



# ASSET

← **BACK** ←  
to ASSET menu

## THE FUTURE

HOW WILL YOUR BEHAVIOUR  
CHANGE?

ACES Paper No 06.5/9 by

**TIM STAPLETON**

Partner  
King Sturge

ACES Spring Conference  
Bath, May 2006



## THE AUTHOR:

TIM STAPLETON MPhil BSc FRICS graduated from the University of London College of Estate Management in 1969. After working in London he taught at UWE for 17 years and was Course Director of Bsc Estate Management during that time he undertook a research degree at Reading University.

He has been a partner of King Sturge LLP for seventeen years, during nine of which he was on the Management Executive, and he has led their public sector consultancy business, advising universities, health trusts, local government and agencies on their estates. This has included estate strategies, expert witness and valuation of specialised assets across the UK.

He was on the board of the College of Estate Management for 15 years, and is on the board of Exeter College and the Devon and Cornwall Regional Board of the National Trust.

He and his firm continue their links with UWE as an examiner, speaker and sponsor of the MA in Real Estate Management.

He has written for the Estates Gazette for 25 years: the fourth edition of "Stapleton Real Estate Management Practice" was published last year.

## CONTENTS:

The Future - Different Expectations.....	79
Speakers .....	79
Lee Dawson.....	79
Value and Delivery.....	79
Terriers.....	80
Questionnaire .....	80
The Big Beasts .....	80
Professional Skills.....	80
Do I Really Want It? .....	81
Analysis .....	81

## THE FUTURE - DIFFERENT EXPECTATIONS

My job is to get you to think about the future and how differently you might view it following all the contributions you have heard at this conference.

## SPEAKERS

It is very difficult to prepare for this talk: I had no idea what the speakers were going to say, nor whether you would agree or disagree with them. However the organisers said I was ideally suited to this task since lack of foreknowledge has never held me back from speaking in the past.

Virginia Gibson, who is an outstanding speaker, mentioned the Ceri Davis Report of 1982 yesterday afternoon and that set out the seven steps to heaven in making the NHS estate meet service need. I worked on that twenty five years ago on things called regional health authorities. Would you believe they are back now and, after four reorganisations, are called strategic health authorities?

## LEE DAWSON

I would like to mention Lee Dawson's article in the spring 2006 Terrier. By sheer chance it had the same title as this conference. It was either an accident or good planning: I wouldn't like to say which. It tells you the eight things you have to do. Would you believe it the first one is 'You really need to want it'. The second one, and only one of your own could have said this to you, is "*Don't be seen as a property anorak. Learn the language. Widen your skill-base. Take on different areas. Remember to let go*". We love dabbling in the detail don't we? "*Oh! I remember dealing with that last time and I have just got a few tips for you on how to do it.*" – and before you know where you are the person with you is sitting there thinking, "I wish he would just shut up". We all do it, don't we?

Do non-property jobs (Most of us do that most of the time now) and be prepared to move. When I read that I remember what Sir Mike Pitt said about the public realm and the local authority bringing all the other public sector elements together. It came out from the DCLG recently - the local authority right at the heart of bringing the public sector together.

## VALUE AND DELIVERY

Remember what has been discussed today – it has all been about value and delivery. I sat thinking about those two words, "value and delivery". Those are the same two words you would have heard at an engineers' conference, a lawyers' conference, a planners' conference, a treasurers' conference, "value and delivery". I know we know what we mean by that. They have the same themes. I think over the last twenty four hours you have had the most talented group of speakers on this subject I have ever heard – a quite remarkable group of people.

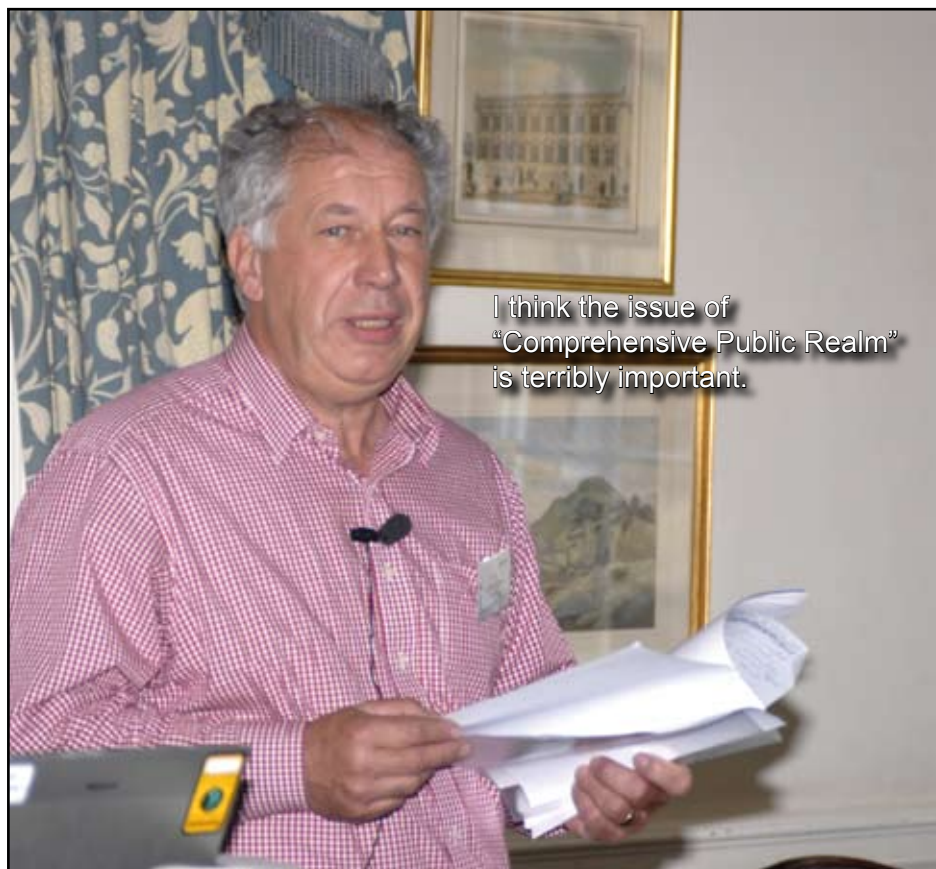


FIGURE 1

**ACES CONFERENCE QUESTIONNAIRE**

What will be the effect on you as a property business adviser over the next five years measured from 0 (nil) to 10 (High) of:

**THE BIG BEASTS**

- Q1 Governance - city region, unitary, elected
- Q2 Responsibilities of Local Government
- Q3 Local Government Finance
- Q4 Working Practices in Offices

**PROFESSIONAL SKILLS**

- Q5 Asset Management
- Q6 Financial Skills
- Q7 Project Management
- Q8 Procurement v Delivery

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

- Q9 (*Respondent's own choice - not analysed*)
- Q10 Do I really want it?

**TERRIERS**

I would like to return to The Terrier. I don't know whether any of you watched the Crufts Show which was on about three months ago. They had a different class every evening but I am thinking particularly about the largest class which was the terrier class. There were hyperactive little black and white fox terriers and then there were those large brown aristocratic long legged Airedales. It is a bit like that with surveyors, isn't it? Each of us with specialist technical skills. One terrier for this, one for another, one for another.

And in the Terrier I was very struck by James Grierson of Donaldsons paper at the Cardiff conference in November. He wrote a very good paper, I thought, called "Surveyors in Business" which is identical with my experience in King Sturge. We organise ourselves around client need. The difference between you and us is that on the whole we try to choose our clients and services and you can't. And that is a huge difference. But having said that, in our Bristol office we have a "corporate real estate" team where we bring together the work for the public and private occupiers, Orange and Bank of Ireland and so on. But these staff are the same people who work on NHS Trusts and universities and central government. Corporate real

estate is about data, enabling us to manage resources, demonstrate value for money and budgeting. The technical side, and I think this keeps coming up again and again in the conference, is increasingly delivered through some form of procurement route and the Office of Government Commerce has done a great deal in pioneering those systems.

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

So has the conference provided the answers? I am going to introduce a touch of democracy here. You have a questionnaire coming round and I will talk you through it. It is fairly straightforward.

**THE BIG BEASTS**

If you would like to look at the questions, I have called the first four 'The Big Beasts' and the first three of those are partly political.

- The first one is governance, single tier, multi-tier and all that sort of stuff.
- Responsibilities of local government: You are moving to enabling, not providing so you are going to do more audit and review and fewer technical services. We heard about this peer review process that is going on.
- Finance: We heard today about the success of the RDAs in introducing, in levering private sector finance into your assets. That is making your assets more valuable in holding them rather than disposing of them.
- And working practice in offices. It was called workspace earlier on. This last one has affected the private sector far more than it has affected you. In our partnership in the UK with a turnover of £120m only one partner has his own office. There are over a thousand staff and only one partner has his own office. Many staff are wholly mobile, working from several locations including the clients' offices, in mutually open and accessible databases. I think one or two of you have a long, long way to go on the issue of workspace.

**PROFESSIONAL SKILLS**

The second category are what I call the professional skills, the things we all like doing. Here the things I am thinking about are:

- Asset management: on which we had a presentation this morning. How is service need changing? You need to provide public sector space, shared facilities between the new larger PCTs and the counties. Boundaries and functions are getting so much closer. No one can work out what social services should be doing and the PCT should be doing in terms of care for the elderly and the young. It is a complete morass and there is going to be a huge change there yet.
- Financial skills must be a priority.
- Project management: Projects are not about property. They are about delivering services.
- And finally, procurement against delivery: the need for your contract management skills.

Now I did consider the possibility that the questions I thought out might not match the content of the conference. So I had left two spare ones for you to decide the things that matter to you. Having heard the conference I have actually worked out the two that matter to me but I don't want that to influence you too much at this stage. Don't fill it in yet because I want you to see the whole picture because you need to think about what criteria 9 and 10 are before you start to fill this in.

## DO I REALLY WANT IT?

Let me tell you what my 9 and 10 happen to be. I am not suggesting they are the ones that would be yours but I think one should be "Comprehensive public realm" which has come across very strongly both yesterday and today and the second should be that lovely question which Mike Pitt asked and was in the article, "Do I really want it?".

Do you really want it? Do you want to become a business manager rather than just a property manager? If the answer to that is no, just get on with items 5, 6, 7 and 8.

What I am asking you to do is score each question from nil to ten based on what will be the effect on you as a property and business adviser over the next five years.

So, if you don't think these are going to have any effect on you put a nought in. If you think it is going to have a big effect on you put a ten in.

I think the issue of "Comprehensive Public Realm" is terribly important. I wish I had thought of it earlier because I would have made it Question 9. However we still have a small amount of democracy of about 10% which enables you to put in for question 9 any issue which you think might be important, something you heard which I had not foreseen would arise.

I would like you please to make the tenth question, "Do I really want it?" because I think that will help us to understand the way you answered questions 1 to 8. So I am now saying make question 10 "Do I really want it?"

Don't think about this too long because the quality of the work won't be any better. So I want one and tens. Try to be bold: fours fives and sixes are not acceptable answers. Be bold if you can. Say "yes that does affect me" or "no it doesn't affect me". You are a property business adviser – which of these is going to be the most important in what you are doing. And of course the real crunch, when you fill that in, is that you have to say to yourself, "So what do I need to do?"

I think we could get some useful feedback from this.

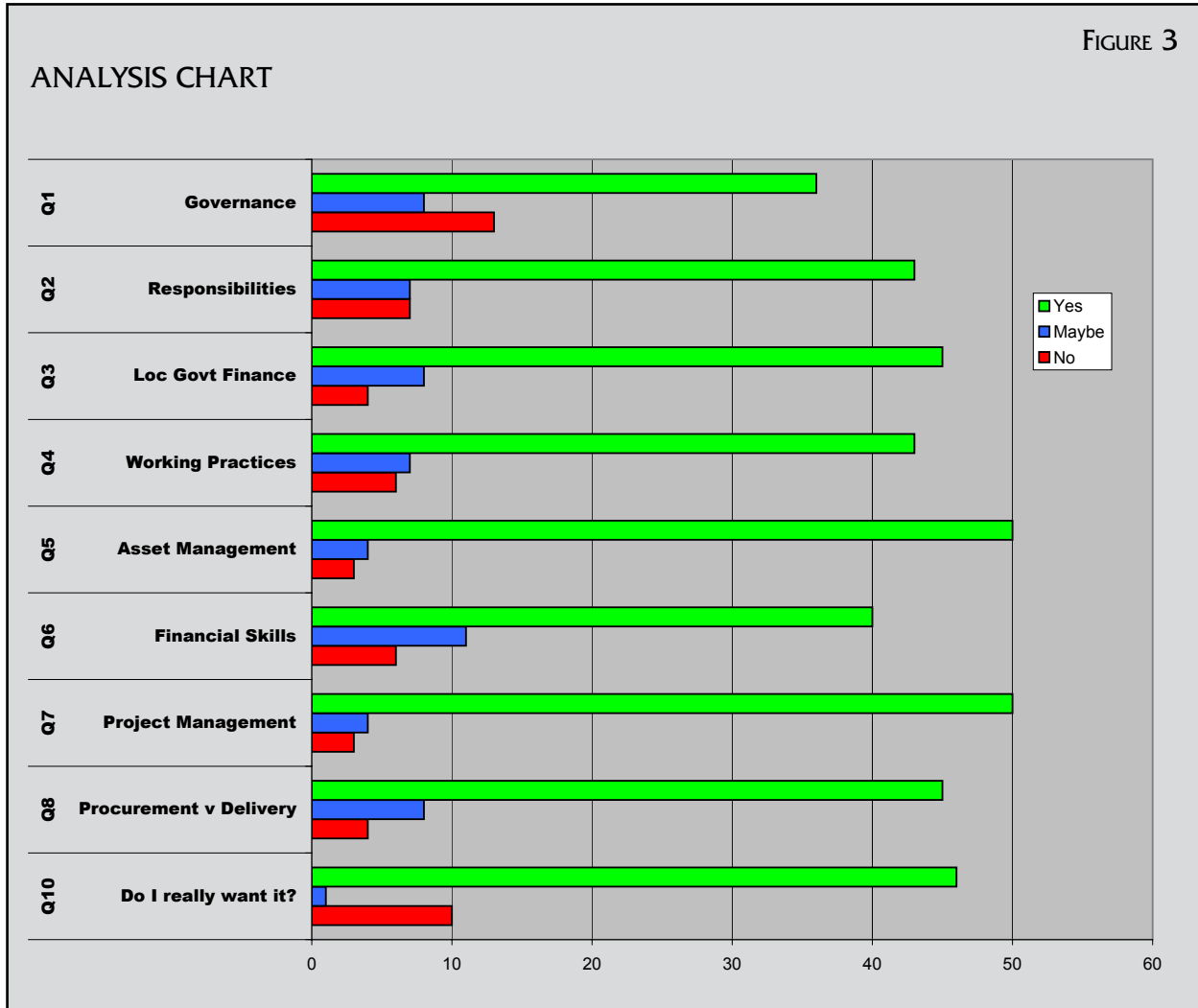
Tim Stapleton  
King Sturge

## ANALYSIS

The scores for questions 1-8 and question 10 are shown in the table in Figure 2. Question 9 was excluded from

FIGURE 2

QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS		Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>The Big Beasts</b>													
Q1	Governance	0	0	6	7	4	2	2	9	16	7	4	
Q2	Responsibilities	0	0	2	5	0	4	3	6	22	9	6	
Q3	Loc Govt Finance	0	0	1	3	3	0	5	7	20	9	9	
Q4	Working Practices	0	0	5	1	0	5	2	8	17	9	9	
<b>Professional Skills</b>													
Q5	Asset Management	1	0	1	1	1	0	3	6	12	19	13	
Q6	Financial Skills	1	0	3	2	3	1	7	8	23	7	2	
Q7	Project Management	0	1	2	0	1	2	1	9	21	10	10	
Q8	Procurement v Delivery	0	0	1	3	1	5	2	8	18	10	9	
<b>Additional Questions</b>													
Q9	Not analysed												
Q10	Do I really want it?	9	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	4	2	38	



analysis because respondents were invited to write in their own issue as well as the associated score. The chart in Figure 3 shows a simplified graphical view of the data. For ease of comparison scores 0-3 have been counted as “No”, scores 4-6 as “Maybe” and scores 7-10 as “Yes”.

It is intriguing, if not a little baffling, to see that Local Government Finance scores highest of the Tim Stapleton’s “Big Beasts” whereas Financial Skill scores lowest of the Professional Skills.

However, it is clear that, inspired and challenged by the conference speakers, most of those at the conference do aspire to greater things and “Do really want it”.

ACES Editor



