

SURF Annual Conference 2014

Notes from the Degeneration Discussion with Greg Lloyd

- Degeneration is the flipside to regeneration
- Degeneration not the cause of what's gone wrong, it's systematic of mass market capitalism (and the forces of such)
- Degeneration happens not by accident but a set of decision making by business – it's a triumph of big business. Plays into the hands of corporate set
- Retailers good at manipulating/threat to jobs
- Regeneration is big business for corporate power – Degeneration we still don't understand what's going on in big business and the corporate state. What happens because of possibility of government state

Challenge/ Expose – What happens?

- Independence or not – things will change
- We are at a stage where things are so bad – we've done de-growth i.e. 3 days of work (can't use deep freezers), drive 2 days a week. Need to be centralist in the way we work/live. "Iron fist/velvet glove"
- Why build military infrastructure rather than kidney machines – same production, skills
- Leave of property
- Education linked into skill development for life-long learning. Schooling to be linked to happenstance
- Get set out targets for medical personnel, for everything else there's no limits
- Corporate business often held in hedge funds, distance investment funds
- Crop yields at maximum in the world. GM not working. Bees dying in vast numbers globally because of chemical sprays – most yet yields of polluted crops
- Fees freeze in education but government not thinking - keyholes in further education

- Degeneration is like privatisation of the NHS especially in England. Company's asset stripping in England – Can this happen in Scotland?
- Highly centralised structures but small group of people making the decisions. Federal system of conduct between training and labour is required
- Local problems need to be addressed locally in the future
- Vibrant community activity required but no one size fits all model
- What type of activities (economic) do we want to engage in Scotland?
- Not top down/bottom up framework – are mutually exclusive
- Community Councils should have more control
- Planning is difficult for Parish Councils to negotiate
- Big decisions made on where things go? – Is that Local Authority or communities themselves?
- NPF seems to be on the right track. How strong are the guidelines for Local Authorities to follow?
- How do you define "broken" need to find solutions
- Centralism is good but can be 'Stalin-istic'
- It's depressing when a vibrant sector becomes stagnant
- "local is me" – take control of your own
- Civic pride is lost – we need to re-claim our own spaces
- Localism is much more powerful than we imagine
- We are an ageing population – how do we deal with that?

- Older people can't access internet – that destabilises society
- Best thing to negotiate in a community is children
- Expensive to have children but more expensive not to in terms of society
- Free personal care for older people is 5mins of contact time
- Lots of money stuck in systems to stop things happening, need to change that to make things happen
- Too many middle aged people stuck in positions stopping things happening
- Younger people don't have a place in life – jobs, housing
- City reigns – a European solution to isolationist centralism
- Nation state needs to be undertaken by city region. Not the only answer though
- Land use in urban areas owned by large assets – land building, MoD land, NHS land
- Manifesto issue – buying land you don't need for other people
- Northern Ireland example look after a building into disrepair before getting a grant - recent Community Empowerment Bill could lead to that
- Possibly capacity could be brought in, detrimental to communities and projects.
- Local democracy can help local projects, from ground up. Maybe need centralised government to help but it's a balancing act
- Another example of 'British Disease' – we say nothing or shout about it. No ongoing dialogue in society
- Time is the forgotten resource. We forget history. Policy has been brought out before and failed time and time again
- Local always the future for people at the local level.
- We're not ready to see what's happening on the future
- Need the councillor as a go-to person but proportional representation provides 4 councillors which doesn't give a direct point of contact
- When a society is in trouble it creates a paper track/surveillance to fix the blame rather than fix the problem
- Create employment for post – qualifications, post-apprenticeships
- We don't live in a society which gives permission
- Beyond the referendum what happens in 2050?
- In Scotland, key great export always people. We have been to self-effacing, need to start pulling ourselves together
- What do we need to do to change?
- New homes don't have dining rooms because people don't eat together. Prioritising people's spaces - that clumps society
- No green space in London so young children have rickets, lack of vitamin D, no fresh air, noise pollution etc.
- A revolutionary new look at society
- A revolutionary new way of looking at things
- A top down way of thinking
- Got to design a new society
- Advanced capitalism makes us 'forecast' but why must we look ahead then back – 'backcast'