

Dear Nicola,

## Burying the Truth - Shed and Corruption – Part 9.

I make no apology for getting back to you about the Shed. In my letter to Paula, you can see that various planning officers were using Customer Advocacy to avoid answering any question about the approved height of the shed. It was titled the Second Phase of the Shed's Development, and [posted as Shed and Corruption – Part 8](#).

A summary of Part 8 is given here to illustrate the share volume of misinformation generated and it began with the response made by Emma Anderson in February 2015:

1. The Planning Manager gave 5 pieces of misinformation, most of which found their way into the Ombudsman's findings a month later;
2. A Planning Officer hid the fact that the shed was in breach of the second condition so he could support UK Docks application to extend it onto foundations laid in 2001;
3. Proof that the Council were misinforming the Ombudsman to hide malpractice in Building Control and the Planning Office;
4. Denying the truth by shooting the messenger;
5. Hiding the fact that the shed was in use on a Sunday other than launching or slipping a vessel;
6. Complaint to the Chief Executive about the misconduct of his staff that was ignored;
7. Councillor Anglin dodges his responsibilities for the third time;
8. Conflation of complaints by Customer Advocacy;
9. Rigging of list of unanswered emails by Customer Advocacy.

If you were to ask me to single out the best example of corrupt practice I would single out No. 7 because I explained to Cllr Anglin exactly what was happening. [Customer Advocates were copied](#).

[The Principal Planning Officer](#) was informed that the shed was wider than permitted as early as December 2013 but he denied it by saying that *that the base and height of the structure are compliant*. They may have been compliant with non approved drawings but not with any approved ones and that has remained the case since the first frame was erected in September 2013. Notice the use of [PROTECT], in his denial and his wish to close the matter.

[The Planning Manager was no better than his Principal Planning Officer](#), when he wrote four weeks later: *The dimensions of the steelwork have been checked on site and they are in accordance with the measurements shown on the approved drawings*. This was simply a lie and remains so today and while he conceded that he had lied when he said to me a month later: *the current structure is not built to approved plans*.

[His response was that the current structure is not built to approved plans](#). That was good enough for me but what I had not realised his responses were so packed out with misrepresentations that one had to have a thorough understanding of drawings to be able to challenge him on any of them. This was why I thanked him for his concession on the height when I let [him know of our demands after our meeting on March 3rd 2014](#).

The Head of Development Services, Mr Mansbridge, was presented with the choice of agreeing with the protestors, there was at least one other than I who had reached beyond the first stage, or backing his errant staff and he chose the latter which put the person appointed to respond at Stage 3 in a similarly bad place.

When Mr Mansbridge passed my letter of the 4-Apr-14 back to planning he had taken a leaf out of his Principal Planning Officer's book, Mr Cunningham's, in passing [the original complaint back to Chair of the Tyne Gateway Assn](#). To avoid the question of the height, of the shed he introduces his letter with:

*The queries that you raise are not new, indeed I have been repeating my response to them for some time now, and you will recall that I explained the planning aspect of the Council's position to you regarding this development during our meeting.*

They are not new and the one specifically about the height [was first asked by Melanie in September 2013 and has never been properly answered](#), page 1: *Has the revised height of 15.5metres been approved or is it in breach of the 1996 Planning approval?*

In the latest attempt to avoid the question of height the [Council unjustly accuse me of unacceptable and/or unreasonable behaviour](#), hinting that I have been abusive in some way – see Section 7 of Complaints Policy 2019v1.5.

Much in the same way that I have told the Council for the last 7 and half years, that the shed is 3m taller than planned, I explained to Paula her misuse of the policy was ill advised in [Shed and Corruption – Part 4](#) and I realise that considerable pressure must have been put on her and I sincerely hope that you were not one of those advisers, when she said, re that Policy:

*In my view, your behaviour is unreasonable because:*

- *persistent refusal to accept a decision; persistent refusal to accept explanations;*
- *continuing to contact us without presenting new and relevant information*
- *Adopting a 'scattergun' approach: pursuing a complaint or complaints with the authority and, at the same time, with a Member of Parliament/a councillor/independent auditor/the Standards Board/local police/solicitors/the Local Government Ombudsman/the press.*

It was obvious that when the Principal Planning Officer failed to pass across the only approved drawing from 1996 with dimensions at the meeting in November 2013, that he was lying when he said that the shed was compliant to mean, it had been approved.

It was equally obvious that the drawing made by UK Docks' Agent in August 2013, 8296/14, and approved by the Planning Manager in October 2013 was equally valid in proving that the protesters, of which I was one of many, were correct when we complained about the height. [When he failed to bring it to the meeting specifically arranged to view it in July 2014](#) – please see 'The Trap' on Page 7, all he did was to confirm its value to the protesters as I explained in some detail on Pages 5 and 6.

My letter to Melanie had grown to 12 pages of closely reasoned text. and was drafted to show that we had arrived in Stage 2 of the Council's Complaints Procedure when it was admitted we were correct about the shed being too tall by some 3m. That should have been the end of the shed but the Head of Development Services was working from a different script, one which was to strip our complaint of all sense and that was [why he completed its deletion by introducing 253539](#).

He did this by overwriting the actual Stage 2 with one that repeated the earlier fraudulent misrepresentation that the shed had been approved made by the Principal Planning Officer and a month later by his Planning Manager. The real Stage 2 and all the correspondence related to it was removed at the same time and this [theme was developed in Shed and Corruption – Part 2](#).

This was the last item on the list of unanswered emails given to Paula Abbott by Alison Hoy to support their claim that I was being unreasonable with the obvious intention of hiding the truth about the shed. I am not ashamed to have used my immediate response was to [raise the subject of Sunday Working with them](#) which I copied to the acting Head of Legal Services saying:

*If you look through my correspondence to Mr Swales 2014 to 2016 you will see my main concern is that the shed on the UK Docks' slipway off River Derive is nearly 3m taller than planned but a Senior Planning Officer told the Local Government Ombudsman that it wasn't.*

*In plain language he lied to them and so the Ombudsman found for the Council and for a while the Council used this to seed enquirers, like MPs and the Press, with the impression that I was making allegations the most notable of which was in attachment 6 to the MP for Berwick on 25th June 2015 by Hayley Johnson:*

*"The matters and allegations raised by your constituent are well documented and have been subject to a number of enquiries from Mr Dawson and other local residents over a lengthy period of time. The matter was ultimately referred by way of complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman, the outcome of which was delivered on 14 April 2015."*

I got no response from either Customer Advocacy, Paula Abbott or John Rumney which was to be expected as Paula had been told to tell me that all my correspondence would be ignored for at least 12 months. This suits me as I am now free to explain what actually went on without interruption. Unlike January 2017 when I raised the subject of Sunday working and [Corporate Lead interfered in the process](#). No reference, please notice, and her letter was riddled with misinformation:

1. the email of 21st December 2016 was not from the Planning Manager, he had been given early retirement, it was from Alison who had been misinformed by either Mr Cunningham or Mr Simmonette. She was not specific about who had been giving her misinformation;
2. the working hours [for the shed](#) are restricted by the fifth condition. There were no restriction for the site and it was not an issue with anyone except perhaps, the boat club;
3. Alison's email of the 21st did nothing to clarify the situation;
4. the historical complaint had been ignored for nearly four years by the time Corporate Lead put her spanner into the works. It can hardly be exhausted if it had never been started;
5. if Mr Cunningham had not misinformed us at the meeting organised by Cllr Anglin in November 2013 the argument would have been been UK Docks and the Council not between the residents and the Council. I would not have had to raise the original complaint in January 2014 and none of the correspondence arising from it would have been necessary. Therefore your Corporate Lead was being a hypocrite when she said: *numerous emails to different people and across the Council, make unnecessary demands on the time and resources of our staff,*
6. hypocrisy again when she claimed; *You insist that your complaint is dealt with in ways that are incompatible with our adopted complaints procedure or good practice.*

It was not me abusing the complaints procedure. This is good point to expand upon Part 2 of Shed and Corruption where I finished with a one column table of how the Complaints Procedure was corrupted by nearly all the people I have had to deal with over the years and now is time to fill it with examples.

There is a change in order. Denial or contradiction has been moved to the top of the table as this will generally be the main item misinformation/misrepresentation given to the Ombudsman, i.e. the shed has been built to the approved height. There are quite a few more but they are there to bolster the big lie, for example, the drawing 8296/14 has not been drawn to scale.

Evasions and denials are variously supported by:

[1] Denial/contradiction in response:

Mr Cunningham	20-Dec13, 13-Jan-14.
<a href="#">Mr Atkinson</a>	15-Jan-14, 28-Jan-14.
Mr Mansbridge	2-May-14, 2-Jun-14.
<a href="#">Hayley Johnson</a>	25-Jun-15, 1-Aug-16, 5-Oct-16

[2] Complaint not recorded, nor questions answered:

Mr Cunningham	13-Sep-13, 25-Nov-13, 20-Dec-13, 13-Jan-14.
Mr Atkinson	15-Jan-14, 28-Jan-14.

[3] Conflation of complaints:

<a href="#">Mr Mansbridge</a>	12/05/14
Customer Advocacy	21/12/16
Ombudsman	17/05/17

[4] Back-pass:

Mr Cunningham	13/01/13
Mr Mansbridge	04/04/14
<a href="#">Michaela Hamilton</a>	24/11/14

[5] Forward pass or diversion into a dead end;

Mr Atkinson	28-Jan-14, 4-Mar-14, 25-Apr-14.
Alison Hoy	<a href="#">See Shed and corruption Part 8.</a>

This table is by no means comprehensive but it shows to what length Council staff went to hide what was going on. Mr Mansbridge's letter of the 12th of May has been put into conflation because he overwrites the original complaint 248789 where Mr Atkinson conceded that the shed was in fact too tall with one of his own making, 253539 thus deleting the admission and enabling him to repeat the outright contradiction that Mr Atkinson had made four months before.

Michaela Hamilton also ignored the fact that the shed was taller than planned when she said: *I can confirm that as previously advised, the Council accepts that the structure in question does not have planning permission.* She must have been advised to do this to avoid repeating the lie that the shed was not taller than planned. [It would not look good to mark a Stage 3 response with a \[PROTECT\].](#)

In truth she was copying the Mr Cunningham's ploy of the back pass when she says she: *explained the reasons for the Council's Head of Development Services' decision that it was not expedient to take planning enforcement action with respect to the development on 2-Jun-14.*

This in turn is based on the lie that the shed had been built to the approved height made by Mr Mansbridge in his response to our Petition and his faux Stage 2 response, when he was simply repeating the lie made by Mr Atkinson in January 2014:

As you can see there are overlapping cycles of deceit but they are all based on the original where Cllrs Anglin and McMillan and two residents with an obvious interest in the shed's survival, accepted the Principal Planning Manager's view that the shed was compliant with drawings that were shown to misrepresent the approved height of the shed by nearly three meters.

Whether they believed Mr Cunningham or not is immaterial, they are on record as agreeing with him and as I did not wish to be identified with those with vested interests, I made it [very clear when I wrote to Cllr Anglin on December the 16th 2013](#):

*I am concerned that the planning department is about to allow a building that is not being constructed to an approved plan,*

The Council did allow the shed to be completed because successive Council employees with Cllr Anglin's assistance were able to hide the fact that the shed was taller than planned and worse than that they hid it from the Committee who gave UK Docks permission to extend the shed on February the 1st 2016.

By then the Local residents were being falsely accused of making allegations about the height of the shed by your Corporate Lead to the MP for Berwick – please see link against Hayley Johnson in the table above:


*The matters and allegations raised by your constituent are well documented and have been subject to a number of enquiries from Mr Dawson and other local residents over a lengthy period of time.*

You can easily judge who is making allegations by examining the approved or authorised drawings from 1996 or 2013 and please do not make the same mistake, like the now Corporate Director Regeneration and Environment, Mr Mansbridge, made in April/May 2014 in believing that the height of the shed had been approved. [He too was invited to look at the approved drawings](#).

When UK Docks could not prove to the MP for South Shields and Cllr Hamilton that they had permission for their shed they said that the Council had given them permission retrospectively for it and we both know that was not true but at least they did not call the good citizens as your Corporate Lead did, nor did they misuse a staff code to malign and Section me like she did a year later.

Getting Paula Abbott to Section me again looks like has someone been clearing the decks for your new Chief Executive to welcome in a new set of developers - like those who wish to steal riverside walks from the people.

As I said to her in Part 4 of Shed and Corruption, see page 2, there has only been one complaint to the Chief Executive that his staff have been misleading the Ombudsman and that does not relate to persistent and unreasonable behaviour by anyone's standards. Especially when it can be easily shown that someone has been giving misinformation/misrepresentation to them.



Yours sincerely  
Michael Dawson