



in perspective

mediation of space • making of place

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROYAL TOWN PLANNING INSTITUTE SOUTH EAST • DECEMBER 2010

www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi_south_east/



From the chair

Steve Avery, Chair, RTPi South East

Hello and welcome to this festive edition. They say it is the season of glad tidings and goodwill and there was plenty of that in evidence at this year's AGM and Awards Evening.

The Awards Evening is one of our flagship events and it was great to see so many people attending on the night. Appropriately enough, the venue itself was an award winner from last year – the stunning Eton College Rowing Lake – which will host the rowing and kayak events in the 2012 Olympics.

There were a record number of entries for this year's Awards and with so much planning reform looming on the horizon, it was a timely opportunity to celebrate the excellent planning work taking place across the Region.

Inspirational and uplifting were just some of the accolades bestowed by Martin Randall, Chair of the Awards Judges, on this year's entries. So congratulations to all, and especially to the joint overall winners – the Bryan Jezeph Consultancy for their imaginative work on refurbishing a listed building and curtilage buildings in East Hampshire and the Lee Evans Partnership for their sensitive restoration of farm buildings to provide specialist residential accommodation in the South Downs National Park.

Special thanks must also go to our generous sponsors who made the evening possible – Adams Hendry, Peak Quality Homes and the Universities of Brighton and Reading. If you have never attended an Awards evening, make sure you book a place for next year.

The Awards were preceded by our AGM - the AGM papers and the make up of the new Committee can be found on the website rtpi.org.uk/rtpi_south_east.

We are always looking for new Committee members and if you would like to get involved with the region's work, then please contact our administrator Carol Dawson southeast@rtpi.org.uk. No previous experience necessary!

You will see from this edition that the new Committee is already working hard to put together a CPD and events' programme for next year. Early in the New Year, we will be undertaking a survey of the Region's members to get your views about our regional activities and events.

It will be your chance to let us know what you think about RTPi South East and how we can best meet your needs as members. So watch this space and make sure you have your say. In the meantime, I imagine many of us will be scrutinising the finer details of the long awaited Localism Bill – assuming it has actually been released by the time you receive this newsletter! We will all have our own views on how the planning system could be improved but if we are to stop "the baby being thrown out with the bathwater" we need to make sure we actively engage in the debate.

The RTPi is campaigning hard on behalf of planning and now is the time for our collective voice to be heard.

southeast@rtpi.org.uk

Steve Avery
Chair, RTPi South East

REPORT ON DFML 2010

This year's lecture was given by Professor Jim Coleman of Regeneris Consulting, Visiting Professor at the University of Westminster and Senior Honorary Research Fellow at the Bartlett School, UCL.

He spoke on how planning effectively for sustainable economic growth requires that a clear, evidence-based economic strategy is already in place. All too often, economic strategies have to be retro-fitted into an existing planning and spatial framework and the two do not necessarily join up to provide the basis for improved economic prosperity. The lecture focused on how to design and develop economic strategies at different spatial levels - regional, sub-regional and especially local - and the challenges and pitfalls of trying to ensure that planning and economic strategy fit together as effectively as possible for the good of local economies and communities. Despite very cold weather conditions, there was still a good turnout, and those who battled through the cold also enjoyed the buffet and networking afterwards. Special thanks go to Oxford Brookes University for hosting the event and to Savills (Oxford) & Peak Quality Homes (Farnham) for their generous sponsorship.

FUTURE EVENTS

Preparations are well underway on next year's programme of CPD events. If you have yet to decide on a New Year's resolution and have not been to one of our regional events then why not commit to trying one in 2011. We provide good quality but low cost events, which may be just the ticket in these days of tighter training budgets.

I hope we will also see many of our regulars again, for fresh updates and debates.

Forthcoming events include: 9 March - Annual Enforcement Event in Maidenhead (joint event with NAPE); April - Spring Legal Update in Southampton; 12 May - Annual Rural Planning Event (afternoon) and inaugural Brighton Rock Spring Lecture by Prof Mark Tewdr-Jones of UCL (late afternoon / early evening), both at Brighton University; 23 June - Coastal Planning, and; Presidents visit in June / July. I expect the Localism Bill will feature in many of our events in 2011; we are looking to make it

the subject of an event in early February, and as part of the President's visit to the Region in the summer. Further news of events throughout 2011 will be released in the New Year.

If you are a local authority, consultancy or sole practitioner and are interested in hosting, sponsoring or speaking at one of these or a future event then please contact us at

southeast@rtpi.org.uk

PLEASE NOTE THAT BECAUSE OF RISING PRINTING AND POSTAGE COSTS, THIS WILL BE THE LAST PAPER NEWSLETTER FOR THE SOUTH EAST REGION. IN FUTURE IT WILL BE SENT ELECTRONICALLY, SO MAKE SURE YOU UPDATE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS WITH CAROL DAWSON. IF YOU WOULD STILL LIKE TO RECEIVE A PAPER COPY, DO LET CAROL KNOW.

■ Send us your articles and ideas at southeast@rtpi.org.uk or use it to tell us you would rather receive a paper copy. If you work outside the public sector and want to update your email details, contact southeast@rtpi.org.uk.

RTPI SOUTH EAST AWARDS 2010

Sponsorship of this year's awards was generously given by Adams Hendry, Brighton University, Peak Quality Homes and Reading University. We would like to thank our sponsors once again, and hope to encourage continued and new sponsorship in 2011. Contact Carol Dawson if you are interested in sponsoring one of next year's awards.

The results of this year's awards were as follows :

Arts Culture & Sport

Award – Simons, Dover District Council and Dover Sea Sports Development Trust

Climate Change

Award - Nature Conservation & Development SPD, Brighton & Hove
Commendation – Planning Policies & Technical Guides, Tonbridge & Malling

Community Engagement

Award – Graylingwell, Chichester – John Thompson & Partners

Equality & Diversity

Award – East Clayton Farm, Bradbury Court – Lee Evans Partnership

Heritage

Award - Cadlington House, Blendworth – Bryan Jezeph Consultancy

Local Regeneration & Renewal (sponsored by Brighton University)

Commendation - Buckinghamshire New University – BNP Paribas Real Estate

Master Planning

Commendation – Former Royal Alexandra Hospital Site, Brighton & Hove

Planning Process (sponsored by Peak Quality Homes)

Award – Implementing Regional Planning in the South East by South East England Partnership Board

Public Realm

Commendation - Art at the Centre – Slough's new high street, Slough Borough Council

Spatial Strategy (sponsored by Adams Hendry)

Commendation - Wokingham's Core Strategy
Commendation – Dover District Council

Sustainable Communities (sponsored by Reading University)
Award – Marriott's Walk, Witney – West Oxfordshire District Council

Joint Overall Winners:

Bryan Jezeph Consultancy
Lee Evans Partnership

PLANNING AID

The Planning Aid service as we currently know it is at grave risk. The government recently confirmed it would not continue the RTPI Planning Aid contract and funding beyond 31 March 2011. The government has said it will make funding available to support neighbourhood planning, for which parties can bid for a share. However, details of this fund, and when and how to submit bids, is still awaited. Planning Aid England has made it very clear to CLG that it is critical information about the fund be made available as a matter of urgency, to allow time for a bid to be made and determined well before the end of March 2011, to help avoid the disintegration of the service infrastructure.

Planning Aid receives substantial support from volunteers across England and here in the South East. The service existed before funding from central government was available and will if necessary continue without it in future. But great progress had been made in recent years in creating a service with far greater reach and more involvement in empowering local communities.

Data released for 2010 showed that Planning Aid England had helped nearly 38,000 people and 1,092 organisations, which included training events for 34,000 people and 4,750 cases. Over a thousand members of the RTPI volunteered their time for free. It will be the poorest members of society, those who cannot afford professional planning advice, who will be hit by these changes.

If it is the intention of government to replace this funding over time with a neighbourhood planning fund, then they should at least ensure sufficient funding is kept in place for the Planning Aid service to continue for a period, to allow for a replacement funding source to be acquired. A number of members across the region, and across England, have already written to the government seeking assurances this will be done - you too could add your voice to these calls, by writing direct to the Secretary of State, Eric Pickles.

Meanwhile, we should all salute the staff and many volunteers who in this difficult time continue to provide a professional Planning Aid service across our region.

THE REGION IS DEAD – long live the sub-national!

The South East regional planning team was disbanded in the summer of 2010 and it is not yet certain whether the Regional Spatial Strategy remains a material consideration (subject to continuing legal challenge by Cala Homes) and the Localism Bill (published on 13 December) proposes that RSS in England will be abolished.

At the Department of Communities and Local Government's Select Committee, the RTPI and TCPA made strong points about the hiatus.

rtpi.org.uk/item/4163/23/5/3

A Public Bodies Bill intends the abolition of quangos including the Regional Development Agencies (SEEDA among many others) and also the Commission for Rural Communities.

Volume II of the Localism Bill sets out, among many other things, the new Neighbourhood Development Orders to be added to the local development orders of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This means another big change to the planning system.

To see this article in full, go to rtpi.org.uk/rtpi_south_east/

OVERALL WINNERS OF THE REGIONAL PLANNING AWARDS 2010



Many thanks once again to this year's sponsors...

