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# ROOT AND BRANCH

RTPI YORKSHIRE REGION  
NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2010



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# FOREWORD

## Planning for the Unexpected

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**A**s I'm writing this, the Summer holidays are drawing to a close, and the spending review deadline is looming ever closer. But, it's on the subject of holidays that I wish to dwell.

**F**orever the planner, I'm always interested to find out about an interesting planning back-story, and this summer I had the pleasure of visiting two fascinating examples that have raised all kinds of challenges for the planning system.

**F**irst, was the unlikely Holmfirth Vineyard, tucked away on a steep hillside just outside Holmbridge in the Holme Valley in Kirklees. The landscape here is beautiful, and in the West Yorkshire Green Belt. It was this location that a downshifting couple from Warwickshire decided to make a new life in the country. For one of the pair, this was a return home. They set up home by converting a vacant barn, and decided to establish a vineyard on the adjacent land they had acquired. So far so simple. However, the couple have ambitions for their vineyard, and have recently secured planning consent for a new visitor centre as well as luxury eco-apartments set into the hillside. This has been far from a straight-forward process, with an inevitable level of objection. However, close working with officers and supportive local elected members keen to see the local economic benefits of the proposals have eventually smoothed the way, and work is due to take place this Winter ready for the 2011 Summer season. I can recommend a tour and a taste by the way (especially the rosé), and the proprietors will be more than happy to tell you about their planning back-story in more detail!

Next was the Forbidden Corner, near Leyburn in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. For those that don't know about this fascinating place, it's a garden folly comprising a labyrinth wooded garden, and subterranean tunnels and grottos. It's great fun to visit. Built originally as a private garden, it has subsequently been opened up to the public. The National Park Authority refused the retrospective planning consent for the visitor attraction, and it was ultimately allowed on appeal subject to measures to regulate visitor numbers through a pre-booking system. It is now one of the more popular visitor attractions in the area, and has won awards including the 'best European folly of the 20th century' by The Folly Fellowship and also voted the best children's attraction in Yorkshire. This case illustrates well the challenge of reconciling the dual purposes of National Parks of promoting public access and recreational opportunities, and conserving

and enhancing natural beauty, wildlife, and cultural heritage. Arguably, this challenge is brought into even sharper focus by the requirement to seek to foster the economic and social well being of local communities added by the Environment Act of 1995.

Both these cases are complex, and raise a series of issues beyond the brief summaries set out here. But they both raise important issues regarding common misunderstandings about the purposes of the Green Belt, and also of National Parks. There's clear evidence that mediating the competing demands for the use of land in our rural landscapes is going to keep planners busy for some time yet. They also raise the important issue that we can't plan for everything, and that the planning system always needs to be ready to respond to the unexpected. Not even the most far-sighted planner could have anticipated a vineyard in the Holme Valley, even in the context of the Last of the Summer Wine! It also raises a challenge to the idealised model of local plan-making set out in Open Source Planning, which assumes a degree of certainty that will never be realised. There will always be competing interests that the planning system needs to attempt to resolve through the development control process.

Back at RTPI Yorkshire HQ we've just finished sorting out the range of topics we plan to cover in 2011 as part of the Yorkshire Conference Series with Leeds Metropolitan and Sheffield Hallam Universities. Thank you for all the suggestions we've received via feedback forms so far this year. We've frozen our prices for 2011, so the programme will be better value than ever. As usual, we have selected a range of ten topics that address contemporary planning issues, offer valuable local CPD opportunities, as well as the chance to meet fellow planners from around the region. Look out for the new programme in December.

We've also just had a very successful Yorkshire Practice Seminars event on Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments, as a free late-afternoon event, look out for further affordable CPD events during the rest of the year. If you have any suggestions for future CPD events, please send an e-mail to [yorkshire@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:yorkshire@rtpi.org.uk).



**Richard Crabtree,  
Chair, RTPI Yorkshire**

(Richard writes in a personal capacity.)

# Professional doctorates for senior planners: The Chester DProf

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## **Jon Talbot concludes his two linked articles on this exciting new initiative**

In the last edition of Root and Branch I explained what a Professional Doctorate (DProf) is and how it differs from a traditional Doctorate (PhD). In summary while a PhD is in some way concerned with generating original, theory relevant knowledge which is universally applicable a DProf aims to generate practice relevant knowledge within a particular context. That context can be individual practice but is more likely to relate to a broader body of professional or organisational knowledge. Whereas PhDs have been the preserve of academics and the specialised forms of knowledge held in universities, DProfs are undertaken by senior practitioners, drawing upon and extending their professional knowledge. DProfs are well established in areas such as Engineering and Education but less so in other professions like planning. The University of the West of England is the only institution to offer a specific 'Doctor in Spatial Planning' but it has no students and

there must be some doubt as to whether a professional doctorate aimed simply at planners is currently viable. The RTPI has no official policy on professional doctorates although there is an awareness of their potential.

The problem seems to be that most DProfs offered at UK universities are tied to a specific discipline and that where there is no tradition within an allied profession there is low visibility and hence low demand. Many university Education departments offer one and it usual for Educational Advisors and Educational Psychologists to obtain one. In recent years there has also been a growth in Business Schools offering a similar qualification- the Doctor in Business Administration (DBA). There is a great deal of variety in terms of content but most offer a combination of Level 7 (Masters) study and Level 8 (Doctoral). Unlike PhDs they are credit rated and modular. A typical UK DProf is comprised of 540 credits- 180 at Level 7, 360 at Level 8 with more taught modules at Level 7 and usually some kind of thesis based upon a research project submitted at Level 8. In most universities several awards and models (in different departments) co-exist but at some, like Portsmouth, there is a single model used throughout.

There are also differences between universities in the extent to which an award can be obtained using prior learning. For example on most programmes students already holding a 180 credit rated Masters degree will be able to obtain exemption from study at Level 7. Practices also vary in the extent to which universities are able to give credit exemption for experiential learning- that is learning generated as part of professional practice. This could be generated in the workplace or could come from external publishing for example. There are many professionals who regularly write for journals or write books, thereby contributing to practice knowledge, who if the university permits, as it does at Chester, can obtain academic credit for it as part of their award. At Chester the rule is that a maximum of 50% of the credit for an award can be obtained in this way. Some universities allow 66%.

At Chester the DProf programme has grown from a record in facilitating adult learning in the workplace rather than a subject discipline. For over a decade the university has delivered learning based around the needs of learners at all levels in Higher Education which not only allows students to negotiate their own title, programme of learning and time of starting and ending. All programmes are based on an explicit commitment to reflective practice whereby students interrogate lived experience in the light of more formal ways of knowing as the basis for improved performance. Delivery is via e-learning platforms, tutorials and workplace workshops. Over a thousand students are currently registered to learn in this way, often completing smaller qualifications such as a 60 credit Post Graduate Certificate in Regeneration Practice, for example. The DProf is a logical extension to this in that it extends the portfolio to include doctoral level study for practitioners.

As a result the Chester DProf is not subject specific but open to practitioners in all fields, constrained only by our ability to provide underpinning subject knowledge. The only other comparable programme is at Middlesex which has been operating for almost a decade (abroad as well as the UK) and with over 300 registered students is by far the largest DProf programme in the UK. Given their location most of their students are in London and the South East and they are able to tap into a market created by the presence of so many Head Offices of public and private bodies there. At Chester our aims are more modest: we have a number of existing Masters graduates who wish to complete, there are members of the university who have enrolled alongside others who have heard of it by chance. We also target specific professional groups beginning with planners, as I am one.

It is expected most people entering the programme will already have a Masters although this is not essential. All students begin with a 40 credit Personal and Professional Review which requires reflection and contextualisation of career and personal development as the basis for consideration of further study at Doctoral level. For those with a Masters the rest of Level 7 can be obtained through Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL). It is anticipated most people will complete this level in a year. At Level 8 students complete modules on research methods for practice, a minor and major research project. Each can be subsumed into a whole leading to the submission of a 35,000 word thesis. Alternatively the minor and major research project can be separate: APL can be used in respect of the minor project- writing articles and books is especially relevant here. Students are encouraged to carry out 'naturally occurring' research projects- that is which are carried out as part of their work. Many planners have lots of opportunities here, especially those engaged in studies for plan preparation or retail impact studies, for example. Even without these kinds of opportunities the research projects should be relevant to practice- either the needs of the organisation or wider professional knowledge. For most students three years is sufficient to complete this level and submit their thesis.

Undertaking a DProf is a considerable undertaking but there are great intrinsic rewards. It enables high achievers to deepen their practice knowledge as well as become familiar with leading thinking. It facilitates self knowledge and inner direction and lays the foundation for future development. I am confident in years to come we will see many planners who achieve it. In the longer term the carrying out of practice relevant research should considerably enhance the knowledge base of the profession. Practitioners have long complained that traditional university research often fails to generate useful knowledge. Research by practitioners should address that issue.

## Are you a senior practitioner looking for a new challenge?

**The University of Chester Professional Doctorate is a part time qualification designed to enable full reflection on your career and create new knowledge for professional practice.**

**\*Fully accredited \*Flexible \* Relevant \*Integrates work and study**

**Contact: Dr Jon Talbot 01244 512108, [j.talbot@chester.ac.uk](mailto:j.talbot@chester.ac.uk)**

Yorkshire Planning Aid has recruited its first Parliamentary Patron. Meg Munn, MP for Sheffield Heeley, will help to support YPA's work both in Westminster and in her own constituency. Meg had visited the Discus Housing Project in York in 2007 when she was a CLG Minister, and she keenly remembered this visit and the support that YPA had given to the residents' group there. (Meg pictured at that visit with YPA Chair Ken Burley) We've approached MPs in other parts of Yorkshire, and we hope to recruit another two to the cause by the end of the year.



Meanwhile, staff and volunteers have been extremely busy at community planning events and with casework. Residents' groups in two parts of Leeds have been supported with their community plans at very different stages. In New Wortley in West Leeds they undertook a one year review of their plan at their Summer Fun Day, assisted by three YPA volunteers. And in Fearnville, in East Leeds, over 200 people turned up to a consultation day at the very start of the process of developing a community plan for their local area, again with support from YPA staff and volunteers.

The YPA Helpline was extremely busy in July, with enquiries ranging from wind turbines and preservation of open spaces, to supermarket expansions and home radio aerials. We are increasingly assigning cases to a volunteer 'team', for instance a lead advisor and a couple of researchers, in order to spread the workload. This seems to work very well – if you're interested in being involved please give us a call. For more information on YPA you can read our recently published Annual Report on the Planning Aid website:- [www.planningaid.rtpi.org.uk](http://www.planningaid.rtpi.org.uk) and go to 'Planning Aid in your Area'.

**Finally, apologies for the absence of Roy and Betty after their inaugural appearance. They're on a late summer holiday but hope to be back in time for the next edition!**

Jacqui Baines



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# Do you work in planning enforcement? Are you interested in how planning decisions are enforced? Have you considered joining NAPE?

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

This year's Chairwoman for NAPE is Sue Taylor, Planning Enforcement Manager at Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council. In all, she has worked in the field of planning enforcement for nearly 25 years and is keen to ensure that this section of the planning community is properly recognised.

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

NAPE membership provides:

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

NAPE is supported by the RTPI, and RTPI members can join NAPE for free. Further details can be found at [www.rtpi.org.uk/nape](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/nape).

Sue Taylor is also always happy to answer any questions you may have about NAPE. Her contact details are: **SusanJTaylor@barnsley.gov.uk Tel: 01226 774714**

## Young Planners' Conference - Planning for Localism

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This conference addresses one of the key issues in planning today – delivering localism through the planning process. Why should I attend?

This conference will help you:

- Understand the importance of 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
- Build up your CPD by developing or picking up new skills Network with fellow young planners across the UK

### Cost:

Student rate: From \*£39 + VAT

Standard rate: From \*£99 + VAT

\*Early bird rates until 10 September **Where and When:**

Cardiff (Park Inn, Mary Street), 15th – 16th October 2010

**For more information and to book your place, visit:** [www.rtpi.org.uk/ypconference](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/ypconference)

This conference is brought to you by RTPi Young Planners' Cymru and is sponsored by the Welsh Assembly Government and Savills, and supported by Nathaniel Litchfield & Partners, Barton Willmore, Cardiff University and Newport City Council.

## Obituary - George William Douglas Marlow

It is our sad duty to inform readers of the death of Brighouse-based planner and surveyor George Marlow (aged 94), a member of the Institute since 1950. Throughout his career he was known as Douglas as opposed to George (his 'Sunday' name). Originally from Desborough, Northamptonshire, he became interested in town planning early in 1937 when working for John German & Sons. This interest was encouraged by his father, Chief Engineer and Surveyor to Ashby Urban and Ashby Wolds Urban Council, who had advised him that 'planning was the 'up and coming profession''. During the Second World War George served as an officer in the Royal Engineers - Middle East and North Western Europe.

In 1946, Douglas commenced his planning studies at the Leeds School of Architecture and Town Planning on a part time basis (mainly evenings) and obtained a Diploma in Town and Country Planning in 1949. From 1946-48, George was the Deputy Planning Officer to the Upper Calderdale Joint Planning Committee, moving onto the post of Deputy Area Planning Officer for the Pontefract Area of West Riding County 1948-54. He was also Junior Partner at Marlow & Sons Chartered Engineers & Town Planners (Goole and Ashby-de-la-Zouch) 1954-59, Senior Planning Assistant to the Dewsbury County Borough 1959-61, Senior Planning Officer at Leeds City Council 1961-1962, and Chief Assistant Planner to the newly formed West Yorkshire Metropolitan County Council 1974-1980 when he retired.

Apart from his time in Yorkshire, Douglas also worked north of Border in the 1960s as Deputy Planning Officer for the Scottish Borough of Paisley and then as Principal Planning Officer with the City of Birmingham from 1964-74. It was here that George led the multi-disciplinary team engaged in the design and implementation of the Daventry Town Development Scheme. He considered this 10 year period as the most satisfying of his whole career.



# The YORnet Softball Extravaganza

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A 'Round-up' by YORnet members Christopher Hull and Will Martin



Roundhay Rounders

YORnet hosted a softball extravaganza on Soldiers Field in Roundhay Park, Leeds on the 12th of August. While the weather had been looking decidedly dodgy during the day the clouds finally broke and provided near perfect conditions for the much anticipated event (although some did get wet on the way to the post match drinks).

The event captured the imagination of young and old alike with participants from all sectors of the Built Environment trying to demonstrate their Sosa and Bonds-like abilities. It was great to see such a strong turn out with approximately 50 people attending, prompting the need for a round-robin style competition. Whilst the emphasis was on fun, socializing and enjoying the Yorkshire sunshine, an element of competitiveness was shown by all – some more than others!!!

It was great to see such a well attended event and provided a refreshing alternative to the usual networking and socialising events. Given the popularity of YORnet softball we recommend that you watch this space for further games and/or other sporting themed events!

In order to be informed of future events please contact the RTPi Yorkshire Regional Co-ordinator, Paula Nolan at [Yorkshire@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:Yorkshire@rtpi.org.uk) to be added to the YORnet mailing list.



The Assembled Athletes

## RTPI - Shaping the debate on planning

Members are often interested in how the Institute is promoting the value of planners and an effective planning system. The RTPI is a charity which exists to advance the science and art of planning for the benefit of the public and we do so by setting high standards for learning, shaping the future of planning and supporting our members.

The RTPI this year launched "Shaping the Future", the Institute's manifesto for planning. One of the most comprehensive statements ever to come from the RTPI, it summarises our aspirations and position on leading issues facing planners, as well as setting out what we will do to achieve these aims.

Recently the RTPI has been very active in responding to the constant flow of government announcements on planning. Regional spatial strategies have been revoked; local enterprise partnerships and a regional growth fund announced; swingeing cuts are

starting to affect planning departments and a whole tier of regional government has been removed.

The RTPI is concerned about the speed of these changes and their impact. We were one of the first organisations to meet decentralisation minister Greg Clark, and – accompanied by Local Government and Planning Minister Bob Neill - he gave his first public speech on planning reform at our annual Planning Convention in June. Showing that the CLG team are keen to engage with the profession, Clark spoke to delegates and both ministers took questions from the floor.

We also held a parliamentary reception hosted by Labour MP and former Housing and Planning Minister Nick Raynsford. This was an excellent opportunity to communicate our key messages from our manifesto and it was a particular coup that the new Communities Secretary Eric Pickles spoke at this event.

We have also taken Greg Clark to Wandsworth Borough Council to see real examples of good planning, and he has accepted our invitation to visit a Planning Aid project and to meet with our Young Planners.

We have a detailed political engagement strategy in operation, monitoring all ministerial and departmental announcements, as well as building relationships with the new government. We continue to develop and strengthen our existing relationships with civil servants, something that has proved fruitful since the coalition government took office.

The RTPI's Policy & Practice team gives high level policy input to government initiatives on a daily basis. We respond to formal consultations, with specialist practitioners through our networks, regions and nations, to develop robust Institute positions. Since the election, members of the policy and practice team, or representatives from the networks, have frequently met civil servants in Westminster to engage on particular issues

Our response to Housing Minister Grant Shapps' proposals to overturn the system for managing HMOs is just one example. Building on the expertise we built up through the joint RTPI/CIH Planning for Housing Network's work on previous consultations, and ongoing discussion with members, we have gathered further evidence and maintained a positive dialogue with CLG. Similar engagement has been taking place on the proposed 'Community Right to Build', marine planning, and the emerging Localism and Decentralisation Bill.

In recent weeks, we have taken a strong stand in support of planning, and of course our members regarding the revocation of regional

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spatial strategies and the strategic planning apparatus. The RTPI has brought together a group of 29 organisations including the WWF, RIBA, BPF and RICS, CPRE and CLA, who have jointly written to Eric Pickles, offering to work with the coalition government to ensure that the localism agenda can deliver and that sub-national planning is developed successfully.

This campaign achieved extensive national press coverage in the FT, Guardian, Sunday Times as well as coverage in the trade press. We look forward to working with the Coalition Government as it takes forward its agenda for planning reform and have pledged to work constructively together to deliver an effective and strategic planning system.

The RTPI's media profile continues to develop and we regularly appear on national radio and television outlets commenting on planning, including recent appearances on 'Newsnight', the 'Politics Show', the 'One Show' and Radio 4's 'Today'. These successes are the results of years of steadily building up the RTPI's media profile and demonstrate how far we have come in being recognised as the key national voice for planning.

We have also campaigned vigorously on the proposed funding cuts to university planning courses in Scotland and the huge job cuts proposed for the Planning Service in Northern Ireland, engaging both Assembly members and MSPs. We have built a broad based coalition against these cuts, which we have argued will affect economic recovery and hinder each nation's ability to meet their government's own objectives.

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

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

To help our members understand the changes happening to the planning system, [www.rtpi.org.uk/policy](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/policy) covers all the latest government announcements and statements, with a summary of their impact for the planning profession, and as the impact of these changes becomes clearer we will be running training events to keep you up-to-date with what is happening to the planning system,

working with others, such as PAS and PINS, to provide practical advice to our members.

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

# FUTURE NEWSLETTERS

We hope that you found this edition of Root and Branch interesting and informative. The articles you have read have been submitted by members of the Yorkshire Region. If you, or your planning colleagues, have any views, reports, articles or any other information which you feel would be of interest to other members, please forward them, preferably by email, to Paula Nolan at regional office for inclusion in the quarterly Newsletter. The remaining deadline for the **2010 winter edition is 1st December.**

The success of the newsletter depends on the members producing the necessary copy and images. There must be things happening in your area that merit being communicated to a wider audience!

**All editorial and enquiries to:** [yorkshire@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:yorkshire@rtpi.org.uk)

## USEFUL LINKS....

**This edition and past copies of Root and Branch can be found on the Yorkshire Region website at:**

<http://www.rtpi.org.uk/cgi-bin/item.cgi?ap=1&id=355>

**Keep up to date with the conference programme and afternoon/evening seminars at:**

[http://www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi\\_yorkshire](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi_yorkshire)

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