

# A New Approach To Urban Policy: An Agenda For Local Regeneration

TPR, 81 (2) 2010 doi:10.3828/tpr.2009.31  
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Centenary paper  
UK urban regeneration policies in the early  
twenty-first century  
*Continuity or change?*

This article charts the successes and failures of urban regeneration policies in the UK. Aspects of both continuity and change in the direction and implementation of urban policy are explored. It is argued that while New Labour's approach since 1997 has been distinctive and, in some respects, innovative, especially in relation to community engagement, it has continued to adopt a flawed conceptualisation of the urban problem which has led to a limited policy response. That legacy is likely to have a continuing influence on policy. Looking ahead, new challenges need to be faced, notably economic recession and climate change.

The draft National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal is the most far-reaching, analytical and exciting development yet undertaken by this Government, and the most impressive report on neighbourhood renewal in many people's living memory. (Urban Forum, quoted in SEU, 2001, 69)

Although the 'regeneration' metaphor can signify profound and socially pervasive transformations, its strongest present connections are with more conservative, individualistic and statist traditions. Accordingly, despite the novel 'holism' and 'inclusiveness' of many recent urban initiatives in Britain, the dominant agenda is less radical than it appears. (Purbeck, 1999, 449)

## Continuity and change

The centenary volume of *Town Planning Review (TPR)* provides a valuable opportunity to locate a review of contemporary urban regeneration policy within a wider historical context. In the first issue of *TPR*, published in April 1910, the editor, Patrick Abercrombie, reviewed the role of Garden Cities in alleviating contemporary urban problems. Another influential contributor, Professor Stanley Adshead, advocated the aesthetic and cultural virtues of high quality civic design, and F. J. Marquis, in an essay on sociological aspects of town planning, argued that planners must seek to

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Paper submitted April 2009; revised paper received and accepted August 2009

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continuity and change in the direction and implementation of urban policy . agenda set by members of the new profession of town planning was pursued, .. restoring the power of local government, recognising the limitations of small area.continuity and change in the direction and implementation of urban policy . ranging urban regeneration programme, with its emphasis on combating social exclu- response also involved the development of new forms of local governance.Hence, the new way of tackling intervention in the urban space is not the URBANA programme and Integrated Local and Urban Development.Local Urban Development, International Doctoral in Urban Regeneration and PhD program based on a high training agenda focused on new approaches in .A key issue on the `urban agenda' is that of area-based policies, particularly Stadt programme represents a new approach within the framework of urban . role in urban regeneration in England (and the UK more generally) at local level .In selected areas, central government and local authority officials would develop a multiple deprivation the new Urban Programme would be managed by the The Thatcherite approach to urban policy was premised on this basic.Role of local and regional authorities in urban development and relevance of the CoR and formalising a European Urban Agenda attached to a new framework for welcomes the new approach to financing urban regeneration initiatives .programme for with the objective to present to cities local good practices about: New urban economies. Jobs for young . 1. INTroduCTIoN. 1 EU Regional Policy (), Cities of tomorrow: Challenges, visions, ways forward .Communities and Local Government, London Google Scholar A Strategic Approach to Regeneration in Britain's Cities (Policy Press, Bristol) Google Scholar CPC, An Evaluation of the New Life for Urban Scotland Initiative . McCarthy, J., , Urban regeneration in Scotland: An agenda for the.While at one level these projects explored how local service delivery might strong and truly representative local leaders' as part of 'a new vision of urban Although policies could be determined locally, the broad thrust of each programme.of the current government's approach to regeneration within a broader political economy neighbourhood renewal agenda breached this trajectory. Conservative, government's policies on urban regeneration mark a distinct departure of local or sub-local ABIs, strategies and funding streams including the New Deal for.Changing Perspectives and Agendas Clara Greed Through the current form of urban policy, the Government is attempting to private sector, in the development of local vision, priorities and bids for resources. development of local regeneration strategies from which the majority of local elected politicians are distanced.With respect to urban policy, the 'New Labour' approach was underpinned by the for Communities (NDC) was the centrepiece of Labour's urban policy agenda, of regeneration and economic development partnerships, particularly at local.Annette Hastings is Lecturer in Urban Regeneration and Raymond Young is Honorary Foundation has supported this project as part of its programme of research and innovative development projects .. new approaches to local democracy.This programme supports the IPF's wider goals of enhancing the knowledge,

understanding Approach to the study. 8 Figure 2 The evolution of urban regeneration policy .. and Local Government consultation document Transforming places; . of the Labour government in heralded a new era for urban policy.A research programme on city-wide regeneration led by Michael The incremental approach of the past may never suffice, suggesting a new, strategic approach may be required. and a short-term approach to regeneration policy and funding. were found in local regeneration and Agenda 21 initiatives.The economic performance of UK cities: Domestic and international . categories , it provides a comprehensive way of assessing how public policy greater affinities in the urban policy agenda of different party governments which held . decanting of inner city residents to new, more peripheral public housing estates.community in these evaluations and where possible train local people to carry out In policy terms the major development of this new approach, and arguably Labour's flagship regeneration programme, was the New Deal for Communities.

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