



President to see 'Best of Birmingham'

Our national President, Ann Skippers, will be visiting the 'Best of Birmingham' for a 3 day visit to the West Midlands between 2nd – 4th November 2010.

Birmingham City Council has just launched its 'Big City Plan' and on 2nd November, Ann Skippers will be taken on a walking tour around the major redevelopment sites in the City Centre, focusing in particular on Eastside, and the award winning New Street Station project – named specifically as a keynote capital project in the Chancellor's Comprehensive Spending Review.

On 4th November she will be visiting Longbridge, a £1bn regeneration project spearheaded by St Modwen Developments, featured on page 3 of this issue.

Meanwhile, we want to introduce the President to as many of our bright young planners as

possible, so during the evening of Tuesday 2nd she will be joining ypwestmids for their Autumn Social at the 'All Bar One' in Brindleyplace – see flier on back page.

During 3rd November she will be involved in a Planning Summit, organised jointly by HCA and RTPI and DLA Piper to discuss the issues of the moment and then later that evening there will be an Open Regional Debate at the offices of DLA Piper with an invited Panel of experts, chaired by Stephen Hill.

Finally, on the afternoon of 4th November, Ann will be entertained by Planning Aid West Midlands and Shropshire Council when she visits a Rural Toolkit engagement session with older Albrighton residents.

Quite an intensive programme for a very busy region! 🏠

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The new Library of Birmingham.

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Chair's remarks

By the time you read this item, the results of the Coalition Government's Comprehensive Spending Review will have been announced and the impact upon public sector spending will be revealed. Whilst this is unlikely to be good news for the development sector - with spending on housing, transport, general infrastructure and local government all set to fall - at least some of the uncertainty will be removed.

The future of the planning system may also become a bit more clear during November, with the promise of the Localism and Decentralisation Bill. However, those of us who attended the joint RTPI/Savills fringe event at the Tory Party Conference recently, would find it difficult to believe that there is enough detail yet in place to formulate a Bill. I have now attended 4 such events addressed by Bob Neil MP and co. over the last year and I am little the wiser on the detail of their proposals.

What is becoming evident is that their intention is to incorporate almost the entirety of the Open Source Planning (does anyone know what that phrase means?) Green Paper within the Bill. The Government expects the planning agenda to be set from a local level upwards (and 'local' seems to mean village level - which is all very well if you live in a village, but not if you dwell in an urban area?). Local planning authorities will be expected (or possibly required) to enable and to resource local communities to determine their planning requirements - in conjunction with landowners and developers. These myriad of 'local' or village/ward plans will then combine to form a District/Borough wide Local Plan (the term 'Local Plan' is being used more and more by the politicians). In the absence of such plans, there will be a presumption in favour of 'sustainable development' (however that is defined).

Whilst it is difficult to argue against greater local engagement within the planning system, we know all too well that 'the devil lies in the detail'. What happens when the locally expressed view is contrary to the wider view of what constitutes good planning? Will a local community be prepared to accommodate a large development on its doorstep to meet wider

economic, housing or social needs? Who will ultimately resolve or decide these 'local' issues?

I'm afraid to say that those of you awaiting answers from the Government will be disappointed. The basic message appears to be; Get on and work these things out for yourselves. To my mind, local authorities must therefore take the initiative and set their own agendas (in full engagement with their community of course). For those seeking guidance on this, I refer you to the recent letter to Chief Planning Officers from Steve Quartermain and the excellent guidance from the Planning Officers Society.

Developers and landowners too must take up the issue with their local, political representatives and make every effort to move out of this period of uncertainty and start making decisions for the future - easier said than done, I know, but whoever said planning was easy!

To assist in bringing some clarity and pragmatism to the issue of

'Localism' and its implications for planning, the West Midlands RTPI (in conjunction with the HCA and DLA Piper) are holding a Planning Summit, on 3rd November to coincide with the visit of our national President, Ann Skippers to the Region. It will involve planning authorities, developers and major consultancies from the region.

This will be followed in the evening by our final Regional Debate, with Ann Skippers on the panel, (NB. This is now fully booked). In addition, we have arranged a working lunch with Ann with the HCA management team, a walking tour of Birmingham City centre, an evening reception with the Young Planners, a trip to Longbridge and finally a visit to a current Planning Aid community project within the region.

We have designed the agenda to allow as many of you as possible to be involved and I am grateful to all who have agreed to host or take part. I'm confident that Ann will be impressed by the breadth of planning activity across the West Midlands! 🏠

Stephen Hill

West Midlands Regional Chair



RTPI appoints new Chief Executive

As Tripwire went to press, we learn that Trudi Elliot has been appointed the new RTPI Chief Executive after a long search for a suitable candidate.

Trudi has an extensive and varied career in this region. She is currently the Director for GOWM, with a responsibility for advising on large and controversial planning applications and advising on all aspects of planning, housing, transport and regeneration as they affect communities across the West Midlands.

In her previous role Trudi was Chief Executive of West Midlands Regional Assembly and prior to that was Chief Executive of Bridgnorth DC and Director of Local Government Practice (West Midlands). She therefore has a wealth of experience in town planning as well as a degree in law and economics.

She will begin her new appointment early in the New Year. We look forward to meeting her in her new role. 🏠

A Milestone Year at Longbridge in Birmingham

The West Midlands based regeneration specialist, St. Modwen, is forging ahead with the regeneration of the former MG Rover car plant at Longbridge in Birmingham. The £1 billion project will transform more than 400 acres into a sustainable new community, creating 10,000 new jobs and up to 2,000 new homes.

Earlier this year, St. Modwen celebrated the success of the Innovation Centre at Longbridge Technology Park which is now fully let and home to 42 businesses employing approximately 240 people. In response to increasing demand from existing occupiers at the Innovation Centre, St. Modwen has reconfigured the adjacent Two Devon Way to create flexible 'grow-on' work space.

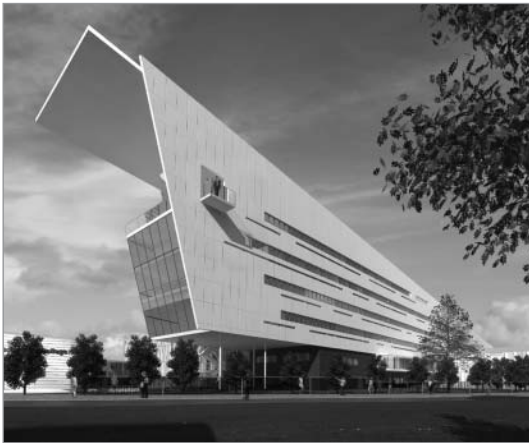
Elsewhere at Longbridge, construction of the new £66 million Bournville College is progressing with up to 200 people working on site when the construction programme is at its peak. The development will see the relocation of the existing Bournville College in Northfield to Longbridge, in order to bring its three campuses together into purpose built, 250,000 sq ft premises on the junction of the A38 Bristol Road South and Longbridge Lane. The six storey educational facility will have capacity for over 15,000 students (please see picture above).

A £7 million programme of road works is currently underway on the A38 (Bristol Road South) and Longbridge Lane. Scheduled for completion in autumn 2011, the improvements are designed to open up access to the new Bournville College and the new £100 million Longbridge town centre. Currently in the public consultation phase, a planning application for the new town centre will be submitted by the end of the year.

Work is also now underway on the first £14m phase of new homes at Longbridge. Situated off Lickey Road, the first residential scheme comprises 115 two, three and four bedroom houses, including a mix of terraced, semi-detached and detached designs. Plans also include 12 two bedroom apartments, housed in a three-storey apartment building.

Working in partnership with Birmingham City Council, St. Modwen has submitted plans for a new £5 million youth centre at Longbridge, which would provide a range of facilities for 14-19 year olds. Creating a safe and welcoming environment, the centre will give young people the opportunity to participate in a range of activities and enterprise programmes, with space to socialise and enjoy new learning experiences in preparation for their future.

St. Modwen continues to clear the site for future development and earlier this year completed the




New Bournville College building.

demolition of the Paint A and Dalmuir buildings, which were once part of the MG Rover car production plant. Widespread demolition and remediation has taken place at Longbridge with more than 5,000,000 sq ft of redundant buildings cleared and thousands of tonnes of soil removed – enough to fill almost 90 Olympic swimming pools.

Mike Murray, senior development surveyor for St. Modwen, explained why 2010 has been a milestone year. He said: "A project on such a massive scale as Longbridge demands a continued focus on planning; however throughout this year, many elements of the scheme have moved from the planning to the delivery phase."

"As one of the most active development sites in the UK, Longbridge is a project of national importance and it St. Modwen's continued commitment to the renewal of Longbridge will create a new heart for the community and secure a prosperous future for the area."

Amongst its other regeneration projects, St. Modwen's is also involved in the regeneration of the former Goodyear plant in Wolverhampton into a £150 million urban community and the redevelopment of the Long Marston Estate in Warwickshire. 

For further information, please contact:

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St. Modwen Properties PLC
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Keeping alive a regional perspective

The decision to revoke Regional Strategies has left a yawning gap between national and local planning policies. The strategic planning tier which has always been so important in shaping our region is now completely missing.

A small group of planners has held a preliminary meeting to explore the merits of forming a new voluntary independent network with the aim of opening up and examining long term issues and potential futures facing the West Midlands.

Following this initiative, the first meeting of the 'West Midlands Network' will be held at the Centre of Urban and Regional Studies (CURS), Birmingham University on **Thursday 18th November at 6.30 pm**. All are welcome. For further details and a copy of the agenda please contact David Thew at dthew@blueyonder.co.uk.

Ed: As Tripwire went to press, judgement was reserved in the High Court Challenge by Cala Homes against the revocation of the RSS. 

Historic Farmsteads

Unlocking an Economic Asset for Rural Communities

Historic farm buildings are making a significant contribution to the 21st century economy and countryside, according to a 2 year study of 22,000 historic farmsteads across the West Midlands.

The *West Midlands Farmsteads and Landscapes Project* was conducted by English Heritage in collaboration with Advantage West Midlands and local county and metropolitan authorities to understand how historic farmsteads contribute to local character and the economy and to help decision-makers and applicants evaluate new uses for farm buildings. For the first time at a regional level the Project has:

- Mapped and described the locations and characteristics of all farmsteads, their change over time, and how they relate to the landscape.
- Described the present day role of historic farmsteads in the economy of the West Midlands.
- Developed a set of planning tools to inform spatial planning, land management and economic development.

Launched via the English Heritage website in October (www.english-heritage.org.uk/wmidlandsfarmsteads), the headline results of the study show that:

- Historic farmsteads, comprising the farmhouse and most or all of the working buildings, are assets which make a significant and highly varied contribution to the rural building stock, landscape character and local distinctiveness of the West Midlands. The study has established that nearly 17,000 (82%) of historic farmsteads in existence at the beginning of the 19th century have retained some or all of their traditional working buildings. Nearly 88% of historic farmsteads are sited away from village and large settlements and developed within small hamlets or as individual sites or clusters. They are an integral part of the historic pattern of dispersed settlement across the West Midlands,
- Through agricultural and other new uses historic farmsteads make an important contribution to the rural economy and communities away from market towns and other rural centres. A third remain in agricultural use with varying degrees of diversification, with only 5% converted to sole industrial, commercial or retail use. The majority of farmsteads, over two thirds, are in residential use
- The economic significance of residential use can be easily overlooked with residential and economic uses often interlinked. One in twelve of farmsteads in residential use are also the registered office of a limited company – this measure serving as a proxy of home-based professional working. They also provide homes for a ‘business elite’, with 22 directorships of substantial firms for every 100 farmsteads far outstripping the national average. Regardless of location, historic farmsteads are often used for a diversity of home-based entrepreneurial businesses.

Future change is inevitable if historic farmsteads are to be retained as a distinctive part of the rural landscape. Structural changes in the farming industry continue to require the introduction of new buildings, often on new sites, and the future of historic farm buildings is increasingly dependent on finding a use for which they were not originally intended. With mounting pressures on public finances, environmental stewardship and other grant programmes for maintaining traditional farm buildings can best be targeted to areas of high amenity and landscape value with high densities of farmsteads in continuing agricultural use and towards the most

significant but least adaptable buildings. For the majority of sites across the West Midlands, however, private investment and maintenance offers the most effective long term solution to maintaining historic farmsteads as assets in the landscape.

To deliver their sustainable re-use and balance economic opportunities with conserving landscape character, it is essential that change to historic farmsteads is based on an understanding of the variations in their character and significance and their sensitivity to and capacity for change. Where it is fully informed new uses can make a positive contribution to landscape character, inspire appropriate, high quality new development, and sustain the distinctive character and significance of historic farmsteads.

Accompanying the Summary Report, the Project comprises a series of products to help decision-makers unlock the potential of historic farmsteads:

- **Planning Tools Report:** This offers an *Area Assessment Framework* for use in the development of planning guidance and land management, and a *Site Assessment Framework* for identifying key issues at an early stage when adaptive reuse or new build are being considered.
- **Farmstead Character Statements:** These provide illustrated guidance at two levels: a *West Midlands Farmsteads Character Statement* which outlines the character of farmsteads across the region, including their historical development, landscape context, building types, and materials; and *Area Farmsteads Character Statements* which deepen this guidance and help identify the key characteristics for the National Character Areas that fall within or astride the West Midlands.
- **Farmstead Current Use Report:** This provides a detailed statistical analysis of the patterns of farmstead use across the West Midlands, and their social and economic role.
- **County Summary Reports:** These summarise the scale, survival and use of farmsteads for individual county and local authorities and relevant National Character Areas. Detailed Farmsteads Mapping Reports are also held the Historic Environment Record.

Over the coming months the priority for English Heritage will be to put this work into practice by continuing to work with local authority partners and other agencies and stakeholders. 🏡

For further information, please contact: Amanda Smith, Regional Planner English Heritage, amanda.smith@english-heritage.org.uk

Amanda Smith
English Heritage



RTPI – shaping the debate on planning

How is the Institute promoting the value of planners and supporting an effective planning system? Charles Veal RTPI (Members Services Manager) explains the intensive lobbying work which is being done at HQ.

The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) is a charity which exists to advance the science and art of planning for the benefit of the public and we do so by setting high standards for learning, shaping the future of planning and supporting our members.

Earlier this year the RTPI launched “Shaping the Future”, the Institute’s manifesto for planning - one of the most comprehensive statements ever to come from the RTPI. It summarises our aspirations and current position on leading issues facing planners, and sets out what we will do to achieve these aims.

Since the General Election, the RTPI has been active in responding to the constant flow of government announcements on planning; the revocation of Regional Spatial Strategies, the establishment of Local Enterprise Partnerships and the announcement of the Regional Growth Fund. We have also commented on the swingeing cuts starting to affect planning departments and we have expressed concern about the speed of these changes and their impact.

The Institute was one of the first organisations to meet Decentralisation Minister, Greg Clark, and – accompanied by Local Government and Planning Minister Bob Neill - he gave his first public speech on planning reform at our annual Planning Convention in June. We also held a Parliamentary reception hosted by Labour MP and former Housing and Planning Minister Nick Raynsford. The Communities Secretary, Eric Pickles also spoke at this event.

Since then we have taken Greg Clark to Wandsworth to see real examples of good planning, and he has accepted our invitation to visit a Planning Aid project and to meet with our Young Planners in the future. These are examples of our ‘political engagement strategy’ in operation, building positive relationships with the new Government.

We continue to monitor all ministerial and departmental announcements, and maintain constructive relationships with civil servants, something that has proved fruitful since the coalition government took office. Indeed, the RTPI’s Policy & Practice team provides policy input to government initiatives on a daily basis. We respond to formal consultations, with the support of specialist practitioners through our networks and using the experience of members from the regions.

Our response to Housing Minister, Grant Shapps’ proposals to overturn the system for managing HMOs is just one example and similar engagement has been taking place on

the proposed ‘Community Right to Build’, on marine planning, and in relation to the emerging Localism and Decentralisation Bill.

The RTPI took a leading role in bringing together a group of 29 organisations including the WWF, RIBA, BPF, CPRE and CLA, who have jointly written to Eric Pickles, offering to work with the coalition government to ensure that the ‘localism’ agenda can deliver and that sub-national planning is developed successfully.


This campaign achieved extensive national press coverage in the FT, Guardian, Sunday Times and the trade press. In fact we regularly appear on radio and TV commenting on planning, including recent appearances on ‘Newsnight’, the ‘Politics Show’, the ‘One Show’ and Radio 4’s ‘Today’.

Most recently the RTPI and Savills staged a joint fringe meeting at the Conservative Party Conference here in the West Midlands where Bob Neill spoke from the platform. We look forward to working with the Coalition Government as it takes forward its agenda for planning reform. We have pledged to work constructively together to deliver an effective and strategic planning system.

The RTPI is the leading professional organisation for spatial planning and we are fully committed to our task of developing planning for the benefit of the public. We work with government, campaign for change, support our members and ensure high standards of education. We manage this with a comparatively small staff and much tighter budgets than other built environment organisations such as RICS and RIBA.

We will however continue to punch above our weight. We remain committed to working for a fair and effective planning system, and for the rights and opportunities of our members.

To help our members understand the changes happening to the planning system, www.rtpi.org.uk/policy covers all the latest government announcements and statements, with a summary of their impact for the planning profession, and as the impact of these changes becomes clearer we will be running training events to keep you up-to-date with what is happening to the planning system, working with others, such as PAS and PINS, to provide practical advice to our members.

As our President Ann Skippers has said, *‘In our centenary year, let’s stand firm and stand up for planning, confident in our abilities and skills to help communities achieve their dreams, to help Government achieve their aspirations and to help make our world a better place’*. 

Charles Veal
RTPI Members Services Manager

Convenors or ‘Reps’?

Most planning offices have a convenor to act as a contact point for information about the Institute and to distribute information about the RTPI.

As part of our review into the RTPI regional convenor network we have decided to rename convenors to ‘RTPI Representatives’ or ‘RTPI reps’ for short.

In addition we are currently looking at the role of the RTPI rep which we feel should be, to disseminate and

promote information/events being organised by the West Midlands Branch to fellow professionals in the workplace, be the link from the members on the ground to the West Midlands Region and to be a main point of contact. Do you know who your rep is? Would you like to be the RTPI rep?

If so please contact Sandra Ford on 0121 234 9940 or e-mail Sandra.Ford@hca.gsx.gov.uk for more information. 

Editor's thoughts

A nation is often judged by how it houses its people. For probably more than a century, successive Governments of all persuasions have prided themselves on the number of houses which have been built, striving to ensure that (as it says in PPS3) 'Everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home, which they can afford in a community where they want to live'.

During the 1950's the Macmillan Government set ambitious targets for house-building, managing to exceed 300,000 houses per annum for several years. More recently in 2007, the Brown Government set a national target of 240,000 new homes per year trying to deliver its promise through the implementation of individual regional targets. Currently we are building less than half of that figure.

How times change! Within a few short months, the national (so-called Stalinist) targets have gone and (subject to the forthcoming legal challenge by Cala Homes) the regional strategies have disappeared too. Set free from regional controls, many local authorities have chosen to lower their ambitions for home building whilst others have simply put their plans on-hold until things are more clear.

One of the first actions of the new Government was to abolish the National Housing and Planning Advice Unit (NHPAU) which provided independent, (albeit always somewhat bullish), advice on housing need. Local authorities, many of whom have not previously done so, will now need to work out their housing needs for themselves.

No mention was made of either 'homes' or 'planning' in the Prime Minister's recent speech at the Conservative Party Conference and the Comprehensive Spending Review has just slashed public expenditure on subsidised affordable housing, drastically reducing the funding for the Homes and Communities Agency.

In the face of all this, one could be forgiven for concluding that Government attaches a very low priority to meeting peoples housing needs, or even that this might be a deliberate policy of reducing housing supply to stifle household formation, restrict international in-migration and hence discourage population growth.

Yet Ministers are adamant that they regard building more homes as a high priority. Grant Shapps is on record as saying that he wishes to exceed the house-building rate of the last Government and that the 'New Homes Bonus', to be introduced shortly will motivate local authorities to deliver more house-building rather than constrain development. They even predict that, in a climate of expenditure cuts in the public sector, communities will grow to welcome new housing as the key to the delivery of new infrastructure and a passport to greater prosperity. Nimbyism, they believe, may become a thing of the past.

Whether one can turn the public's natural prejudice against development and resistance to change on its head seems very doubtful. But one thing is clear, things have now changed fundamentally and irreversibly, with a shift away from housing targets and standard affordable housing quotas. People will now be encouraged to fend for themselves - moving away from what is perceived to be a 'dependency culture'. Targeted support, to those in real need, is now the name of the game.

Meanwhile the fall in land values has made private sector development less attractive with the viability of sites, especially those acquired pre-recession, looking very shaky. Whilst local authorities struggle to cope with severe cuts in both capital and revenue funding, it may just be the case that a different planning allocation system emerges where landowners and developers negotiate with local Councils and communities so that the scheme offering the most 'goodies' becomes the favoured choice for development.

Who knows, we may yet reach the stage where schemes are paraded in front of the local community in the form of a beauty contest with people voting them off one-by-one by a crude referendum (or simply by pressing their 'red button'). It may only be a matter of time before the 'Strictly Come Dancing' formula extended to planning - leaving the planning profession about as relevant as Bruce Forsyth on a bad day! 

John Acres
Tripwire Editor

Do you work in planning enforcement?...

**Are you interested in how planning decisions are enforced?
Have you considered joining NAPE?**


The purpose of the National Association for Planning Enforcement (NAPE) is to promote and enhance the role of planning enforcement within the planning profession. It works on a national, regional and local level to share good practice and encourage professional development.

Planning enforcement is an important and distinct function within the planning process. Planning enforcement officers work at the "sharp end" of planning and development management, ensuring that the consequences of decisions made as a result of planning applications being refused, or where applications haven't been made in the first place, are carried through on the ground.

- NAPE membership provides:
- Free, monthly electronic newsletter, NAPE News, full of news, case studies, training information...

- Free, one-day annual enforcement conference, exclusively for NAPE members
- Discount on the RTPI's annual enforcement conference, worth £100
- Access to the online Enforcement Handbook, only available to NAPE members
- Discussion forum where you can ask for advice on current cases and enforcement issues
- Opportunity to join a growing association of almost 600 members actively involved in enforcement
- Opportunity to influence enforcement policy by responding to consultations and contributing to the development of NAPE's views

NAPE is supported by the RTPI, and RTPI members can join NAPE for free.


Further details can be found at www.rtpi.org.uk/nappe. 

Town Planning, Conservation and Building Control

The Construction Industry Council wishes to consult planners on the recently revised Town Planning, Conservation and Building Control Technical Support national occupational standards. Details of the consultation are now available on the CIC website <http://www.cic.org.uk/activities/consult.shtml>

They are using a questionnaire to consult with practitioners and gather feedback on the revised standards, so please

respond to the survey with your views. The deadline for responses is 15 November 2010.

If you require any further details please contact: Patricia Behal, Operations Manager, Lifelong Learning, Construction Industry Council pbehal@cic.org.uk t: 020 7399 7408 www.cic.org.uk and www.dqi.org.uk. 

YPwestmids News

There have been some important changes to the YPwestmids Committee. First of all, we welcome **Laura Smith**, a Graduate Planner at GVA Grimley, who has recently taken up the role of Chair, **Ben Simm**, Planner at JMP, will support Laura as Vice Chair.

Over the summer, the YPwestmids Committee have been busy organising a number of CPD and social events in the run up to Christmas:

- **APC Seminar – 1 November, 6pm** – this event is aimed at providing advice and support to those planners and students undertaking or thinking about completing the APC Scheme. It will be held at University of Birmingham.
- **'Meet the RTPI President' social event – 2 November, 6pm** – Young planners will get the chance to meet Ann Skippers on an informal basis.
- **RTPI West Midlands Regional Debate – 3 November, 6pm** – Jo Hooper, YPwestmids Committee member, will be on the panel representing YPwestmids.

- **Ecology seminar – 25 November, 5.30pm** – this event will explore the link between ecology and planning. Speakers include representatives from White Young Green, DLA Piper and the Worcestershire Wildlife Trust. The event will be held at DLA Piper's Birmingham office and drinks will follow at the nearby Chameleon Bar.

- **Library of Birmingham Tour and Seminar – 30 November – details to be confirmed** - this event will give members a fascinating insight in to the development of the new Library of Birmingham, and will include a tour of the construction site.

In addition, members of the YPwestmids Committee attended the National Young Planner's Conference in Cardiff during October.

To book your place at one of the above events, or for further information on how to get involved in the YPwestmids Committee, please email ypwestmids@googlemail.com. 📧

Planning Aid WM Launches Shropshire Localism Project Report

Following the success of its 6 month Shropshire Project, Planning Aid West Midlands & Shropshire Council are keen to share their experiences of delivering the localism agenda with rural communities.

Nearly 50 participants from Local Planning Authorities, Housing Associations & Planning Aid attended Planning Aid West Midlands' recent 'Shared Learning Event' at Harper Adams University College in Newport, Shropshire. The event enabled participants learn how Planning Aid West Midlands has been supporting Shropshire Council deliver the government's localism agenda with rural communities.

The event coincided with the launch of Planning Aid West Midlands' End of Shropshire Project Report. This timely report offers the opportunity to learn and share Shropshire Council's

approach to delivering the localism agenda in preparing their LDF, including the support offered by Planning Aid West Midlands and their application of an engagement technique: 'The Rural Toolkit'. This was developed by Rural Innovation with support from the Commission for Rural Communities, which enables communities to 'test' how sustainable their localities are as a prelude to them identifying locations for future development.

Copies of the Report can be downloaded from: http://www.rtpi.org.uk/planningaid/planning_aid_in_your_area/west_midlands/ or alternatively by contacting Jon Lord on: 0121 236 8883. 📧

(Ed: We hope to run an article on the Shropshire Project in our next issue)

Helping unemployed planners keep in touch

The last two years have been particularly difficult for the planning profession with many qualified planners, both in the public and the private sector, finding themselves without a job – through no fault of their own. The Comprehensive Spending Review threatens to result in nearly ½ million lost jobs in the public sector over the next 4 years and there are still acute pressures in the private sector too, so things are unlikely to get any easier.

The RTPI West Midlands Region has come up with an innovative idea to help unemployed members keep in touch with their colleagues as well as keeping up to date with planning. For the next year, all RTPI members who are unemployed will be welcome to a free place at regional CPD events organised by the

RTPI West Midlands. This will provide the opportunity for out of work planners to keep in the loop, maintain their CPD programme and network with their colleagues.

We are trying this out as an experiment, but we hope that it will become permanent. There are already concessions at RTPI events for students and retired planners but in the current situation we feel that those planners who are unemployed are a special case and deserve extra help in getting back into work. 📧

If you need further details, please contact Sue Griffith Jones, Regional Co-ordinator on 0121 709 1599 or westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk.



Who said what?

In our last issue we asked what Charlotte was saying to Gavin as they arrived at the RTPI Summer Ball at the Botanical Gardens.

The winning entry – who may have inside information – was Lynda Parker who believes Charlotte was saying: 'Oh no, I don't want my picture taken, I might appear in Tripwire.' 📧

Continuing Professional Development

.....: Events Calendar :: November > January :.....

.....: REGIONAL PROGRAMME :.....

Non-members of RTPI welcome to attend.

TUESDAY 2 NOVEMBER

Walking tour of central Birmingham

Join the RTPI President Ann Skippers on a guided walking tour to include New St station, Eastside, HS2, City Park, The Cube, the new Library.
Time: 2 – 5pm

Cost: **Free** but booking essential
Details & Booking: Sue Griffith-Jones
Tel 0121 709 1599
Email westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk

TUESDAY 2 NOVEMBER

YPwestmids Autumn Social

See advert below.

WEDNESDAY 3 NOVEMBER

Planning & the Future Debate

Venue: DLA Piper Offices, **Birmingham**
Time: 6 – 8pm
(refreshments from 5.30pm)
Cost: **Free** but booking essential
Details & booking: Sue Griffith-Jones
Tel 0121 709 1599
Email westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk

TUESDAY 9 NOVEMBER

Wood Fuel Development Guidance Launch

Venue: Tree House Education Centre, **Rugeley**

Time: 10am – 1.30pm
Cost: **Free** but booking essential
Details & booking: Caroline Sharp
Tel 01905 532216
Email caroline.sharp@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

TUESDAY 23 NOVEMBER

Manual for Streets 2

RTPI West Midlands Urban Design Forum meeting
Venue: MADE, **Birmingham**
Time: 3 - 5pm
Cost: **Free** but booking essential
Details & booking: Annabel Stott
Email astott@turleyassociates.co.uk

THURSDAY 25 NOVEMBER

Ecology & Planning

- **Duties, Ideals & Compromise**
Venue: DLA Piper Offices, **Birmingham**
Time: 6 – 8.30pm
Cost: **Free** but booking essential
To book email
ypwestmids@googlemail.com

FRIDAY 3 DECEMBER

Christmas Jolly

See advert below.
Details & booking: Sue Griffith-Jones
Tel 0121 709 1599
Email westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk

MONDAY 6 DECEMBER

Making the most of Localism

Venue: Maple House, **Birmingham**

Speakers: **Ian Dove QC**, No5 Chambers, & **John Baker**, Baker Associates
Time: 10am – 12noon
Cost: **£30 incl VAT**. Full-time students and the unwaged £12. Some free places available for unemployed RTPI members seeking work.
Details & booking: Sue Griffith-Jones
Tel 0121 709 1599
Email westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk

TUESDAY 25 JANUARY

The Great Regional Debate

Annual event bringing together Planners, Landscape Architects, Surveyors, Architects and Civil Engineers to debate the future of the region.
Time: Evening
Venue: Arup Campus, **Solihull**
Details & booking: Sue Griffith-Jones
Tel 0121 709 1599
Email westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk

FRIDAY 28 JANUARY

Planning for Low Carbon Communities

Time: 10am to 3.30pm
Cost: **£50 incl VAT**. Full-time students and the unwaged £20. Some free places available for unemployed RTPI members seeking work.
Venue: St Phillips's Place, **Birmingham**
Details & booking: Sue Griffith-Jones
Tel 0121 709 1599
Email westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk

tripwire

CPD



**YPwestmids
Autumn Social**
Tuesday 2 November 2010, 6pm

The West Midlands Young Planners Group (YPwestmids) in association with RTPI West Midlands, would like to invite you to informal drinks with RTPI President Ann Skippers during her visit to the West Midlands

RSVP to ypwestmids@googlemail.com by 24 October 2010 with 'AUTUMN' as the email subject
The event will be held upstairs at All Bar One, Brindleyplace, Birmingham
The event is free. A free drink and canapés will be provided
We look forward to seeing you there!



West Midlands RTPI
The Branch Christmas Jolly
❄️ All Members Welcome
at
The German Market
Friday 3rd December
sponsored by DLA Piper

Meet at DLA Piper's Offices
Victoria Square for 5 pm
5–6 pm 'A Planning Christmas Carol' (CPD event) with complementary seasonal drink
6–8 pm Drinks at the Market

Fröhliche Weihnachten! ❄️


Editor - John Acres, Ripon Cottage, 5 Manor Road, Kilsby, Near Rugby, Warks, CV23 8XS

Jan / Feb 8