The Future of *Caring as an organising principle* in a 'Good Economy'

Dilemmas and tensions in
Patterns of behaviour amongst
Place based systems as they
seek to improve health and wellbeing

Esmee Wilcox, Socially Adept

By way of introduction to ground us in the sense of place - my personal connection to the coast – working for CEFAS in Lowestoft, a global reach of research scientists connected with the people of this historic fishing town.
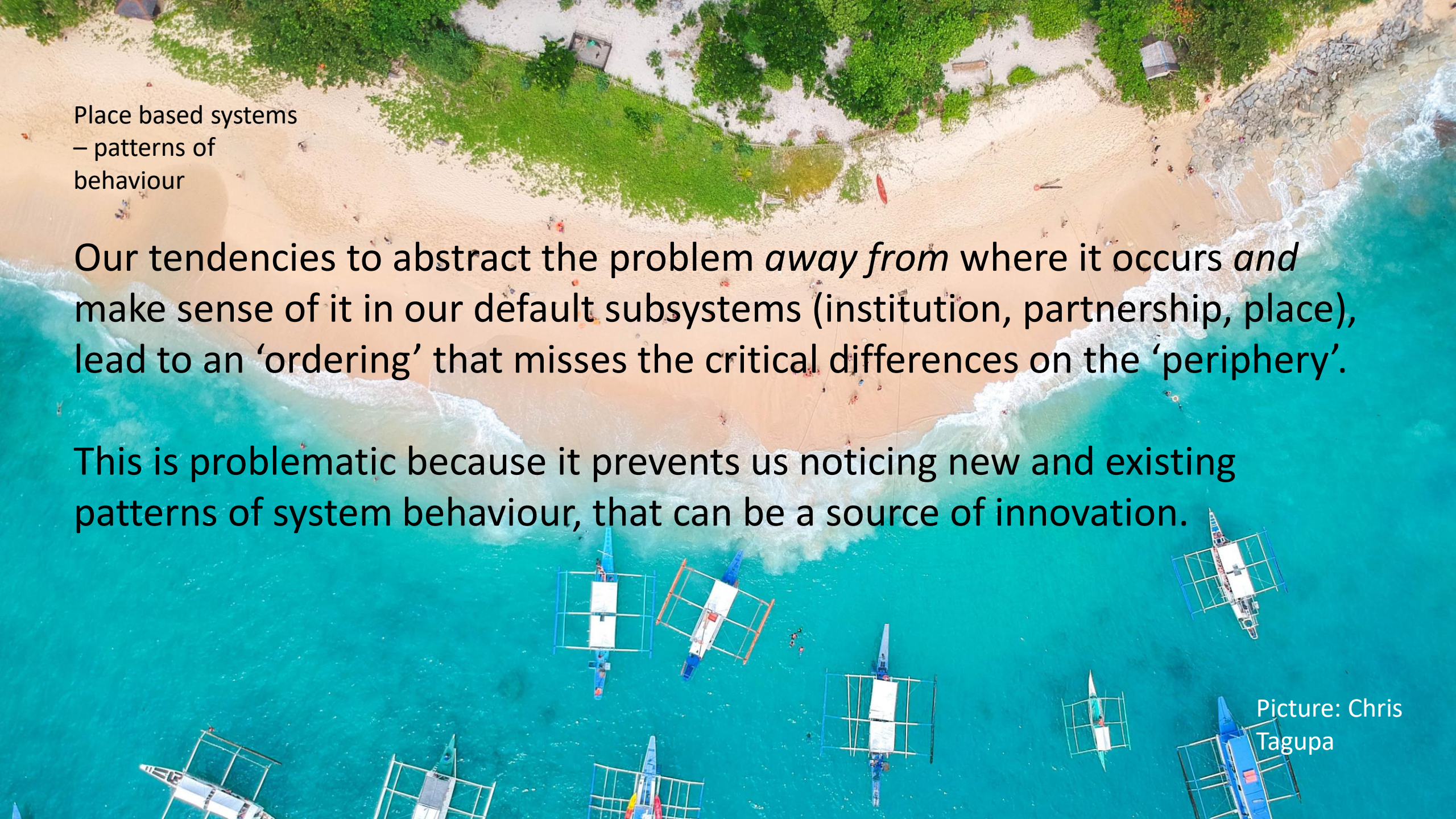
Picture: Chris Holifield

To visualise the theme of today in "Opportunities of the Coast" – the CEFAS ENDEAVOUR – a magnificent research vessel with enormous impact on science policy

Picture: Roger Haworth

Place based systems – patterns of behaviour

Our tendencies to abstract the problem *away from* where it occurs *and* make sense of it in our default subsystems (institution, partnership, place), lead to an 'ordering' that misses the critical differences on the 'periphery'.

This is problematic because it prevents us noticing new and existing patterns of system behaviour, that can be a source of innovation.

Picture: Chris Tagupa

NORWICH GOOD ECONOMY COMMISSION

The Norwich Good Economy Commission (website pictured here): Seeking collective agency in plausible futures, for how we organise place-based economies. The Future of Caring project sat within this. Primary research with Carers: methodology was framed in evidence of enablers of Community Wellbeing, and plausible future Urban Design.

What Would A
Good Economy For
Norwich Look Like?

How Might We All Make
It Better, For Everyone?

Primary research found significant patters of broken and/or limited connectivity in Cares' experiences of:

Economic activity – unable to participate in work *at a level qualified for*, even where possible to remain in work, with well-known effects on wellbeing.

Participation in civic spaces – designed for consumption and throughput, reinforcing stigma of isolation already present in living with disability and caring.

Healthcare and education systems - primary focus on resource constraints in the system has the effect of reduced agency and increased isolation of carers and disabled people.

Functionality cannot be conceived of within existing patterns of our healthcare economy in Norwich (designed for yesterday's socio-economic phenomena).

Instead we might look to plausible alternatives, not least Caring as an organising principle for the City alongside Climate and Net Zero.
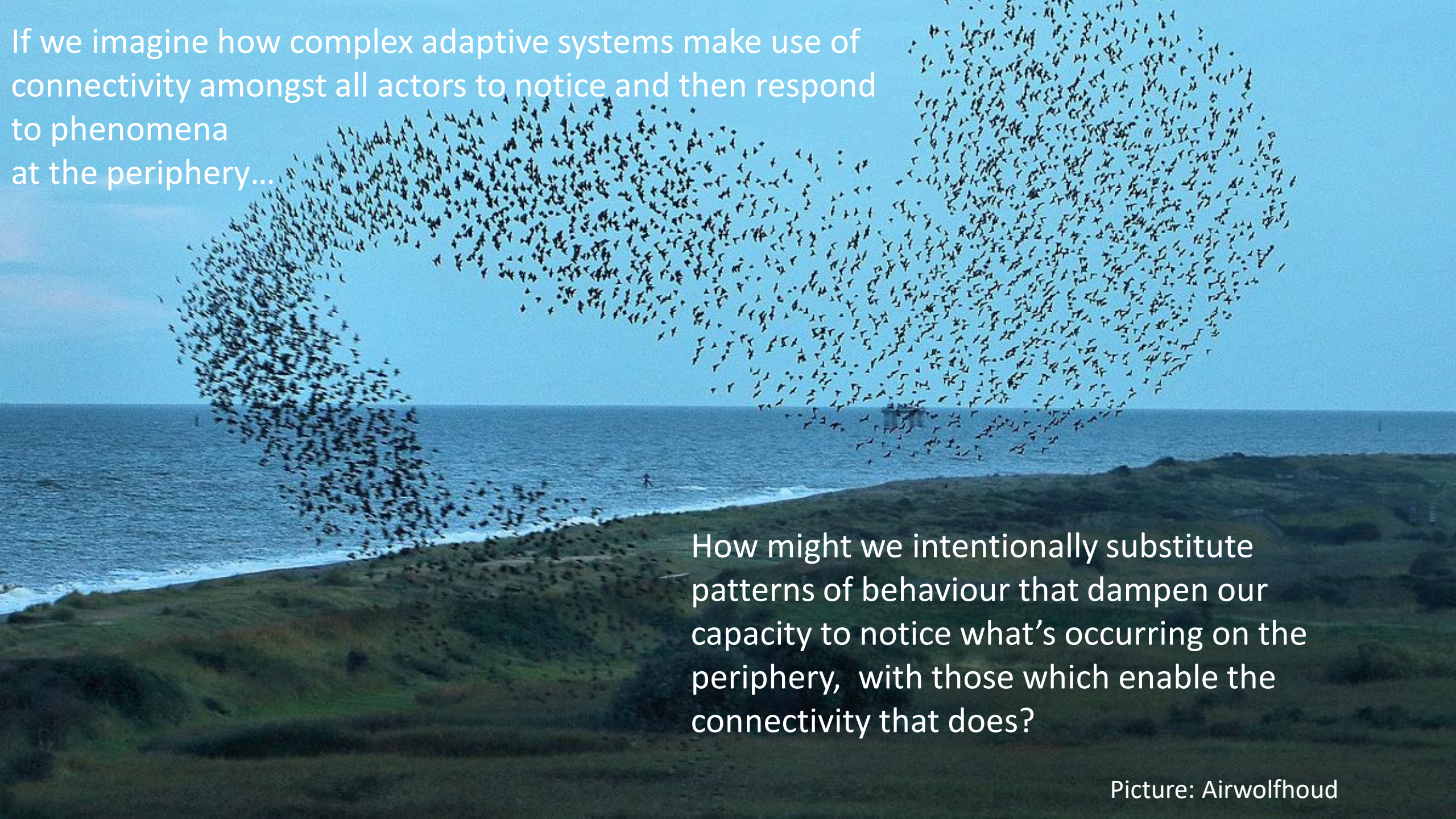
Picture: Alexander Andrews
Ref: Curry, A: in 'Planetary Cities', 2022; Unwin, J: Carnegie Trust, 2018.

If we imagine how complex adaptive systems make use of connectivity amongst all actors to notice and then respond to phenomena at the periphery…

How might we intentionally substitute patterns of behaviour that dampen our capacity to notice what's occurring on the periphery, with those which enable the connectivity that does?

Picture: Airwolfhoud

Here and now we face the dilemma of holding space for *transitions* in the patterns of our system behaviour, whilst dealing with major ongoing change in how we operationalise place-based health.

How do we *all* generously use our power and intent to notice our patterns of system behaviour? To embrace the dilemmas and tensions they represent, as we seek to create ones that enable better place-based health?