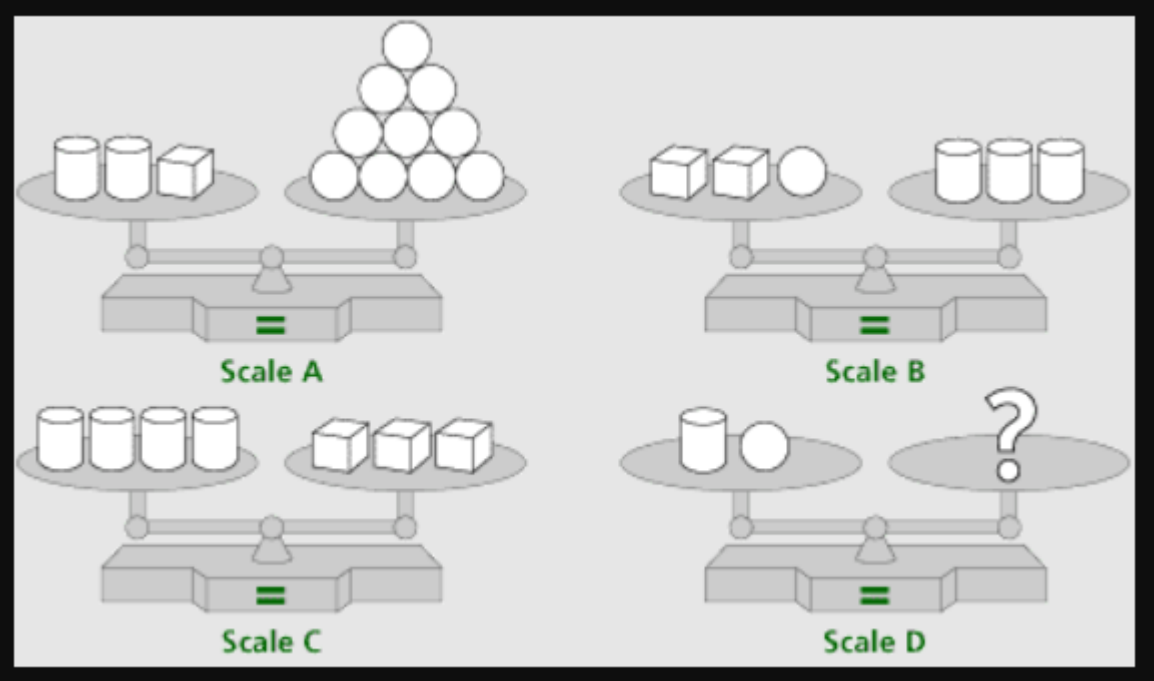


Healthier Places in the North: *Just about weighting?*



Rob Murfin

Director Northumberland County Council

Some key *reverse dolly zoom* moments

- Public Health and Planning aspirations recognised as co-dependant in 19th Century
- ...strong pushback when trying to upstream, from commercial + ideological perspectives, even if unambiguous evidence shows downstreaming costs to society and NHS (G. Fell, a Monday 2018)
- Parallel - climate change heavily mainstreamed in academia 1980's 7/10 > 19/20
- 1989, Greenpeace seen as a worthwhile flag
- A Tuesday, 2018 – I heard Jaws theme in office



None of this is ground breaking

Public Health < > Planning

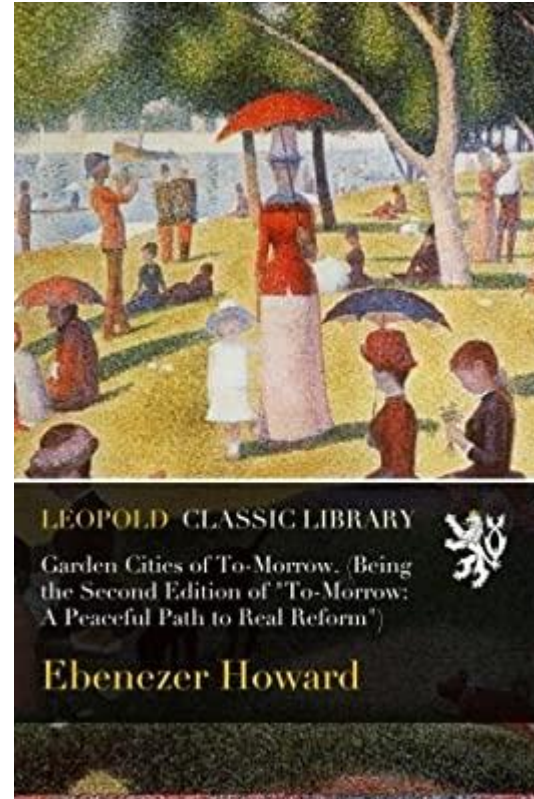
- Salutogenesis: factors that support human well-being, rather than **single factors** that cause specific diseases (pathogenesis)
- Multidisciplinary fields: professionals <should be> working to improve welfare of communities by creating more sustainable, equitable, healthful, efficient, **robust** and attractive places

Intertwined for most of their histories.

- 1854, John Snow mapping of cholera outbreak.
- 1872, 2/7 American Public Health Assc founders were urban designers
- 1898 Ebenezer Howard (Garden Cities and Fridge 'Magnets')

No time for normal list

1. Community engagement
2. Land value capture for benefit of community
3. Mixed-tenure affordable housing
4. Well designed homes with gardens
5. Healthy communities
6. Strong local jobs offer and easy commuting
7. Opportunities for residents to grow own food, including allotments
8. Generous green space
9. Well connected and biodiversity-rich public parks
10. Tree-lined streets and open spaces
11. Local services
12. Walkable neighbourhoods
13. Integrated and accessible transport systems



OK, Bible
obviously needs
updating, but it's
a start



Protecting and improving the nation's health

Spatial Planning for Health
An evidence resource for planning
and designing healthier places

Realising where it goes wrong

- **Reductive/checklist thinking** (e.g. abject failure >PD amendments)
- Jobs* and false dichotomies -a post Covid Shark is build, build build?
- Reductive view of "lifestyle choices" "it's their own fault" bias
- Ecosocial factors are place based and people's choices are constrained by layering of elements of disadvantage
- Weakening role in place making and creating **robust** communities
- Government sometimes listens to simplistic answers without questions
- Strawman planning as (1) tap that should be tightened or loosened in different places and (2) its just a slow-audit process for housing
- Without being political. Policy Exchange/Planning White Paper now openly hosting events for MHCLG. Focused on land value promotion rather than delivery of schemes with external co-dependencies



= underweighting of issues or regarded them as discretionary “added luxury” in viable locations

More alarming
than a rubbery
shark



A Watford legacy of PD
to meet the "housing crisis"?



Not reinventing wheel...material considerations and
Wednesbury unreasonableness
Health, Climate Change, issue X, Y, Z

- Not just about final decision, should shape entire design process
- The spatial patterns of healthy life expectation make this a crisis

(weighting characteristics we all recognise on a scale)

- *In making the decision taking into account factors that really ought not to have been taken into account.*
- *Failure to take into account factors that ought to have been taken into account*
- *So **outrageous in its defiance of logic** or accepted moral standards that no sensible person who had applied his mind to the question to be decided could have arrived at it.*



Cinematograph Act 1909
Sundays and Staffordshire

Steps to proper weighting

- Get policy framework right and “hooks” in Plans
- Strategies outside Local Plan can carry weight of NPPF
- Evidence, evidence, evidence
- Don’t just focus on HIA
- Look outside site boundary or masterplan, but beware opportunity costs
- Challenge to PINs of non-reductive thinking; e.g. noise impact and Rotherham flats
- Training – not just for the coverts. Inert into corporate social responsibility*
- Planning decisions = harm <> benefit balancing in public interest
- What is material/matter of law, weight to be attached/matter for decision
 - with the evidence, argue weight should be reasonable, given importance of issue

Agreeing on **robust place making** is like agreeing on **sustainable development**