

## Urban experts discuss shape of things to come

Posted by [Press Office](#) on May 12, 2016



Space is at a premium in an island city like Portsmouth.

What will Portsmouth and Southsea look like in 20 years' time?

That was the question at the heart of a University event that saw industry, government and community leaders invited to Spinnaker Tower to discuss the future of the city.



Professor Steffen Lehmann

A group of about 100 urban experts and decision-makers gathered at Spinnaker Cafe, in Gunwharf Quays, this morning for the University's first Industry Breakfast.

University Vice-Chancellor Professor Graham Galbraith, Wayne Hemingway MBE of Hemingway Design, city council leader Donna Jones, Roberts Centre CEO Carole Damper, and Allan Gordon, chairman of the Shaping Portsmouth Developers Group, led the debate, which was moderated by Cheryl Buggy of Express FM.

Professor Galbraith outlined the University's ambitious estates masterplan, which is now under development and will lead to significant investment in the city over the next decade.

Early plans include a new sports complex and landmark building to house [Portsmouth Business School](#). These developments have the potential to open up the campus to the community and create opportunities for reimagining the public realm – including people and vehicle flow – within the heart of the city, Professor Galbraith said.

The debate focused on strategies and ideas about the future of Portsmouth – which has developed over the last 20 years from a dockyard to a knowledge-based city – and what needs to be done to meet the urban challenges of the 21st century.

The experts were asked for their views on how best to release the potential of collaboration between industry, local government and world-class research expertise at the University.

Wayne Hemingway, who is currently working on a vision for the future of the Guildhall, outlined the potential role of this traditional venue as the “heart of the city, together with the future city campus”.

Professor Steffen Lehmann, an urbanist and co-organiser of the event, said: “The question of how we will best manage the needs of a growing city with the need to ensure we preserve a sustainable environment is timely and of great importance for Portsmouth.”

Several speakers mentioned urban disconnect and the challenges of moving comfortably around in the compact island city.

Professor Lehmann explained: “If there is strong pedestrian connectivity within a city, it allows residents to move easily and conveniently from one part to another, with ease and safety, including on bicycles.

“But if there is a disconnect, or if connectivity is weak, it means we end up using the car and avoid walking or cycling.”

Professor Lehmann pointed out that Portsmouth has a flat environment that makes cycling an easy alternative way of getting about.

Opportunities for new public space along the waterfront and for urban regeneration were also debated.

<http://www.port.ac.uk/uopnews/2016/05/12/urban-experts-discuss-shape-of-things-to-come/>