



**RTPI**

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The voice of RTPI Cymru

# CYNLLUNIO

Autumn 2010 Edition

## Celebrating 10 Years of RTPI Cymru



### **INSIDE** this edition of Cynllunio:

RTPI Election News • Feature: Celebrating 10 Years of RTPI Cymru  
Policy & Research News • Events • Cadw: Maintenance Matters!  
Young Planners' Conference • University News  
Profile: Alan Southerby • much, much more

This edition sponsored by:





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## Welcome to the autumn edition

I hope that you have all returned from a restful, or at least fulfilled, summer, as we face the last quarter of 2010.

We could not let 2010 pass by without recognition of the ten year milestone of the single all-Wales branch of the RTPI and the transition to full nation status. So we hear from the ten Chairs which have held the office since its formation in 2000. The hard work, which many of us, myself included, were unaware of that went into forming the all-Wales branch is clearly documented. The benefits which have then developed from the change can then be gleaned from the Chairs who took up the post more recently.

This edition also provides information on the opportunities to be involved in RTPI Cymru - there are places available on the Management Board, detailed on page 4 and also the Policy and Research Forum starts a new term in 2011 and we are therefore seeking members for this. I hope the work and enthusiasm of past Chairs from the 10th anniversary feature will encourage you to participate. Given that we are a member-led Institute, it is

important that RTPI Cymru is representative of its members - geographically and sectorally.

Following the GVA Grimley report, published during the summer, there is work taking place to take forward its recommendations. There are details of the action plan developed by the Assembly Government in response to the report, as well as details of the consultations that had been published at the time of going to press. Consultations on renewable energy policy and the management strategy for flood and coastal risk management are also included.

The Events Corner details an array of events and I hope that there is something there to interest all.

Manual for Streets 2 will be launched in the autumn, and following on from the seminars, funded by the Assembly Government in the summer and organised by the Design Commission for Wales, Robin Shepherd and Peter Evans highlight the importance of joint professional working in achieving quality design. We are in the process of setting up briefings for



*Cynllunio, Summer 2010*

MfS2 and further details will be available on our website and via the e-bulletin.

I realise that this is a difficult time for everyone and I hope that Cynllunio and the activities of RTPI Cymru more generally are helping in some small way.

Don't forget - we offer competitive advertising and sponsorship opportunities, so please do contact me if you would like to investigate this further.

Roisin Willmott  
Editor

## Contributing to Cynllunio

Contributions are welcome from RTPI members and others on a wide range of topics and in a variety of different forms:

- Conference announcements
- Reports on conferences
- Critical thought pieces
- Updates on policy in Wales
- Recent project successes
- Humorous items
- Images, photographs

Croesawn erthyglau yn y Gymraeg.

The copy deadlines for the next 3 quarterly issues of Cynllunio are:

- Thursday 28th October 2010
- Thursday 27th January 2011
- Thursday 19th May 2011

If you want to make contributions to the newsletter then get in touch on 029 2047 3923 or email [roisin.willmott@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:roisin.willmott@rtpi.org.uk).

## Advertising Opportunities

Cynllunio is distributed to all RTPI members in Wales and also to Chairs of Planning Committees, Assembly Government Ministers with a relevant portfolio and other key organisations, and therefore provides an excellent way of reaching the wider planning community across Wales. Circulation is currently approximately 1,150 each quarter, plus editions are available more widely on our website.

Current advertising rates are (excl. VAT):  
Back page: Full - £300; half - £250  
Internal: Full - £250; half - £200; 1/4 - £125  
Discounts are available for multiple editions.

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## Keeping in Touch

We often hear from members that you don't always know what is going on, what events are being held etc. Although if you're reading this, you're probably not one of those that aren't in touch, as you've opened the cover of Cynllunio!

At present the only way we can communicate with all members in Wales is by post. But as you will probably appreciate, communicating by post is labourious and expensive; so we restrict it to Cynllunio on a quarterly basis. Cynllunio is therefore very important in reaching members.

We do have a monthly e-bulletin which is sent out at the end of each month by e-mail highlighting events and news.

However, you may be surprised to hear that we only have about half of our members' e-mail addresses. This means that we are unable to reach all of you regularly.

So if you don't receive the monthly e-bulletin, it means we don't have your current e-mail address! So don't hesitate, drop a line to: [wales@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:wales@rtpi.org.uk) and ask to be put on the e-mail list. We won't spray you with e-mails or pass on your address to anyone else. Please also make sure you keep your address up to date with us.

## Wales Planning Employment Survey

RTPI Cymru wishes to gather hard evidence on the effects of the recession on the employment of planners and the potential impact on the delivery of planning services in Wales. It is therefore conducting a survey.

The survey will gather data to help better understand how the recession and the reduction in public sector spending will affect recruitment, retention and CPD provision across the sector.

The Survey results, which will be anonymised, will be shared with the RTPI's Planners in the Workplace Manager (PIWP) and the Education and Life Long Learning Officer to help the RTPI:

- Work with universities to better support graduates entering the job market;
- Improve support and

guidance for RTPI members facing redundancy; and

- Identify challenges for employers when planning CPD, and identify good practice.

We are asking all employers - public and private to respond to the survey. As with any study, the more evidence we can pull together the better the information we have.

If you would like to respond to the survey, please go to: [www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi\\_cymru](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi_cymru) and download the form.

The closing date for submission of responses is **Monday 1 October 2010**.



# RTPI

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## RTPI CYMRU

### PRELIMINARY NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2010 & NOMINATIONS FOR THE MANAGEMENT BOARD 2011

**FRIDAY 3rd DECEMBER 2010, 2pm Wales Millennium Centre, Cardiff Bay**

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - NOMINATIONS:

1. Nominations are invited for an officer to serve on the Management Board for a period of one year in the following post: **Junior Vice Chair** (corporate members may nominate).
2. Nominations are invited for one **Technical Member** to serve on the Management Board for a period of two years (technical members may nominate). Nominations are also invited for two **Corporate / Legal Members** to serve on the Management Board for a period of two years (corporate members may nominate). Nominations are also involved for the **Hon. Secretary** and the **Hon. Treasurer**, and one RTPI Cymru Representative on the RTPI's **General Assembly** (corporate members may nominate).

(See page 4 for further information on each position and what is involved).

In the event that nominations exceed the number of vacancies, a ballot will take place. Nominees please note that should an election be required, this may be your only opportunity to submit an election address (200 words maximum) prior to the AGM.

3. Following the first meeting of the Management Board in 2011, in the event of any place remaining unfilled, the Management Board shall have the power to fill the vacancy with a member in Wales of an appropriate class of membership.

### MOTIONS:

4. A member giving notice in writing to the Honorary Secretary by **29th October 2010** may have a motion set out for consideration on the AGM Agenda. Any motion raised should be relevant to the powers and purpose of RTPI Cymru\* and signed by the proposing Member(s).

### DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF NOMINATIONS AND MOTIONS:

5. All nominations and motions should be received by **Friday 29th October 2010** to:

Tony Humphreys, Hon. Secretary, RTPI Cymru, PO Box 2465, Cardiff CF23 0DS

\* The Rules of RTPI Cymru are available to view on the members' area of the RTPI Cymru webpages. Go to: [www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi\\_cymru](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi_cymru) and follow the link on the left to the 'Members Area'.

# Representing Your Nation: Opportunities to get involved (and the odd free lunch)

It's that time of year, where nominations for RTPI Cymru's Management Board are invited. Could you add something, have you got ideas and would like to have a say in the activities of RTPI Cymru?

The positions open for nominations are (except for the Technical Member, nominations must be from Corporate Members of RTPI Cymru):

- Junior Vice Chair (JVC)**  
 The JVC is the starting point for progressing ultimately to Chair of RTPI Cymru. 1 year is spent as JVC, then 1 year as Senior Vice Chair (SVC) before becoming Chair for a year, followed by a year as Immediate Past Chair. So it's a four year term. The Chair's role is to provide a figurehead for RTPI Cymru, chairing the Management Board meetings and representing RTPI Cymru at events. You also host the RTPI President on their visit to Wales. The JVC, SVC and IPC provide support for the Chair.
- From the July of the JVC's year to July of the SVC (a total of 12 months) you are asked to be the RTPI Cymru representative on the Planning Aid Wales Board, which meets quarterly.
- Hon Secretary**  
 This position is for a year only. The principal role of the

Secretary is to run the AGM in December, oversee the elections and advise the Management Board on issues relating to the RTPI Cymru Rules, elections and Management Board positions. You are also the RTPI Cymru representative on the RTPI's Regions and Nations Panel, which meets between three and four times a year.

- Hon Treasurer**  
 As with the Secretary position, this post is for a year. The Treasurer does not perform a traditional treasurer role, but provides a focus on the Management Board for financial scrutiny and consideration.
- Technical Member**  
 The Rules allow for a Technical Member of RTPI Cymru to represent the interests of Technical Members, as is done for Student, Licentiate and Associate Members. This is a two year position.
- Two Corporate / Legal Members**  
 There are a total of five Corporate / Legal members on the Board, but to provide continuation, two positions are elected in one year, and three the next; two positions are available for 2011. The positions are for a two year period. Whilst these positions do not have a specific role, they are

expected to actively contribute at meetings to the various papers and development of strategies and initiatives within and outside meetings, as are all members of the Management Board.

- General Assembly Representative**  
 RTPI Cymru has two positions on the RTPI's General Assembly (GA). This is the representative membership body of the RTPI. The position is for a two year term; RTPI Cymru elects an alternate position each year. You are expected to attend the RTPI Cymru meetings as well as the 3 or 4 GA meetings per year, as you need to be in contact with what's happening in Wales, to be able to represent us on the GA - but at least you get to travel (not quite the world!) If you have aspirations of becoming President one day - this is certainly the position for you!

## What is involved?

We are looking for members who feel they can contribute to the work of RTPI Cymru.

Normally four meetings are held per year - 1 in Cardiff, 1 in Swansea, 1 in north Wales and 1 where the AGM is held (the location of the AGM is decided by the SVC); although the Board is always open to

moving. We need members from across Wales, so that we are representative of the members of RTPI Cymru. Reasonable travel and subsistence payments are made to support attendance at meetings. In return for your contributions, we also offer discounts to the Spring Conference and the Wales Planning Conference.

## What do I need to do?

If you are interested in standing for one of these positions, you will need to complete the nomination form and return it to us by **Friday 29th October 2010**. The nomination also needs to be supported by two Members (see page 3 for details).

If you know of someone who you feel would do a good job, why not give them a nudge?

The forms are available from the RTPI Cymru website, or by e-mail from: [wales@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:wales@rtpi.org.uk) or by telephone: 029 2049 8215 (to save on paper, we no longer send these out to everyone).

In the event of more than one nomination for any position, an election will take place and the result announced at the RTPI Cymru AGM on 3 December.

If you would like to discuss any of the options please contact Roisin Willmott (see page 2).

## RTPI Cymru Management Board 2010

Who is on the 2010 RTPI Cymru Management Board?

- Chair:** Lucie Taylor (Newport City Council)
- Senior Vice Chair:** Anna Prescott (Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners)
- Junior Vice Chair:** Chris Potts (Savills)
- Immediate Past Chair:** James Hooker (Welsh Assembly Government)
- Hon Secretary:** Tony Humphreys (retired)
- Hon Treasurer:** Martin Buckle (independent consultant)
- Licentiate Representative:** Lindsay Christian (Newport City Council) (to 2011)
- Student Representative:** Laura Price (Savills) (to 2011)
- Associate Representative:** Ceri Porter (Capita Symonds) (to 2011)

### Corporate Members:

- Allan Archer (City & County of Swansea) (to 2010)
- Chris Fray (independent) (to 2010)
- Mark Harris (Bridgend County Borough Council) (to 2011)
- Neil Harris (Cardiff University) (to 2011)
- Terry Stevens (Welsh Assembly Government) (to 2011)

### General Assembly Representatives:

- Owain Wyn (Borum - independent consultant) (to 2010)
- Cath Ranson (Pembrokeshire County Council) (to 2011)

### Co-Opted Members (appointed each year by the Management Board)

- Shawn Cullen (independent consultant)
- Jon Fox (Capita Symonds)
- Nick Mills (City and County of Swansea)
- Karen Potter (Liverpool University)

## New Policy & Research Forum: Applications Invited

In 2007 the RTPI Cymru Policy and Research Forum took over from the former Wales Policy Panel to lead on the RTPI's development of policy in Wales.

The Forum is formed for a period of 3 years; and the term of the first Forum will come to an end in December 2010.

During the period the Forum has met regularly (quarterly) with very good attendance records. The Forum has been active in responding to policy consultations relating to planning specifically in Wales and contributing to those with a wider coverage which affect Wales e.g. UK or England and Wales.

During the next term it is intended that the Forum will develop the work it has started on proactive policy development, as well as responding to consultations.

There are up to 15 members of the Forum, supported by the National Director. Ten of these members are appointed by the National Director in consultation with the Chair and Senior Vice Chair of the Management Board. The remaining members are selected from the Management Board to provide continuity.

The meetings are in the main held on the same day as the

Management Board. The difference being the final meeting of the year; the Forum meeting is held on the same day as the Annual Dinner in November; whereas the Management Board meeting is held prior to the AGM. During the year there are 2 meetings in Cardiff, 1 in Swansea and 1 in north Wales.

Reasonable travel and subsistence payments are made to support attendance at meetings. In return for your contributions, we also offer discounts to the Spring Conference and the Wales Planning Conference.

Applications are invited for members of RTPI Cymru to sit on the Forum for 2011 to 2013. We are looking for a variety of experience and for members who will attend and contribute to the meetings, as well as contributing to policy development and consultations via e-mail. - This is an excellent way to secure valuable CPD experience!

### How do you apply?

Forms are available on the RTPI Cymru website or by e-mail from: [wales@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:wales@rtpi.org.uk) or by telephone: 029 2049 8215. The closing date is **Friday 29th October 2010**.

## Reduce Costs not the Quality of Service

*Chris Sheridan reports on a workshop at the 2010 Planning Convention, offering cost saving ideas to LPAs*

Local Authority budgets are under scrutiny as efficiency savings and spending priorities are identified. The challenge for many managers is to maintain a good service whilst providing better value to the tax payer. But as the workshop demonstrated, it is only when the costs of running a planning service are fully understood that effective ways to reduce them can be found.

At the Planning Convention workshop in June, presenter Jay Patel of Peter Pendleton & Associates led an interactive discussion of ideas and suggestions for planning managers to consider. The session opened with an overview of the costs incurred by some planning services. Data provided by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) offered delegates an insight into the estimated operational costs of providing planning services. Delegates noted four Councils who provide a development management service that pays for itself.

Budget cuts were discussed, with some delegates reportedly having to make annual savings of 30%. There was concern that savings may translate into reducing staff levels (in some cases 10% is the equivalent of two staff). It was the view of some managers that their only option is to reduce the level of service provided, others citing the recent 'Easy Jet' approach to delivering planning services.

So how can planning services identify ways to maintain service levels and reduce costs? This question challenged delegates to think about what they do and why they do it. Some admitted adding to their costs by printing out applications received through the Planning Portal. Others recognised the need to remove historic and unnecessary work processes.

Delegates were invited to work



with their neighbouring planning services to better understand costs and quality of service; why not evaluate neighbouring planning services by submitting a 'test' application? Validation is one area that illustrates the value of cost comparisons with other planning services. Why does validating a planning application (excluding major applications) cost some Councils £342, but for others it is £690? What can be learned from more cost-effective Councils? If validation is outsourced can quality be maintained and costs reduced?

"Planners should look at the published CIPFA figures and understand the cost base of planning services", said Jay Patel. "They may find that their neighbours are providing an equal or better service at a lower cost".

The Planning Advisory Service's (PAS) Managing Excellent Planning Services (MEPS) helps LPAs create useful, comparable information about the real costs of providing their service. Further information is available from the PAS website: [www.pas.gov.uk](http://www.pas.gov.uk).

The RTPI has also published guidance helping LPAs respond to the challenges ahead.

*Chris is the RTPI's planners in the workplace manager [chris.sheridan@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:chris.sheridan@rtpi.org.uk). For RTPI recession support visit [www.rtpi.org.uk/member\\_services](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/member_services).*

## P&R Forum Members 2007-2010

- **Chair:** Owain Wyn (Borum - independent consultant)
- **Deputy Chair:** Anna Prescott (Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners)
- Charlotte Beattie (Wrexham County Borough Council)
- Martin Buckle (independent consultant)
- Jonathan Cawley (West Coast Energy)
- Mike Cuddy (Welsh Assembly Government)
- Tanya Davies (RWE npower Renewables Ltd)
- Jon Fox (Capita Symonds)
- Neil Harris (Cardiff University)
- James Hooker (Welsh Assembly Government)
- Tony Humphreys (retired)
- Lyn Owen (retired)
- Leslie Punter (independent consultant)
- Clare Taylor (independent consultant)
- Keith Thomas (AECOM)
- Elfed Willaims (independent consultant)

## Current Consultations



Above: Solar panels at the National Trust's property at Llanerchaeron, near Aberaeron

### Planning Policy Wales: Section 12.8 Planning for Renewable Energy

The Assembly Government is consulting on its proposed update to national planning policy on renewable energy in Wales. Current planning policy and guidance on renewable energy

is available in section 12.8 of Planning Policy Wales (Edition 2, June 2010) and TAN 8 Planning for Renewable Energy.

The update is intended to enable the delivery of 'A Low Carbon Revolution - Wales' Energy Policy Statement and renewable energy and climate change commitments.

The Assembly has also

commissioned research looking at how the planning system can facilitate renewable energy. The research included:

- Local Authority Zero Carbon Barriers Research (May 2009);
- Practice Guidance - Renewable Energy: A Toolkit for Planners (June 2010); and
- Research - The Planning Implications of Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development (June 2010).

Due to the new Energy Policy Statement and the findings of this research, the Assembly has decided to review and update the planning policy on renewable energy as contained in PPW.

The consultation does not cover renewable energy policy and the related energy aspirations, published in March 2010.

Further information is available from: [www.wales.gov.uk/consultations/planning](http://www.wales.gov.uk/consultations/planning). Comments should be submitted by 8 October 2010.

### Local Development Orders

The Assembly Government is consulting on proposals for the introduction of Local Development Orders (LDOs) in Wales. The consultation covers the principle of LDOs, the implementation of the legislation and the appropriateness of the procedures and limitations to be followed.

LDOs are an extension of permitted development rights, where for specific developments, planning permission is not required. The LDO could relate to all land in a local planning authority area (LPA) or only to a part of that land including specific sites. This power is discretionary and intended to help speed up the planning system. LDOs will, in effect, grant permission for the development to which they relate and remove the need for a planning application and associated application fees. It is proposed that the content

of LDOs would be decided upon locally in response to local circumstances. For example, a LPA may wish to make a LDO to assist in the regeneration of an employment area or industrial estate. An LDO can guide development in areas where significant change is anticipated. It could also encourage the provision of housing on a particular site.

LDOs can operate at a variety of scales and can be made to achieve a variety of objectives. Specific developments or specified classes of development can be defined. LDOs could be used to achieve and promote a variety of objectives and behaviours by developers to achieve community, planning, environmental or regeneration objectives. It is proposed that LPAs will have discretionary powers to make LDOs.

Further information is available from: [www.wales.gov.uk/consultations/planning](http://www.wales.gov.uk/consultations/planning)

Comments should be submitted by 29 October 2010.

### Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management: Development of a National Strategy for Wales

This consultation is the first step in producing a National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management in Wales.

It poses questions about the objectives that should be set, the actions to be taken and the way flood and coastal erosion risk management should be funded. It also includes information on the roles and responsibilities of the Risk Management Authorities.

Further information is available from: [www.wales.gov.uk/consultations/environmentandcountryside](http://www.wales.gov.uk/consultations/environmentandcountryside)

Comments should be submitted by 8 October 2010.

### Introducing Standard Information Requirements for Planning Applications

The Assembly Government has issued a consultation on proposals to make the Standard Application Form mandatory. The intention is that this should then be clearer to the applicants what information is required for applications for planning permission, listed building and conservation area consents.

Following changes to legislation to come into force in 2010/2011, the Assembly propose to issue:

- a new circular with advice for local planning authorities; and
- a best practice guide for a wider audience including applicants.

Views are sought on whether the proposed approach is appropriate and comments on the draft guidance documents.

Further information is available from: [wales.gov.uk/consultations/planning](http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/planning)

The consultation closes on 12 November 2010.

### Draft List of Statutory & Non-statutory Consultees in the Planning Application Process

The Assembly Government wishes to develop a single comprehensive list of all nationally defined consultees in the planning application process in Wales. This draft list is based on a similar exercise carried out in England between December 2009 and March 2010.

Further information is available from: [wales.gov.uk/planning/consultations](http://wales.gov.uk/planning/consultations)

The consultation closes on 26 November 2010.

# Study into the Planning Application Process in Wales

The research study was carried out between September 2009 and April 2010 by GVA Grimley to support the Assembly Government's review of the planning application process in Wales.

The report identified 16 recommendations which the Assembly has now considered and responded to. Below is a summary of the Assembly's response to the recommendations - you will note that some are already being acted upon with the consultations listed on page 6. The GVA Grimley study and the full Assembly's response are available on the Assembly's website: [www.wales.gov.uk/topics/planning/planningresearch](http://www.wales.gov.uk/topics/planning/planningresearch)

**Theme 1 is about improving understanding and the relationships amongst the different players in the planning application process.**

## 1: Policy Statement on the Importance of Economic Development

Research will be commissioned to evaluate existing planning policies for economic development against the Assembly's economic development policies and scope future planning policy requirements against the emerging Economic Renewal Programme. After completion of that evaluation, planning policy will be revised as appropriate and a Sustainable Economic Renewal TAN produced.

## 2: Make the Planning System More Responsive to Business

The Assembly Government will:

- consider the role of the Wales Planning Forum and the need to establish a new group of business and planning interests along with other mechanisms that could be used to improve dialogue;
- review current advice available and produce a revised booklet for business and planning;
- undertake a review of statutory and non-statutory consultees;
- produce a toolkit to assist LPAs to take into account sustainable economic development interests when preparing plans and determining planning applications; and

- evaluate the business community's engagement in policy development at national and local level and identify areas for improvement.

## 3: Design & Access Statements

A clarification letter will be issued to explain the appropriateness of Design and Access Statements.

## 4: Guidance Process

Key stakeholders are already involved in policy making from the outset of the process as part of the Assembly Government's normal working practices. But the effectiveness of business engagement will be reviewed to identify areas for improvement. The introduction of an 'impact test' to ensure the implications of introducing new policy requirements are assessed fully and ensure alternative implementation mechanisms are identified as appropriate.

## 5: Pause on New Guidance

Revised policy and new guidance is not introduced lightly. Planning policy and guidance is kept under constant review and only updated where necessary.

The move to the electronic only production of policy (PPW) and some guidance documents should aid dissemination and ease of access and updating.

Revised guidance on criteria for call-in and its operation was issued in May 2010. This guidance is kept under continuous review and amendments made as appropriate. The explanatory note accompanying the call-in letters is to be revised.

**Theme 2 is about the culture of the planning application process and striving to move from a culture of development control to one of proactive development management.**

## 6: Development Management Principles

Current development management policy will be reviewed and revisions and new best practice guidance considered to take account of the development management changes being taken forward this year as part of this project.

## 7: Improving Consultation

Work has started on scoping statutory and non-statutory consultee arrangements that are in place in current policy, guidance and legislation to inform a review of these processes, including a consultation setting out the current arrangements.

Following that review, proposals will be consulted on to ensure that a proportionate approach is taken by LPAs and statutory and non-statutory consultees in considering different types of planning applications.

The Assembly will work with statutory consultees to determine appropriate timescales for consultation responses to be made.

## 8: Making Process and Delivery More Consistent

The Assembly will consider best practice guidance (see 6).

## 9: The Approach to Committee

Current guidance will be reviewed and best practice guidance considered (see 6).

**Theme 3 is about the operation of the planning application process.**

## 10: Extension of Permitted Development (PD)

Where the approach taken in England is considered appropriate for Wales, similar legislative arrangements will be made. Although it should not be assumed that Welsh Ministers will take exactly the same approach as in England. With regard to Permitted Development (PD):

- Domestic dwellings microgeneration PD rights came into effect in September 2009;

- Non-domestic buildings microgeneration amended PD rights were the subject of public consultation ending on 3 July 2010;
- Domestic dwellings PD rights will be consulted upon;
- Non-domestic buildings PD rights will also be consulted upon in the Autumn.

With regard to the Use Classes Order – the Assembly Government's formal conclusion about the outcome of the 2006 consultation, which included UCO proposed changes in Wales, was outlined in a letter issued by the Chief Planner in July 2010 (see the legal update on page 20).

## 11: A Practical Approach to Minor Amendments

A consultation will be issued in 2010.

## 12: Pre-application Discussions - Best Practice Guide

This will be taken forward this year, in collaboration with Planning Officers' Society Wales and others, to identify best practice in Wales. It will clarify arrangements for both users and deliverers of the service.

## 13: Validation Requirements

A consultation package will be published, clarifying requirements for information to accompany planning applications and result in better targeted information.

## 14: Increasing Use of Electronic Planning Services

Work is ongoing with the Planning Portal to increase the use of electronic planning services. All 25 LPAs offer this bilingual on-line service. The e-consultation Hub is being tested in Wales by several LPAs and statutory consultees including the Environment Agency and CCW.

## 15: Sharing Expertise

The Assembly will procure specialist consultancy support to assist LPAs to determine complex planning applications in the waste and renewable energy sectors in a timely manner.

## 16: Planning Conditions

A review of conditions will begin during 2011, which will include the issues identified.

## Rural Policy Launched

Proving that the electronic version of PPW, really does mean that policy can be incorporated immediately within the document, without the need for MIPPS, a third version of PPW was published in July. Edition 3 introduces changes to rural planning policy and was launched by Jane Davidson at the Royal Welsh Show in July, along with a revised TAN 6.

'One Wales' sets out a number of commitments, which included increasing the supply of affordable housing; extending the scope of essential dwellings; and helping new entrants to farming. These concepts have been central to the revision of rural planning policy and advice, and support the Assembly Government's objective of helping deliver sustainable rural communities through the planning system.

Changes to Chapter 4 of PPW

emphasise the importance of affordable housing in sustainable rural communities. Also, that there should be balance between housing and employment in urban and rural areas to help minimise travel.

Changes to Chapter 7 of PPW indicate that growth of existing rural businesses should be encouraged where they do not impact unacceptably on local amenity. Also, when new economic development (other than farm diversification and agricultural development) is proposed, they may generally be located not only within, but also adjacent to, defined settlement boundaries.

Changes to Chapter 9 of PPW update policy guidance on affordable housing and establish the principle of rural enterprise dwellings, which supports younger people to manage farm businesses and



Above: Rural enterprise near Machynlleth

promotes the diversification of established farms. The chapter also introduces the One Planet Development concept into national planning policy.

Technical Advice Note 6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities supports PPW and provides detailed advice

concerning the implementation of the new rural planning policy.

These changes to policy and advice are effective from 20th July 2010.

Further details are available from the Assembly Government's web site: [www.wales.gov.uk/planning](http://www.wales.gov.uk/planning)

## Building Regulations: Next Steps

As the first step on the path to zero carbon the Welsh Assembly Government has set a 55% improvement (over the 2006 Building Regulations) as the target for the first changes to devolved Building Regulations when powers transfer on 31 December 2011. Their aim is to bring forward detailed proposals for consultation during 2012 with a view to implementation in 2013. It is anticipated that renewable energy will play a part in meeting the new standards and that in the short term these are likely to be small scale provision.

Higher standards will support the Assembly Government's climate change, economic and social policies. The target reflects the need to find a balance between an ambitious agenda on climate change and setting standards that do not make the cost of new building prohibitively expensive

with the risk of stalling the housing market and losing the social value of new housing.

After considering a range of options from current standards to a 70% improvement for regulated emissions, the Assembly Government have concluded that a reduction in carbon (CO2 equivalent) emissions of 55% compared to 2006 achieves the right balance.

The target will mean new flats and houses with combined heating, lighting and hot water bills as low as £7.50 a week. A combination of green technologies including heat pumps, photovoltaics, solar hot water and higher building standards will help achieve lower carbon emissions and fuel bills.

Further information is available from: [www.wales.gov.uk/housing](http://www.wales.gov.uk/housing)

## Green Standards in Wales widened to cover all new homes

As set out in a policy statement on planning for sustainable buildings last year, all planning applications for new homes will be expected to meet Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes from 1 September 2010.

For new homes this will:

- reduce their carbon footprint by more than 31 per cent compared to current building regulations through energy efficiency measures and renewable energy;
- reduce the consumption of water; and
- ensure the use of more sustainable materials.

Speaking about the changes, Jane Davidson said: "I am committed to making sure that Wales reduces its carbon footprint to protect the environment for

future generations.

"We know that the built environment is the largest contributor to green house gases in Wales and that the way we construct our homes and buildings accounts for 40% of our total carbon emissions. That is why I am determined to use the planning system to help move us towards zero carbon buildings."

Delivering buildings to a higher standard may also help to generate demand for low carbon, resource efficient and eco-friendly products and services – a key part of the Assembly Government's Green Jobs Strategy.

## Housing: Opportunities for Discussion in Wales

The Welsh Assembly Government now has the legislative power to introduce 'Measures'<sup>1</sup> on housing in Wales. In July, Jocelyn Davies, Deputy Minister for Housing and Regeneration, welcomed news that the Housing and Local Government Legislative Competence Order (LCO) had received Royal Assent.

The LCO will enable the Assembly to consider its own means to tackle issues such as improved regulation of Registered Social Landlords, securing greater homelessness provision, bringing empty homes back into use, proving security of tenure, and supporting the most vulnerable. A Measure to enable Local Authorities to apply to Welsh Ministers for approval to suspend the Right to Buy in areas of housing pressure and provide Welsh Ministers with a broad range of intervention powers that are essential to strengthen the regulation of Registered Social Landlords is to be brought forward in the Autumn.

Keith Edwards, Chief Executive of the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) in Wales stated that: "It is excellent news that housing powers have been transferred to Cardiff. Given the scale of the housing challenge we face, this provides a great opportunity to develop Welsh solutions and create a housing system that is fit for purpose in the future."

It is right and proper that housing and planning powers now sit together. As was recognised at the launch of the RTPI-CIH Planning for Housing Network in Wales in 2009, housing & planning professionals can only achieve appropriate interventions if they work together and see housing issues in the round. Land allocations can exacerbate problems within the existing stock but with sensitive, joined-up thinking, investment can be directed and prioritised appropriately. And suspensions of the Right to Buy can greatly



assist planning measures where new investment is likely to have a low priority.

The Network in Wales is aiming to hold a regular series of events, alternating between the north and the south, so that joint thinking and working can be further developed. As a starter, meetings in Old Colwyn and Swansea in November – see the Events Listing in this edition – will look at the Cambridge University study 'Housing Need and Demands in Wales 2006 – 2026' and review its messages with the authors in the light of the current doldrums for the housebuilding industry.

Your ideas on future Housing Network events would be very welcome: [housing@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:housing@rtpi.org.uk)

Membership of the Network is free and open to everyone interested in housing across the UK – not just RTPI or CIH Members – and with activities developed with the membership – see [www.rtpi.org.uk/housing](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/housing)

<sup>1</sup>*Explanatory footnote:* Welsh laws are known as 'Assembly Measures'. An Assembly Measure can broadly do anything an Act of Parliament can in relation to Wales, subject to limitations as defined by the Government of Wales Act 2006.

## Coalition Government on Strategic Planning

Announced in the Queen's Speech on the 25 May 2010, the Decentralisation and Localism Bill covers the Coalition Government's proposals for a wide range of planning and related legislation.

The Bill would 'devolve greater powers to councils and neighbourhoods' and 'give local communities control over housing and planning decisions'.

Until there is more detail on the individual components, it is not clear of the implications to Wales. However, it is expected that any element which is already devolved, will be the Welsh Assembly Government's choice of whether it is applied to Wales.

The Government propose that the main benefits of the Bill would be:

- empowering local people;
- freeing local government from central and regional control;
- giving local communities a real share in local growth; and
- a more efficient and more local planning system.

The main elements of the Bill are:

- abolish Regional Spatial Strategies in England;
- return decision-making powers on housing and planning to local councils;
- abolish the Infrastructure Planning Commission and replace it with an efficient and democratically accountable system that provides a fast-track process for major infrastructure projects;
- new powers to help save local facilities and services threatened with closure, and give communities the right to bid to take over local state-run services;
- abolish the Standards Board regime;
- give councils a general power of competence;

- require public bodies to publish online the job titles of every member of staff and the salaries and expenses of senior officials;
- give residents the power to instigate local referendums on any local issue and the power to veto excessive council tax increases;
- greater financial autonomy to local government and community groups;
- create Local Enterprise Partnerships (to replace Regional Development Agencies) – joint local authority-business bodies brought forward by local authorities to promote local economic development;
- form plans to deliver a genuine and lasting Olympic legacy;
- outright abolition of Home Improvement Packs;
- create new trusts that would make it simpler for communities to provide homes for local people; and
- review Housing Revenue Account.

In response to the various announcements, the RTPI along with a uniquely wide-ranging group of 29 national bodies have written to the Communities and Local Government Secretary, Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP, to urge national and local government to work with them to ensure that strategic planning – planning at the 'larger-than-local level' – is embedded in any reform of the planning system under the new agenda for localism. Further details and a copy of the letter are available on the RTPI website.

The RTPI is monitoring all the announcements made regarding the Bill and its developments. To see the latest updates, see the RTPI's website: [www.rtpi.org.uk](http://www.rtpi.org.uk)

# RTPI Cymru Celebrates Ten Years of an all-Wales Branch

It is with some surprise to many of us that ten years have passed since the creation of a single all-Wales branch of the RTPI and the move to 'nation' status. Time has certainly flown past quickly. Some readers will even be unaware that there used to be a South Wales Branch and North Wales was joined with the North West of England.

In recognition of this landmark in the history of the RTPI in Wales, we hear from the past Chairs of RTPI Cymru since December 2000 when it was created.

Reading these accounts demonstrates how far the governance in Wales has come and I trust that we all feel, as Members of the Institute, that an all-Wales basis is the right way to organise ourselves and that 'nation' status now gives us the resources to be able to respond and actively participate in the Wales' devolved planning arena.

We do need to ensure the continuation of an active member base in Wales and to continue to strive to be representative of the whole of Wales - geographically and sectorally, and of course in terms of our activities. So if you feel that the Board is too dominant in a particular way - why not stand yourself or encourage a colleague to stand?

## RTPI Cymru Chairs 2000 - 2010

2000-2001: Allan Archer

2001-2002: Lyn Owen

2002-2003: Tony Humphreys

2003-2004: Cath Ranson

2004-2005: Tim Ball

2005-2006: Owain Wyn

2006-2007: Terry Stevens

2007-2008: Jon Fox

2008-2009: James Hooker

2009-2010: Lucie Taylor

## "Up and Running at Last"

*As the first Chair of the new All-Wales Branch, Allan Archer looks back at the time it began. Chair: 2000-2001*



*Above: Allan Archer (centre) pictured with Sue Essex (right) and Kay Powell (left) at the Cardiff launch of the new single all-Wales Branch of the RTPI*

"Up and running at last" was the headline in the March 2001 edition of the new Branch's newsletter. The next sentence

says "Following successful launches in Colwyn Bay and Cardiff, the new Branch is at long last well and truly off the ground".

Looking back, my overwhelming recollection is of a mix of relief, optimism and gratitude – "at long last" are the words that encapsulate both the relief that the formation of the new Branch had at last happened after years of discussion and negotiation and also the gratitude to many people inside (and also outside) the Branch whose efforts and support over those years had made it possible.

Optimism – that the new Branch structure would make a practical difference to the support provided by the Institute for the membership in Wales and to the ability of members to influence and contribute more effectively to the future of the planning system in Wales.

Sue Essex, the Assembly's Minister for the Environment at the time, welcomed the new Branch and made two points at the Cardiff launch – which seem as relevant today as they did then – the need for an active Institute in Wales and the value of a successful planning profession.

One of the initiatives of the new

Branch was to press for the inclusion of a planning award for Wales as part of the Institute's national award scheme – this small beginning was then taken forward over subsequent years to create the Branch's now well established annual Wales Planning Awards – providing an annual opportunity to recognise, celebrate and showcase the positive benefits and the diversity of planning activity throughout Wales.

Bringing together planners in North and South Wales in a way that created a strong all Wales voice while creating a local focus and identity in the various regions of Wales to support local membership activity were twin objectives for the new Branch. The active support and participation of members from all parts of Wales was a key feature of the creation of the new Branch and, happily, seems to have continued to be a feature ever since (and hopefully will continue into the next 10 years!).

Best wishes to all.

# The Path to an all-Wales Branch

*A personal view from Lyn Owen who sets out the background and transition to the move to all-Wales Branch. Chair: 2001-2002*



There is a famous quote about the setting up of the National Assembly that "Devolution is a process not an event". That could be said equally about the establishment of the all Wales branch of the RTPI. It was a process which took place in stages over many years, and involving the input of many different members of the Institute in both North and South Wales. In this article I have referred to some of the individuals concerned but recognise there are many others who could be equally named.

When I joined the South Wales Branch back in the 1970s it was active and well run but there was only occasional contact with the members of the North West of England and North Wales Branch.

Talk of an all-Wales Branch was muted, but the need for greater links to address all Wales issues was widely appreciated. I think that a seminal event which began the process of developing those links, leading eventually to a single branch took place with the relaunch in 1991 of the dormant newsletter of the South Wales Branch, with the title *Planning Wales* (later retitled *Cynllunio*). Those involved, were clear that it should address planning issues of interest to all parts of Wales. The magazine was distributed to all members in South Wales. Requests to distribute to North Wales via the North West of England and North Wales Branch initially failed to receive a response. Contact was made directly with Institute members in North Wales to establish an informal system for distributing copies there, mainly via Planning Department offices. Eventually an all Wales circulation list was achieved. Under the editorship

for many years of John Forrester and later of Neil Harris, the magazine has had a crucial role in recognising the distinctive aspects of planning in Wales.

A further development was the setting up from the late 1980s of chapter events in South West Wales and the Swansea Bay areas of the South Wales Branch, many organised by Carol Williams, Nick Mills and Alan Archer with others. At the same time there were moves to develop a North Wales Chapter within the North West of England and North Wales Branch, led by people such as Tony Humphreys and John Bowers. These activities showed that an all-Wales structure with locally organised activities was a feasible prospect.

The next step was a joint effort by planners in the South Wales Branch, and active members in North Wales, to persuade RTPI headquarters to give better coverage of all Wales issues. This was needed especially to secure responses to the growing number of separate consultations and policy initiatives emerging from the then Welsh Office. A succession of Branch Chairs and others in the South and some within the North West England and North Wales Branch took any opportunity to raise the issue formally and informally. David Wilson was one high profile advocate of the need for change. One important occasion was a National event in London to consider the future organisation of the Institute across the UK when Tony Humphreys from the North and myself from the South spoke to press the case for a Wales dimension. A memorable informal occasion was at a St Andrews Summer School in the early 1990s when several Welsh members collared some of the National leadership on the issue, over a late night whisky in an oak panelled common room.

In 1995 the Institute established an all Wales Planning Policy Panel, with representatives from across the profession – local

authority, central government and private practice. This body was very successful in making inputs to Wales and UK planning consultations. Under the Chairmanship of Mike Flynn and Mike Sant the Panel impressed the Institute centrally by its enthusiasm and professionalism. To support the Panel a part time Policy Officer for Wales was also appointed, and after a few years was made a full time position to reflect the growing workload. Rebecca Phillips and Owain Wyn developed that role with great success. The support for the Panel from HQ staff such as David Rose and Kelvin Macdonald should also be acknowledged.

For a number of years there were therefore parallel structures with the all-Wales Panel addressing policy issues while the South Wales Branch, and the increasingly active North Wales Chapter of the North West England and North Wales Branch, addressed CPD and events. There was much overlap between the membership and increasing co-operation between the Branch Administrative Officer and the Panel Policy Officer. The logic of a merger to a single all-Wales Branch was clear to many members in Wales, but the detail of how to achieve it needed careful consideration. Detailed proposals for such a reorganisation were developed and refined jointly by the Wales Policy Panel and the Branch memberships, and presented to Headquarters in 1998 and 1999. Although at the time it seemed to some that Headquarters was slow in responding to the case for the all Wales Branch, their position is understandable in retrospect. There was a need to show how the new all Wales set-up could function effectively without losing the recognised value of the component parts being brought together. The links to *Planning Aid Wales* were another important matter to consider. Much demanding but unrecognised work was done to develop business plans,

including detailed budgets. Over the years Nick Mills, Rosemary Thomas, Martin Buckle and others all played essential roles in drawing up those documents. Again Branch Chairs and representatives on Council from North and South Wales including Tim Ball, Allan Archer, Tony Humphreys and Cath Ranson used their skills to take the case for further progress forward.

Eventually Headquarters was convinced that an all-Wales Branch, with a Policy Officer and administrative support could be achieved at a reasonable cost, and could effectively deliver the range of member services and policy functions needed. The Branch came into being at the end of 2000 and a few years later was further developed, in 2006, when a full time Director post for Wales was successfully established. Roisin Wilmott was appointed and has established the value of that position.

Of course the establishment of RTPI Cymru is not the end point of a process. The activity of the Institute in Wales will continue to adapt to changing circumstances, to developing technologies for involving the membership and the interests of new generations of members.

I have felt privileged to have played a role, along with those named above and many others, in the process leading up to establishing the all-Wales Branch. If asked to suggest a further ambition for the Institute in Wales it would be to follow the example of Scotland and secure a small office space, preferably shared with the *Planning Aid Wales* service, and perhaps with other professional bodies. This could provide a future working base for the Director and Administrative Officer, and might include access to facilities for meetings, event and exhibitions, without at all reducing a programme of activities across the whole of Wales. Who knows, that may yet be achieved as another part of this ongoing process.

# Tony Humphreys

## Chair 2002-2003



Above: Tony Humphreys with the Wales Planning Award winners 2003

In December 2002 I was given the honour of being the first North Wales member of the RTPI to take the position of Chair of the all-Wales Branch of the RTPI. I had a similar honour six years prior to that when I was the first and only Chair of the North West England and North Wales Branch of the RTPI to come from Wales.

My year as Chair of the North West England and North Wales Branch coincided with the 1996 Local Government reorganisation in Wales. The turmoil and uncertainty which is inherent with local government reorganisation had a knock on effect and I found it difficult to achieve all the aims

that I had set for the year.

So becoming Chair of RTPI Cymru gave me a second bite at the cherry, so to speak, and if my memory serves me right it was quite a successful year. The RTPI President during 2002 was Nic Davies, who although working in England hailed from Welsh ancestry. During his Presidential visit he was given a hearty welcome in both the north and south of the Principality. That year Wales won the award for the best and most inspiring of the visits during Nic's Presidential year.

It was in 1992 that the Management Board instigated moves to seek some form of autonomy by working towards becoming a 'nation' as opposed to a branch within the RTPI. A set of rules specific to Wales was drawn up during the year, although due to procrastination at Botolph Lane it took until December 2006 to get them approved by the Executive Board of the RTPI. As a result RTPI Cymru came into being to take over running many of the

Institute's affairs in Wales.

Apart from a short absence due to illness in 2007 I have continued to serve on the Management Board of RTPI Cymru and have been Hon Secretary since December 2004. I also sit on the Policy and Research Forum (previously the Wales Planning Policy Panel) of which I have been a member since its inception in 1996.

I retired from work in July 2006 and whilst it would have given me the opportunity to dedicate more time to the work of RTPI Cymru my responsibilities as Hon Secretary have diminished following the creation of the National Director post. I do however represent RTPI Cymru on the RTPI's Regions and Nations Panel.

It was fitting that the AGM at which I was made Chair was held at Wrexham where I had started my planning career in 1969 which is now over forty years ago. The Presidential visit that year also commenced in Wrexham where along with the President, Robert Upton, David Rose and I stayed overnight in a hotel which turned out to be a converted manor house where my late father used to be a part time gardener and

where I spent a great deal of my childhood in the 1950s. It brought quite a few memories flooding back.

The most embarrassing thing to happen to me as Chair occurred during the AGM at Cardiff City Hall in December 2003, as my year was coming to an end and I was about to hand over the Chair to Cath Ranson. In those days AGMs were preceded by a guest speaker and on this occasion the speaker was Sue Essex. As Chair I introduced Sue to the meeting and in doing so I asked all present to turn off mobile phones and announced that any disturbance due to phones going off would incur a £10 penalty to be donated to Planning Aid. As I sat down and as Sue began her address to the meeting she was disturbed by the polyphonic sound of a mobile. All eyes turned to me as my face turned crimson and I removed the offending phone from my pocket to switch it off. At least Planning Aid had benefitted from my embarrassment.

# Cath Ranson

## Chair 2003-2004

2004 - The fourth year for RTPI Cymru and a year of promise: a new Planning Act, a commitment to changing the culture, with additional funding for local planning authorities, a Spatial Plan for Wales and mainstream funding for Planning Aid Wales.



Above: Guest Speaker Bill Morrison 'Stand by Your Plan' Morrison, pictured with Cath Ranson

The President's visit focussed on meeting practising planners to discussing the challenges of 'standing and delivering' across Wales, showcasing ambitious projects - such as Cardiff Bay, SA1 Waterfront, Cardigan Castle and Galeri, Caernarfon, ..... and on convincing Mike Hayes that it was normal practice for planners in Wales to drive around with a tent in the boot.

Alongside trying to secure improved funding for the work of RTPI Cymru, key commitments for me were to deliver low cost local CPD, to celebrate and share good practice and to encourage RTPI members in Wales into more active membership, locally and nationally...



Above: President's Visit 2004 - Mike Hayes meeting Snowdonia National Park Planners

## Tim Ball

Chair 2004-2005



Above: Tim Ball, enjoying retirement touring around France

It's not stretching the facts too far (perhaps) to see the recent social and political history of Wales in terms of the way in which the RTPI was organised.

Thirty years ago I was working for Ceredigion District Council in Aberaeron. Devolution was an idea that had been shelved. Telephones weren't common and business was conducted by letter and face to face meetings. Planning policy was essentially the same as that in England, except that Circulars had a different reference number. It was not therefore surprising that planners in North Wales looked to colleagues in the north-west of England for professional and social contacts. In mid-Wales, we would meet colleagues from what is now Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire. Whilst technically part of the south Wales branch of the RTPI, the road network in mid-Wales usually meant that the rest of Wales was isolated from us.

In the 1990s the then Secretary of State wanted Wales to have a distinctive planning framework, different from that in force in England, and showed that it could

be done without the world falling apart.

With the coming of a devolved administration shortly afterwards, planners throughout Wales now had more in common with each other than with (sometimes) geographically closer neighbours. An all-Wales branch of the RTPI, able to speak for planners and for planning across Wales, made sense.

Technological advances meant that we could have video conferences, though my memories of the early days include times when we could see but not hear each other, and of vain searches for technicians at 6.30pm. But electronic communications get easier and more commonplace by the day.

In 2010 Wales has an Assembly Government with a recognisably different political and planning framework, together with policies, and not to mention a spatial plan, which set it apart from its larger neighbour. Whatever happens at a political level in the future, RTPI Cymru now has the organisation to participate in the debates about the places and spaces that make Wales distinctive.

## Owain Wyn

Cadeirydd 2005-2006

Rhaid dweud mai gyda gwên fawr yr wyf yn edrych yn ôl dros y deng mlynedd diwethaf. Fel llawer ohonoch dwi'n siŵr, am flynyddoedd yr oedd yr RTPI ddim yn sefydliad a oedd ar flaen y meddwl. Erbyn 1999 yr oedd fy nghysylltiad â'r Sefydliad yn bur frau. Yr oedd fy ngyrfa erbyn hynny wedi mynd â mi ar drywydd bur wahanol iawn i'r stereoteip o gynllunydd ac heb dablo go iawn gyda chynllunio ers canol yr wythdegau. Ar y pryd yr oeddwn yn ceisio sefydlu fy ymgynghoriaeth busnes a gwelais y cyfle i weithio rhan amser i'r RTPI fel modd i gadw dau ben llinyn ynghyd.

Wedi i'r cyfnod hwnnw ddod i ben cadwais fy nghysylltiad gyda'r Sefydliad drwy wasanaethu ar y Bwrdd a'r Panel. Rhaid cofio mai cymharol wan oedd y strwythur a'r brwdfrydedd bryd hynny ac felly, yn absenoldeb gwrfoddolwr arall, fe wirfoddolais i fod yn y Gadair am 2006.

Fel y bydd amryw o fy nghyd gadeiryddion yn tystiolaethu mae blwyddyn yn y Gadair yn mynd fel y gwynt ac i hen begor fel fi anodd yw cofio'n union yr hyn a ddigwyddodd. Bu'r dirprwyaeth ohonom yn ymweld â Dulyn - a oedd ar y pryd yng nghanol boom adeiladu'r Teigr Celtaidd (fel mae pethau yn

newid mewn byr o amser!). Ond diau mai un o'r materion sy'n sefyll yn y côf yw llwyddiant i dorri'r mowld. Yn gynnar ar ôl sefydlu cangen Cymru yn 2000 bu'r Bwrdd Rheoli yn canfasio Botolph Lane i gael Cyfarwyddwr ac adnoddau priodol tebyg i'r RTPI yn yr Alban. Blwyddyn ar ôl blwyddyn cafwyd llythyr cwrtais yn ôl yn dweud i bob pwrpas "iawn ond nid rwan". Yn ystod fy mlwyddyn i, gadawodd f'olynydd Rebecca Philips a gwelwyd cyfle i gael Cyfarwyddwr Cenedlaethol llawn amser. Ddigwyddodd fawr ddim am 6 mis a ffrwydrodd rhwystredigaeth y Bwrdd gyda'r arafwch hwn. Na - ddigwyddodd ddim byd mawr fel ympryd, martsio ar Lundain neu hyd yn oed chwyldro ond fe wnaeth llythyr uniongyrchol i'r Llywydd ddim drwg o gwbl! Does dim byd fel styrbio bywyd tawel y pen dyn i gael rhywbeth i ddigwydd. Does gennyf ddim côf am union eiriad y llythyr ac er i'r ysgrifenyddiaeth wadu ar y pryd, yn rhyfedd iawn fe symudodd pethau yn sydyn iawn wedyn. Llai na blwyddyn yn ddiweddarach yr oedd gennym y strwythur a'r arweinaid yn ei le a tydi RTPI Cymru heb edrych yn ôl ers hynny!

*Bu Owain yn Swyddog Polisi Cynllunio Cymru rhan amser rhwng 1999 a 2002 ac yn Gadeirydd yn 2006.*



Above: Owain Wyn, Cadeirydd yn 2006

## Terry Stevens

Chair 2006-2007



It was an immense privilege to hold the post of Chair of RTPI Cymru for a year in 2007.

It was a very interesting and enjoyable year, and a significant one in the history of the Branch, as I will explain later.

The Wales Spatial Plan had become established, and work was beginning on the development of Regional Spatial Strategies flowing from it. I mention this because one of the highlights of my year was being invited to make a presentation in January 2007 to the General Assembly on the Spatial Plan.

A further highlight of my year was spending two days with the then RTPI President, Jim Claydon, on a visit to North Wales. On the first day we toured the Optic Technium in St Asaph and visited regeneration initiatives in Holyhead, before travelling through a very wet Snowdonia to the National Park Study Centre at Plas Tan Y Bwlch. I know that a particular highlight of the tour for Jim was the meeting held the following day at the Snowdonia National Park Offices with students and young planners from across North Wales to discuss membership issues.

Finally, while referencing highlights, I was very grateful that, despite what I know was a very heavy schedule for her at the time, the Assembly Minister for the Environment, Sustainability and Housing, Jane Davidson kindly accepted my invitation to be guest speaker at our Annual Dinner in November. In what was a very interesting, informative and

well received speech the Minister outlined emerging developments in the context of planning in Wales. I recall she won a raffle prize also (and it wasn't fixed!)

I mentioned earlier that the year was a particularly important one for the Branch. It was the year in which a number of changes to the Branch structure were implemented. These changes included the establishment of a new Management Board and Policy and Research Forum and, but my view undoubtedly the most significant change, was the appointment of a new full time national Director for RTPI Cymru.

It had taken a great deal of work by the Branch, and particularly by my predecessor as Chair, Owain Wyn, to develop the new Structure and obtain the approval of the RTPI Executive to the changes and to the funding of the new post. We were fortunate to have a very high calibre of applicants for the post, and following competitive interviews, appointed Dr Roisin Willmott to the post.

Roisin has proved an excellent Director and I know her work is greatly appreciated by the Management Board and Forum. Roisin is a great ambassador for RTPI Cymru and her appointment has proved a major benefit, raising the profile of the Branch considerably. I believe membership has grown, and certainly member interest in Branch activity has increased significantly, as evidenced by applications for Management Board and Forum membership.

We are all aware that the time ahead is likely to be a difficult one for the profession and the membership in both the private and public sectors in Wales. I firmly believe however that as a consequence of the changes outlined above RTPI Cymru is better placed to be able to provide assistance to members in meeting the challenges ahead.

## Jon Fox

Chair 2007-2008



Above: Wayne Hemingway puts his views across at the new-look RTPI Cymru Annual Dinner

2008 was my year as Chair of RTPI Cymru, it was also a proper rollercoaster ride of a year for many of us in the planning world. In the first half of the year there was massive pressure on planner to deliver projects, deal with unprecedented volumes of applications, keep pushy clients happy, meet community needs and save the planet. In the second half of the year the bottom fell out of the market literally and within weeks application numbers dropped, and the pressure disappeared only to be replaced by worry and concerns about how the profession would cope with a downturn.

Highlights of my year for me included:

- Achieving a more grown up and devolved relationship between RTPI Cymru and RTPI;
- Working with Roisin Willmott and the rest of the Management Board;

- awarding a special prize to the guys at Cardiff Harbour Authority for their courses helping primary school children to the process of developing Cardiff Bay;
- taking the President and Roisin Willmott on a whistle stop tour of regeneration projects in the Heads of the Valleys and culminating in the president going underground at the Big Pit; and
- Cynllunio being launched and quickly establishing itself as the main voice of planning in Wales

However what I'll remember most about 2008 is the fantastically well attended and very fancy Annual Dinner, which was made all the more memorable by my handpicked speaker Mr Wayne Hemingway venting his frustration at the acoustics of the Museum using some very colourful language!



Above: New-look RTPI Cymru Annual Dinner

## James Hooker

### Immediate Past Chair 2008-2009

I became Chair of RTPI Cymru in December 2008. Around the same time the wheels started to fall off the wagon and the UK plunged into the biggest recession since the 1930s. I feel that on balance the two events were most definitely unrelated, although being a Planner it is being said by some that my grasp of economic considerations is somewhat limited – maybe they mean the banks?

My theme for that year was One Wales: One Profession and focussed on the need for the planning community across all sectors to work collectively to deliver for the people of Wales. It was very clear through the course of my year as Chair that a great deal of collaborative working is taking place across Wales. The close knit community that exists between Local Authority Planners was certainly regarded with considerable envy by planning colleagues on the other side of Offa's Dyke – and probably even more so now!

The RTPI President's visit to West Wales was a fantastic success - in converting a Somerset man (albeit with part

Welsh heritage) to the delights of Evans Evans Bitter on the overnight stay in Llandeilo. However the early morning pick up to visit Dinefwr Park and Castle did prove to be a challenge!

Despite the economic downturn the Annual Dinner in November was well attended, and potential disaster averted thanks to Marks and Spencer's staying open late so that the Guest Speaker could buy another set of trousers – the original pair was still hanging up in Upper Tumble! I know of at least one person who is grateful that planning conditions did not require Cardiff shops to close earlier!

I thoroughly enjoyed my year as Chair representing over 1,000 Chartered Planners in Wales at various events and to other professions. It is said that people are the greatest asset to an organisation, and after my year meeting lots of Planners I know that this is most certainly the case for the profession in Wales. I am now curious to see what the next 10 years hold for the profession as we face the challenges that lie ahead.



Above: The early morning visit to Dinefwr Park with the RTPI President, Martin Willey (right) and the 'guide' - Eifion Bowen of Carmarthenshire County Council (centre) and James Hooker (left)

## Lucie Taylor

### Current Chair 2009-2010



Above: Lucie Taylor (centre) pictured with Ann Skippers (left), RTPI President and Roisin Willmott (right), National Director, judging the student schemes at Coleg Gwent

Ten years ago I was not even working in Wales; I was a young planner working in the development control section of South Bucks District Council. I loved my job but always dreamed of coming back to working in my homeland of Wales. Ten years on I am now doing exactly what I love, where I want to be. Having said this, being Chair of RTPI Cymru was completely off my radar 10 years ago. A job in Wales was all I wanted at the time! I know that will resonate with those planners out there that want that very thing right now. I guess my advice to you would be to stick at it, because you never know what you could achieve in 10 years in the planning profession.

With the recruitment of a National Director RTPI Cymru is now achieving some of the things that it only dreamed of 10 years ago.

By the end of this year it will have hosted at least 20 seminar style events, a spring conference in North Wales, a national conference with over 220 people attending, and the annual dinner which is to be held on 26th November. The events have all been held in top venues across Wales, drawn in

first class speakers and achieved year on year improvements in attendance. There are not many other organisations that are achieving such success in such difficult times.

My proudest moment this year has undoubtedly been hosting the President of the RTPI, Ann Skippers, to Newport, the City in which I work. First stop was the new University of Newport, Riverside Campus where the Vice Chancellor of the University was extremely proud to provide us with a personal tour of the building. Next, we visited the eco friendly Mariners Quay development at Old Town Dock, and the Riverside Park. The tour finished at Coleg Gwent in Newport, where I was very pleased to assist the President in judging a planning competition. The students taking part were fabulous and really wanted to do well. I couldn't believe how much enthusiasm there was in the room and it was really great to see young people showing an awareness of land use issues. The students, although studying for careers in hairdressing and IT, had great fun in gaining an understanding of compatible land uses and developments.

# Biodiversity Planning Toolkit Launched

## BIODIVERSITY PLANNING TOOLKIT

ALGE (Association of Local Government Ecologists) has been creating a new web based biodiversity toolkit for planners in collaboration with a nationwide partnership, including the RTPI and CCW.

The toolkit aims to help the planning community contribute to the conservation, enhancement and sustainable use of biodiversity and geodiversity.

The toolkit, which is still under development, has been designed to provide a one-stop interactive shop for:

- finding relevant legislation,

policy, guidance and good practice;

- highlighting potential development impacts; and
- providing access to information on how to manage such impacts in a way that benefits biodiversity and geodiversity conservation.

The toolkit has two main parts:

- a traditional web site with information relevant for each of the four countries in the UK; and
- an Interactive Landscape – providing animated

scenarios to describe various aspects of biodiversity and geodiversity conservation within different types of development, and also shows visually most of the habitats in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and a wide range of geodiversity features.

The pilot includes one of the most innovative approaches found in the Toolkit; this includes an animated farmstead that shows what issues should be considered for 'Barn Conversions' and how biodiversity conservation can be built into such a scenario.

At present ALGE and its partners are working on tools to assist with geodiversity conservation, small-scale residential developments, wind farms, minerals and waste applications, green infrastructure, forward spatial planning and sustainable urban drainage systems. These will be added to the toolkit later in the year.

Access the toolkit via: [www.biodiversityplanningtoolkit.com](http://www.biodiversityplanningtoolkit.com)

Cymorth	Planning
Cynllunio	Aid
Cymru	Wales

## YN EISIAU: CYFARWYDDWYR

Mae Cymorth Cynllunio Cymru yn awyddus i recriwtio dau aelod newydd i'w Fwrdd Rheoli. Gall hyn fod yn gyfle i chi - naill ai yn gynllunydd neu'n rhywun sy â diddordeb yn y sector wirfoddol - i ddatblygu'ch sgiliau, ehangu'ch dealltwriaeth o'r system gynllunio a chyfarfod â phobl newydd.

Mae'r Bwrdd yn cynnwys cyfarwyddwyr gydag arbenigedd mewn cynllunio, yr amgylchedd a datblygu cymunedol. Ymysg y cyfarwyddwyr ceir cynllunwyr proffesiynol ac phobl eraill sy a diddordeb yn y system gynllunio o ogledd a de Cymru. Cynhelir cyfarfodydd o'r Bwrdd bob chwarter, rhai rhithwir a rhai wyneb-yn-wyneb bob yn ail.

**Os am ragor o wybodaeth, cysylltwch ag Elwyn Thomas ar 01766 762244.**

**Am becyn ymgeiswyr, ewch i:**

<http://www.cymorthcynllunio.cymru.org.uk/about-us/directors>

Cymorth	Planning
Cynllunio	Aid
Cymru	Wales

## DIRECTORS WANTED

Planning Aid Wales is recruiting two new members to its Management Board. This is an opportunity for you - either as a planner or someone with an interest in the voluntary sector - to develop your skills, broaden your understanding of the planning system and meet new people.

The Board includes directors with expertise and experience in planning, environment and community development. It includes both professional planners and others with an interest in the planning system from north and south Wales. The Board meets quarterly, alternating between virtual and face-to-face meetings.

**If you would like more information, please contact Elwyn Thomas on 01766 762244.**

**For an application pack, please go to:**

<http://www.planningaidwales.org.uk/about-us/directors>

# Alan Southerby

*The current Chair of POSW, Alan Southerby, tells us about celebrities, being a TV celebrity and optimism.*



## How did you come into planning in the first place?

Completely by accident. I was all set to study civil engineering in London but for some reason got cold feet. At the same time, a job came up with my local council, the former Aberconwy Borough Council, for a planning technician. I applied and got it.

## What has been your career path to date?

I've always likened my career to climbing up every rung of the ladder. After 3 years with Aberconwy in the mid 1980s, where I also studied part-time for my HNC in Liverpool, I moved to East Sussex to work for Wealden District Council as a planning assistant in their policy team. Here, I finished off my bridge course with Birmingham Poly and went on to study for three years part-time at South Bank for my post graduate diploma. I particularly remember how one of the lecturers caught my imagination with the whole theoretical basis for Planning. I've always enjoyed that side of things.

Fully qualified, I moved into DC in the early 1990s. Cutting my DC teeth at Wealden was interesting as the policies were principally about restraint; the area had two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. After Wealden, I moved to Warrington Borough Council, which was not about restraint to anywhere near the same

extent. Moving around has certainly taught me the need to be sensitive to different policy perspectives and to understand how and why these are generated and the circumstances that need to be taken into account.

In 2000, I went to work for Macclesfield Borough Council as one of their area Principal Planning Officers. Polices of restraint existed here too as a means of supporting the economic regeneration of the south Manchester area. This was new to me as I hadn't previously encountered policies that were designed to engender change in a neighbouring area. My patch was Wilmslow and Alderley Edge, the Premiership Footballer Belt as it is colloquially known, and I thoroughly enjoyed my time there. I always remember a Members' site visit to Sir Alex Ferguson's place and all the Members pretending not to know whose house it was! Stuart Hall used to phone me quite a bit too making sure his locality was being properly planned. We used to joke in the office about people we had met and I remain envious to this day of the occasion a colleague bumped into Noddy Holder when looking at his garage extension.

Moving then to Essex, I enjoyed working at a senior level with two councils, Chelmsford Borough Council and later, Braintree District Council. It was whilst at Braintree that I was filmed for the BBC TV show *The Planners are Coming*, which was good fun but with a serious side – to be able to positively portray the challenging nature of Planning and to try to get people to see the difficult balanced judgements we have to make.

I moved to Powys in 2007 as senior manager responsible for Development Management, hoping to put my skills and experiences into good use with what is a geographically vast unitary authority. It was also a

great opportunity to move back to Wales with my family.

## What does your job involve?

My current role is both operational and strategic in equal measures although it is always a challenge not letting the everyday issues take precedence.

## What do you like about it – anything you dislike?

Finding solutions that work for people is what motivates me. One of my dislikes is how we so easily feel constrained, it seems, by previous decisions and precedent. My biggest fear, if you like, is a planning system struggling to continue making well balanced decisions that can withstand scrutiny under the weight of a fairly burdensome bureaucracy, an overwhelming array of matters to take into account and the perception of a greater threat of judicial review. This is our challenge, though, and one that we will rise to; we have to if we are to see this Country develop and prosper.

## How does devolution of planning in Wales influence your work?

Having previously worked for most of my career in England, I see two planning systems beginning to drift apart at the moment. I say this because the new UK Government has set out some fairly radical ideas in its pre-election manifesto (*Open Source Planning*) that seem like coming to fruition. Our alternative approach is a good thing provided we can foster a planning system and broader context that works for Wales.

## Are you involved with the RTPI at all?

Not as actively as perhaps I could be. Having said that, I applied for membership back in 1993 at the very first opportunity to do so. I am proud to be able to demonstrate that I am a chartered professional.

## Finally, how optimistic or pessimistic are you about the future of planning in Wales?

Always optimistic. The system is a superb way of reconciling competing interests and demands. If I'm honest, though, it has, perhaps, been a little too successful in that Planning is now used as a major delivery mechanism for so many things; there are a lot of players in the process, all with potentially quite different and competing agendas, who have a legitimate call on the system – it is there for them and we have to remain impartial, particularly in the public sector. That's ok up to a point but there comes a time, and I think we are getting close, when that impartiality can create conflict in that it sometimes manifests itself in a belief that we are unhelpful. I want us to feel unconstrained and able to help all players through the process without fear of recrimination.

Our remit has become very broad, which is fine. What I personally feel we need, however, is a return to the presumption in favour of development. This would give the profession an overarching principle when weighing up all the conflicting and competing demands and would help guide us and others through the process.

I am very pleased to chair POSW for the next two years, particularly at this time of significant change working with public and private sector colleagues, the Assembly, WLGA and RTPI Cymru to secure a planning system that is fit for purpose and able to deliver the agenda for Wales.

These views are, of course, my own and do not necessarily represent those of my employer, etc., etc.

## Events Corner

**Debate: Planning in 2010**

**Date:** 11 October 2010, 5.30 for 6pm - 8pm

**Location:** Glamorgan Building, Cardiff University, Cardiff

As part of her commitments for 2010, Lucie Taylor Chair of RTPI Cymru will be hosting a debate to discuss planning in Wales in 2010 .

**Price:** Free to RTPI Members. Advance booking is compulsory. [www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi\\_cymru](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi_cymru)

**RTPI Young Planners' Conference 2010**

**Date:** 15 & 16 October 2010

**Location:** Park Inn, Cardiff  
The RTPI-wide Young Planners' Conference is coming to Wales, organised by Young Planners Cymru. This year's conference addresses one of the key issues in planning today – delivering localism through the planning process. **All ages welcome!**

**Price:** £150 + VAT (£59 for full time students - limited places) [www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi\\_cymru](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi_cymru)

**Planning for a Healthy Wales**

**Date:** Thursday 28 October 2010, all day

**Location:** Brangwyn Hall, Swansea

Working together CIEH and RTPI Cymru are organising this joint seminar to draw together professionals with a common goal in delivering a healthy Wales.

The Conference will discuss a range of issues including area renewal, the new environmental noise directive, the practical application of health impact assessments and how to tackle the health impacts of climate change.

**Price:** £40 [www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi\\_cymru](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi_cymru)

**Wales Planning for Housing Network**

**Dates:** 16 November 2010: The Interchange, Old Colwyn  
17 November 2010: The Environment Centre, Swansea  
Both events will start at 1.30 for 2pm

CIH Cymru and RTPI Cymru are establishing a joint 'Planning for Housing' network. The purpose of this network will be to provide a Wales-wide forum to bring together professional planning and housing interests in order to raise awareness of the value of joint working, facilitate the sharing of information and provide a mechanism to raise the profile and understanding of positive planning within the housing sector and of housing interests in the planning sector.

The network will be launched with two regional events this autumn. Speakers at the events will be the authors of recent research on housing need and demand in Wales.

The events will also discuss topics for future discussion through the Network.

**Price:** £15 incl VAT [www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi\\_cymru](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi_cymru)

**Mediation Seminar / SCMA\* Launch**

\* Standing Conference of Mediation Advocates

**Date:** Thursday 24 November 2010, from 1400

**Location:** Cardiff Law School  
This will be a wide-ranging seminar, aimed at generally promoting the use of mediation in Wales (and beyond). The event will consider mediation in planning disputes, especially enforcement proceedings, amongst other applications of mediation.

**Price:** Free  
If you are interested in attending, please e-mail: [dwo@pengaron.co.uk](mailto:dwo@pengaron.co.uk)

**RTPI Cymru Annual Dinner 2010**

**Date:** Friday 26 November 2010, 7pm

**Location:** Parc Hotel, Cardiff  
Join us to celebrate another year of planning in Wales, hear who will be awarded the Wales Planning Award and catch up with friends new and old.

**Price:** £40 (early bird price of £37 by 13 October). Discounts available for tables of ten. RTPI Student & Licentiate Members: £30 if booked by 22 October. [www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi\\_cymru](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi_cymru)

**RTPI Cymru AGM 2010**

**Date:** 3 December 2010, 1.30 for 2pm

**Location:** Wales Millennium Centre, Cardiff Bay

This year's RTPI Cymru AGM will be held at the Wales Millennium Centre, Cardiff. Our guest speaker is Neil Ashbridge, Agent for the Bank of England in Wales.

**Price:** Free to RTPI members [www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi\\_cymru](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi_cymru)

**North Wales Chapter AGM 2010**

**Date:** 15 December 2010

**Location:** tbc

Further details will be available on the RTPI Cymru website and through the e-bulletin: [www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi\\_cymru](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi_cymru)

**Diary Marker: Wales Planning Conference 2011**

7th June 2011, City Hall, Cardiff

RTPI Cymru is in the process of planning the Spring Conference for 2011, as well as briefings on the launch of the forthcoming Manual for Streets 2.

Further details will be announced through the website and the e-bulletin - see page 3 for details of how to subscribe.

**Eisteddfod Genedlaethol: Regeneration in Action**

This year's seminar at the National Eisteddfod focused on the theme of regeneration, given that the Maes this year was at the major regeneration site of the former Ebbw Vale steelworks.

We heard from a range of excellent speakers discussing different aspects of regeneration - the role of planning tools, design and transport. We heard from area based regeneration taking place along the north Wales coast, Bridgend and Portishead

just across the border in England. The findings of a recent study to evaluate the impact of the former Wales Planning Award winner, Galeri in Caernarfon, were also highlighted.

The presentations are all available to download from the RTPI Cymru website (follow the left hand link - 'Presentations from events').

We would like to thank all the excellent speakers and also The Works project team at Blaenau Gwent CBC for supporting the seminar.

Next year's Eisteddfod is in Wrexham - if you would like to assist in organising the RTPI Cymru involvement, please contact Roisin Willmott.

# Changes to the Welsh Planning System

*Christian Silk discusses a recent position statement issued by the Welsh Assembly Government*

Following the General Election earlier this year there has been a general hiatus in planning legislation throughout the UK. The Welsh Assembly has taken the opportunity to write to Chief Planning Officers in July this year to set out the current position of a series of proposals stemming from the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The most important of these are:

## Mezzanines

Under Section 49 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 there are provisions for making secondary legislation to set controls on the creation of additional floorspace within buildings. This was introduced in England in May 2006, however following a consultation exercise; the Welsh Assembly has decided not to introduce secondary legislation for the foreseeable future.

## Period of validity of planning permission, listed building consent

The default time limits for implementing planning permissions and listed building consents was amended from five to three years in England in 2005 but has remained at five years in Wales. The Welsh Assembly has confirmed that the five years time period will remain unaltered. The recent downturn in the economy has caused developers in England difficulty as they have found that they have not been able to afford to implement planning permissions during the more limited time period for implementation and have had to let planning permissions lapse because they were not able to apply to vary those time limits either – a restriction which has not been introduced in Wales. This led to measures being introduced in October 2009 in England allowing for replacement planning permissions.

## Use Classes Order / General Permitted Development Order / General Development Procedure Order

Unlike in England, the Welsh Assembly has decided not to

alter Class A of the Use Classes order. In England pubs, bars, restaurants, cafes and hot food takeaways have been subdivided into different classes (from Use Class A3 to Use Class, A3, A4 and A5). Subsequent changes to permitted development rights in England mean that planning permission would be required in some cases when moving between those uses that used to fall within Use Class A3. By deciding not to alter Class A of the Use Classes Order the Welsh Assembly will allow for a flexible development management system as additional applications for planning permissions are not required should a bar be converted to a restaurant, for example as they remain within the same use class.

Casinos will also continue to remain within Use Class D2 (Assembly and Leisure) in Wales. This means use within Use Class D2, which includes Cinemas and music, concert bingo or dance halls could be changed to use as a casino without the need for planning permission as it will not be a material change of use. In England, casinos no longer fall within a use class and are 'sui generis' meaning that planning permission will always be required in order to change use to a casino. The provisions in relation to nightclubs will also remain unamended in Wales.

Changes will not be made to Use Classes C2 and C3 which relate to residential institutions and dwelling houses because of criticism that these use classes are not defined narrowly enough and include uses such as children's homes, care homes and halls of residence which can have a significant impact on a primarily residential area made up of single household dwelling houses.

Changes will also be introduced requiring consultation with the Sports Council of Wales in relation to development of recreational land of 0.2 hectares or more. The current threshold is 0.4 hectares. A date has not yet been set for

introducing this change.

Changes to Use Class C3 (residential dwellings) were introduced in England earlier this year so that houses in multiple occupation subject to specific limits in terms of the number of residents now fall within Use Class C4. Changes to permitted development rights to correspond with this change mean that planning permission is required to change a use from Use Class C3 to Use Class C4 in England. The Welsh Assembly has decided not to introduce such changes in Wales.

## Power to decline to determine applications

The Welsh Assembly also has no plans to bring into force the powers set out in The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which would allow local authorities to decline subsequent applications if they are the same or substantially the same as an application which, within the previous two years has been called-in, refused or dismissed on appeal, or if the local authority has refused two similar applications and there has been no appeal.

## Power to make non-material changes to planning permissions

This is another power which has already been brought into force in England and its purpose is to introduce express powers

for a local planning authority to make changes to a planning permission, providing those changes are not material. The Welsh Assembly is due to consult on this issue during 2010 although a specific date has not yet been set.

There has been speculation for some time regarding whether the Welsh Assembly would introduce changes to the development management system that would lead to the system duplicating the English system. It would appear that they have given consideration to the characteristics of development and the development management system in Wales and have determined that the 'shape' of the development management system should take a different path from that in England.

The Welsh development management system looks like it will evolve into a far less restrictive and controlling one when compared to the perceived characteristics of the English system. Only time will tell.

*Christian is an associate with TLT, Bristol in the Planning and Development team.*

## Bill Unsworth Memorial Prize

The Bill Unsworth Memorial prize for excellence in examinations and coursework is awarded to a student in the first year of the BSC. in City and Regional Planning at Cardiff University who reaches a high level of achievement across all their course work.

The 2009/10 Prize has been won by Elen Jenkins. Elen will receive her Award at the RTPi Cymru Annual Dinner in November.

Congratulations Elen!

# Maintenance Matters!

*Jill Fairweather tells us about a new Cadw campaign to encourage regular maintenance and explains how you can get involved in your area*



Despite the important role that the historic buildings play in the day-to-day lives of people in Wales many are degraded or threatened due to lack of basic maintenance. Even after the injection of public funding through grant schemes such as Town Scheme Partnerships and Townscape Heritage Initiatives there is no guarantee that buildings will not fall back into a state of disrepair.

To help tackle this problem Cadw has launched a new campaign: Maintenance Matters! The aim of the campaign, which is fronted by Greg Stevenson, is to promote a care, repair and re-use philosophy to underpin the sustainable development of the Welsh historic environment.

By providing practical advice on what to look for, when and what to do if problems are found, owners and tenants are encouraged to take timely action to look after their buildings. The advice is set out in two free publications, one on secular buildings and the other on places of worship. These include basic guidance on how to get started and a generic maintenance plan that can be cut out and used when buildings are inspected.

The publications also point to a website recently launched by Cadw – [www.maintenancematterswales.org](http://www.maintenancematterswales.org). This is a simple to use, free and interactive resource all about building maintenance.

The website contains expert advice on keeping buildings in the best possible condition, as well as offering advice on issues including health and safety, and choosing a suitable architect, surveyor or contractor when problems do arise. There are articles on the historic use of building materials and the development of architectural styles, as well as fact sheets on a range of topics including the use of lime mortar and how to change a broken sash cord. There are also lots of contact details and links to other useful websites, such as trade bodies and professional organisations. We hope to add more material as the site develops.

What makes this website different is the facility to build a tailor-made maintenance plan to suit an individual building. The plan can be stored on-line and printed off to record notes during maintenance inspections. These notes and a record of action taken can then be saved on-line. The 'log in' facility allows people to share their maintenance plan with others. We think that this will be particularly useful for places of worship where more than one person may be responsible for maintenance.

## How you can help

For the Maintenance Matters! campaign to succeed we need your help to distribute the publications and to publicise the website in your area. We also hope that you will find the

resource useful, especially if you are working in the areas of development control, regeneration, town centre management and building conservation. Do let us know what you think.

We have tried to make the website as flexible as possible and all of the advice can be downloaded as pdf files. National Maintenance Week, which is on 19th to 26th November this year, is an ideal opportunity to spread the message. The preparation of a maintenance plan could be linked to grant schemes and details sent to building owners and occupiers when buildings are listed or new conservation areas are designated. These are just a

couple of suggestions, but we are sure that you will think of other uses. As well as the publications and website we have postcards publicising the campaign. We are happy to provide any of this material free of charge so please get in touch if we can help.

Just as neglect tends to lead to the wider decline of an area, so regular maintenance can encourage others to do the same, to the benefit of building owners, residents and visitors alike, so let us work together to show that Maintenance Matters!

*Jill is the Senior Conservation Officer at Cadw. Cadw is the historic environment service of the Welsh Assembly Government. We aim to protect, sustain and encourage community engagement with and access to the historic environment of Wales.*

## Greg's Top Tips!



1. The original building construction will tell you how best to maintain the structure - so if lime-built use lime for repairs, if limewashed don't use any modern masonry paints, if the gutters were cast iron then don't replace with plastic and if the slates were Welsh then keep them Welsh!
2. Stand outside in the rain! It may not be fun but the best time to see if your gutters and drains are working properly is to dash out with an umbrella during a heavy downpour.
3. When painting exterior woodwork use microporous or linseed oil based paints - they'll last many more years than standard 'gloss', are less prone to cracking, and a more sustainable paint solution.
4. Keep friendly with the neighbours. Often the best view of your roof/guttering/ the rear of your house can be from a neighbouring property. A quick look through a neighbour's first floor window can avoid a dangerous climb up a ladder.
5. Don't wait for maintenance to be required, but do a spruce up of the exterior of your house in the good weather of early summer. Painting the front door or cutting back ivy isn't such a bad way to spend a warm May evening, but it is much less appealing in the cold, short days of winter.

# Better Support for Graduates

*When will we see a recovery in the employment market? asks Chris Sheridan*



During the recession many employers focused on limiting the impact on their employees. Some planners faced a reduction in working hours, others faced redundancy. Where this happened, the majority either regained employment or opted for short-term consultancy work until the job market improves. RTPI member guidance and support has been of real help to many.

It seems that the worst of the recession is behind us, but the effects on the job market may take longer to recover. Many employers suspended the recruitment of new staff during the recession, and graduates became particularly vulnerable. Having witnessed continued

economic growth, helping fuel the demand for planners and the offer of certain employment, graduates have faced the prospect of debt and a lack of opportunity. Many have found employment, but for others the first steps of their chosen career have been difficult.

The need to earn an income has led to many taking short-term work outside of planning, as Faizal Jasat, a planning graduate from the University of Sheffield, explains. "I am fortunate that I have part time, unskilled employment. But after all the hard work and expenditure towards studying a degree and masters in planning, it is very frustrating not being able to start my professional career in

planning."

It can be a disheartening process for those starting out in their careers. "Completing job applications can take so long. It would be nice to get confirmation on the outcome of your application, and maybe even some feedback" explains Faizal.

But are there ways in which the profession can help graduates gain valuable work experience? Internships are one possible option. Graduates are not short on enthusiasm, but their lack of practical experience puts them at a disadvantage. "The lack of experience doesn't help" Faizal comments, "the sector needs to find ways of providing opportunities for experience, through internships, for example".

"I felt that there wasn't any real support for unemployed planners. The RTPI and the planning profession can't create jobs, and I am sure that they are aware of the problems graduates are facing. We just want them to be more vocal in their recognition and support for us."

If we are to better support the next generation of planners then the profession needs to consider how it can help graduates get the work experience they need.

The RTPI's recession support webpages ([www.rtpi.org.uk/member\\_services/piwpl/](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/member_services/piwpl/)) includes articles and information on internships.

*Chris is the RTPI's planners in the workplace manager chris.sheridan@rtpi.org.uk. For RTPI recession support visit [www.rtpi.org.uk/member\\_services](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/member_services).*

# Third Party Appeals in Practice

*John Bowers shares his experience of third party appeals operating in the Isle of Man*

Both parties in the coalition government have proposed allowing third parties to appeal against planning decisions. The Isle of Man has allowed third party appeals for many years. I took part in one such appeal earlier this year. What follows is an account of the process.

About 20 years ago, my mother moved from a large house to a bungalow on an un-made road in a village. On one side is an orchard owned by neighbours she had known for nearly 60 years. When the son inherited the property, he applied for planning permission for two houses. My mother objected and was awarded 'party status' – meaning that she could appeal against any permission. Permission was granted as recommended by the planning officer. My mother appealed and asked for her appeal to be considered by the 'written procedure'. However, because the Village Commissioners - the local authority - also appealed, the Chief Secretary's Office decided that a hearing was needed. The Hearing was conducted by a

Planning Inspector from England, in much the same way as an Informal Hearing on the island of Britain. What was different is that the inspector held 2 or 3 other hearings on that day, all at the same venue. He made his site inspection the previous day, with the Appeals Secretary.

My mother's appeal succeeded. The Minister agreed with his inspector and refused the planning application. His decision letter was dated 18 working days after the date of the hearing. The developers have submitted a new application for two houses which will have much less effect on my mother's house. She does not intend to object.

According to the government web site, the Isle of Man has 5 development control officers. The application number was PA09/1511, suggesting that each one deals with over 300 applications a year. The report on the neighbour's application ran to 5 pages of text, excluding conditions. I have written less for an application in Snowdonia National Park with an Environmental Impact

Assessment.

The Case Officer was on a course on the day of the hearing. Her line manager stepped into the breach, after viewing the site the previous evening. Both my mother and the local authority thought that the un-made road was not good enough to serve two extra houses. The drive would need to encroach onto what I thought was a non-maintainable highway. The Highway Department did not object, and were not represented at the hearing. The inspector gave no weight to the highway issues.

How might third party appeals work in Britain? My mother won on 'amenity' issues. The new houses would "have an unacceptably dominant and overbearing impact on the outlook from the neighbouring property..."

The Development Plan has a policy which includes the phrase "does not adversely affect the amenity of local residents..." There are similar phrases in many development plans in Britain. It is difficult to think of a

development which a neighbour would want to appeal against where such policies would not be relevant. Limiting the right of third party appeal to decisions contrary to the development plan could have almost no effect.

The Isle of Man has a long tradition of individual petition, and no party discipline in Tynwald (our parliament). This allows disputes between citizens and government to be settled with recourse to the courts.

As with nearly all 'improvements' to the planning system in Britain over the last 30 years, third party appeals would add to the workload of DC Officers. Adding such rights to the British planning system would certainly benefit lawyers and consultants.

Could any UK government could make them work?

*John works for Snowdonia NPA and is originally from the Isle of Man.*

# Creating Quality Places - Working Together ....

## All professions are equal, but some are more equal than others ....!

*Robin Shepherd and Peter Evans discuss the application of Manual for Streets and the need for cross-professional working*

In designing new developments, architects, planners, urban designers / masterplanners, landscape designers, engineers, environmental specialists and many other disciplines are involved, each at different stages.

When we are asked what we like about our favourite places, more often than not, we would struggle to recall the design of individual buildings, but will be able to describe the character of the place – the spaces between the buildings - and what they feel like.

However, despite this, typically when designing new developments or reviewing their quality, the vast majority of time and effort is placed upon what the buildings and streetscenes will look like, rather than focussing upon the spaces between them.

Far too often, different professionals are consulted at a late stage, resulting in problems of conflicting objectives, such as the reluctance of highway teams to adopt spaces, or concerns of different parties over certain elements of proposals, far too late in the process. At the same time, the entire development profession is often reluctant to think innovatively and flexibly, instead reverting to standards and rule books for comfort and assurance.

At a recent seminar in West Wales, HRH Prince Charles astutely commented that “the rule book will only ever create estates”. Yet very few people will hail these estates as examples of high quality places or even aspire to live in them. The profession then wonders why we are creating the same form of developments throughout the country. He then went on to ask: “Where are our Conservation Areas of tomorrow?”

It is therefore obvious that if we want to change the type of places we are creating, we have to change the way we are working.

Manual for Streets was published

in 2007 – some 3 years ago and applies equally to Wales as it does in England. However, planners often assume that it is a document solely for the transport professionals and it is rarely used when designing new developments and spaces in Wales, despite numerous appeals drawing upon this as one of the key pieces of design guidance.

One of the key messages within Manual for Streets is the need to work collaboratively across professions, engaging with each other at an early stage, to agree a vision and objectives for the development and to iron out problems before they arise. This not only helps the applicant through pre-application discussions (for which some authorities are now charging to cover resourcing concerns) by providing consistent and comprehensive advice, but this approach also saves time

and resources in addressing problems at a late stage.

One of the other key messages in Manual for Streets is the need for a focus upon creating quality places – moving away from the rule book and thinking flexibly, creatively and innovatively. Potential issues over adoption, shared spaces, parking and other “gritty” problems that can hold developments up for months on end, can often be addressed by careful and creative thinking, without reverting the old superseded DB32 approach, creating high quality places that we are proud of and that provide an attractive environment to live, work or play in.

A companion guide “Manual for Streets 2 - Application of the Wider Principles” is due to be published this autumn, this will build on the original guidance exploring in greater detail how and where its key principles can

be applied to busier streets and non-trunk roads, thus helping to fill the perceived gap in guidance between Manual for Streets and Design Manual for Roads and Bridges. Manual for Streets 2 sets out that Design Manual for Roads and Bridges is the design standard for trunk roads in the UK, and its strict application to non-trunk routes is rarely appropriate for highway design in built up areas, regardless of traffic volume. Manual for Streets 2 will provide further examples of how the approaches advocated have been applied in practice, providing further evidence of how it can work to create quality places.

### So what is the role of the planner in this process?

Firstly, the planner must understand the principles in Manual for Streets and focus their efforts on creating quality places.



*Above: Delegates discussing street layout at the recent Transportation Training sessions, Llandudno*

Secondly, the planner must take control of the process. The determining authority for a planning application is the local planning authority and therefore, the planner is able to steer, influence and even override consultees concerns where this would undermine the objective of creating a quality place. The planner is also in the unique position of being able to bring each party to the table at an early stage to agree objectives and a vision for the development.

Thirdly, the planner must have the necessary skills to advise on design and creating quality places, being able to visualise plans and foresee potential problems and opportunities. Where necessary, further advice should be sought from elsewhere, for example colleagues, external consultants, or the Design Review process

undertaken by the Design Commission for Wales.

Barton Willmore and WSP were recently commissioned by a client group including the Design Commission for Wales, Welsh Assembly and RTPI, to provide training to all local planning and highway authorities across Wales with the aim of championing sustainable and good design and great places. This training was delivered to a mixed audience of planners, engineers and other development related professionals with the aim of bringing planning and transport objectives closer together in engendering shared objectives and collaborative working for the creation of better places in which to live in Wales emphasising the importance of design and quality and seeking to put the latest thinking into practice into projects. A key focus of the

training was "Manual for Streets" and how this guidance should be used to help deliver sustainable and good design and great places. The responses received from the training were excellent, welcoming the interactive nature and content of the courses. Many of the preconceptions or obstacles to delivering successful places were addressed and the critical role of the planner in achieving quality design was highlighted.

The developments we are creating will be there for many years and will have a significant effect upon the quality of peoples lives. This is a responsibility that cannot be taken lightly and a failure to create the best possible places today will be a lost opportunity and problem for tomorrow.

The design agenda is therefore

at the heart of the planning process and creating quality places needs to be embraced to create sustainable, successful and attractive places for our communities and generations to come. There is growing evidence that high quality public spaces, developments or buildings have far reaching benefits in terms of health and well being. However, evidence is also growing of the wider economic, social and environmental benefits of good design.

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## Planning for Localism: Young Planners' Conference

RTPI Cymru young planners gazed into their crystal ball a while ago and are thus able to bring you their 2010 young planners' conference with a theme of Planning for Localism, just at the time that the word 'localism' has come to dominate the planning agenda.

In Cardiff on 15th and 16th October, the conference organisers have devised a 'devolution-neutral' programme that will be of benefit to all planners across the UK irrespective of the planning system they work in, and delegates will also be able to visit some of the iconic landmarks in the city.

The Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing at the Welsh Assembly Government, Jane Davidson, together with the RTPI President, Ann Skippers, will open the conference.

A full two days of plenary sessions, workshops and study tours will help you:

- Understand the importance being placed on local distinctiveness
- Understand how to respond

to local distinctiveness in preparing applications

- Be aware of the different approaches being taken on development plan preparation
- Consider the role of Design and Access Statements
- Learn from international lessons on local distinctiveness

Young planners will also be able to build up their CPD by developing or picking up new skills and networking with other young planners from across the UK. And there's an innovative 'Young Planners' Den' for which you need to think in terms of speed dating, Dragons Den and The Apprentice, with some planning thrown in!

On the Friday evening delegates will dine at the Millennium Stadium (optional at an additional cost). And on the Saturday afternoon there's a choice of study tours including two to Cardiff Bay (with optional boat tour), to Cardiff City Centre, to St Fagan's National History Museum, and to nearby Newport to look at waterside regeneration



– home of the Ryder Cup 2010. Delegates may also have the time to sneak off to the Dr Who exhibition in the Bay or the largest John Lewis outside of London.

For more information and to book, visit our website at [www.rtpi.org.uk/ypconference](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/ypconference) or contact Trish Cookson at [young.planners@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:young.planners@rtpi.org.uk). And you don't have to be 'young' or even a 'planner' to attend – **all ages are welcome**.

Conference organiser and Senior Planning Manager at the Welsh

Assembly Government, Andrew Charles, says: "I look forward to welcoming young planners across the UK to my home city of Cardiff for what is shaping up to be an eventful and fruitful conference".

# RTPI Cymru Annual Dinner 2010

**Parc Hotel,  
Park Place, Cardiff  
Friday 26 November  
7 for 7.30pm**

**Wine Reception &  
3 Course Dinner**

**Presentation of the Wales  
Planning Award**

£40 (or book by 13 October - £37)  
Discounts for full tables  
RTPI Student & Licentiate Members:  
£30 (must book by 22 October)

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