

PLANNING FOR THE PUBLIC: WHY LABOUR SHOULD SUPPORT A PUBLIC PLANNING SYSTEM



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CHALLENGING MARKET-LED PLANNING



De-regulation: Expanded permitted development, streamlining of policy through NPPF, 'presumption in favour' of sustainable development. Basic idea that the housing development industry, if left alone, will deliver. De-regulated building standards – Grenfell.



Privatisation and austerity: Reduction of funding for local gov, over 50% cuts to planning departments, nearly half of planners work in private sector, by 2025 78% of plans to be out of date, increased delay correlates with public sector cuts.



Centralisation: Slightly counter intuitive, but market led approach has allowed for greater centralisation as local gov lacks capacity and Ministers attempt to intervene – through written statements, appeals etc.

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A FAILED EXPERIMENT?

- UK suffering from chronic underinvestment: in infrastructure, in housing, and in public services like planning
- Push for de-regulation, zoning etc a means of addressing the problems that follow, and avoiding the needed investment (and thus, taxation) – driven by right wing thinktanks.
- Abandonment of strategic planning, for land use and for large scale systems like water and energy, in favour of ad-hoc market 'co-ordination'
- We now have a housing crisis to parallel the 1940's, without a World War to create it
- And, we have major planning problems for infrastructure evidences by HS2 and the problems in the National Grid



First right to buy house (£8k), the Patterson's marriage broke down due to pressure to meet mortgage payments as interest rates rose. Mrs P later sold and moved to mobile home then sheltered accommodation. House sold for £290,000 in 2016 – 35 times more than 1980.

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THERE IS AN
ALTERNATIVE!!!

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COMMUNITIES NEED PROPER RESOURCES

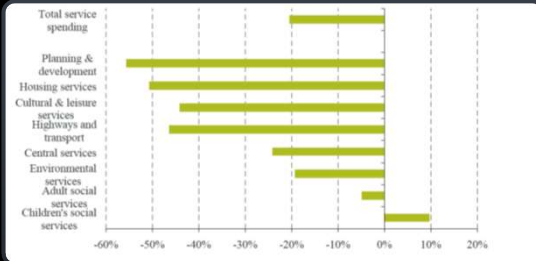


Figure 1: Real-terms change in local government service spending by service area 2009-10 to 2017-18 (Source: Institute for Fiscal Studies)

REDISTRIBUTE

Increasing land value capture and introducing progressive reforms to land and property taxation to fund social housing and infrastructure.

FUND

Restoring local government funding to pre-austerity levels in real terms

RECRUIT

Launching a nation-wide recruitment drive for strategic and specialist public planners on permanent contracts.

LEGISLATE

Legislating to end planning outsourcing for its core functions (policy, decision-making), with barriers between public and private planning.

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GOOD QUALITY AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR ALL

SOCIAL HOUSING	NEW POWERS	STATE-LED DEVELOPMENT
Invest in a new programme of social housing, with priority given to its development in policy.	Allow local authorities to use land/property taxes to control second/empty homes	Legislate for local authorities to introduce more strictly applied levies on private development, ring fenced for social housing and community infrastructure.
End right to buy of social housing	Local and devolved governments to implement rent controls with rent set by affordable ratios to income.	End the use of Permitted Development Rights for house-building/conversions.
Increase <u>public</u> land holdings to be released according to need (active land policy)	Reform building standards, securing minimum space, safety and environmental standards	Enable stronger use of compulsory purchase powers for new housing and infrastructure development which capture uplift

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THE LABOUR POSITION NOW

CONTINUITY

Strengthening S106 as means of levying more money for social housing but no commitments on local gov funding or central funding

New Towns – like every govt for the last 30 years – but again no new funding and unclear who will oversee this process (private-public partnership?)

Strengthen requirements to approve new homes in areas that do not have an up-to-date plan and will intervene to approve new homes in poorly performing areas, including using call-in powers

Government-backed mortgage guarantee scheme!!!

CHANGE?

A package of devolution to Mayors, with stronger powers over planning and control over housing investment

Recruiting 300 extra planners in a 'sprint' to agree new plans

Reform of the "antiquated planning system" with a "blitz of planning reform "

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FUTURE DIRECTIONS...

Gap between rhetoric and proposals: language of further neoliberal reform, in practice proposals are modifications

Rhetoric as cover for larger scale reform when in power?

Bigger issue: gap between funding and ambition. Very little public investment – huge reliance on private sector oligopoly

PREDICTION: Low funding means proposals fail, provides justification for further liberalisation

ACTION: Break through YIMBY/NIMBY positioning by advocating for public-led housing and infrastructure development.



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