



RTPI

mediation of space · making of place



The Chartered Institute of Housing

THE RTPI-CIH PLANNING FOR HOUSING NETWORK REPORT FOR 2011

Summary

The Network has continued to thrive under the joint aegis of the RTPI & CIH and continues to be an attentive and active contributor to debate and policy & practice development in the field of planning for housing. The Network has continued to offer activity across the UK, in particular a new programme of activities in Wales. The events programme has not been as extensive as last year simply because the tasks of addressing and debating the wide implications of the Localism Bill and the draft National Planning Policy Framework have been so demanding. The Network is also a well-used consultation route to inform responses to public consultations by both Institutes whether jointly or individually. In particular the RTPI contributed to the CIH submission to the Inquiry into the Financing of New Housing Supply. The Network's Plan for 2012 will in particular ensure opportunities for cross-professional and cross-sectoral sharing in the light of the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to be published early in the year.

The Year

2011 was the third full year of the Network as the RTPI-CIH Planning for Housing Network. In practical demonstration of the joint commitments of the two Institutes, the RTPI contributed some content for the CIH submission to the Communities & Local Government Committee Inquiry into the Financing of New Housing Supply. Network member contributions also informed the RTPI response to the consultation on Planning for Traveller Sites.

An extensive programme of opportunities to be active in the Network has been offered to Members, including a meeting with the Institute for Public Policy Research (ippr) looking at their report 'Forever Blowing Bubbles' and their housing policy research in general. There were also two very well attended visits (jointly with the Urban Design Network, the first offer being oversubscribed) to Newhall in Harlow, Essex; Newhall is described as a neighbourhood 'where design, community and ecology work as one' and although far from complete it has already won several Awards. Either through member notifications or through RTPI & CIH regions a number of more local events have also been offered and publicized through the Network. The Network's own events programme has not been as extensive as last year simply because the tasks of addressing and debating the wide implications of the Localism Bill and the draft National Planning Policy Framework have been so demanding.

'Planning' carried an article by Network Manager Andrew Matheson, on the lessons arising from the 2010 visit to see a development in Warwickshire achieved under the Stratford-on-Avon DC 'Local Choice' policy initiative. Similarly, an article followed the first of the two visits to Newhall looking at the potential to achieve well designed housing with a strong sense of place. With Planning reducing to fortnightly publication during the year opportunities to publish what the Network is doing have reduced.

As a result of the efforts throughout the year to raise the profile, awareness and potential of the Network across the UK, new members have continued to join at a steady pace. However, as a result of a positive audit of email addresses used to contact members, the total number of active members reduced from 683 at the end of 2010 to, at the year end, 562.

There was no member survey during 2011. Instead, the end of the year saw the commencement of formal Review of all the RTPI and joint Networks with a view to rebalancing their resource demands within the new RTPI Policy, Practice & Networks Hub. At the turn of the year the Review had not been concluded but there has been full acknowledgement of the need for a priority for housing within positive planning outcomes.

The Network's Plan for 2012 will aim to ensure that the Network is active, responsive and respected in a year of new policy implementation. All opportunities for cross-professional and cross-sectoral sharing will be explored and continuing efforts will be made to break down policy & practice barriers to effective delivery of housing.

Total Membership

Figure current at 31.12.11: **562** (*after a 2011 positive audit of member email contacts*)
(For comparison: Members 2008 – 401; 2009 – 520; 2010 - 683)

E-bulletins

E-bulletins have been distributed fortnightly, with special editions for any topics of urgency.

Network On-line Forum

With support from CIH the Network has been making use of the Moodle facility extensively used by the Open University. Whilst its potential to host a number of on-going debates, some for sub-sections of the wider membership, has been demonstrated very successfully, the Member contributions have been more limited than we had hoped and we continue to explore ways to further develop its undoubted potential with new website potential coming from both CIH & RTPI in 2012.

Requests to/from Members (beyond the information content of the Bulletins)

Member attention was drawn to a **Research Paper** in the House of Commons Library on the Localism Bill: Planning and Housing.

A member requested contact from any member aware of any authority that requests commuted sums via **Section 106 Planning Obligations** for *single* new dwellings.

Members were invited to **contribute to a debate** on 'what is needed to get the housing market moving'.

Prompted by a blog in Inside Housing Network members were invited to comment on the role of **housing associations** in rising to the challenges of localism.

Member attention was drawn to a letter to Chief Planning Officers in England from the DCLG following the revision of **Planning Policy Guidance 13** re residential parking standards.

CIH is part of the **Housing and Ageing Alliance** and, as part of its activities they asked for comment/feedback on the Group's concern that the localism agenda for planning, and the lack of potential join-up sub nationally might mean a lack of delivery of a range of housing options that can meet the needs and aspirations of an ageing society.

Member input was invited on the potential of a **Local Standards Framework for New Homes** to assist RTPI/CIH contributions to the debate.

A member, who is an architect involved with **retrofit projects** (for both the Energy Savings Trust and the Technology Strategy Board) to upgrade existing housing stock to reduce energy requirements/CO2 emissions, asked whether these types of projects are the subject of any local guidance – or prospective guidance - on getting the planning process for such projects right.

A Building Surveying student of the University of Westminster requested member completion of a questionnaire to help his current research based on the **planning system delivery of affordable housing**.

Aware that the Government recognised that there will be a variety of opinions as to what developments should be **subject to consultation**, members were invited to share their thoughts with fellow Network members.

A '**Larger than Local**' discussion was started in the Member Forum.

Transform South Yorkshire had prepared a strategic **Residential Design Guide** which was publicised to members.

Members were invited to participate in a **programme of charrettes** throughout Scotland aimed at embedding charrette working at the heart of designs for new and regenerated places.

Members were invited to share their thoughts on the proposals included in the Government's **Budget Plan for Growth** and the debate around it.

The Communities & Local Government Parliamentary Committee expressed concern at the "vacuum at the heart of the English planning system" left by the **abolition of the Regional Spatial Strategies** and members were invited to share their experiences.

The National Housing Federation (NHF) looked for someone to help them ensure that the reforms of the Localism Bill and National Planning Policy Framework effectively support the delivery of new affordable homes

LocalGov reported that 'Councils have been urged to renege on **Section 106 Agreements**, as sites signed off prior to the credit crunch remain untouched' and members were invited to submit examples to share for the benefit of all.

CLG Chief Planner Steve Quartermain wrote to Chief Planning Officers drawing attention to the Minister of Decentralisation's Written Statement that emphasised the importance of local planning authorities adopting a more pro-development stance and member comment was invited.

Members drew attention to two **relevant courses** that they were involved in offering:
Localism: Embracing the Culture of Community-Led Planning, London
Community Land Trusts Annual Conference, London

A 10-minute survey from the University of Lancaster aimed to obtain the views of members on aspects of **density and decision-making** in the urban environment.

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives in Winnipeg asked for member experience and thoughts on the use of **Housing Improvement Zones**.

Member comments were invited on the new consideration, introduced via a Government **amendment to the Localism Bill**, to make "any local finance considerations" material to a planning application.

A member contributed his paper for the Housing Forum on the subject of the **duty to co-operate**.

Member input on **assessing housing requirements** was invited in advance of a sector group meeting to examine current guidance.

Member comment on the **Practitioner Group draft of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** was invited.

A PIPA Network member started a member discussion on **new routes to affordable housing**.

Members attention was drawn to: **Faith in Affordable Housing Conference**: Using church land & property.

Following suggestions that the **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** "would provide a greater opportunity for revenue to flow into affordable housing if it were regarded as part of the infrastructure of a community" members were asked whether this was an appropriate use of CIL.

Members were invited to make suggestions for a new **portfolio of webinars** to meet their training needs.

A leaked draft of the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** that suggested that planning authorities will need a 5 year + 20% housing land supply gave rise to the question: where will LPAs find their extra 20%?

Shelter Housing Insights for Communities was introduced to members and Shelter invited direct feedback to improve the product.

B.Line Housing Information Ltd made their "Bramley based **housing needs model**" spreadsheet freely available to members.

Member interest in contributing to the RTPI response to the **RICS guidance note on Financial Viability** in Planning was invited.

Members were advised that applications were being accepted for a **12-month paid internship** with BSHF.

Member contributions on the **draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** were canvassed.

Members drew attention to the following **housing events** in which they were involved:

Brighton & Hove Eco Open Houses

Housing Choice for Older People - three events

Members were advised that the RTPI had launched a nationwide planning **myth busting campaign** in England.

The Retirement Housing Group (RHG) was looking to build up a picture across England and Wales of the extent to which new build provision in either the affordable or the market sectors is catering for the needs of their group and invited members to provide examples of current or proposed **monitoring of provision of older persons housing**.

Members were advised of the RIBA launch of its **HomeWise campaign**.

The National Housing Federation (NHF), Shelter and the CIH launch of their **Housing Report** was publicised to members.

A member asked for examples of where LAs/providers have been particularly successful at including requirements for **housing for disabled people** through their planning documents.

Members were advised that the **RICS was asking its members** for their ideas on a number of issues including how to increase home ownership, improve the private rented sector & create new ways of building homes.

An opportunity available in 2012 for a 3-4 week or 3 month **Fellowship in the US** was drawn to member attention.

The National Housing Federation kindly shared its **draft response to the CIL Consultation** with Network members.

Members were sent a **special Bulletin** with details of the English Housing Strategy.

Policy consultations

Network members were invited to contribute to consultations on the following during 2011:

National Planning Policy Framework - DCLG

RICS Land & Society Commission - RICS

Regeneration - Inquiry and Call for evidence - Communities and Local Government Committee

Proposals to introduce a Community Right to Buy - assets of community value - DCLG

Mayoral Community Infrastructure Levy - Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule – London Assembly

Northern Ireland Draft Revised Regional Development Strategy – NI Assembly

PPS 23 (Draft): Enabling Development and accompanying Best Practice Guidance 'Assessing Enabling Development' – NI Assembly

Revision to Annex B of Planning Policy Statement 3 - DCLG

Pre-application Consultation with Communities - DCLG

Planning Policy Statement 3: Planning for housing - Technical change to annex B - Affordable housing definition - DCLG

Guidance on the use of compulsory purchase – Scottish Government

Welsh Housing Statistics – Welsh Assembly Government

Statutory Instruments that should be removed in order to make it easier to deliver planning outcomes - DCLG

Sustainable Communities Act 2007: Inspiring the Big Society - DCLG

Building on Tradition - A Sustainable Design Guide for the Northern Ireland Countryside - NI Assembly

Planning for Traveller Sites – DCLG

Housing Market Statistics - The National Statistician

Community Infrastructure Levy – the London Assembly

Communities First: The Future – Welsh Assembly Government

Local Planning Regulations - DCLG

Realising the potential of pre-application discussions - Welsh Assembly Government

Inquiry into the role of public property in growth agenda - All Party Urban Development Group

The registration on new town or village greens - Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Community involvement in planning - The London Assembly

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - DCLG

Inquiry into energy policy and planning in Wales - Welsh Assembly Government
Improving the Planning Appeal Process - Welsh Assembly Government
Inquiry into Financing of New Housing Supply - Communities and Local Government Committee
Travellers' Accommodation in Northern Ireland – NI Assembly
Community Infrastructure Levy - DCLG
Neighbourhood Planning - DCLG
Red tape challenge – Cabinet Office

Events (restrictions are generally placed on numbers at events, either to allow for essential debate or to fit with venue/tour capacities)

Date: 3rd February 2011
Event: National Planning Policy Framework for England
Venue: London
Subject: All Networks discussion on the draft document.
The Presentations from this event were available via the members' area of the website.

Date: 30th March 2011
Event: Study Tour to Newhall, Harlow (joint event with P4H Network)
Venue: Harlow
Subject: The publicity describes Newhall as a neighbourhood 'where design, community and ecology work as one'. It has already won several Awards.
Participants: 30
A photographic record of this visit is available via the member website.

Date: 12th May 2011
Event: Engaging communities and its potential within neighbourhood planning
Venue: Cambridge
Subject: Explored 2-3 examples of recent and productive community engagement.
Participants: 16
The link to the Cambridge website material was available in the members' area of the website.

Date: 12th May 2011
Event: Funding Housing in Wales
Venue: Swansea
Offered to members by RTPI Cymru and publicized through the Network.

Date: 19th May 2011
Event: Funding Housing in Wales
Venue: Old Colwyn
Offered to members by RTPI Cymru and publicised through the Network.

Date: 2nd June 2011
Event: Recycling in housing and regeneration
Venue: London
Subject: The meeting asked "How realistic is this in the new context for RSLs and local authorities?"
Offered to members by RoomatRTPI London and publicised through the Network.

Date: 9th June 2011
Event: Planning & its Role in relation to Housing Supply
Venue: London
Subject: A look at the ippr strand of research on housing policy.

Participants: 24

The link to the ippr report and research was available in the members' area of the website.

Date: 21st to 23rd June 2011

Event: CIH Conference 2011

Venue: Harrogate

Subject Bringing Housing Together

Offered to members by CIH and publicised through the Network.

Date: 21st September 2011

Event: Repeat of Visit to Newhall, Harlow

Venue: Harlow

Subject The publicity describes Newhall as a neighbourhood 'where design, community and ecology work as one'. It has already won several Awards.

Participants: 26

A photographic record of this visit is available via the member website.

Date: 17th November 2011

Event: Community Engagement in Planning under Localism

Venue: Leeds

Offered to members by RTPI Yorkshire and publicised through the Network.

Date: 23rd November 2011

Event: Where have all the New Homes Gone?

Venue: Nottingham

Offered to members by RTPI East Midlands and publicised through the Network.

Date: 1st December 2011

Event: Introduction to Section 106 Agreements

Venue: Birmingham

Offered to members by CIH and publicised through the Network.

Date: 2nd December 2011

Event: The Challenges for Housing Delivery

Venue: Cardiff

Offered to members by RTPI Cymru and publicised through the Network.

Date: 6th December 2011

Event: CIH Conference 2011

Venue: Harrogate

Subject Bringing Housing Together

Offered to members by CIH and publicised through the Network.

Date: 6th December 2011

Event: Housing - What Do We Do Now?

Venue: Peterborough

Offered to members by RTPI East of England and publicised through the Network.

Date: 7th December 2011

Event: What next for Housing Growth?

Venue: Northampton

Offered to members by the University of Northampton and publicised through the Network.

Andrew Matheson MRTPI FCIH
Network Manager

Direct line: +44(0)1789 763006 Mobile: 07971 375362 Switchboard: +44(0)20 7929 9494

Royal Town Planning Institute
41 Botolph Lane
London EC3R 8DL
www.rtpi.org.uk

Chartered Institute of Housing
Octavia House, Westwood Way
Coventry CV4 8JP
www.cih.org

Registered Charity No 262865; Scotland SC 037841

A charity incorporated by Royal Charter and
registered in England 244067/R