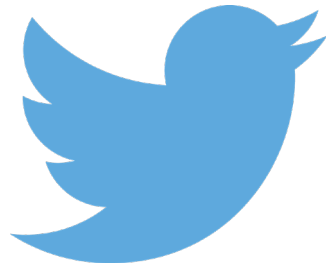




Be part of the conversation! Follow APSE on Twitter and LinkedIn



@apseevents
@apsenews



**@APSE - Association for
Public Service Excellence**

At a crossroads: Building foundations for healthy communities

Analysis, key messages and recommendations



Paul O'Brien, Chief Executive, APSE



Key question: We know what healthy places look like, so why are we not building them?

Research and data:

- **Desk-based research**
- **Case studies:** The Connswater Community Greenway, Belfast; Polnoon Residential Street Project, East Renfrewshire; Old School Master's House, Conwy; Marmalade Lane, Cambridge; The Healthy New Towns programme, Darlington.
- **Interviews**
- **Survey**

New data this year - matrix tables

ENGLAND					
Degree to which each factor is a barrier					
Score	1	2	3	4	5
Under-resourcing	6.0%	11.4%	28.2%	35.6%	18.8%
Lack of skills	6.0%	23.3%	33.3%	30.0%	7.3%
National level policy	3.4%	12.8%	31.5%	28.9%	23.5%
National leadership	5.8%	11.7%	31.2%	29.9%	21.4%

SCOTLAND					
Degree to which each factor is a barrier					
Score	1	2	3	4	5
Under-resourcing	7.7%	7.7%	53.8%	23.1%	7.7%
Skills	7.7%	15.4%	46.2%	23.1%	7.7%
National policy	15.4%	38.5%	38.5%	7.7%	0.0%
National leadership	28.6%	14.3%	50.0%	0.0%	7.1%

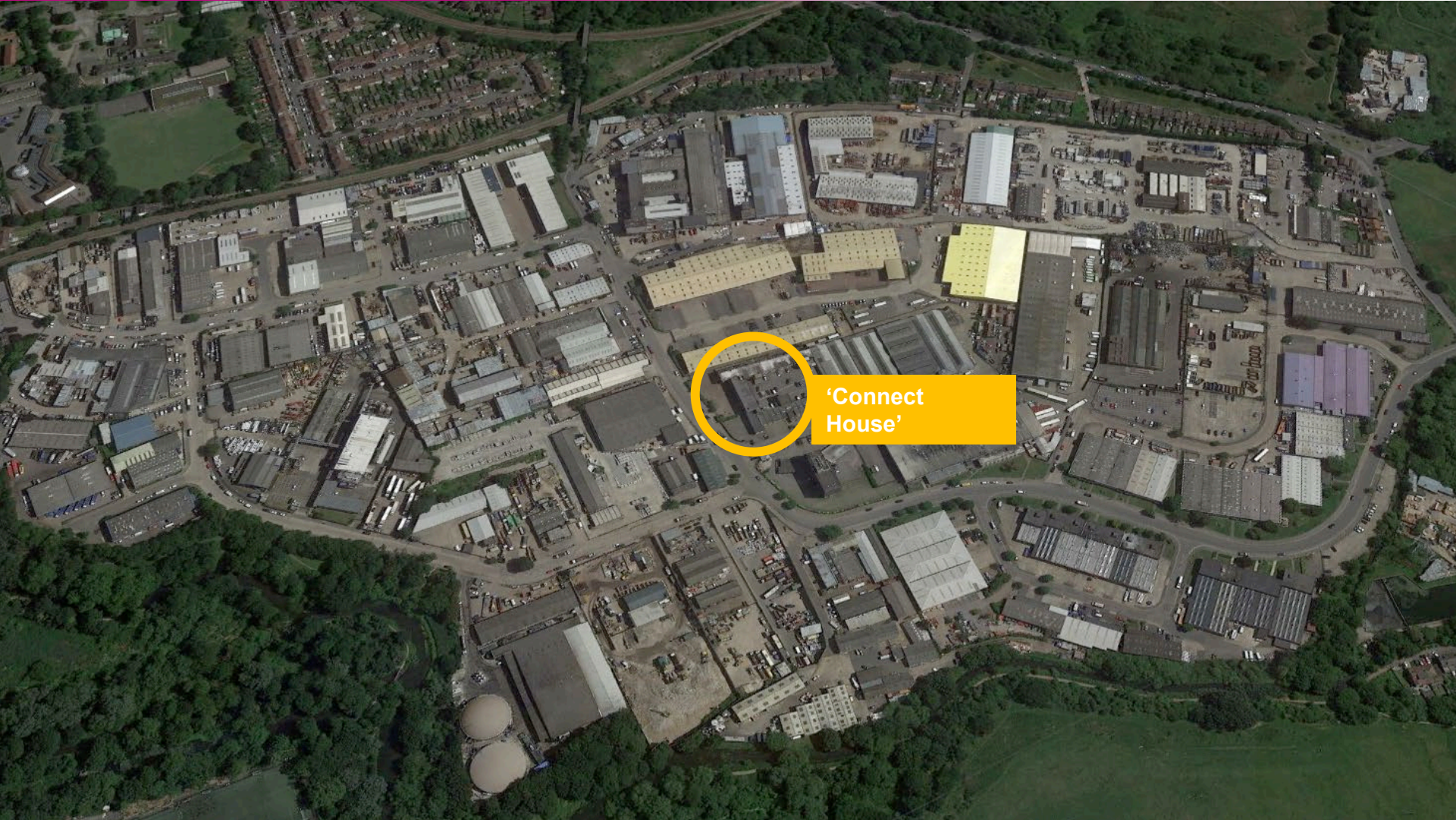
WALES					
Degree to which each factor is a barrier					
Score	1	2	3	4	5
Under-resourcing	6.0%	11.4%	28.2%	35.6%	18.8%
Skills	6.0%	23.3%	33.3%	30.0%	7.3%
National policy	11.1%	44.4%	33.3%	11.1%	0.0%
National leadership	11.1%	33.3%	44.4%	11.1%	0.0%

Reflecting on 10 years of deregulatory reform

This year, as well focusing on healthy place making, we reflected on a decade of deregulatory planning reform in England. Most of our recommendations therefore concentrate on institutional and national-level change.

- Researched in the run up the *Planning for the Future* and further expansion of Permitted Development Rights
- Post-covid rebuilding also provides and inflection point
- We now have 5 years of longitudinal data from previous APSE/TCPA reports...
- ...and a vast body of evidence that the last decade of deregulatory reform has failed to achieve key policy objectives. E.g. PDR...





Connect House, Morden



Theme 1 – the role of the public sector

Central government in England must acknowledge the vital role of public sector in delivering healthy places, and empower them accordingly.

Central government in England should:

- Give local authorities a central role in developing the forthcoming reforms to the planning system, and build consensus on an approach to delivery.
- Provide more support and grant funding to local planning authorities (LPAs) wishing to directly deliver social housing.
- Resource LPAs effectively. This is a blunt and obvious recommendation, but it underpins effective delivery in both the public and private sectors...

Theme 2 - decentralisation

Devolving more decision-making power from central government to the strategic level will improve coordination and communication between public health and planning.

Central government in England should:

- Consider how it can effectively ensure strategic planning and public health funding and policy powers are used at a local and combined authority level to best support the better coordination and communication between public health and planning.

Outside of Combined Authority areas across the UK, the governments should:

- Encourage neighbouring local authorities to work together and identify and deliver on health priorities at the strategic level, and 'push down' the necessary powers to do this

Theme 3 - Regulation

The need for a more ambitious approach to regulating quality in the built Environment.

The UK government in England and the devolved administrations should:

- Make the promotion of health and wellbeing central to the regulation of the build environment, and outlaw the construction of homes and neighbourhood which undermine the health and wellbeing of residents. In England, this means passing a Healthy Homes Act. In Scotland and Wales, which have more advanced approaches to planning for health and wellbeing, and Northern Ireland, which has very weak policy in this area, it may require different legislation.

Theme 4 – Enforcing best practice

The Planning Inspectorate in England and Wales need to find local plans which don't sufficiently address health and wellbeing to be unsound.

The Planning Inspectorate in England should:

- Find local plans which do not incorporate public health evidence, in line with the NPPF, unsound.

The future Planning Inspectorate in Wales should:

- Find local plans which do not incorporate public health evidence, in line with the Wales Spatial Plan, unsound.

Theme 5 – Local best practice

What local authorities can do to plan for healthy places in trying times.

Local authorities across the UK should:

- Focus on setting up processes that enable planners to work with public health colleagues and evidence when developing local policy, and take advantage of the large amount of best practice guidance available when doing this.

This a step all local authorities can take now, despite the many challenges they face, and will only become more important in light of COVID-19.

Conclusion

- We are clearly at an inflection point; austerity and the deregulatory drive of planning reform over the last decade has done little improve communities' health and wellbeing. In some ways it has actively made it worse.
- The current moment provides an opportunity to do things differently. It is not too late for central government to:
 - **Acknowledge the role of the local public sector in driving up standards and creating healthy places.**
 - **Push down the powers councils and partnerships of councils need to plan strategically for local health.**
 - **Act on local plans which don't prioritise wellbeing, and ambitiously pursue minimum standards and guarantee all new homes are safe and healthy.**

This is not rocket science. And England the UK government standards to learn a great deal from Wales and Scotland.



The Healthy Homes Bill

A bill that transforms the regulation of the built environment to ensure that new homes and neighbourhoods support their residents' health and wellbeing

Published by the Town and Country Planning Association
Version 5 (England): August 2020



Healthy Homes Bill

CONTENTS

PART 1

DUTY TO SECURE HEALTHY HOMES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

1 Duty on the secretary of state

PRINCIPLES OF A HEALTHY HOME

2 Policy statement on healthy homes principles

3 Meaning of 'healthy homes principles'

4 Policy statement on healthy homes principles: process

5 Policy statement on healthy homes principles: effect

6 Annual monitoring

ESTABLISHING A HEALTHY HOMES COMMISSIONER

7 Establishment

8 Primary function: securing healthy homes

PART 2

PLANNING FOR HEALTHY AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

9 Duty on local planning authorities to plan for affordable housing needs

NEW MUNICIPALISM

Delivering for local people and local economies



Contact details

Paul O'Brien, Chief Executive

Email: po'brien@apse.org.uk

@apsetweets

Association for Public Service Excellence

3rd floor Trafford House

Chester Road

Manchester M32 0RS

telephone: 0161 772 1810

fax: 0161 772 1811

web: www.apse.org.uk

