



## **250 New Towns Club: The Need for Speed**

**RIBA Hub, CUBE Gallery, Manchester**

**Reviewed by [Simon Belt](#) June 2011**

The **250 New Towns** is the club for people with big plans to build – where enthusiasts meet with experts to argue about where and how we live in Britain, and this first meeting of it in Manchester was hosted by [Mark Iddon](#) of Urbanization Architects. This was also a part of the North West Architecture Festival.

### **10.30 Welcome to the 250 New Towns Club in Manchester – Mark Iddon**

Mark is an architect and founder of Urbanization Architects, with several years experience in the social housing sector. He earlier led the housing team at Urban Vision, designing the first phase of council housing built in 30 years for Salford City Council. Mark is a council member of the [Manchester Society of Architects](#), and a reviewer and coordinator for [The Manchester Salon](#)

. Urbanization promotes development of the man made environment for greater convenience, comfort and delight for all.

## **11.00 The 250 NTC Map of England: Work on the first 50 locations – Ian Abley**

The Eco-Towns, promoted by New Labour and Coalition governments through the department for Communities and Local Government, have failed. We see that none will be built - [www.audacity.org/250NTC-Eco-Towns.htm](http://www.audacity.org/250NTC-Eco-Towns.htm)

. Of course we can learn from the attempt, and recover pro-development opportunities. The National Planning Policy Framework will formalise a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Why the prefix sustainable? We need development everywhere, and need it fast. The club's work to date will be summarised, and Ian will look at development proposals around High Speed Rail in particular.

## **12.00 Interconnecting Britain: The case for High Speed Rail – Speaker TBC**

The [Campaign for High Speed Rail](#) , argues that only new high speed lines can offer the capacity needed to meet increased demand for long distance rail, freight and commuting. The West Coast Main Line, East Coast and Midland Main Lines will otherwise become severely congested.

## **1.00 Lunch Break**

## **1.30 Dislocating/Relocating Hulme – Steven Millington**

Steven lectures in Geography and Environmental Management, at the Faculty of Science and Engineering, Manchester Metropolitan University. He is a member of the [Manchester Modernist Society](#)

Steven argues that the 20th century produced multiple attempts to resolve the problems of the city, and improve urban life. For industrial cities like Manchester the ideological beliefs of planners and policy makers have radically transformed the postwar city. Notably, in the working class neighbourhood of Hulme, the dreams of planners flattened a post-war landscape. Hulme

was comprehensively redeveloped, yet within thirty years this proposed utopia was subject to further demolition. The logic of the market was then meant to resolve urban problems.

Steven says that the current financial crisis brings us from modernism to market failure. In an age of austerity, where do we go next in pursuit of the ideal city?

## **2.30 Closing discussion – Chaired by Mark Iddon**

## **3.00 Close – We have to tidy up, and will continue in a local café or bar**

### **Venue**

We will be meeting in the newly opened [RIBA Hub](#), at the CUBE Gallery, 113-115 Portland Street, Manchester, M1 6FB. The club starts at 10.30am and runs through to 3.00pm. You can drop into the club at any time. Bring your own lunch, pop out, or eat in the café.

### **Registration**

Register directly with Mark Iddon by Email on [mark@urbanization.org.uk](mailto:mark@urbanization.org.uk), or by phone on (M) 07971 570 696 as the RIBA hub is not dealing with registrations. If you register on the day, please provide your contact details.

### **Attendance Fee**

A charge of £5 will be made. We can only accept cash on the day at the reception desk.

Hosted in Manchester by



---

### Further Information

A discussion draft of the 3 Aims for the 250 New Towns Club can be downloaded from [www.audacity.org/downloads/250NTC-06-12.02.11-Aims-Draft-02.pdf](http://www.audacity.org/downloads/250NTC-06-12.02.11-Aims-Draft-02.pdf)

### Suggestions for future events

Learning from popular house types: <http://www.davoine.net/> – Pierre d'Avoine

Self-sufficient New Towns: <http://www.tlio.org.uk/> – Simon Fairlie

A town called Hunter Douglas: <http://www.hunterdouglas.co.uk/> – Andrew Lee

Britain's coastal potential: <http://www.urbisnet.co.uk/> – Tony Pierce

Springfield: <http://www.springfieldland.com.au/> – Raynuha Sinnathamby

Broken Ladder: <http://www.joelkotkin.com/> – Joel Kotkin

Mile High Megastructure over the Thames: <http://www.audacity.org/> – Ian Abley

Apsley Guise: <http://www.urbisnet.co.uk/> – Tony Pierce

## Initial Club Organisation

There is much to be done if we are to work as an effective club, and to find ways to better confront the planning establishment. This is our eleventh meeting, and we are beginning to sketch out a number of development locations. We need to do more.

**250 New Towns** club want to raise the £3,000 needed to produce and publish our first 50 locations in an A3 landscape format colour book. This will be the focus of work for next year, inviting essays from members. We need skilled people for the website. The club's constitution needs to be drafted ready for an Annual General Meeting on 10 September 2011. The members are to accept, reject, or add to these stated aims by the time of the AGM:

- 1) To promote development and prosperity for a growing population
- 2) To re-establish a universal Right to Build on all Freehold land
- 3) To lower costs of Owner Occupation, so all forms of tenure cost less

Cautious endorsements were given on 9 September 2010 by Kate Henderson, Chief Executive of the TCPA, and by Housing Minister Grant Shapps on the Radio 4 programme **You and Yours** . Listen again on

[www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p009xv98](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p009xv98)

Ian Abley – wants to establish a stand alone website to keep up with club content

Tony Pierce – is finishing the Big Potatoes contribution based on our 3 draft aims

James Stevens – hopes to raise sponsorship for club activities and publications

The programme from the day is available for download in PDF format to print by clicking on this

' [The Need for Speed - Manchester](#) '.