



This leaflet contains my thoughts on how we might improve life in British cities. Many ideas were previously published on my personal *D'log* weblog.

*Under the pavements,
the rivers!*

I have also added some new ideas especially for this leaflet. Two of the newly added ideas - the radio programme for local bands, 100 miles of off-road cycle paths - are already in action in my own city of Stoke-on-Trent, in the West Midlands of England.

30 ideas for more liveable cities



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A DIGEST OF
SUGGESTIONS
THAT COULD
IMPROVE THE
QUALITY OF LIFE
IN BRITISH
CITIES.





Music - three hours of local radio on Thursdays for a mix of local bands and new indie releases.

Quirky attractions - value existing heritage attractions, but also grow new and contemporary "quirky / eccentric" visitor attractions.

Record history - even the smallest and most overlooked place in the city has oral history.

The new ateliers - make space for a new creative "master and apprentices" system, sited at the edge of university and college campuses but completely freed from their infernal bureaucracy.

Cull - the naff public art. No-one loves it.

Cycle network - use every available route to create off-road bicycle paths.

Cycle locking - free and secure bicycle-locking at all rail stations.

The knowledge - ensure taxi drivers can understand where they are being asked to go, and will go there by the most efficient route possible.

Hedges - break up car-parks with thick hedgerows made of native species. Lay turf over flat roofs.

Perfect mile - a 24hr 'clean team' to clean every scrap of litter and do minor repairs and renovations within a one-mile radius of the train station. A 'green team' does the same for the 'last mile' of the train lines.

30 ideas for more livable cities



THE BASICS:

Cut red tape - simplify it, eliminate it.

Boost the birth-rate - a city with empty primary schools has no sustainable future.

Go faster - faster broadband, uncapped.

Be nice - raise the standards of customer service in your city.

Accessible stories - a twice-yearly comic book, illustrating local true-life stories from the city that have first aired on local radio.

Build in wood - make some new buildings entirely from solid wood, ideally renewable native timber.

A touchable city - add tactile surfaces using durable materials.



Tell stories - real stories about people, places and emotions.

Walk before you visit - create a 3D online "walkable" version of key parts of your city.

Honest images - new city postcards, coupled with a free online city 'image bank'. Keep it honest and authentic.



Work together - create small well-resourced teams that cross disciplinary and professional boundaries.

Night walks - once a month council officials must walk in pairs, late at night, through a different area.

Youth curfews - when there are proper, well-funded long-term youth clubs in place. Special-interest clubs to cherish the geeks/nerdy/odd/brainy kids.

Peace and quiet - super-soundproof all new-build and newly-converted flats.

"The City Matchmaker" - she pro-actively seeks out like-minded people, and introduces them in a relaxed setting.

Adult baths - public baths that actually serve as baths for adults, not as children's playgrounds or stadiums for sports jocks.

Private/public benches - secure "clam" robo-benches, that only unfold themselves if they get the correct signal from your phone.

Empty-shops management - a scheme to manage the decline of independent shopping on the High St.



Bigger is better - much larger letter boxes and big parcel lockers at new-build properties.

Flag local food - dedicated "local food" shelves in supermarkets, for food from a 60-mile radius.

Leave it alone - protect scrubby marginal land where young kids make their 'secret dens'.

