

## 7

# Participation in urban open space governance and management

*Hanna Fors, Bianca Ambrose-Oji,  
Cecil Konijnendijk van den Bosch,  
Helena Mellqvist and Märit Jansson*

## Why participation in urban open space?

In the past, local governments have been responsible for the management of public urban open space (UOS). However, recent years have seen an emerging trend for user involvement in UOS management (Matijssen et al., 2017; Sheppard et al., 2017). User participation in urban planning and management issues dates back to the 1960s, when local governments – for example in the US and UK – started involving users in urban and regional planning as a response to contemporary criticisms of professionally based rational comprehensive planning (Smith et al., 2014). The work of Patsy Healey (1997) contributed to establishing and developing more collaborative approaches to planning. In the specific case of green spaces, such as parks and other UOSs, user participation is currently promoted not only in terms of contributions to planning and design but also most recently in terms of ongoing management. International policies and initiatives, such as the

Local Agenda 21 Action Plan (UN, 1992), the European Landscape Convention (CE, 2000) and the Aarhus Convention (UN, 1998), all of which advocate involving users more closely in decisions regarding UOSs, have contributed to this widening remit. The underlying idea regarding user participation is that UOS can only be planned and managed in an appropriate, democratic, robust and sustainable way if its users are directly involved and their needs, perspectives and capabilities are effectively integrated (Van Herzele et al., 2005; Sheppard et al., 2017).

Various benefits of participation in UOS management have been highlighted. User participation in UOS management has the potential to benefit local governments, participating and non-participating users and UOSs. Users have been found to benefit from participation in UOS management through an increased sense of satisfaction with their neighbourhoods (Nannini et al., 1998), with greater recreational and social use (Jones, 2002; Glover et al., 2005) and an increased sense of attachment to green

spaces (Van Herzele et al., 2005). When a user (sometimes denoted ‘connoisseur’) is invited to participate in actual planning, a new expert is introduced and an exchange of knowledge emerges that strengthens trust between participating stakeholders (Mellqvist, 2017). Participation can also address environmental justice issues (e.g. Rutt & Gulsrud, 2016) and lead to UOS quality being perceived as higher among participating users (Fors et al., 2018a). However, a review of the scientific literature on user participation in UOS planning and management found that, while many potential benefits of participation were discussed, few were empirically tested (Fors et al., 2015). This implies that many benefits of participation seem to be taken for granted, especially whether participation actually improves the quality of physical UOS.

User participation in UOS governance and management has gained increased attention with the introduction of the various international policies, research studies and development of new trends, such as urbanisation and individualisation. User participation is becoming a more emphasised aspect of UOS management and a main pillar for UOS governance (Jansson et al., 2019). This chapter addresses the need for theories and appropriate methods to support participatory approaches within these practices.

## Current trends and approaches to participation in UOS development

As a result of the increased interest in user participation, different ways of including users have been tested. A variety of participatory approaches are actively promoted by managers on the strategic level

(top-down), facilitated by various organisations and initiated by users (bottom-up). Some of the trends affecting green space governance and management in Europe, but also relevant for North America and worldwide, are described in Box 7.1. Associated examples of participatory projects and actions in UOS management are shown in Figure 7.1.

## Involved – but to what degree?

The concept of participation may be defined in various ways, but the important signifier here is *user* – implying that the target group is mostly relatively local to the UOS. Users are a specific part of the public – namely, the people or groups that regularly or potentially inhabit and interact with a space. Users can also be described as either ‘communities of location’, i.e. a group of people living in the same geographical location, such as a neighbourhood close to an UOS, or ‘communities of interest’, i.e. a group of people brought together due to their common interest in using the same UOS (e.g. Seyfang & Smith, 2007). When these users participate in the management of, and decision making about, a publicly accessible UOS, the term ‘public participation’ is also relevant. ‘Public participation’ and ‘public involvement’ are often used interchangeably, but their meanings can entail different nuances. The term public involvement includes the public in decision making without necessarily guaranteeing that they actually have any impact on the end result (World Bank, 1993). In contrast, in her seminal work on public participation, Sherry Arnstein (1969) stressed that participation should give access to process and a degree of power to affect outcomes. The use of these terms as synonyms shows that participation

## BOX 7.1: TRENDS IN USER PARTICIPATION IN UOS

Several societal trends currently affect participatory governance practices for UOS in Europe (Van der Jagt et al., 2016). Four of these trends are described next.

### 1. Linking up with sociocultural objectives

Public involvement in green space management is often linked up with sociocultural objectives, finding mechanisms to improve social cohesion, supporting users with less power or facilitating integration of immigrants. However, there is little attention in current research on how to involve different groups in modes of participation that move beyond consultation towards empowerment and self-organisation.

### 2. Promoting e-governance

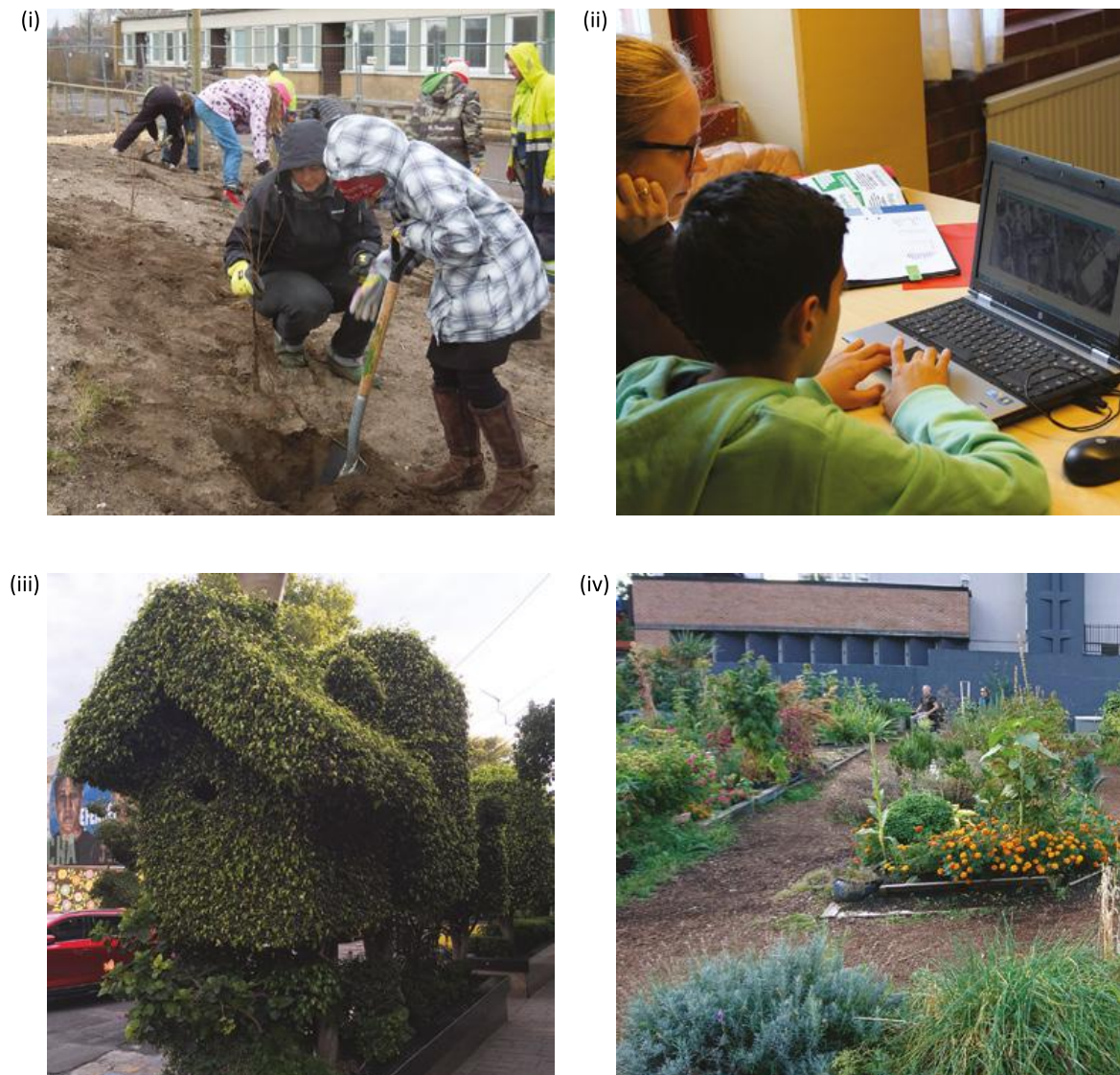
E-governance facilitates participatory green space governance. It is becoming increasingly common to include the use of electronic Internet-based communication tools in governance activities, such as online consultation platforms, participatory GIS and mapping of green space issues. Another example of this is participatory budgeting, when local governments invite users to submit their ideas on how to develop local green spaces. Winning proposals are implemented for a dedicated part of the municipal budget, and in this way, users influence what is done with their city.

### 3. Fostering of public-private partnerships

Cuts in maintenance budgets have forced local governments to find alternative solutions in order to maintain public UOS quality. This has increased outsourcing of public green space maintenance to private actors and led to a third trend: fostering of public-private partnerships where, for example, private businesses sponsor maintenance of a local public green space.

### 4. Engaging in urban agriculture and local food production

Many local governments across the globe promote and engage in community-supported urban agriculture and local food production. Urban residents in many parts of the world are showing increasing interest in knowing more about the origins of food, understanding the health benefits of gardening and wanting to encounter biodiversity. This has led to the initiation of many urban gardening initiatives. Urban gardening initiatives create unique UOSs, such as allotment gardens, community food gardens, orchards or vineyards. A rather new urban gardening practice in Europe, North America and elsewhere is to make use of former industrial or infrastructural areas (i.e. brown space) through temporary and 'pop-up' gardening projects, often linked with objectives to foster social cohesion.



**Figure 7.1** Examples of four current trends in user participation. (i) School ground greening in Malmö, Sweden. (ii) E-governance using children's maps in GIS. (iii) Public-private collaboration in Mexico City where some businesses have taken responsibility for maintenance of public planting areas outside their premises. (iv) Davie Village community garden in Vancouver, Canada. *Photos: (i) Jansson et al. (2014), (ii) Ulla Berglund, (iii) Elizabeth Shelley and (iv) Märit Jansson*

notions can range from consultation without influence on decisions to integrated cooperation (World Bank, 1993), a range that raises questions regarding what ideals of participation processes and outcomes to strive for.

Involvement of users in UOS planning and management is generally seen as good and desirable, but it is not always clear what it means in practice in terms of the

degree of actual involvement and how much power is transferred from, for example, local governments to participating users. Figure 7.2 presents different ways of describing the level of user participation. Apart from the 'spectrum of public participation in forest and woodland planning', none of the ladders and spectra described next is specifically developed for participation in UOS management, but all may,

Ladder of citizen participation (Arnstein, 1969)				
Manipulation	Therapy	Informing	Consultation	Placation
Non-participation		Tokenism		
Ladder of children's participation (Hart, 1992)				
Manipulation	Decoratation	Tokenism	Assigned but informed	Consulted and informed
			Adult-initiated, shared decisions with children	Child initiated and directed
			Child initiated, shared decisions with adults	
Non-participation				
<i>Degrees of participation</i>				
Spectrum of public participation in forest and woodland planning (Ambrose-Oji et al., 2011)				
Form of participation	Inform	Consult	Involve	
	Partner-ship (or collaborate)	Empower (or control)		
Non-government actor role	Provide information and views about plans for decision making processes	In care and maintenance	In man-agement decisions	In man-agement
	Open co-governance	Closed co-governance	Lease of public land	Purchase of public land
The hierarchical, closed and open co-governance and self-governance continuum (Arnouts et al., 2012)				
	Hierarchical governance		Open co-governance	Self-governance

**Figure 7.2** Levels of user participation as described in different studies. *Source: Reproduced from Fors (2018)*

nonetheless, be applied to the field. An early description of involvement levels can be found in Arnstein's (1969) ladder of citizen participation, which was a response to how citizen participation was treated in the 1960s in the US, often without redistribution of power. This created an 'empty' participation process for the users involved, while the authorities could still claim that they had permitted user participation. Arnstein (1969) pointed out that there are gradations of user participation with varying degrees of power and depicted the different levels of user (citizen) participation in decision making and planning as a ladder with eight progressive rungs: (i) manipulation, (ii) therapy, (iii) informing, (iv) consultation, (v) placation, (vi) partnership, (vii) delegated power and (viii) citizen control. Rungs i and ii represent non-participation and rungs iii–v represent tokenism, so only the three highest levels of participation can be described as 'citizen power' (Arnstein, 1969). This work is still influential and frequently cited, although its suggested view and the metaphor of a ladder, with the highest degree of participation always at the top (the best), has been criticised because the full spectrum of user participation may play an important part in different social and political contexts and at different stages in the development of UOS (Hayward et al., 2004).

Tritter and McCallum (2006) criticised Arnstein's ladder of participation for being a hierarchical, linear and, therefore, unrealistic model of user involvement that only emphasises the transfer of power between authorities and the public. Their focus was on user participation in health-care policy and practice, but their remarks are valid for other contexts. Gaining power through a public participation process is not the goal for all users or in all circumstances, and

some do not even wish to become involved. Transferred power from, for example, local governments to users does not automatically result in high-quality participation processes or outcomes. Rather, Tritter and McCallum (2006) call for a model that shows the full potential of participation, dynamic and evolving with time, including a diversity of valuable knowledge and experience of the professionals and users involved – i.e. instead of a ladder, they propose a mosaic model.

It is not enough to consider only *how* people are involved; it is also important to be clear about *which* users are involved. Some societal groups tend to have less possibilities to influence decision making and the development of UOS, and it is important to include these groups in participatory approaches. Examples are ethnic and cultural minorities, people with disabilities, the elderly and children. Children and young people are a societal group that is particularly important to involve, as they provide a valuable perspective that is different from adults and are often interested in becoming involved and having their points of view included as important users of UOS. Participation can be a way to foster their democratic learning too, providing an opportunity for young people to learn about users' rights and duties and how decisions are made in a democracy. Article 12 in the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989) supports children's participation, stating the right of each child to express views, be listened to and taken seriously. Despite these compelling reasons, adults often fail to involve children or even consider doing so (Lansdown, 2001).

Children's participation in the development of UOS has often been restricted to planning and design, but children might be particularly interested in participating within

management, including on the operational level through possibilities for physical manipulation of the environment (Jansson, 2015). Management has the potential to facilitate children's participation on a level that is daily, informal, local and hands-on (Clark & Percy-Smith, 2006), while also allowing for a dialogue-based approach (Graham & Fitzgerald, 2010). Increased participation and dialogue can help counteract the common lack of understanding and large distance between managers on various organisational levels, on the one hand, and children and youth as users of UOS on the other hand (Roe, 2006; Jansson, 2015).

Hart (1992) recognised the need to promote children's participation in particular and adapted Arnstein's ladder to include children's participation in the UN Children's Fund publication *Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship*. The purpose of this re-conceptualisation of Arnstein's ladder was to stimulate dialogue on children's participation rather than provide a comprehensive tool for assessment of work where children are involved (Hart, 2008). According to Hart (1992), a project involving children can be considered truly participatory when the children (i) understand the intentions of the project, (ii) know who made the decisions concerning their involvement and why, (iii) have a meaningful (rather than 'decorative') role and (iv) volunteer for the project after it is made clear to them.

There has been some criticism and misinterpretations of Hart's use of the ladder metaphor for children's participation, as discussed by Hart (2008). This is partly due to the important difference that, in many if not all circumstances, children are not fully empowered and in control of processes and decision making because of the (necessary) involvement of adults. Hart (2008) acknowledges that his approach provides a rather narrow range of ways for children to participate – i.e. formal programmes and projects rather than

the much-needed every day informal participation of children and creation of a culture of play in their communities. That said, the most important thing when children are involved is that they are provided with the opportunity to choose to participate in any way they can to the best of their ability and in the fullest way possible (Hart, 1992).

Francis and Lorenzo (2002) reviewed 30 years of children's participation in planning and design and identified seven partly overlapping realms or approaches. They concluded that involving children in the romantic realm meant regarding children as competent planners who made better environments for themselves than adults could. Other realms were advocacy, needs, learning, rights and institutionalisation, as well as the increasingly common proactive realm, which regards participation as a communicative and visionary process that empowers both children and adults to create good environments for children through their genuine participation (Francis & Lorenzo, 2002). More recently, critical discussions have concluded that there are sometimes too many expectations on children's participation in UOS development and that adults need to take more responsibility for ensuring children's access to UOS of both sufficient quantity and quality as a basic requirement for children's participation to be meaningful and ethical.

There are also more recent descriptions of user participation levels. The spectrum of public participation, developed by the International Association for Public Participation, was adapted by Ambrose-Oji et al. (2011) to specifically describe public participation in forest and woodland planning and management. A difference between the spectrum and the ladder of citizen participation is that the former does not take account of non-participation and the use of a spectrum, rather than a ladder, that attempts to move past the normative

association that the upper rungs of the (Arnstein) ladder are 'best' or the ultimate objective of any participation process. According to Van der Jagt et al. (2016), the value of the spectrum also lies in clarification of various roles of non-government actors along different parts of the spectrum (see the bottom row in Figure 7.2). Thus 'involve' is included between the rungs 'placation' and 'partnership' on the Arnstein ladder (Figure 7.2). Partnership is about 'partnering with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution', while to empower is to 'place final decision-making in the hands of the public' (Ambrose-Oji et al., 2011, p. 3).

There is a real distinction between involvement, partnership and empowerment in terms of where the power to make decisions and move forward with use and management of a UOS actually rests. Involvement and partnership imply different degrees of collaborative decision making but with a significant controlling interest remaining with the government agency or local government. Empowerment implies that the local community or other participatory groups – i.e. communities of interest – can act autonomously and have the power to move ahead with their own ideas about the development and management of UOS. In some cases, for example in Scotland through the National Forest Land Scheme, this might mean community groups actually purchasing land in public ownership (Ambrose-Oji et al., 2014; Lawrence & Ambrose-Oji, 2015). However, empowerment is commonly achieved through negotiation of a lease or similar agreement, where ownership of the land remains with the local government but the community or 'user group' has the agreed and often legal right to make its own decisions about land use.

The level of participation achieved may be affected by whether participation is initiated top-down by authorities or bottom-up by

users. A participation process could be placed along the levels described earlier but could also be described according to the role of users in different modes of governance, ranging from hierarchical to closed co-governance, open co-governance or self-governance, depending on the level of public involvement and power sharing between different actors (Arnouts et al., 2012).

### *More than power – matching participation*

The message conveyed by all spectra and ladders described earlier is that local governments should aim for genuine and real participation by a range of users while considering the benefits of their involvement. The most important issues for local governments to consider are what type of participation is appropriate, when and which users or groups of users to include. Once the decision to involve people has been made, the process needs to be handled with care, commitment and awareness. Users may lose interest in participation processes and become disappointed if their efforts and inputs are (or seem to be) disregarded by authorities seeking a more consultative type of involvement or if participation processes take too long, making it difficult to maintain enthusiasm and involvement and to effect the changes users want.

A key challenge is to match the type of participation to the objectives and users' desire to be involved, avoiding unconscious symbolic box-ticking on participation or imposition of the highest (empowering) level of involvement if participants do not want this. As Burton and Mathers (2014) emphasise, participants' capacity and interests concerning the scale and type of participation need to be matched with corresponding management activities. If an activity requires insurance, for



example, or if participants lack the needed skills to carry it out, it is better to offer participants other tasks. Many stakeholders in European cities continue to regard UOS management as the responsibility of local government, making them reluctant to participate in initiatives or very selective in how they become involved. Participants who feel that they are ‘taking jobs’ from professional staff may choose to be involved in arranging events rather than in operational maintenance. Participants may also find the initial place-making part more exciting than the place-keeping (management) of an UOS and lose interest over time (Burton & Mathers, 2014).

Building on a more critical perspective of earlier categorisations, spectra and ladders of participation, Buijs et al. (2016) propose so-called mosaic governance as a way to maximise environmental outcomes of user participation in UOS development. Mosaic governance is about applying an enabling and stimulating governance style in order to exploit the full potential of user participation while avoiding undesired outcomes. The cultural diversity of urban residents and their UOS use, the institutional diversity of how they self-organise and the diversity of physical UOSs demand context-sensitive rather than generic governance approaches from the authorities. In practice, this means embracing a wide range of partnerships with users, from bottom-up initiatives to cross-sector partnerships, creating different kinds of arrangements depending on UOS type and character and that of the users involved and adapted to changing social and ecological circumstances (Buijs et al., 2016).

Mosaic governance is closely connected with spatially explicit UOS and the spatial dimension of strategic urban planning, recognising that its components are not totally independent of one another. The variety of governance arrangements that exist and

the different governance models employed in them reflect the urban landscape scale mosaic of interrelated urban green infrastructure ecologies, ecosystem functions and benefits. However, while landscape governance takes, primarily, characteristics of non-urban landscapes into account, mosaic governance explicitly focuses on grassroots and bottom-up processes in the urban context, as well as the unique feature of sociocultural diversity of residents and communities (Buijs et al., 2018).

### MOSAIC GOVERNANCE IN PRACTICE

While it is important to be aware of problems associated with the different types of non-participation described in Figure 7.2, the higher levels of participation are more interesting when discussing what participation at different levels might consist of in practice. The choice of method depends on the type of place where participation takes place and the type of participation process – for example involving residents in their local UOS close to their homes – calls for a different approach than, for example, involving them in planning for a more distant park. Based on conclusions reached by Tritter and McCallum (2006) and Buijs et al. (2016) on mosaic governance in UOS in practice, the following aspects need to be included:

- Acknowledge that participants may seek different types of involvement in relation to different issues and at different times in the development and implementation processes.
- Use a variety of methods for participation to tap into complementary communities of users. Thus provide context-sensitive methods for participation varying in set-up, ranging from, for example, one-off events to continuous participation, from hierarchical to self-governance, from bottom-up to

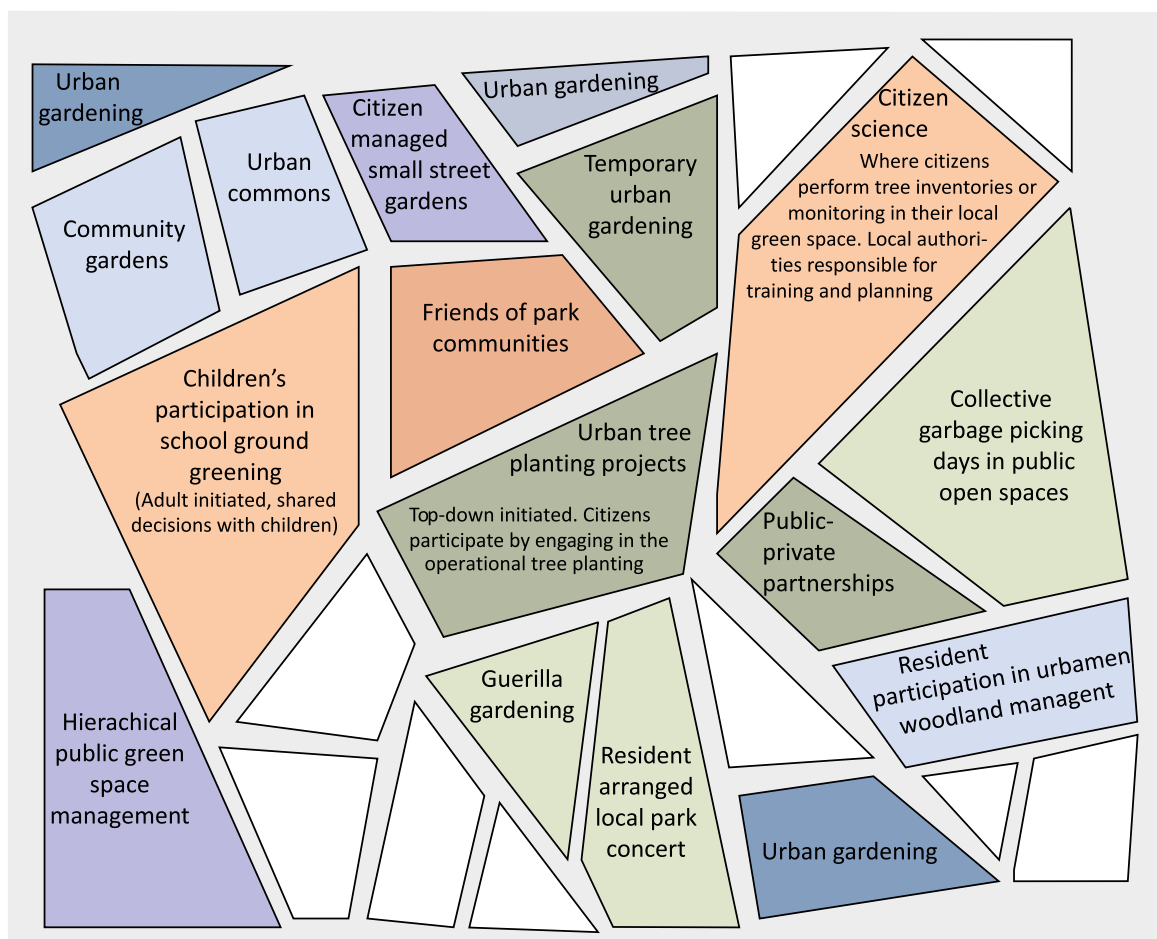
cross-sector partnerships or from individual to collective organisation and concerning a diversity of UOS types and scales – i.e. individual street trees, small street gardens, community gardens and nature conservation areas. These can target a diverse range of users – for example individuals, groups or organisations – as well as user diversity in culture, age, UOS use, knowledge, experience, resources, etc., and ensure UOS meets local requirements.

- Employ a dynamic structure and participation process negotiated by users themselves, along with changing social and ecological circumstances.

The mosaic envisioned by Tritter and McCalum (2006) shows a complex and dynamic

relationship between individual tiles and groups of tiles, where tiles of different colours and shapes are essential parts of the complete picture, but only when systematically integrated. In the context of UOS, the tiles would represent different governance arrangements associated with different spatial locations varying in size, UOS type, community and participant type and integration within different institutional and organisational arrangements which might be top-down or bottom-up initiated, long-term or short-term and so forth. The completed mosaic could then be considered to represent the entire UOS governance approach and enable user participation to be mapped and monitored (Figure 7.3).

The mosaic governance concept (Buijs et al., 2016) resembles the policy arrangement



**Figure 7.3** Illustration of mosaic governance in UOS and examples of possible content. *Illustration:* Hanna Fors

approach developed within the field of environmental policy and governance (Arts et al., 2006). This approach looks at the components important to decision making and places equal focus on the different types of users involved (e.g. individual users, local governments, communities). However, it makes the point that the power and resources (e.g. knowledge, time, financial), the discourses (main 'storylines' that provide context and background) and the rules of the game (formal and informal, guiding interaction and decision making) are harnessed and used by the different kinds of users in ways which produce different power relationships and outcomes (Arts et al., 2006).

## Facilitating long-term participation

A crucial question for user participation in UOS management is how local governments can facilitate long-term user participation. Long-term initiatives often rely on individual 'champions' or 'key drivers', and if they leave, succession is often a problem. The concept of environmental stewardship can be described as responsible, sustainable engagement in natural resources, which can include individuals or groups of stakeholders in relation to UOS. In the US, environmental stewardship has been recognised as a way to foster longer-term involvement of, for example, community groups in the management of UOSs and other areas. Efforts are underway to identify and connect environmental stewardship organisations in networks. An example is the US Forest Service's Stewardship Mapping network, which currently includes cities such as New York City, Seattle and San Juan (Puerto Rico) (e.g. Romolini et al., 2016).

In some cases, local government can be the limiting factor over the long term.

The well-established nature association De Ruige Hof (the Wild Court), which has managed 13 ha of nature in the Netherlands since 1986, has experienced both close and distant contacts with the local government over the years. Similarly, the Boscoincittà (Forest in the City) in Italy, a 120 ha public park managed by a non-government organisation for 40 years, reports both good and bad relations with different administrations during this time. These two European examples illustrate that changes in public administrations over time can make it difficult for users to create long-term relationships with authorities. Ambiguous communication structures and bureaucratic procedures may also hinder users' activities (Mattijsen et al., 2018). The set-up of formal arrangements and official policies that influence UOS substantially affect whether it is possible to secure long-term participation in UOS management. Annually renewed management contracts between local governments and an association, or an area not being officially designated as UOS or protected area, are examples of aspects that hinder users from feeling convinced that their work will be long-term and not destroyed by urban development (Mattijsen et al., 2018).

Three factors that support long-term user participation in public UOS management were identified by Mattijsen et al. (2018). First, *formalisation* supports continuity, so it is important to establish rules, procedures and power structures for stability within the group of users involved. However, a balance is needed between enough institutionalisation, matching existing laws and regulations to safeguard continuity and managing the UOS in a preferred way without losing too much independence. Second, users need to have strong *adaptive capacity* to cope with external political, socioeconomic and cultural development over time caused by

continual contextual changes. This capacity may include resources such as social capital, sufficient funding and a strong network. Third, the *supporting role of authorities* is very important for long-term user involvement, including providing security via stable (UOS) policies, formally protecting spaces, allowing long-term management contracts and contributing resources. Today, local governments retain a key role in UOS governance arrangements as landowners and policy makers, making users dependent on their cooperation and support in order to carry out activities but possibly also play a facilitating and enabling role in the background (Mattijsen et al., 2018).

The residential area Sletten in Holstebro, Denmark, is an example of resident participation in UOS management that has persisted over a long time (Fors et al., 2018b). Sletten residents participate in maintenance and management of the urban public woodland edge zone bordering their private gardens (Figure 7.4). This transition

area between private and public land has been named the 'co-management zone'. Early on, some Sletten residents started to weed around the small tree seedlings or to grow flowers and vegetables at the woodland edge. As the tree canopy started to close, residents engaged in activities such as pruning and thinning among the trees, planting their own plants, providing nesting and feeding boxes for birds, setting up hammocks, putting out garden furniture, creating paths or building huts as part of children's play. Their participation in the woodland was tolerated and even encouraged by the local government. Some years later, resident participation became formalised with written guidelines for the co-management zone.

The case of Sletten both confirms and contradicts the importance of the three factors identified by Mattijsen et al. (2018b) in sustaining local residents' engagement in the long run. Formalisation of participation in Sletten, when guidelines for the

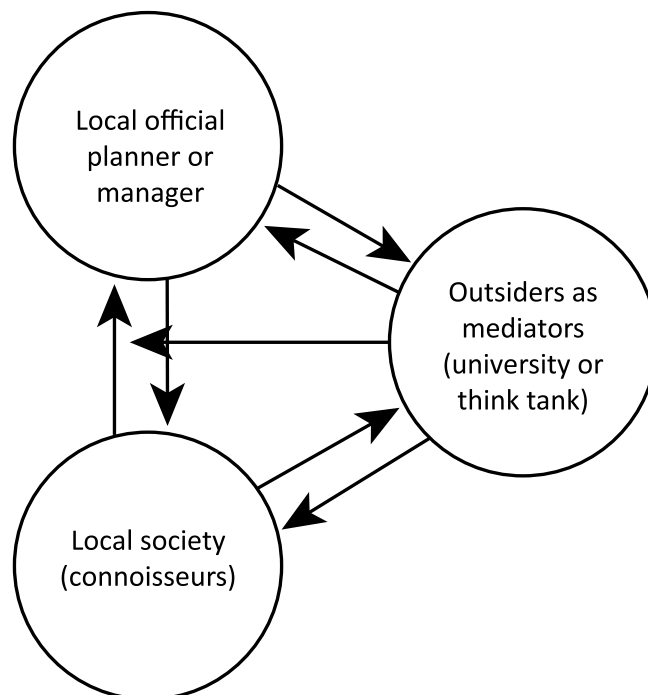


**Figure 7.4** (i) and (ii): Two locations in the co-management zone between private garden and public woodland edge and the results of residents participation in Sletten, Holstebro, Denmark. Photos: Anders Busse Nielsen

co-management zone were written down and sent to all residents, increased the level of resident participation. The participation of Sletten residents was probably not greatly affected by societal changes over time, but they still needed strong adaptive capacity since the continuously growing woodland changed the circumstances. A young and an old woodland allowed for different actions and expressions of participation, where, for example, some residents initially grew vegetables but later put up a hammock in the shade of the trees. Sletten residents have appreciated the supporting role of authorities when given professional guidance, inspiration and control, clear guidelines for the co-management zone and continuous communication between residents and the local government. Earlier periods when this communication did not function well and guidelines were unclear made some residents refrain from participation, while others were satisfied with participating

independently. It is important for local governments to find a good balance between encouraging and controlling the participation process since too strong control or too strict guidelines too early in the process seem to discourage participation. The Sletten residents appreciate their freedom to participate individually or in collaboration with neighbours without always having to ask for permission before they act.

In order to facilitate long-term participation in planning and management of UOS, the connoisseur method has been developed and tested in southern Sweden. The method aims to achieve a complete mosaic (see Figure 7.3) where the local users are considered experts or connoisseurs of their everyday landscape. Another aim is to support the role of local government. This is done by introducing university researchers as a third party in a model for planning, governance and management of UOS (see Figure 7.5). Studies



**Figure 7.5** A university or other body that can contribute knowledge and facilitate communication can help achieve a circular flow of information between established decision makers and the local society or connoisseurs. *Source:* Adapted from Mellqvist (2017)

have shown that university researchers can contribute knowledge but also act as mediators, focusing the dialogue between local governments and local connoisseurs. University researchers could be replaced by think tank members or similar as a third party involved in the process with an interest in mutual learning and communication (Mellqvist, 2017).

### *The value of short-term and temporary participation*

As discussed earlier, power transfer from local governments to users is not always the ultimate goal of participation in UOS governance and management. Similarly, long-term participation is not the only participation type to strive for, as short-term and temporary participation can also be valuable by allowing participation in cases where the long-term perspective is particularly challenging or not the goal for other reasons. Short-term/temporary participation can also be a way of broadening the possibilities for participation, involving those who are less interested in longer commitments and perhaps even reaching out to non-users. As an example, when children and their parents participate in playground development, the long-term perspective can be a challenge because the users quickly change as the children grow older, but short-term participatory projects can still be useful and create mutual learning (Jansson & Ramberg, 2012). Short-term involvement can also have value in school ground greening, developing more vegetation or growing vegetables, with children, teachers and managers involved in creating the change. Being able to extend children's participation to ongoing maintenance has also been shown to be valuable for children's engagement (Jansson et al., 2018).

With a mosaic governance approach, long- and short-term participatory approaches can co-exist.

## Changing roles and approaches within governance and management

Developing the enabling and stimulating governance style embodied by mosaic governance and using the full potential of user participation places the role of UOS managers under scrutiny. To fully mobilise the diversity of urban residents and the values and knowledge they hold regarding physical UOS types and ways of organising user participation, UOS managers need to be skilled communicators, sensitive and flexible to user initiatives when they arise, as well as to new trends in UOS management and participation. It helps to have a palette of reliable participation methods at hand, facilitating top-down integration of participation processes in the daily work and responses to urban residents' initiatives bottom-up. This also makes it easier to decide which method to use when jointly creating a functional UOS mosaic governance form built up from interdependent tiles.

While user participation processes demand new skills, the more conventional core competencies of UOS managers related to, for example, vegetation and technique are still needed. The changed role can take different forms. Some managers perceive the transformation from hierarchical governance to increased co-governance as challenging (Molin & Konijnendijk van den Bosch, 2014), while others simply deal with the changed circumstances (Fors et al., 2018b). The important inclusion of many different types of users in participatory

approaches, including groups such as children or people with disabilities, can be challenging and time-consuming but could be facilitated through collaboration with, for example, schools or interest organisations. Managers' reactions to this new role could depend on the type of governance arrangement, as dealing with participation through empowerment in a limited zone close to participants' homes might be perceived as less challenging than partnerships between local governments and users in an UOS farther from home. Location and participation types affect how much participants care about a specific place and how much work is demanded from managers.

There are increased opportunities for user participation in UOS management in general, but success will depend on a wide range of actors and opportunities as related to the parts of various governance arrangements (Arts et al., 2006). In Sweden, for example, few UOS managers involve users in management or intend to do so in the near future in contrast to the trend among managers in the UK (Randrup et al., 2017). There are neglected UOSs and under-prioritised areas farther away from city centres in residential areas in many parts of the world. Participation in management is an untapped resource that could increase UOS quality in such areas as long as participants are given clear guidelines and managers are sufficiently engaged, present and follow up on individual participation arrangements.

## References

- Ambrose-Oji, B., Lawrence, A. & Stewart, A., (2014). Community based forest enterprises in Britain: Two organising typologies. *Forest Policy and Economics*. **58**, 65–74.
- Ambrose-Oji, B., Tabbush, P., Frost, B., Carter, C. & Fielding, K., (2011). *Public Engagement in Forestry: A Toolbox for Public Engagement in Forest and Woodland Planning*. Edinburgh: Forestry Commission, GB.
- Arnouts, R., van der Zouwen, M. & Arts, B., (2012). Analysing governance modes and shifts – Governance arrangements in Dutch nature policy. *Forest Policy and Economics*. **16**, 43–50.
- Arnstein, S.R., (1969). A ladder of citizen participation. *Journal of American Institute of Planners*. **35**(4), 216–224.
- Arts, B., Leroy, P. & van Tatenhove, J., (2006). Political modernisation and policy arrangements: A framework for understanding environmental policy change. *Public Organization Review*. **6**(2), 93–106.
- Buijs, A.E., Hansen, R., Van der Jagt, S., Ambrose-Oji, B., Elands, B., Lorance Rall, E., . . . Steen Møller, M., (2018). Mosaic governance for urban green infrastructure : Upscaling active citizenship from a local government perspective. *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*. **40**, 53–62.
- Buijs, A.E., Mattijssen, T.J.M., van der Jagt, A.P.N., Ambrose-Oji, B., Andersson, E., Elands, B.H.M. & Møller, M.S., (2016). Active citizenship for urban green infrastructure: Fostering the diversity and dynamics of citizen contributions through mosaic governance. *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability*. **22**, 1–6.
- Burton, M. & Mathers, A., (2014). Collective responsibility for place-keeping: Are partnerships the solution for open space management? In: N. Dempsey, H. Smith & M. Burton (eds.) *Place-Keeping: Open Space Management in Practice*. New York: Routledge. 76–99.
- CE, (2000). *European Landscape Convention*. Council of Europe.
- Clark, A. & Percy-Smith, B., (2006). Beyond consultation: Participatory practices in everyday spaces. *Children, Youth and Environments*. **16**(2), 1–9.
- Fors, H., (2018). *User Participation in Public Urban Woodland Management: Drivers and Impact on Green Space Quality*. Department of Landscape architecture, Planning and Management (Ph.D. Thesis). Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Alnarp.
- Fors, H., Molin, J.F., Murphy, M.A. & Konijnendijk van den Bosch, C., (2015). User participation in urban green spaces – For the people or the parks? *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*. **14**, 722–734.

- Fors, H., Jansson, M., Nielsen, A.B., (2018a). The impact of resident participation on urban woodland quality – A case study of Sletten, Denmark. *Forests* 9.
- Fors, H., Nielsen, A.B., van den Bosch, C.C.K. & Jansson, M., (2018b). From borders to ecotones – Private-public co-management of urban woodland edges bordering private housing. *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*. **30**, 46–55.
- Francis, M. & Lorenzo, R., (2002). Seven realms of children's participation. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*. **22**(1–2), 157–169.
- Glover, T.D., Shinew, K.J. & Parry, D.C., (2005). Association, sociability, and civic culture: The democratic effect of community gardening. *Leisure Sciences*. **27**(1), 75–92.
- Graham, A. & Fitzgerald, R., (2010). Progressing children's participation: Exploring the potential of a dialogical turn. *Childhood*. **17**(3), 343–359.
- Hart, R.A., (1992). *Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship*. Innocenti Essay No. 4. United Nations Children's Fund: UNICEF.
- Hart, R.A., (2008). Stepping back from 'The Ladder': Reflections on a model of participatory work with children. In: A. Reid, B.B. Jensen, J. Nikel & V. Simovska (eds.) *Participation and Learning: Perspectives on Education and the Environment, Health and Sustainability*. Dordrecht: Springer. 19–31.
- Hayward, C., Simpson, L. & Wood, L., (2004). Still left out in the cold: Problematizing participatory research and development. *Sociologica Ruralis*. **44**(1), 95–108.
- Healey, P., (1997). *Collaborative Planning: Shaping Places in Fragmented Societies*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Jansson, M., (2015). Children's perspectives on playground use as basis for children's participation in local play space management. *Local Environment*. **20**(2), 165–179.
- Jansson, M., Gunnarsson, A., Mårtensson, F. & Andersson, S., (2014). Children's perspectives on vegetation establishment: Implications for school ground greening. *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*. **13**(1), 166–174.
- Jansson, M., Mårtensson, F. & Gunnarsson, A., (2018). The meaning of participation in school ground greening: A study from project to everyday setting. *Landscape Research*. **43**(1), 163–179.
- Jansson, M. & Ramberg, U., (2012). Implementation and effects of user participation in playground management: A comparative study of two Swedish municipalities. *Managing Leisure*. **17**(1), 1–13.
- Jansson, M., Vogel, N., Fors, H. & Randrup, T.B., (2019). The governance of landscape management: New approaches to urban open space development. *Landscape Research*. **44**(8), 952–965.
- Jones, R., (2002). Enticement: The role of community involvement in the management of urban parks. *Managing Leisure*. **7**(1), 18–32.
- Lansdown, G., (2001). *Promoting Children's Participation in Democratic Decision-Making*. Innocenti 01/9, Innocenti Insights. United Nations Children's Fund: UNICEF.
- Lawrence, A. & Ambrose-Oji, B., (2015). Beauty, friends, power, money: Navigating the impacts of community woodlands. *Geographical Journal*. **181**, 268–279.
- Mattijssen, T.J.M., Buijs, A., Elands, B. & Arts, B., (2018). The 'green' and 'self' in green self-governance – A study of 264 green space initiatives by citizens. *Journal of Environmental Policy and Planning*. **20**(1), 96–113.
- Mattijssen, T.J.M., van der Jagt, A.P.N., Buijs, A.E., Elands, B.H.M., Erlwein, S. & Laforteza, R., (2017). The long-term prospects of citizens managing urban green space: From place making to place-keeping? *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*. **26**, 78–84.
- Mellqvist, H., (2017). *The Connoisseur Method – A Study on Long-Term Participation in Landscape Planning* (Ph.D. Thesis). Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Alnarp.
- Molin, J.F. & Konijnendijk van den Bosch, C.C., (2014). Between big ideas and daily realities – The roles and perspectives of Danish municipal green space managers on public involvement in green space maintenance. *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*. **13**(3), 553–561.
- Nannini, D.K., Sommer, R. & Meyers, L.S., (1998). Resident involvement in inspecting trees for Dutch elm disease. *Journal of Arboriculture*. **24**, 42–46.
- Randrup, T.B., Östberg, J. & Wiström, B., (2017). Swedish green space management – The managers perspective. *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*. **28**, 103–109.
- Roe, M., (2006). 'Making a wish': Children and the local landscape. *Local Environment*. **11**(2), 163–182.
- Romolini, M., Bixler, R.P. & Grove, M., (2016). A social-ecological framework for urban



- stewardship network research to promote sustainable and resilient cities. *Sustainability*. **8**(10), 956.
- Rutt, R. & Gulsrud, N.M., (2016). Green justice in the city: A new agenda for urban green space research in Europe. *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*. **19**, 123–127.
- Seyfang, G. & Smith, A., (2007). Grassroots innovations for sustainable development: Towards a new research and policy agenda. *Environmental Politics*. **16**(4), 584–603.
- Sheppard, S., Konijnendijk van den Bosch, C., Croy, O., Palomo, A.M. & Barron, S., (2017). Chapter 15: Urban forest governance and community engagement. In: F. Ferrini, C. Konijnendijk van den Bosch & A. Fini (eds.) *Handbook of Urban Forestry*. London: Earthscan-Routledge. 205–221.
- Smith, H., Pereira, M., Hull, A. & van den Bosch, C.K., (2014). The governance of open space: Decision-making around place-keeping. In: N. Dempsey, H. Smith & M. Burton (eds.) *Place-Keeping: Open Space Management in Practice*, 52–75.
- Tritter, J.Q. & McCallum, A., (2006). The snakes and ladders of user involvement: Moving beyond Arnstein. *Health Policy*. **76**(2), 156–168.
- UN, (1989). *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. UNICEF.
- UN, (1992). *AGENDA 21*. Rio de Janeiro: United Nations.
- UN, (1998). *Aarhus Convention: Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters*. Aarhus: United Nations.
- Van der Jagt, A.P.N., Elands, B.H.M., Ambrose-Oji, B., Geróházi, E., Steen Møller, M. & Buizer, M., (2016). Participatory governance of urban green space: Trends and practices in the EU. *Nordic Journal of Architectural Research*. **28**(3), 11–39.
- Van Herzele, A., Collins, K. & Tyrväinen, L., (2005). Involving people in urban forestry – A discussion of participatory practices throughout Europe. In: C.C. Konijnendijk, K. Nilsson, T.B. Randrup & J. Schipperjin (eds.) *Urban Forests and Trees*. Heidelberg: Springer. 207–228.
- World Bank, (1993). *Public Involvement in Environmental Assessment: Requirements, Opportunities and Issues*. Environmental Assessment Sourcebook Update, vol. 5. Washington, DC: World Bank.

All figures are used with permission.