

# EAST OF ENGLAND EXPRESS

Summer 2011

SERVING PLANNERS IN  
BEDFORDSHIRE  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
ESSEX  
HERTFORDSHIRE  
SUFFOLK  
& NORFOLK



**RTPI**

mediation of space - making of place

Newsletter of the RTPI East of England  
[www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi\\_east\\_of\\_england](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi_east_of_england)



**INSIDE** • [Our New Chair Speaks Again](#) • [Conference Programme](#) • [Young Planners](#) • [EIA](#) • [Your Committee](#) • [News from HQ](#) • [Localism](#) • [Achievement Awards](#) • [Planning Aid](#) • [Cinderella](#) • [Marine Planning](#) • [More from Natasha](#)

This edition of the East of England Express is sponsored by

**David Lock Associates**  
Town Planning and Urban Design



# EDITORIAL Newsletter of the Royal Town Planning Institute East of England

## Welcome to the second issue of 2011.

May I first of all congratulate all the new councillors who will now have to grapple with the ever changing planning system, and to commiserate with those who have been relieved of these peculiar matters.

## Next, dear reader,

### OUR CHAIR SPEAKS AGAIN....

Our new Chair, **Peter Geraghty** has something he wishes to share with you all....

I am delighted and honoured to be chair of the Regional Management Board for 2011. Firstly, I want to pay tribute to and thank the outgoing chair Robert Hobbs for his efforts during 2010. I hope in some small way I can build upon Robert and his predecessors' efforts on behalf of the region.

I have extensive experience in planning mostly within the public sector. Following a period working in London I have worked extensively in the Eastern region starting at Epping Forest District Council (1997-2004) and from there moved to Broadland District Council as Head of Planning & Conservation (2005-2007), both very beautiful and attractive parts of the country. I then subsequently became Chief Planning Officer at Brentwood Borough Council (2007-2009) and currently I am the Group Manager for Development Control and Building Control at Southend-on-Sea Borough Council. Despite the recessionary period it is an exciting time to be involved with Southend with a number of significant infrastructure projects currently being undertaken and some further major developments in the pipeline.

Throughout my career I have been involved with the RTPI at first as a member of the Northwest Branch Executive then as a member of the London branch where I was the Planning Aid for London representative for the London Branch and latterly as a member of the East of England Region. At a national level I have been a member of the General Assembly or its predecessor since 2000. I have also served as a Trustee of the Institute on the Executive Board. And, this year I am the Junior Vice President of the Institute following in the footsteps of Ann Skippers and Richard Summers. My commitment to the Institute and profession is, therefore, long standing.

The profession and public services are under threat as never before. The planning profession in recent times has gone through a period of change and flux with the introduction of Local Development Frameworks and the Planning and Compensation Act of 2004. Now we have a new coalition government with a new agenda. This includes the recently published Localism Bill, the bonfire of the quangos and the cuts in funding for local government. This means there are further challenges ahead and another period of uncertainty. This is a time for a strong Institute delivering good quality services in a focussed way.

Working in the public service I experience the pressures that our colleagues are under; whether working in consultancies or local authorities. We need an Institute that demonstrates to government the value of planning to the future prosperity of the country and promotes the importance of planning to the localism agenda. The new Localism Bill is a prime opportunity to do just that. Our members in the East of England Region and countrywide have made a huge difference to people's lives and now is the time to promote and celebrate that contribution.

Planning Aid England (PAE) has been a major success story for the Institute and has changed people's perception of planning. It has also given our young planners the opportunity to gain a wide range of expertise whilst providing valuable experience and skills. The Young Planners are the future of our profession and we must ensure PAE and the work the Institute does in influencing emerging planning policy is maintained. The recent announcements on the funding for Planning Aid are welcome and the Institute must do all it can to preserve a Planning Aid service for the future. Going forward changes to the way PAE is provided will be necessary but this flagship service must be maintained.

Over the coming year I look forward to meeting and working with colleagues all over the region and sharing experience and knowledge at the training and CPD events organised and promoted by the East of England's Regional Activity Committee.

**Peter Geraghty** Chair of the Region

\*\*\*

Thanks Peter.

Don't forget to send all your articles, cartoons pictures etc. for the next issue, to me at the address below.

**Peter Hakes**, Editor

## Helping members to attend conferences

East of England semi-retired, fully-retired and full time student Members in full time education are able to attend conferences at a subsidised rate. A carer's allowance may also be available for those Members who have to make special care arrangements to attend a Regional event.

For further details contact Tina Jessup – details on Page 6.



### Next Issue

The next issue should be published in Autumn 2011.  
Deadline for copy is 15 August 2011 to:  
The Editor Peter Hakes, 30 Viking Way,  
Brentwood, Essex, CM15 9HX  
Tel: 01277 220043  
email: peter@hakes3334.fsnet.co.uk



### Acknowledgements

Editing: Peter Hakes/Tina Jessup  
Design: David Lock Associates  
Printing: New World Creative Print Ltd  
Distribution: Jean Aldous  
Thanks to all contributors

Notice to Readers: The RTPI East of England Regional Management Board wish to point out that the sponsors have had no editorial role in the production of this newsletter and the Board does not endorse the sponsors or have any view on any matter on which they are involved.

Registered Charity No. 262865 and Scotland SC 037841

This edition was sponsored by: **David Lock Associates**  
Town Planning and Urban Design



# REGIONAL EVENTS PROGRAMME 2011

## Theme:

## “Skilling for the New World of Planning”

With comments in recent feedback forms such as:

- “very informative and thought provoking”
- “brilliant and interesting conference”

these events attract a very high calibre of speaker, and they offer you, the local member, an opportunity to keep your knowledge up-to-date and to network with other members, without spending a fortune on training.

Wherever possible, the conference fees for 2011 have been reduced from those charged in 2010 by using venues that provide excellent value for money and keeping lunch costs to a minimum.

To keep up-to-date with the programme visit the Region's web site at [http://www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi\\_east\\_of\\_england](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi_east_of_england) or email Tina Jessup at [eastofengland@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:eastofengland@rtpi.org.uk) asking to be included on the Region's email circulation list.

### LATEST INFORMATION ON CONFERENCES & EVENTS FROM JUNE TO DECEMBER 2011

TITLE	DATE	LOCATION	COST	COMMENTS
INTEGRATING MARINE & TERRESTRIAL PLANNING	Wed 29th June 2011	Imperial Hotel, Great Yarmouth	£85 + VAT	(in association with the MMO) The RTPI President will make a key note speech at this event.
THE GREAT DEBATE - AN INTER-PROFESSIONAL COLLOQUIUM	Thurs 30th June 2011 (from 4.30pm)	West Suffolk House, Bury St Edmunds	FREE	Meet with colleagues from RIBA, RICS, ICE and the Landscape Institute to discuss the hot topics of the day! The 2010 Awards will be presented by the RTPI President
THE ROLE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN SUPPORTING A NEW ECONOMIC BASE	Tues 27th September 2011 (tbc)	Cambridge (tbc)	£85 + VAT	
CONFERENCE FOR COUNCILLORS	October 2011 (date tbc)	Cambridge	£100 + VAT	
RETAIL PLANNING	Wed 19th October 2011	City Hall, Norwich	£85 + VAT	
EAST OF ENGLAND PLANNING LAW UPDATE	Fri 11th November 2011	Downing College, Cambridge	£140 + VAT	(free place won by Tanya Adams, courtesy of the Planning Legislation Update Service)
HOUSING - WHERE ARE WE NOW?	Tues 6th December 2011	Hampton, Peterborough	£85 + VAT	(sponsored by David Lock Associates and O&H Properties)

(Note: events are also open to non-members).

### Your support at these events is vital to ensure their success

#### Does your organisation have a suitable conference room that we could use?

Or would your organisation be willing and able to sponsor one of these events by making a contribution towards the cost of a venue or towards the cost of lunch?

In return, the organisation's name would be included on the conference literature and promotional material could be displayed at the event.

#### A “free” place or two would be available on the event for your employees.

#### Are there topics which you think should be included in the Events Programme?

Let us know as soon as possible to ensure your views can be taken into account during forthcoming discussions.

Do you have an expertise in one of the suggested topic areas and would like to share your knowledge with other members?

\*\*\*\*\*

We are currently in discussions with Anglia Ruskin University to provide co-ordinated delivery of CPD events and training for planners in the East of England.

\*\*\*\*\*

Any offers of help or assistance from Regional members would be very gratefully received!

Please help us to provide the Regional events you need!

Up-to-date information can be obtained from:

**Tina Jessup, Regional Co-ordinator, RTPI East of England**

**Tel: 01359 233408; Fax: 01359 232176; Email: [eastofengland@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:eastofengland@rtpi.org.uk)**

**Web: [www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi\\_east\\_of\\_england](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi_east_of_england)**

# QUIZ - WHERE ARE WE NOW?



Well what a contrast with last time; this was extremely difficult with only 4 people attempting it –and one of them was wrong! It was in fact **Cottered in Hertfordshire** near Buntingford (the previous answer!!!)

The first name out of the RTPI Mug, and pictured here, was **Andy Bestwick** of Chelmsford BC who has been sent a **£25.00 gift voucher**.

Runners up were, **Peter Moss** and **Richard Greaves**.

Well now it's **your** chance to win that valuable voucher.

All you have to do is decipher the photo on the front cover and tell me where it is!

Letters, post cards and e-mails (to address on page 2) will be eligible.

These will be kept in a secure place until 2 weeks before the closing date of the next issue. The first entry taken (by someone independent of the RTPI) from this secure place will be the winner. Only those on the East of England RTPI register will be eligible, except the Editor and staff of David Lock and Associates.

Good luck!

## Young planners Update



The deadline for preparing this article is well-timed as it falls a couple of days after I attended the Young Planners Network Annual Steering Group meeting on Thursday 12th May.

The meeting included representatives from all regions as well as RTPI President for 2011

Richard Summers and the new Chief Executive Trudi Elliot. It was chaired by Sara Parkinson who is the Young Planners' Representative on the Board of Trustees. Although this was only my second meeting, to my mind there was quite a different emphasis on the discussions.

Previously there has been more of a focus on the work that individual regions are undertaking in terms of CPD and social events as well as particular areas such as the always debated APC process. Whilst these were still important facets of the meeting, the current focus was much more on the strategic aims and objectives of Young Planners and the important role they have to play in the future of the profession.



This will see a rebranding of the Young Planners Network and a move away from the current, quite bulky delivery plan to an emphasis on 3 key areas. Fundamentally there is a desire to increase the profile and influence of Young Planners within the RTPI. To this end, YPs are strongly encouraged to be involved in current planning debates such as the Localism Bill.

Also in the meeting, there was confirmation that the 2011 Young Planners' Conference has been awarded to the West Midlands. This will take place on 21st and 22nd October, with the more formal presentation and discussion events based at Birmingham City Council. A number of very good speakers have already been lined up and there will also be visits and social events. The Young Planners Conference is highly recommended in terms of both social/networking opportunities and CPD and there will once again be discounted rates for those that book "early bird" tickets.

One final issue that arose was that whilst the individual regional representatives have lengthy mailing lists of people who wish to be updated on YP events, a number of these are not registered for the National Network. This as a very useful resource providing regular updates on YP issues and you can register at [http://www.rtpi.org.uk/young\\_planners\\_network/](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/young_planners_network/). There are also a range of other networks on particular areas that may interest you.

In terms of upcoming events, at the time of preparing this article, details are being finalised for a Young Planners Event in Norwich based around the RTPI President's visit to the region on 29th June. This is likely to be a meal and drinks in the evening and although not exclusive to YPs, will be a good networking opportunity with the President and other senior figures within the Regional Activities Committee in attendance.

Finally, consistent with my previous article, I understand there have once again been very high numbers of APC submissions for the most recent deadline of 15th April. We will once again be hosting an APC event in late August / early September ahead of the final APC deadline of the year on 23rd September 2011. Further information will follow closer to the event.

As ever, if you have any particular issues you would like to raise or ideas for events, please contact me at [graham.bloomfield@bidwells.co.uk](mailto:graham.bloomfield@bidwells.co.uk)

**Graham Bloomfield**

## REGIONAL CONFERENCE 17.03.11

## Environmental Impact Assessment: Updates in theory and Practice

St Nicholas Centre, Ipswich

An excellent programme of speakers was arranged by **Steven Bainbridge of the Landscape Partnership** for this ever-popular topic.

Deputising for the ill **Nick Sibbett**, his Landscape Partnership colleague **Jo Parmenter** stepped into the breach to give an update on the Habitats and Species Regulations. After a quick reminder of the fundamentals of Appropriate Assessment and the new 2010 Regulations, Jo discussed several LDF case studies, including the Thames Basin Heaths SPA (woodlark and nightjar) and Brecks SPA (stone curlew) and the assessment and mitigation measures necessary to allow their Core Strategies to progress. Moving on to some recent case law, the key principles of the Woolley case (which involved the destruction of a bat roost) were mentioned, confirming the requirement for planning authorities to undertake the three AA 'tests'. The Morge case (involving potential harm to bat feeding habitat) was also discussed, with Natural England's key advisory role in AA matters reconfirmed by the Supreme Court.

**James Allan** of URS Scott Wilson then spoke on Integrated Assessments. In a thought-provoking presentation, he explored the benefits and drawbacks of integrating various different assessments – such as SA, Health Impact Assessments, Rural/Urban Proofing and Analysis of Equality – into a single exercise. Key advantages include a reduced consultation burden for consultees and a broader understanding of social and economic issues in a spatial planning context (e.g. health inequalities). Whilst some disadvantages were noted – particularly a risk of environmental issues being 'swamped' by economic and social concerns – the benefits of Integrated Assessment seem to be considerable.

Next up was SEA/EIA 'guru' **Dr Riki Therivel**, who gave a presentation on Resilience in Environmental Assessment. Her talk involved an interesting debate discussing what a resilient East of England would look like. Half of the delegates were tasked with looking at this matter from the land use planning perspective, i.e. looking at it on a wider scale, and the other half examined it on the individual, more local scale. This stimulated some fruitful discussion with a number of issues covered including flooding, waste, access to open space, travel and access to employment.

The afternoon commenced with **Josh Fothergill** of the IEMA, providing an engaging presentation on EIA Practice. He began by talking about the increasing number of EIAs being undertaken over the last 20 years and then identified what 'quality' is in EIA practice and equally what influences quality. He also discussed what the drivers of quality are during the scoping process. One of his observations was that scoping reports appear to be increasing in their length and in light of this he posed an interesting question of whether they are still needed in this age of austerity. He mooted a potential alternative: a workshop where key stakeholders would meet to discuss the scope of EIAs. Apparently there is nothing in the current Regulations to

prevent this. Reference was also made to the IEMA's proposed introduction of an EIA Quality (Charter) Mark for which EIA practitioners will be able to apply.

This presentation also provided one of the day's most interesting case studies with Josh talking about a Danish EfW incinerator which had recently been built. This had an innovative design that incorporated a dry ski slope down one side of it, trays in the walls to facilitate planting, and also flumes that would enable the emissions from the plant to form smoke rings; certainly some food for thought.

This presentation was followed by a panel discussion, led by **Jessica Fleming**, on Cumulative Impact Assessment. The catalyst for this debate was the 'Baker' case which requires that, when determining whether EIA is required, planning authorities must look at the effect of the whole development, as modified, and not just the modification alone. Wind turbines, and the ability for different landscapes to accommodate them, dominated this discussion.

Following this debate, **Dr Belinda Godbold** provided an overview of the way in which Suffolk County Council has undertaken various Sustainability Appraisal (SA) exercises. This seminar looked at the Suffolk-wide SA framework, the scoping that took place and how the sustainability appraisal was carried out, which included a case study for the SA for the Minerals and Waste Development Framework. She also talked about the main issues that had arisen during the process, which included the level of detail to be included in the SA and SEA documents and the lack of guidance for carrying out an Appropriate Assessment as a supporting document, the latter being a point that a lot of officers can probably sympathise with.



Riki is in a yellowy green top



Photos by Tina Jessup

The final presentation was provided by **David Brock** of Mills and Reeve LLP who, true to form, gave an engaging talk on the current legal challenges to EIA. He discussed a range of different cases, although one of the more interesting ones was *Ardagh Glass Factory v. Chester City Council*. The pertinent point here was that the High Court had ordered the local planning authority to take enforcement action as the factory had been built (without permission) and was nearing the 4 years that would have made it immune from enforcement action. One of the clarifications to come out of this case was whether a retrospective permission can be issued for EIA development: the outcome, as ruled by the High Court, was that it can.

The day was concluded with the RTPi President, **Richard Summers**, providing some closing thoughts. Richard talked about a letter he had recently had published in *The Times* newspaper which defended the planning system in response to the recent criticism levelled at the profession by Vince Cable. He had stressed that it is actually the slowdown in the property market, a consequence of the global recession, that had led to the problems in the construction industry and that it was not therefore the fault of town planners. He also spoke about Localism and highlighted a number of concerns that the RTPi has with the current approach.

**Adam Nicholls and Ralph Cox**

The venue, the St Nicholas Centre in Ipswich, is a converted church. As a web site states:

The former St Nicholas Church in Ipswich in Suffolk has been innovatively brought back to use after being declared surplus to religious needs as the St Nicholas Centre. The Centre is a modern, light and comfortable conference and event space with some of the former churches splendid stained glass windows casting wonderful colour into the room.

## EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS

Would you rather receive information from the Region by email? The Region's e-mailing list is growing! We are keen to reduce the post coming through your letterbox or into your in-tray - would you rather receive your information by email?

There is the added advantage that you would receive the most up-to-date information at the earliest opportunity of events organised at short notice, or changes to published information about events.

Please contact the Regional Administrator Tina Jessup at [eastofengland@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:eastofengland@rtpi.org.uk) if you are keen to receive information electronically.

## REGIONAL CONTACTS

All Members of the Regional Management Board and Regional Activity Committee Members can be contacted via the Regional Office at:

RTPi East of England, 4 Opus House, Elm Farm Park, Great Green, Thurston, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP31 3SH

**Tel:** 01359 233408 **Fax:** 01359 232176

**email:** [eastofengland@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:eastofengland@rtpi.org.uk)



### Bidwells LLP achieve RTPi Learning Partner status

Congratulations to Bidwells LLP, one of the largest planning teams in the East of England, who have successfully met the requirements of RTPi Learning Partner status by demonstrating their commitment to the learning and professional development of their planning staff. They join a group of employers of planners who have gained this impressive status. For further information about becoming an RTPi Learning Partner visit:

[www.rtpi.org.uk/education\\_and\\_careers/learning\\_partnerships/](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/education_and_careers/learning_partnerships/)

or contact the Lifelong Learning Officer at [learning.partners@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:learning.partners@rtpi.org.uk)

## Why not Advertise in the East of England Express?

The newsletter is published quarterly. Eighteen hundred copies are distributed to planners throughout the six counties of the East of England and a copy is available from the RTPi East of England region web site.

**It is therefore an ideal vehicle for your message!**

# YOUR COMMITTEE 21.03.11 and 19.05.11

## A Very Brief Summary

Held as always at West Suffolk House in Bury St. Edmunds

The domicile of president Richard Summers.

### The March meeting included the following:-

- Congratulations were offered to Committee member **Steven Bainbridge**, on gaining chartered status.
- **Planning Aid: Jackie Ward** reported that 37 organisations had bid for the DCLG funding from the new Supporting Communities and Neighbourhoods in Planning fund. Successful bidders should know by the end of March, but this did not give enough time for the existing Planning Aid service to continue. Unfortunately, staff in Regional offices were being made redundant and the offices were being closed with effect from the end of March. A central advice line was being set up, which will be manned by staff in the National Unit, who will be on temporary contracts extendable for a week at a time. Information from the East of England Planning Aid Service has been transferred to the RTPI Regional office in Thurston. Jackie proposed that a Planning Aid Sub-Group be set up to provide a professional overview and guidance, and to look closely at what the future role of the Planning Aid Service should be. Jackie was thanked for all her hard work. For up-to-date situation (or as up-to-date as we can achieve in the compilation of the newsletter) see separate report in this issue and also [www.rtpi.org.uk/planningaid](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/planningaid)
- The Committee had received a consultation from HQ on a new **Affiliate Class of Membership**. After discussion, members were not convinced of the benefits and were concerned with the dilution of the value of RTPI chartered status. There was concern about the potential for damage to the RTPI because of a lack of clarity or uncertainty as to how those in this new class of membership would be perceived or understood by the public. It was agreed that Chair, Peter Geraghty should respond.
- **Paul Maison** gave a brief presentation on the government's proposals for a national high speed rail network and whether it would benefit the East of England.

### From the May meeting Tina reports...

- **Simon Atha** of Broadland DC and **Humphrey Jamieson** were co-opted on to the Committee to fill the two vacancies for Licentiate Members.
- **Treasurer, Steve Bateman**, reported that 2010 had been a very difficult year and the region had finished with a deficit of £3,778. The Region has two main sources of income – the Regional grant from HQ (which has remained frozen for the past two years) and income from Regional conferences. It is therefore vital that conferences are well attended and the costs kept under strict control. Note: Accounts for 2010 are included in the 2010 Annual Report, which is available in the Members Area of the web site at [www.rtpi.org.uk/groups/rtpi\\_east\\_of\\_england](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/groups/rtpi_east_of_england)

It is believed that attendance at RTPI East of England conferences continues to be affected by events organised in London by RTPI Conferences. Steve reported that, in order to cut costs, there had been no meeting of RTPI Regional Treasurers for the last two years.



- **The 2011 Regional Conference Programme** was discussed. **Ann Hockey** stressed the need to get the message out to members that our Regional Conference Programme attracts some very good speakers and is excellent value for money. They should also be looked upon as a networking opportunity for members. We also need to ensure that events held are suitably reported on, both within the newsletter and on the web site.
- **The Presidential visit** to the Region, on 29 & 30 June 2011, was discussed: The President will visit sites in Norfolk and Essex, with the opportunity for all members to join in the **"Great Debate" on 30 June**, being held in Bury St Edmunds (see elsewhere in the newsletter for details). The winners of the **2010 Regional Planning Achievement Award** will also be presented with their trophy and certificates at the "Great Debate".
- The **newsletter** editor praised the help and efforts of the sponsors, **David Lock Associates**, and hoped that they would be able to continue with sponsorship of this newsletter from 2012. Watch this space!
- The Chair had written to HQ following the consultation on **Affiliate Membership**, giving the Region's view. The outcome of the consultation was awaited.
- **Ann Hockey** reported that Anglia Ruskin were no longer the only university offering an accredited course in the region, as the University of Cambridge have just received full accreditation for their MPhil Planning, Growth and Regeneration course. It was agreed that a representative from the University of Cambridge should be invited to a future meeting of the Committee.
- Due to health reasons, the Honorary Secretary, **Richard Chillingford**, was unfortunately unable to attend this meeting and would be out of action for a considerable amount of time. Members of the Committee wished Richard a speedy and successful recovery.

This is only a very brief outline of the detailed and meaningful discussions that took place. The full minutes can be obtained from **Tina Jessup**. If any Member feels the urge to join the fray at these exciting meetings please contact Tina for details of dates, times etc. (see address on page 6)

## NEWS FROM HQ

### Planning Summer School 2011 - Planning with Communities

This year the Planning Summer School returns to one of our most popular venues at Swansea University from 3-7 September 2011.

In response to delegates' feedback there is a new, faster paced and concentrated programme for 2011. This means less time spent away from work, but still provides up to 20 hours of CPD. The Big Debate returns as well as speed briefing, mobile workshops, an excellent mix of papers and ample opportunities for discussion and networking. New for 2011 is a Joint Planning Summit for planning practitioners and elected members, which is also available as a day ticket.

Planning Summer School has provided a unique learning opportunity for almost 80 years. It has given thousands of elected members and planners a chance to increase their knowledge and understanding of best practice as well as current and emerging policy with fellow practitioners. As a charity, Summer School aims to advance education in planning and offers assisted places, travelling scholarships and opportunities for planners from overseas to share their experiences and learn from the UK.



Photo by RTPI

Given the challenges, uncertainties and opportunities being posed by the emerging localism agenda there, has never been a better time to attend Summer School. For more information on all aspects of our work including our charitable aims, booking information, and the latest details on the Swansea 2011 programme and speakers go to [www.planningsummerschool.org](http://www.planningsummerschool.org) and follow the links.

### Financial Issues

The 2009 recession has had an effect throughout the UK and the RTPI has also felt the impact of the downturn. As an organisation the RTPI has seen its revenues fall and in a similar fashion to many other planning organisations and we have had to make hard choices to ensure that we can continue to deliver services to members and to train the next generation of planners.

Helping our members at this difficult time has been a key priority for the RTPI and since 2008 we have frozen subscription rates,



RTPI Finance

with 2011 now being the third year of no subscription rate rises. We have also developed our Planners in the Workplace programme which offers support and advice to planners facing redundancy or difficulties at work and we have expanded the number of free and low cost events available to our members.

However freezing subscription rates doesn't mean that we can freeze inflation and the RTPI has been working hard to make sure that we live within our income. Not only have we faced tightening subscription income we have also seen declining revenues from our commercial activities such as advertising jobs in Planning and event income from RTPI Conferences.

In order to maintain services we undertook a comprehensive review of all RTPI activities with the aim of finding savings wherever possible. As a target we asked most RTPI departments to find 5% savings. Those departments critical to delivering frontline member services such as the Regions and Nations had their budgets protected so that they could continue providing low cost CPD. In 2009 we found £400k worth of savings and in 2010 we managed to find an additional £200k worth of cost reductions.

We found savings in a number of different areas, for example we looked at our travel budget and made sure that all journeys were strictly necessary and we always buy advance tickets. Where possible we have combined meetings to reduce the number of trips. We have expanded the use of teleconference and online meeting technology. The RTPI also revisited our suppliers and looked for improved value and more cost effective solutions – for example, this led to cheaper contracts for printing services. It is not only in big costs that we have sought to make savings but also in the detail. We have found more cost effective lunches for committees, timed meetings to avoid peak time fares, used cheaper venues or hosted smaller meetings, all helping to keep the Institute's costs down.

The RTPI has additionally taken a long hard look at recruitment. Since 2009 we have had a recruitment freeze on creating new posts and as members of staff have moved on we have considered whether their job could be outsourced or combined with another role. In this way over the last three years we have managed to make the RTPI leaner and more efficient.

One of the biggest financial changes for the RTPI is the Coalition Government's decision not to renew the Planning Aid England grant after the 31 March 2011. This grant was worth £3.6million and supported over 60 staff. As members are no doubt aware the RTPI has had to reduce the scope of Planning Aid England and unfortunately close many of the regional offices and staff are being made redundant. Whilst the transition to a smaller Planning Aid England is very hard the Institute is committed to making sure we can provide a financially viable Planning Aid England service. 2011 will see the RTPI looking to find new ways of delivering Planning Aid England and rethinking our financial models.

The drive for improved value for money will continue, the RTPI will not only rigorously scrutinise and question all expenditure; we are also looking at ways of growing our income and ensuring that our subscription structure is the right model. At the same time the RTPI is expanding the number of events that we have on offer, we are investing in new IT systems and improving our procedures to make us as cost effective as possible.

The RTPI is a membership organisation and we want to make sure that we use members' money as effectively as possible. In difficult economic times we have looked again at how we do things and found savings whilst maintaining standards. We will continue to make sure we spend your money wisely and continue to look at how we raise money and new opportunities to improve the RTPI.

SEMINAR 04.04.11

## Making the Most of Localism

-in association with No 5 Chambers and Baker Associates.

The Maltings Ely

Following an introduction from **Eiluned Morgan, Ian Dove QC** (No 5 Chambers) gave an amusing account of the Localism Bill, pointing out that of its many clauses, and schedules, planning is but a small part. The Bill is currently at an early stage in its consideration through the House of Commons and is subject to amendment. The Bill does however have wide reaching implications for planning control and a question was raised over how a coherent theory could be made of its vast scope. The overall message from the Bill is that people take control of the planning process and through this control achieve a euphoric state- a return to Ambridge was mentioned. He pointed out that this simplistic view of the development process sweeps over all complicated mechanisms and creates an idyllic solution to planning problems.

**Peter Goatley** (No 5 Chambers) continued this theme. The age of Localism he said, presents a new dawn but a difficult and problematic time for lawyers. Under the 'General power of competence' there is an immediate problem of LAs potentially acting ultra vires with subsequent consequences. Under the 'Right to Challenge' the mechanics of how this will work are not laid out. The Bill introduces the possibility of a private takeover of public services though those challenging the service will not necessarily be the ones who eventually carry out the service. Under 'Assets of Community Value' and the 'Duty to Co-operate' Local authorities are able to list land of community value and freeze rights to that land to prevent disposal to enable the community the opportunity to purchase it. In looking at how this will work along with possible compensation payable to the owner, the Bill claims that 'Regulations may provide that...' but does not go on to state what the Regulations are. The mysterious 'Regulations' are mentioned throughout the Bill. The fourth main area is a minor adjustment to the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Other important areas skimmed over throughout the Bill include the introduction of S.61W to the 1990 Act in clause 102 which is the duty for developers to engage in pre-application discussion for certain types of development and then to take the advice into account. This has yet to be defined. Miscellaneous enforcement provisions under clauses 103-106 are to be introduced as s.70c and s.174 (2A) in relation to ground 'a' appeals. S.171BA will enable enforcement where there has been concealment of the breach. Local Authorities have one year to take action. There is a whole new raft of powers being introduced in relation to advertisements and the defacement of buildings.

Neighbourhood Planning is dealt with under clauses 96-101 and Schedule 9. Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan is part of the Development Plan, it is not part of the LDF stream. Whilst any person can propose a Neighbourhood Plan it is considered by the Local Planning Authority who would provide support and advice in its development. The 'Regulations' provide for the correct consultation to be carried out but ultimately the Plan can be rejected by the LPA. It would be subject to an Independent Examination where the examiner can recommend the plan or refuse to recommend it. Ultimately the LPA considers the opinion but is not bound by its findings. Given the considerable input from the neighbourhood plan makers and the LPA, it was suggested that given the uncertain outcome it may be more beneficial for a neighbourhood to make a planning application which would provide a more certain outcome.

**Ian Dove QC** continued his earlier theme, questioning who are the locals and who is the Localism Bill for. It is clearly not for



the developers and the wealth creators. He quoted from Bakunin (one of the intellectual founding fathers of Anarchism) stating 'when the people are being beaten with a stick they're not much happier when its called the people's stick.'

**John Baker** (Baker Associates) on a positive note commented that performance could be delivered via the Bill on a DIY basis and persons would no longer need to wait for guidance. It appears to be speeding up the process with a presumption in favour of development, land auctions and all planning applications and appeals processed in 12 months. There are however some serious weak points and creating a positive view of development is a tall order.

The duty to cooperate in the Bill appears to be presented weakly. This area will need strengthening.

On Neighbourhood planning, parish councils or any person can create a plan but only once the LPAs have established the protocol for the location of the Neighbourhood Area. How would LPAs decide on the priority? It is considered unlikely that communities would prepare plans given the amount of work required but if there is a drive for development from certain individuals then the possibility of community planning is there.

Despite the Bill, LDFs are still in place and LDFs are evidence driven. This has not changed. He commented that the process is not that difficult provided there are skills to match the task. This could be a sticking point.

The Bill takes hold next April.

**Steve Ingram** from Huntingdonshire District Council gave the Local Planning Authority perspective on the Bill. He said that on the surface, Government aims and aspirations all seem like a good idea. However, for example, Neighbourhood Plans have been estimated at a cost of £10,000 a time for Huntingdonshire, not taking into account the vast sums spent on evidence gathering for the LDFs. No budgets have been set for dealing with Neighbourhood Plans. Whilst the Bill is, according to Greg Clarke intended to facilitate growth, local Members will have a difficult time with their decisions. They will have to reconcile strategic thinking with local concerns, thinking 20 years ahead rather than to the end of their appointed term. With the loss of RSS, how will the Bill cope with strategic planning issues such as renewable resources? Neighbourhood Development Orders could allow permitted development but only with a referendum held. In any event, the existing LDF arrangement if based on good forward planning decisions should negate the need for neighbourhood plans.

The Duty to Co-operate allows LAs to work alongside neighbours in more strategic plans. Whilst on the surface this seems positive, it could only work where LAs have similar aspirations.

The existing planning development framework could negate the necessity of many of the 'new' ideas. The revised system could be seen as a new incentive to put a positive slant on development.

The **Q and A** session, included:-

- CIL: it is not clear how the funding raised will be spent and it is likely to create a political battle.
- Neighbourhood Plans: it was considered there would not be many given the expense in time and money for their creation. Local Government resources are being reduced in many areas and funds to support Neighbourhood Plans only mean a reduction in funding for other projects.

The notes from the seminar are on Baker Associates website, [www.bakerassocs.com/news](http://www.bakerassocs.com/news)

**Anita Kittle**

# PLANNING ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS 2010

After holding our breath for several months we can at last announce that the The Winning Entry for our regional award is.....

## The Great Fen, Huntingdon “A Green Infrastructure Masterplan for people, wildlife and the local economy, now and in the future.”

Submitted by Great Fen Project Partners (Environment Agency, Huntingdonshire District Council, Middle Level Commissioners, Natural England and Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire and Peterborough) with LDA Design.

### An exemplar of sustainable development: environmental, economic and social...

This project is breath taking in its ambition which sets it apart from most habitat creation initiatives in the UK, transforming an area of over 3000ha of arable land, innovative in itself. Its true innovation and success however, lies within the multi faceted nature of the projected outcomes effectively giving real value to nature conservation through, for example, economic development, recreation, flood storage and community worth.

### A key challenge has been concerned with the underlying science...

In particular hydrological modelling was needed in order to predict the interventions required and the resulting predicted habitats. This has required innovative scientific research which is adding to the collective knowledge of restoration ecology. Faced with the loss of arable land the project has also had to prove itself in terms of the on going contribution of agriculture, including the active involvement of farming families within the area and the wider benefits such as the protection for the surrounding fenlands, economic and social opportunities and climate change mitigation and adaptation.



### Judges comments:

This is a truly visionary project and illustrates the benefits of teamwork and a thorough understanding of the issues. It is already seen as a leading model in Europe and shows how an integrated approach to climate change adaptation for people and wildlife can bring about multiple benefits for local communities at a local and strategic level. The results are, and will, be there for all to see and benefit from and will continue to inspire and act as a best practice model for future generations.

### The runner-up was:-

## Objectives for Design in Central Bedfordshire – A Guide for Development

Submitted by Central Bedfordshire Council

The Council is committed to ensuring that new development is of high quality, is sustainable and maintains or enhances the character or local distinctiveness of the locality in which it is proposed.

The Guide has been produced to set out the twin interacting principles contributing to good placemaking and to sustainable development, within the context of creating a safe, accessible, attractive and healthy built environment. It seeks to ensure that each proposal responds to the challenges, opportunities and character of its site and setting, by identifying the aspects which contribute to their character and distinctiveness."



### Judges comments:

The development of the guide coincided with the merger of two former district councils and the county council into one unitary authority, and the document is the first produced by the three authorities working together and incorporates planning and highway services.

The Design Guide addresses a range of development and establishes basic sustainability and place-making principles in an accessible, clear and structured way. The diagrams charting the design process and developing design principles provide a useful model for development anywhere, and the eight documents are well illustrated and will provide a useful resource for years to come.

### In third place we have:

## Green Infrastructure by Design; Adding Value to Development

Submitted by Bedfordshire & Luton GI Consortium Partners who commissioned the guidance were Natural England, the Environment Agency, the MKSM Inter-Regional Board (mksm), Transform MKSM, Bedfordshire and Luton Green Infrastructure Consortium, Buckinghamshire Green Infrastructure Consortium, Buckinghamshire County Council, Milton Keynes Council and the River Nene Regional Park.

### A guide detailing how to transform urban life by including green spaces is the first of its kind in the UK...

Developed in the Milton Keynes South Midlands (MKSM) growth area the new guidance was funded by Natural England and the Environment Agency and is aimed at developers and planners. It sets out design principles that allow for green spaces to transform urban life by cooling cities, filtering out pollutants, improving people's health, supporting wildlife and creating attractive places to live and work in.

These design principles will serve as a valuable checklist for developers and planners, both in designing high quality environments for people and wildlife and ensuring high standards are achieved in the evaluation of planning applications.

Natural England's Catherine Cairns said: "Natural England, the Environment Agency and local authorities and green infrastructure partnerships worked closely together, to bring the vision of green infrastructure design advice to

fruition. Although focussed on the Milton Keynes South Midlands area, the advice is equally applicable to new developments in all areas."

Dominic Watkins, Director at Chris Blandford Associates, said: "The guidance has plugged a much needed gap to help planners and developers translate policies and strategies into well-designed, high quality green infrastructure on the ground. The guide's design principles show how investment in green infrastructure also makes economic sense by adding value to development."

Laura Kitson from the Bedfordshire and Luton Green Infrastructure Consortium, who managed the project, said: "This guidance shows what can be achieved by working in partnership across sectors and administrative areas. It provides consistent, easy to use advice, which shows the importance of green infrastructure in raising the quality and value of development."



See: [www.bedsandlutongreeninfrastructure.org/pdfs/MKSM-GI-by-Design-Guide.pdf](http://www.bedsandlutongreeninfrastructure.org/pdfs/MKSM-GI-by-Design-Guide.pdf)

The launch event, left to right, Catherine Cairns (Natural England), Laura Kitson (Bedfordshire and Luton Green Infrastructure Consortium), Hilary Chipping (MKSM Executive) and Paul Woodcock (Environment Agency).

#### Judges comments:

A truly collaborative project on a grand scale, the result is deceptively simple. This is a clear and informative guide with case studies to illustrate the aims and objectives of the document.

This is an excellent model for GI design guidance, and shows the contribution of planning to enhancing the total environment and influencing sustainable development in the future addressing climate change. Masterful masterplanning.

The top 3 entries have been invited to participate in the inter-professional colloquium in Bury St Edmunds on 30 June.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Other Entries to the Regional Award:

### Tackling Climate Change through the Hertfordshire Planning System

Submitted by Hertfordshire County Council

#### Judges Comments:

This project is a partnership of nine Local Planning Authorities and the County Council who set out to assess the current performance of the planning system in relation to climate change, identify remedial actions, and prioritise these actions according to the degree of impact they would have upon climate change issues. As well as involving ten authorities, this project has secured the commitment of all to a single private sector partner over an extended timeframe. It is a good model for others particularly in these resource hungry but cashstrapped times. The project has already collectively saved the authorities in excess of £200,000, and addressing the challenges in a collaborative manner ensures a uniformity of message, certainty and security for both the development industry and potential energy investors.

### The Essex Design Initiative: Brentwood Renaissance

Submitted by Essex County Council

#### Judges Comments:

This builds on the original pioneering Essex Design Guide. The Brentwood Renaissance project use a partnership approach that has created a vision for the town centre, looked beyond the high street improvement works to a range of improvements to the public realm, and identified a key follow-up project. An enhancement scheme was used as a catalyst for a range of activities and the enhancement of Brentwood High Street has transformed the quality of the town centre for all its users from businesses, shoppers, pedestrians and visitors. It is an excellent model of collaborative working.

### Harford Gypsy and Traveller Site, South Norfolk (entered into Regional Award only)

Submitted by South Norfolk Council

#### Judges Comments:

This project shows just what can be done, and should become a well-publicised good practice example of how to do it. The consultation and collaboration involved in the project and ecodesign of the scheme tackles this unpopular and often controversial area in an innovative and sympathetic way that should be recognised more widely.

### The Nude Ewe

Submitted by Central Bedfordshire Council

#### Judges Comments:

Good example of local sustainable husbandry, environment management and distribution.

### Soham Masterplan Vision – Reshaping Soham

Submitted by Entec UK Ltd.

#### Judges Comments:

This is an ambitious vision that has really captured the imagination and aspirations of local people. The Masterplan Vision has turned a negative list of issues and challenges into a positive vision in an integrated way involving stakeholders in delivery in co-ordinating the future of the town.

### Imaginative ways of collecting and collating consultation responses – Mid Bedfordshire

Submitted by Central Bedfordshire Council

#### Judges Comments:

Unfortunately because of the merger and creation of a new unitary authority, Central Bedfordshire, much of the website material is no longer easily accessible. However, it is clear that this project aimed to tackle a difficult problem of making people aware of an important consultation and to create the more responsive way of capturing local people's views. The results are impressive and the model created can be employed in future consultation exercises. It can create a consultation response report speedily and can handle a high volume of responses. It also helped to raise the profile of the planning service by producing a higher than average number of consultation responses.

The Regional Award Panel, led by Jackie Ward, comprised Robert Purton and John Young.

# PLANNING AID



## Update



The East of England Planning Aid's office and service was closed in March due to the withdrawal of funding from the government's Department of Communities & Local Government. As a result all members of staff in the region were made redundant. Over the period of operation with DCLG funding significant numbers of people and community groups benefited from the work of both staff and the network of volunteers.

On 13th April 2011 the DCLG announced that Planning Aid England (PAE), in conjunction with Planning Aid London (PAL) was awarded £1 million from the new Supporting Communities and Neighbourhoods in Planning Fund. The RTPI, as sponsoring body, is currently looking at how the revised service can be implemented.

It is understood that there will be a National Helpline, available to all plus a Web-Based advice facility. In addition and most relevantly there will be a focus on targeted support for eligible groups and individuals and support for neighbourhoods and groups in disadvantaged areas.

The proposed new structure for PAE/PAL, as contained in the bid for funds, included 7 'Outreach Areas' where outreach workers would act as a conduit and facilitate local engagement.

One of these areas is broadly consistent with the East of England Planning Region. However this has not been confirmed. Staffing is yet to be arranged, both at central level and in the 'Outreach Areas'. It is expected that 14 staff will be appointed but with contracts running to 31st March 2012 (the grant is only annual)

The precise relationship with the East of England RTPI is yet to be determined. The current Business Plan for the RTPI region states that the Planning Aid service will supported by a Steering Group (known as the Regional Advisory Panel). The latter has been in place for the last three years and it is assumed that it will continue.

Previously membership has been dependent on Regional Activities Committee (RAC) membership, but this is not a necessary requirement from now on. As soon as more information on the exact arrangements for the new service is available the Regional Management Board, RAC and all members will be informed immediately.

Finally a formal vote of thanks should be given to those members of staff who in recent years had so successfully operated the Planning Aid Service in the East Of England and who unfortunately had to leave the service in March.

**Philip Godwin**

## Is it time for Cinderella to go to the Ball and help us all?

### - How joined up planning could help solve our energy and waste crises

The 'barmy' days of British 'summer' time are again with us. Our minds quickly turn to sun, packing the ipod for the flight, sand and far away places where the light and pace of life allows us to recuperate for the daily challenges of the autumn. However, in cancelling the milk, the newspapers and asking your neighbour to put the rubbish and recycling bins out for you, do any of us make the link between the light we seek, the energy we use and the rubbish we create? Indeed, that shiny new computer you bought last week is actually a small bit of plastic and electrical circuits, a lot of packaging and a big cardboard box.

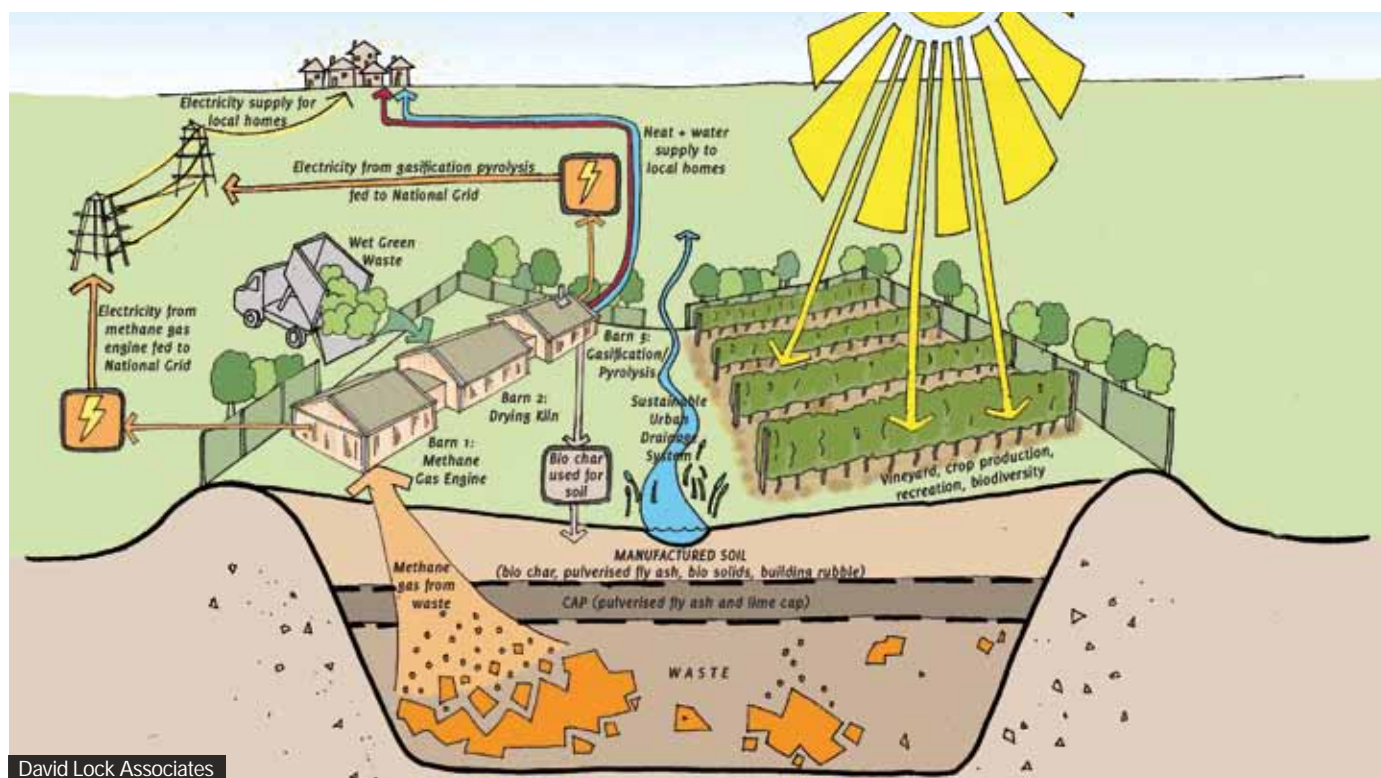
### The impact of tipping.....

In the UK, since the 1940's our desire to consume 'things' has filled up some 22,000 former landfill sites with dustbins and 'black plastic bags' of assorted materials. The landfill sites were frequently former brick pits or quarries where the County Councils buried our waste for us no matter what it was. During the five decades we had of filling up the holes we increasingly worked by the rules of 'dilute and disperse'. Effectively this meant place the municipal waste in a large hole, mix it up, fill it up and then place a thin cap of soil on it so it could be colonised by native species as the ground settled. Of course, unseen by us, each time it rained the water permeated the top soil, filtered through the decomposing municipal waste and then spread the diluted pollutants via the water table far and wide into the aquifers we extract our drinking water from. Equally, as the waste decomposes – where it is not captured – methane escapes into the atmosphere. Sadly, at a time of political fixation on the carbon footprint of everything, methane is actually not measured so vigorously, even though it is up to 20 times more effective in speeding up climate change. Thankfully, we now take more care with recycling and minimising waste but we still face the situation of there potentially being no more holes by 2020 for us to place our municipal waste in. And yes, more minerals are extracted creating new holes but our rate of infilling outstrips the rate we create new holes in this increasingly environmentally sensitive world of localised planning.

### Gloom and doom-the ugly sisters...

On the environmental front, fortunately times have changed and the practice of 'dilute and disperse' is no longer seen as best practice. However, at a time when Local Government finances come under increasing scrutiny European law states that the polluter must pay for the harm it creates. This leaves many local authorities with a potential bill for remediation they can not afford or leaves them open to the risk of prosecution and large environmental fines.

At the same time as Councils face this dilemma, and they seek to protect visible front line services, increasingly the energy we rely on to keep our modern lives going, the lights on and us warm in the winter is being produced by increasingly out of date power stations. Indeed, some commentators have stated that if the recession had not occurred when it did and the economy had continued to grow at the same rate by 2012, as a country we would be facing rolling power cuts due to the inability of our power stations to meet our daily peak time demands.



Our economy will recover, in time. More of us will continue to live longer. Our hunger for energy is unlikely to rapidly decline. Equally, as our economy is increasingly based on consumerism, our ability to generate waste – despite best efforts to recycle – will inevitably grow. So how can we provide enough energy for all of us and where will we hide our rubbish from the generations of the future?

### A step change, in a glass slipper?

Perhaps, just perhaps, now is the time for hard pressed Local Authority planners in LDF teams of forward planners and waste teams to take a step change in holistic thinking. We need energy, we need to stop polluting our own drinking water, we need to resolve our looming waste problem, so can we put the three together to provide a mutual solution that benefits us all?

### New research...

Research is now being undertaken by the **University of Edinburgh** and **Lichen Renewal** to develop a formula whereby manufactured soil can be placed over leaking former municipal landfill sites. This will allow crops such as vines or timber grown for renewable energy CHP plants to be grown whilst rain water is prevented from percolating into the waste. Instead, the rainwater is collected in reed beds and subsequently passed at agricultural runoff rates into local ditches or water features thereby increasing the biodiversity of the locality.

### Gasification or pyrolysis plants arrive on the back of a lorry...

With new water prevented from entering the former landfill site the heated former rainwater already in the decomposing waste, can then be pumped out. The heat from this water can then be used to create power and / or dry green domestic municipal waste, 40% of which is further water. Of course, the methane which naturally comes from the decomposing waste can also be collected and used as a source of fuel to ensure that drying / power generation is more efficient and suitable as a form of carbon capture. Once green domestic household waste is dried (by the heat from the water and the methane) it can be placed in a small (they can come on the back of a single lorry) gasification

or pyrolysis plant. This uses the dried material as a source of fuel to create water vapour (steam / clouds) and charcoal (a good material for soil improvement or for use on the summer BBQ). Are there any other by-products? Yes, heat. And with the steam this can be used to create electricity and be fed into the national grid or serve new local housing.

### Is this new technology?

Not really, it is simplistically a redesign of the Victorian steam engine which uses the green waste we freely create to make the energy we constantly seek to use and in so doing it turns a problem site into a renewable neighbourhood power station. No big chimneys, no fuel sourced from Russia or further afield – all we need to do is think in a holistic way, keep cutting the lawn and the bushes in your garden when you get back from holiday – and we can perhaps help each other secure some of our own energy.

### Could you use these proven technologies in your area?

Of course, if you have a former municipal refuse site – and every county does in the East of England – then it is possible to obtain this double win. After all if localised planning continues to frustrate the provision of other forms of renewable energy, and no solutions are found other than the now outdated thought of oh well somewhere else out of sight and sound will do it for me, your lights could go out, your fridge, cooker, toaster and TV may not work, the traffic lights may not operate on your way to work and your heating bills may rocket both at work and at home.

### Go on, think and plan holistically and let Cinderella go to the Ball – it will help you too.



Here is to an improving future for all of us.

### Robert M Purton

Partner on behalf of David Lock Associates Limited The views expressed are his own.

# Marine Planning: The New Frontier

It's the next planning quiz night. At the tie-break, the quiz-master lobs in the question

"What do the initials MMO stand for?" Could you give the correct answer?.....

The answer is the **Marine Management Organisation**, which was set up as a consequence of the Marine and Coastal Planning Act 2009. The MMO, which is based in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, is charged with delivering a system of marine spatial planning for England.

Development of a marine planning system and the formulation of the 2009 Act have been sponsored by DEFRA. The overall context for the system is set out in a Marine Policy Statement, which applies to the whole of the UK, and has been adopted by the Government and the devolved administrations. It is a framework which extends to the whole of UK territorial waters, in many places reaching up to 200 nautical miles from our shores.

The RTPI has been a key stakeholder in the development of the new system. From 2004, I chaired the Institute's Marine Planning Task Group, which brought together a wide range of coastal and marine expertise and was instrumental in advising DEFRA on the scope and content of the emerging legislation. The work of the Task Group has now been absorbed by the web-based Water and Marine Planning Sub-group of the Environmental Policy and Protection (EPP) network.

## Marine Plans workshop in Norwich: 29th March 2011.

I chaired this event which was sponsored jointly by the EPP Network, the MMO and RTPI East of England. Its main purpose was to publicise the preparation of the **East Inshore and Offshore Marine Plans**, which commenced on 1st April. It provided a valuable opportunity for delegates to engage with the MMO and to explore many of the issues which are likely to emerge.

The initial address was given by **Russell Gadbury**, planning officer for the MMO, who outlined the new framework for marine planning and the roles and responsibilities of the MMO. He explained the programme for a series of marine plans which will cover the whole of the English territorial waters, both inshore and offshore....

### "The East Inshore Plan would extend from Flamborough Head to Felixstowe"

Clearly, there would be interactions between Marine Plans and Local Development Frameworks prepared by coastal authorities.

Gadbury also described the MMO's role in operating a **new marine licensing system**, equivalent to development management in local authorities. The MMO will also be a pre-application consultation body for large-scale offshore energy schemes including Round 3 wind farm projects. There will be a key role in liaising with the IPC and its successor body on major infrastructure projects.

A local authority view was given by **Rob Young**, Coastal Management planner from North Norfolk District Council. This is a local authority area which contains most of the problems and issues surrounding coastal and marine planning. Young was enthusiastic in welcoming the MMO, and the system of marine planning. He cited the example of marina development at Wells-next-the-Sea, where the existence of the MMO would have helped to resolve many of the issues which had emerged.

In Young's opinion, most developments off-shore would have consequences for coastal areas, and there would be need for the MMO to work closely with coastal authorities and communities.

### "interface between marine and terrestrial systems"- the workshop sessions...

The MMO was clearly aware of the possible problems and was keen to work closely with coastal planning colleagues. A number of synergies between the two systems had emerged and it had become clear how marine planning would impact on the terrestrial environment. For instance, offshore wind farms off the East Coast would require cabling to reach coastal transmission stations, which would be connected to main centres of demand by overhead lines. Sea defence and flood protection schemes would also have widespread impacts. Careful attention would need to be paid to design issues.

Concern about the environmental impacts of off-shore developments was raised. The effects of schemes on marine conservation had been a long-standing concern. More recently, stakeholders had commented on the possible impact of off-shore developments on terrestrial landmarks, also on important seascapes. Natural England is engaged in Seascape Character Assessments and has engaged consultants to study the East Inshore and Offshore areas. The results of the research will inform the preparation of the marine plans.

The need for political and community engagement was stressed in the workshops. In response, the MMO pledged that it was concerned to reach all stakeholders and any interested parties in the preparation of the Marine Plans. The workshop itself was part of a process of raising awareness and engagement, and it was acknowledged that this would be a challenging task.

Economic issues were also raised in discussions. It was agreed that Marine Planning could be a positive influence in the creation of new business activities and job creation in coastal areas. The possible maximising of economic benefits had been a key driver in selecting the East Inshore and Offshore areas for the first wave of plans. Clearly, the plans would help to stimulate the economic recovery of seaside communities.

Some concerns were raised about the deliverability of the plans. This was recognised by the MMO, who intend to review plans statutorily every six years. Plans would be subject to an implementation monitoring process, coupled to an informal annual review. Delegates were assured that the plans would be subject to examination by an independent inspector.

### In summary...

Delegates left with a positive impression of the MMO and the marine planning process. There was a considerable resonance with the terrestrial system, with an emphasis on sustainable development, stakeholder involvement, an evidence base, with deliverability coupled to review and monitoring.

In the workshops, the main issue raised was undoubtedly the interface between the marine and terrestrial planning systems and the ways in which the two could be integrated. **This topic will be the focus of an RTPI East of England Conference to be held at the Imperial Hotel, Great Yarmouth on 29th June next.**

### If you want to know more, be there on 29th June.

Why not join the RTPI EPP Network and its Water and Marine Sub-Group? This is free to anyone who is interested.

For a profile of Steve Brooker, the Head of Planning at the MMO, see the 6th May edition of Planning. This article also contains more information about the MMO and its remit.

### Jed Griffiths

Griffiths Environmental Planning, Hertford

# INSIDE THE BACK WITH *Natasha x*

Natasha Oosedam, Editor of 'Planners Up Front and On Top', brings you 'love, intrigue and town planning' from the 'Barbara Cartlodge of the Marshes' - Marcia Worlspittle.

## Perspectives, lost

She was proud of her job as Assistant Head Librarian. It wasn't a big library-it was 'medium' she told her Mam, on her weekly visits back to the small slate mining village in Snowdonia. But it did have a marvellous view of the sea- well the Dee Estuary to be precise.

Tabitha Morgan was a bit of an actress on the quiet. To see her sitting at her desk, cataloguing and rearranging books, you would say she was - what the locals called, 'stuck up'. She had her long dark hair pulled up into a sort of a bun, she wore thick black framed spectacles (with clear lenses), a neat tweed suit and of course, sensible shoes. But on a Friday night down at the 'Adulte'- 'one of the best nightclubs in the North-West (including North Wales)' (the best being the 'Poco A Poco Club' in Stockport!)-she looked stunning with her long black glistening hair, fluttering green eyes, curvaceous figure and provocative dancing. And she always wore something sexy and fashionable- she was an avid viewer of 'Oh, Boy!' on the 'telly' and knew exactly what to wear in those far off 'sixties'.

She played other roles as well - the dutiful daughter, the Sergeant and radio operator in the TA - like their Gryff. She could play these many parts, well; she had thought of joining 'The Sands of Dee Players' a local amateur theatre group, run of course by retired actor-manager, Irving 'Sandy' Borrowmore. Their latest production - 'Carousel' had impressed her greatly.

\*\*\*

He, had been coming to the Library every week on Wednesday mornings -just before 'early closing', this tall dark handsome stranger. He was slightly tanned, with what might be termed a 'military bearing' and he had an amiable, persuasive and humorous way with him. Their snatched conversations, as she worked and he browsed, included discussing authors, books and latterly current affairs. He had a knack of putting her at her ease -of empathising -and generally always agreeing with her.

Eventually he tentatively asked her out. She was rather taken aback-she had thought she presented a too severe figure in her 'library outfit'!

They met at The Lyons Corner House for tea on the following Wednesday afternoon and continued to meet at various places around the town for several months and became much attached. Then quite suddenly, as they stood one Sunday gazing at the sunset from the Great Orme at Llandudno, he announced that he had been called away -posted to some far flung outpost of the commonwealth; he had previously mentioned that he 'was something to do with the government'.

They said their lingering and poignant goodbyes on the cold gray platform at Crew Railway Station. She was sad but kept her tears in check. They had promised to meet again when he came home on leave, in three months. As the train slowly slid out of the station and she dragged her leaden feet to the barrier and gave-in her 'platform ticket', she realised she was devastated - there was a huge desperate feeling of emptiness.



In a nearby telephone kiosk within sight of the red brick station, a short, rain-coated man with a trilby hat pulled down over his eyes, spoke quietly into the telephone. "She's ripe for the pickin', Mr Willerby, Sir -he's softened 'r up beautiful - another spy in the makin' eh?"

When Tabitha started work on the following Monday she was shocked to find that her precious view of the Dee was gradually disappearing as a large aquarium (now known as a 'sealife centre') was in course of erection on the promenade opposite.

These, of course, were the days before 'site notices'. She was now even more depressed.

**To be continued?... (probably not).**

This story is just one of those that Mrs Worlspittle will be reading in her New Year Tour of the Baltic States of Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia and Kaliningrad (actually part of Russia); be there or be square!

**What do you think of the new look East of England Express?**

If you have any views on the new format or anything else to do with the newsletter please write to:

Peter Hakes, 30 Viking Way,  
Brentwood, Essex, CM15 9HX  
Tel: 01277 220043  
email: [peter@hakes3334.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:peter@hakes3334.fsnet.co.uk)



**David Lock Associates are always on the look out for talented planners and urban designers.** We have been delivering value to our clients in the East of England for over 20 years by responding to changing circumstances to bring forward and implement development at all scales.



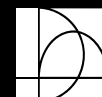
## Our skills include:

- Communication and consultation skills to engage effectively with local communities, business groups, local stakeholders, political leaders and young people. We can build the capacity required to ensure effective participation in debate, discussion and planning for growth and change.
- A long track record in the master planning and regeneration of towns, cities and regions, through robust spatial plans and urban design frameworks that guide investment in infrastructure.
- Ambition for places - their potential and opportunity - to make 'big plans' which have the ability to galvanise consensus around a vision for the future.
- Capacity to make good places through urban design and the implementation of complex plans at the local level to bring the vision to fruition.
- A trusted multi-discipline network of fellow consultants, particularly our 'Collaborate' partnership and our sister companies Integrated Transport Planning and DLA Architects Practice, to draw together complementary skills to match any project.
- A broad appreciation of the complexities faced by public and private sector clients to deliver regeneration and change, reconciling differing requirements through planning and engagement.

If you're motivated by creating sustainable developments that make a real difference to the quality of people's lives, DLA are looking for talented planners and urban designers. If you think you have the right creative skills to make a genuine contribution to our projects in Colchester, Felixstowe, Ipswich, Luton and Peterborough then please send your CV to Jo Cave: [jcave@davidlock.com](mailto:jcave@davidlock.com).

[www.davidlock.com](http://www.davidlock.com)

David Lock Associates  
Town Planning and Urban Design



© 2011 David Lock Associates. Photograph taken at Hampton, where DLA continue the planning, master planning, design and implementation of development at Peterborough's southern township

The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the Regional Activities Committee or Management Board, the Institute or author's employer's.

**RTPI East of England Regional Office**

4 Opus House, Elm Farm Park, Great Green, Thurston, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP31 3SH

**Royal Town Planning Institute Registered Address**

41 Botolph Lane, London, EC3R 8DL

The paper used is sourced from a sustainable forest. The inks used throughout are vegetable based and bio-degradable.