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International Review of Planning Systems, Christine Whitehead

On 10 May 2017, Christine Whitehead presented at the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) planners away day. Her presentation, '[International Review of Planning Systems](#)', provided just that, a review of international planning systems. The evidence she provided came from two previous reports she worked on: the first – Monk et al's (2013) [International review of land supply and planning systems](#), York, J.R.F.; and the second – Gordon, I. Mace, A., & Whitehead, C.M.E. (2017) [Defining, measuring and implementing density standards in London](#). Mayor of London.

In the presentation, Christine drew out findings from these reports on governance, growth management, land assembly, infrastructure provision, compensation and incentives, and land value capture. She argued that there are three interlinked core issues:

- How to provide sufficient incentives to bring land forward;
- How to enable growth without urban sprawl;
- How to provide infrastructure to support new housing development
 - PLUS – what data to use in monitoring/enforcement.

- Evidence from other countries suggests that planning does not have to be seen as wholly restrictive even though most instruments are based on constraint;
- Also suggests there are no 'pure' systems either of zoning or planning permission;
- Metropolitan Green Belts should be operated flexibly, with boundaries revisited regularly;
- Most of the mechanisms identified have their equivalent in England;
- Could these be used more widely or brought together more effectively and on a sufficient scale to ensure a larger and more regular flow of land to meet current and future housing needs;
- Example of good practice – Cambridge LEP area/combined authorities?
- The interaction between planning and tax/subsidy regimes inadequately explored.

The PPT presentation in full can be downloaded [here](#).

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