



Planning – All Change
David Newbury, Group Manager,
Leeds City Council

Planning – All Change - Introduction

- CV- 27 years planning experience, both private and public sector, last 17 years at Leeds
- Currently look after the development management function for the eastern half of Leeds
- Intend to cover: Govt. approach to planning; look at principles that underpin that; key changes to policy/law; brief look at hot topics such as energy provision, northern powerhouse and flooding.
- Implications for LPA's.

All change and full steam ahead



Casey Jones, Steamin' and rollin'
Casey Jones, You never have to guess
When you hear the tootin' of the whistle
It's Casey at the throttle of the Cannonball Express

Fixing the Foundations: Creating a more prosperous nation

Themes:

- Long term productivity problem (behind other leading economies – as measured by GDP per hour worked – 31% below USA; 17% below France; 17% below G7 average)
- Financial crisis – eliminate fiscal deficit
- Aim that Britain becomes the richest of all economies by 2030

Govt. framework for raising productivity based on 2 pillars:

- Encouraging long term investment
- Promoting a dynamic economy

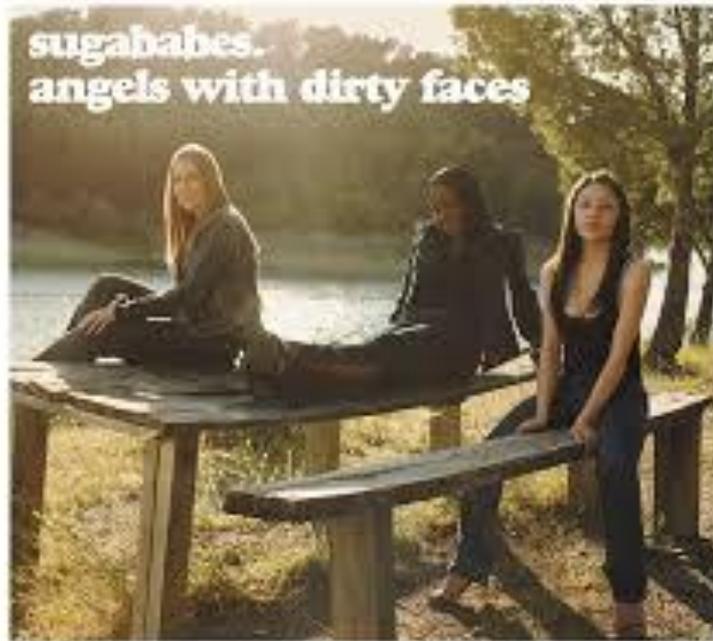
15 point plan, including:

- Competitive tax system; high skilled workforce; modern transport system; reliable low carbon energy; higher pay low welfare society.
- How:
 - Free up the planning system to allow more houses to be built
 - Develop resurgent cities, a rebalanced economy and a thriving Northern Powerhouse
- Barriers to growth:
 - “excessively strict planning system” (para. 9.4)
 - “proposals...are subject to detailed and discretionary scrutiny” (para. 9.14)



Leeds Planning Performance

- 2015/16 – Approx. 4,700 applications received
- 4,400 applications determined
- Approx. 930 applications in the system (321 condition discharges, 100 pre-application enquiries)
- In time: Majors 97%; Minors 91%, Others 94%
- Appeals: 231 decisions; 74% dismissed
- 98% decisions taken by officers.
- Plans Panel 127 decisions made only 4 overturns.



LPA's = Angels with Dirty Faces

What has the Govt. done (all change part 1)

- NPPF – Simplify policy. 59 pages long.
- Designated authorities – 50% or fewer of decisions on majors made outside of statutory time period. Or 20% or more of appeals on majors allowed.
- GPDO changes – larger house extensions/ change of use of offices to residential/amusement arcades and warehouses to residential.
- CIL – Levy on per sq.m. of floorspace. To pay for infrastructure such as schools, public transport and open space improvements. Not on affordable housing.
- Vacant Building Credit.

What has the Govt. done (all change part 2)

- Housing & Planning Act 2016 (May 2016):
 - “national crusade to get 1 million homes built by 2020 and transform from “generation rent to generation buy”.
 - Permission in Principle – Local plan allocations/brownfield register. Technical development consent.
 - Competition into the processing of planning applications.
 - Starter homes – 1st time buyers/under the age of 40/20% discount on open market value.
- David Lock CBE: ‘Much of the Bill would not be necessary if the planning system had housed us properly. It seems more like a consequence, not a harbinger, of doom’

What else is current:

(1) The Northern Powerhouse:

- Chancellor George Osborne It would be "a collection of northern cities sufficiently close to each other that combined they can take on the world", he said.
- Assumed capital is Manchester.
- Concept rather than actual?
- Tied up with devolution – City Mayors; increased powers – health; transport; planning.
- HS2/HS3.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yoHrRcKIBKw>

(2) Energy Provision:

- Govt. commitment to fracking and nuclear. Fixing the Foundations:
 - “ensure the UK attracts the necessary investment to guarantee secure energy supplies, including through the development of shale gas, North Sea oil and gas production, and new nuclear power stations”
- Wind energy? Strong support for renewables and low carbon energy in NPPF and FtF. But:
 - Ministerial Statement - LPA can't grant consent unless windfarm situated in an area that has been identified as suitable for wind energy in a local or neighbourhood plan and the proposed development has the backing of local people.

(3) Flooding

- Cost to Britain. Winter 2013/2014 floods. Total economic damages estimated at £1 to £1.5M. EA report.
- The Sun reported that more than 15,000 insurance claims as a result of December storms. Final bill for all repairs expected to hit £1.3bn.
- NPPF – Direct development away from highest risk of flooding, but where development is necessary, making it safe without increasing the risk of flooding elsewhere (para. 100).
 - Sequential test – steer development to areas with the lowest probability of flooding.
 - Exception test – if not possible then must be demonstrated that sustainability benefits to the community outweigh the flood risk and demonstrated that development will be safe for its lifetime.

(4) What's happening in LPA's

- ❑ Cuts to funding
- ❑ Restructuring – Some councils re-aligning their planning departments with regeneration.
- ❑ Not enough planners/skill shortages
- ❑ Squeezed age profile – 27-55 years. Few graduates.

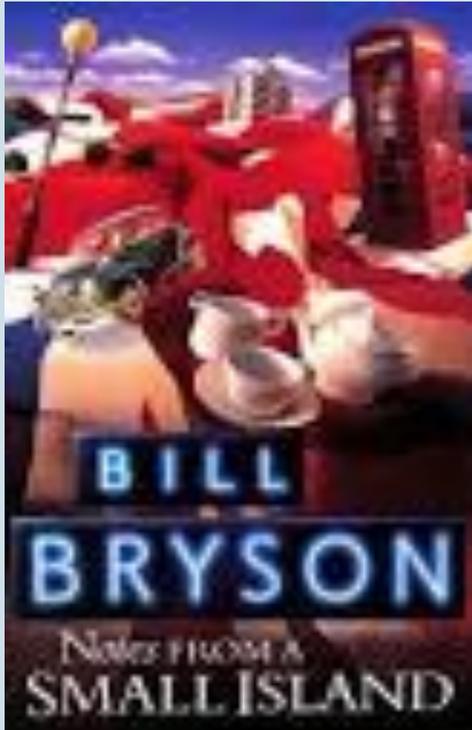


- ❑ Encyclopedic planning knowledge,
- ❑ Loads of experience and common sense,
- ❑ Great leadership and communication skills,
- ❑ Political nous
- ❑ Delivered significant improvements



Okilly-dokilly!, Hey-Diddly-Ho!

Planning = Place Making



What a remarkable series of improbabilities were necessary to its construction. First, some architect had to design it, had to wander through a city steeped in 800 years of architectural tradition, and with great care conceive of a structure that looked like a toaster with windows. Then a committee of finely educated minds at Merton had to show the most extraordinary indifference to their responsibilities to posterity and say to themselves, 'You know, we've been putting up handsome buildings since 1264; let's have an ugly one for a change.' Then the planning authorities had to say, 'Well, why not? Plenty worse in Basildon.'