and training day in restorative practices
- Resourcing the process; Impact evaluation.

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THANK YOU

DISCUSSION

A presentation to the Second International Conference on Non Adversarial Justice, Australasian Institute of Judicial Administration. Sydney 6 April 2017