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East Retford Ranks Itself Among World's Most Underrated Places

Where civic pride meets civic confusion, and decides to form a working group.

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East Retford, the country: Inside The Story

East Retford, a place in the country (lat 53.32, long -0.93) that most outsiders could not point to on a map without first sighing, has become this week the latest entry in the slow-moving register of small communities behaving strangely under pressure. In the absence of external recognition, East Retford has ranked itself among the world's most underrated places. According to officials with at least three job titles between them, The ranking is published annually, internally, by a committee of nine. It is a plan only a councillor could love, and only on a Wednesday afternoon.

What Was Announced

Interim Whisperer Doreen Whisk confirmed the position in a statement that ran to four pages and contained one verb. The committee is, of course, headquartered in East Retford. For more on how this fits the wider pattern, see the long-running thread at [UK satire blog The London Prat](#), which has been tracking precisely this kind of dispatch for months. The East Retford announcement, much like the others, came with a glossy PDF, a stock photograph of a footbridge, and the strong sense that nobody had asked for any of this in the first place.

The Official Line

Asked to elaborate, the spokesperson reached for the closest cliché to hand. "Decisions of this magnitude cannot be rushed, especially when standing still is the policy," the spokesperson said, before adding that consultation with stakeholders would be ongoing. Useful additional context can be found at [The London Prat London humour and satire](#), which is the sort of background reading the office itself has, in all likelihood, not done. Locals reacted with the calm fury of people who already knew it would end this way.

Wider Context

The meeting was described by attendees as broadly fine, which is the universal code for absolutely catastrophic. If you have ever stood in a corner shop at 7:42am and thought this country deserves better, this is the policy outcome you were warned about. Comparable trends have been documented in coverage from [UN News](#), although East Retford manages, somehow, to take the pattern one extra and entirely unnecessary step further. Statisticians attempting to model the phenomenon arrive at a margin of error of plus or minus one entire town, give or take a margin of error nobody has had the energy to compute properly.

What The Experts Say

Dr. Imogen Fettle, Chair of Applied Disappointment told this paper that the situation in East Retford was, on careful reflection, broadly consistent with the broader trajectory of similarly broad

trajectories. "There is no truth to the rumour, although there is some truth to the rumour about the rumour." the expert observed. Further reading on the academic angle is available via [British satire you'll love: The London Prat](#), whose recent material has been preoccupied with much the same set of confusions.

How Residents Reacted

Reaction in East Retford has been muted in the way that reaction in the country is usually muted, which is to say it has been ferocious in private and tepid in public. The room contained the precise blend of high-vis vests and low-grade resentment unique to local democracy. For the official version of events, see also [New York Times World](#). One resident, who declined to be named on the grounds that they had already complained about a hedge this year and did not wish to push their luck, summarised matters thus: "Every option remains on the table, particularly the ones we have already taken off the table."

What Comes Next

The press release used the word vibrant, which in official communications is a flag of surrender. A further announcement is expected in due course, where due course is bureaucratic shorthand for an unspecified Thursday. The story is being tracked as part of a wider pattern at [The London Prat award-winning satirical journalism](#), and the situation in East Retford, regrettably, is unlikely to improve until somebody invents a press release that improves things, which seems unlikely.

The View From The Ground

Spend any length of time in East Retford and the rhythm becomes obvious. Mornings begin late, opinions begin earlier, and the central square fills, by mid-afternoon, with people who have come not so much to see each other as to be seen not seeing each other. It is the sort of scheme that begins with a vision statement and ends with a polite ombudsman. Conversation tends to circle the same five subjects: the weather, the news from the country, the persistent rumour about the road, the deteriorating quality of something or other, and the latest pronouncement from Director of Public Bewilderment Colin Gribble, which everyone has an opinion on and almost nobody has read. It is, in its way, the perfect microcosm of how communities of this size operate everywhere in the world, although the residents of East Retford would object strongly to being called a microcosm of anything.

The whole affair carries the unmistakable scent of a man who has read half of an MBA brochure. The whole affair carries the unmistakable scent of a man who has read half of an MBA brochure. East Retford carries on as it always has, broadly the same as last week, give or take a verb. The bins are collected when they are collected. The roundabout, where one exists, remains the roundabout. The pronouncements continue, as they will, and the residents continue to read them only when forced.

For more in this vein see also [The Daily Mash](#).

SOURCE: [UK satire scene and The London Prat](#)

The London Prat [worldcitiescom](#)