

COUNCIL FOR EUROPEAN URBANISM
CHARTER OF STOCKHOLM...
THE CHARTER OF EUROPEAN URBANISM

MISSION

The Council for European Urbanism is dedicated to the well being of present and future generations through the advancement of humane cities, towns, villages and countryside in Europe.

CHALLENGE

Cities, towns and villages are being destroyed by social exclusion and isolation, urban sprawl, waste of land and cultural resources, monofunctional development, lack of competitiveness, and a loss of respect for local and regional culture.

OBJECTIVES

Cities, towns and villages should have mixed uses and social diversity; make efficient and sustainable use of buildings, land and other resources; be safe and accessible by foot, bicycle, car and public transport; have clearly defined boundaries at all stages of development; have streets and spaces formed by an architecture that respects local history, climate, landscape and geography; and have a variety that allows for the evolution of society, function and design.

ACTION

The CEU will promote: the distinctive character of European cities, towns, villages and countryside; consolidation, renewal and growth in keeping with regional identity and the aspirations of citizens; where appropriate, the creation of new towns and villages according to these objectives; the reorganisation and redesign of declining suburbs into thriving mixed use areas; respect for the natural environment and its balance with human habitation; and the protection of our built and landscape heritage.

CONTEXT

The CEU recognises that physical improvement cannot stand alone. Cities, towns, villages and the countryside are a reflection of their social, political, economic and environmental context. Any improvement in physical surroundings must be part of a wider advancement of the well-being of the people of Europe.

POLICY, REGULATION AND PRACTICE

The CEU will work for the change, amendment and refinement of economic practices, public policies, law, regulations, guidance and standards of practice at a European, national, regional and local level to further the objectives of this charter.

PROCESS AND PARTICIPATION

The CEU will re-invigorate the relationship between the community, inhabitants and all concerned parties through a process of participation in planning, design, building and management.

THE CEU

The CEU is a network of members which will implement the principles expressed in this charter.

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I Regions

I.1 Regions are areas that have distinct identities recognised by their inhabitants. This identity can be geographic, cultural, political or economic. Regions are not nation states but they may correspond to national boundaries.

I.2 The well-being of its inhabitants and the identity of the region must be the foundation of all planning policies and principles.

I.3 The region is made up of its rural and natural landscape as well as its cities, towns and villages. All regional planning must respect the identity, distinction and balance of these component parts.

II Cities and Towns

II.4 Cities and towns are self-contained, distinct and dense settlements where significant numbers of people gather to live and trade. Density of population facilitates the exchange of information and the creation of civic and cultural institutions.

II.5 Cities and towns depend upon the free and close mixture of living, trading and communication. Any significant segregation of functions or people by income, occupation or race will undermine the effective operation and quality of life of a city or town and must be discouraged.

II.6 To maintain the identity of a city or town it must remain physically distinct. New development must not blur or eradicate the edges of cities and towns.

II.7 Cities and towns have well-defined and recognisable centres. The identity of cities and towns depends upon the character of these centres.

II.8 The historic centres of cities and towns must be protected and revitalised and, if necessary, appropriately reconstructed.

II.9 Cities and towns will only function with a recognisable centre. Any settlement must either be fully integrated with the city or town to which it is attached or be organised as a new town or village with a clear physical edge.

II.10 Cities and towns must have a pattern of roads, streets, alleys and public places that derive from the use and scale of the functions they serve. This pattern creates the maximum and most amenable opportunities for pedestrian communication while allowing safe access for other forms of transport where necessary.

II.11 Cities and towns have civic and institutional buildings and places of worship. Major public buildings will occupy a significant place in the structure of the city or town and their architecture will help to define their character. Minor public buildings will be located in and serve individual neighbourhoods.

II.12 Parks, playing fields and community gardens must be distributed throughout cities and towns and must act as unifying elements.

III Villages and the Countryside

III.13 Villages are small, self-contained rural communities with agricultural origins. They will have essential community services and may have small local industries. Where a decline in agricultural labour has turned many villages into residential settlements serving nearby cities and towns their character must be maintained.

III.14 The countryside is made up of agricultural land, forestry and wilderness and is the medium into which all settlement is placed. Cities, towns and villages depend on the countryside for food and for their separate identities. There must be easy access to the countryside for health and recreation.

III.15 Villages must remain small and self-contained with a clear boundary between buildings and the countryside. If villages expand or have expanded to exceed the capacity of their community services they must be restructured to become towns with the necessary physical and institutional structures.

III.16 New villages must be small, self-contained and in a rural setting but may not have agricultural origins or functions. They must contain the services required for day-to-day living, employment and community facilities.

III.17 Well-managed agriculture, protected landscape, the avoidance of the encroachment of urban sprawl and the reclamation of derelict land into countryside must be promoted to benefit those who make their living from the land as well as the inhabitants of adjacent cities, towns and villages.

IV Neighbourhoods and Districts

IV.18 Neighbourhoods are recognisable areas with which people can identify. They must be compact, pedestrian-friendly, have mixed uses and the services required for day-to-day living.

IV.19 Local districts are small areas of cities and towns that have a particular use or character but are smaller than a neighbourhood. This use or character could range from a single function such as an industrial district to a predominant building type such as a redbrick district.

IV.20 The neighbourhood and the local district are the primary elements of development and redevelopment in the city and town. Cities and towns are made up of seamlessly connected neighbourhoods. The identity of neighbourhoods will encourage the inhabitants of neighbourhoods

and districts to take responsibility for their maintenance and development. The character of neighbourhoods and districts must be supported and preserved.

IV.21 The redevelopment of large industrialised housing areas, disused industrial areas, abandoned military sites and other dysfunctional or unused building groups must follow the principles of neighbourhood and local district design.

IV.22 Within neighbourhoods, a broad range of housing types and price levels must be established to bring people of different ages, races, and incomes into daily contact. This will strengthen the personal and civic bonds that create a community.

IV.23 The economic health and harmonious evolution of neighbourhoods and districts will be improved with urban design codes and development guidelines agreed by the community. Codes and guidelines manage change in a predictable manner.

V Streets, Squares, Blocks and Public Gardens

V.24 Urban architecture and landscape design is primarily concerned with the creation of streets and squares for public use. Buildings and landscape must physically define these spaces and contribute to the wider cultural context of the neighbourhood, town and city.

V.25 Streets and squares must be safe, easy to use and interesting to the pedestrian. Properly configured, they encourage walking, enable neighbours to know one other and encourage public activity.

V.26 Safety and security are essential for the revitalisation of urban life. The design of streets and squares must create a safe, accessible and open urban environment.

V.27 Urban form and individual buildings must be robustly designed to allow for permanence and continuity as well as change and development.

V.28 There must be small-scale plot division to maintain a fine urban grain and provide potential for mixed use.

V.29 Small parks are essential in housing areas. They are social and ecological refuges and must invite everyday use.

V.30 Historic areas, buildings and landscape maintain continuity, allow for the evolution of urban life and form an essential foundation for future development and must be preserved, renewed or reconstructed.

VI Architecture and Landscape Architecture

VI.31 Individual buildings must be sensitively linked to their surroundings. This issue transcends questions of style. Urban architecture must respect the history and urban context of its location, be diverse and be receptive to the new.

VI.32 Architecture and landscape design must grow from local climate, topography, history and building practice and harmonize with and enrich their context.

VI.33 All buildings must provide their inhabitants with a clear sense of location, weather, and time. Heating and cooling should be affected wherever possible by natural resource-efficient means and by regenerative technologies.

VII Transport

VII.34 There must be co-ordinated transport within and between regions. Public transport, pedestrian movement, the use of bicycles (and other forms of individual transport) must be co-ordinated to maximise mobility and reduce dependence on the car.

VII.35 Transport corridors connect cities, towns, neighbourhoods and local districts; they can be major roads, rail lines, rivers or parks.

VII.36 Transport corridors, when properly planned and coordinated, can stimulate cooperation between cities, towns and villages and help to revitalize urban centres. Transport corridors must not displace investment from existing centres.

VII.37 Compact, walkable, mixed-use centres should surround stations and major public transport stops. Daily life should not require the motor car.

VII.38 The quality of urban form and pedestrian movement must take precedence over highway and parking policy. Large scale parking areas must not dominate streets and squares.
