

The potential and limits of participatory planning

Cliff Hague
4th Annual Rural Planning
Conference
Belfast 4 December 2007

International endorsement of participatory planning

- “Participatory urban planning, management and governance” is one of six “mutually reinforcing focus areas” in UN-Habitat’s new Mid-term Strategic and Institutional Plan.



Structure

- The “dark side” of planning
- Re-inventing planning
- Participatory practices
- Towards a set of standards for public involvement in planning
- Conclusions



The dark side of planning: Operation Murambatsvina/Restore Order



Participation as routine

- “Planning has acquired a bad name partly because intolerable delays have held up the implementation of urgently needed developments.”*
- Plan, Consult, Defend



Participation and participatory planning

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informing and consulting Led by council/developer Everyone informed, “insiders” involved. Technical skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diverse stakeholders negotiate plans. Led by independent person / agency Outreach Listening and mediation skills |
|---|---|

Re-inventing planning as a participatory process

- Vancouver Declaration
- *We stand for Planning as an inclusive process. Planning is strategic and local, integrative, participatory, creative, embracing cultural diversity and rooted in concerns for equity.*



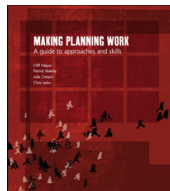
Reinventing Planning paper

- Sustainability
- Integrating planning with budgets
- Transparent, accountable planning
- Planning with partners
- Subsidiarity
- Market responsiveness
- Access to land
- Appropriate tools
- Pro-poor and inclusive
- Cultural diversity



Making planning work: skills

- Analytical skills
- Communication, negotiation and inclusion skills
- Visioning and strategy and leadership skills
- Management
- Learning and monitoring skills

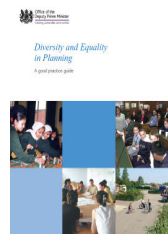


Negotiation, mediation and conflict resolution skills

- Anticipate likely conflicts of interest
- Know your own strengths and weaknesses
- Flexibility: willingness to compromise
- Creativity – invent new solutions; quickly assess risks
- Patience and stamina; tolerate stress, cope with personal abuse
- Listen well, be sensitive to others

Participatory practices

- Planning authorities need a good understanding of diversity and social justice and how they relate to community involvement.



Participatory cultures

- Netherlands
- South Africa
- Australia
- Canada
- West coast USA



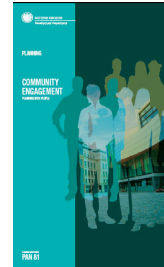
Good practice advice

- Resources
- Clear aims and objectives
- Timetable – avoid participation fatigue
- Work with other council departments
- Avoid jargon



Towards a set of standards

- “Scottish Ministers are determined to make the planning system more inclusive and accessible to everyone with greater openness and accountability in the decision-making process” PAN 81.



The aim of the project

- To develop a set of standards that can be used by actors in the planning system to ensure that the process of public involvement is fit for purpose, and a mechanism to deliver continuous improvement.
- Quality assurance for the process of public involvement.

Developing propositions – a work in progress

- Criteria:
 - Purpose
 - Transparency
 - Resourcing
 - Appropriateness
 - Information
 - Timing
 - Accessibility
 - Inclusion & outreach
 - Representativeness
- Responsiveness
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Learning & sharing
- 3 levels + commendations
 - Satisfactory
 - Very Satisfactory
 - Excellent

Testing and developing indicators

- Interviews and review of documents to research case studies of characteristic planning situations – e.g. development plan; masterplan; contentious development proposal; initiatives to reach “hard to reach” groups.
- Are the standards robust?
- What indicators define different levels?

How might the standards be used?

- Self-assessment – a tool for learning from practice and to prepare for community engagement.
- Independent assessment – of a self-assessment. This would involve interviews and audit of the evidence.

[How you can help]

- Please read the paper in your pack
- Please give us your comments and advice – either here – or by email to kerstin@planningaidscotland.org
- We have a deadline, so responses before the end of the week would be appreciated!

[Conclusions]

- International endorsement of participatory planning as a key requirement for sustainable urbanisation.
- Limits – centralised systems; institutionalised exclusion; wrong skills.
- Potential – the right to a decent living environment for all.

[Participatory rap]

Hey, man, the world's moved on,
The age of old-style planning is gone.
We'll free our profession from its trap
When we all do the Participatory Rap.

I'm glad you asked
Why planning's stuck in the past.
Traditional professional,
Bureaucrat,
Technocrat,
Top-down n' all that...

[Participatory rap]

So what have planners gotta be?
Advocates for equity,
Comfy with diversity,
Inclusive, participatory,
It's AGENTS FOR CHANGE planners need to be.

Hey, man, the world's moved on,
The age of old-style planning is gone.
So now we can give ourselves a clap
'Coz we're all doing the Participatory Rap.