

# LONDON CALLING

The Journal of the London Region of the RTPI

October 2006



## The RTPI London Region wants you!

The RTPI London region is looking for new committee members to join for 2007.

One or all of the following could benefit you by joining us:

- Become more attractive to new employers
- Meet other planners to share experiences
- Learn more about other career opportunities in planning
- Promote planning as a profession
- Get the opportunity to gain new skills and skills and experience outside your current job role including; organising events, finance, managing people, marketing and more
- Commission ground breaking planning research
- Promote planning to young people
- Represent the RTPI's views to government and other professional

bodies including RIBA, RICS, UDL, ROOM and many more. A list of committees we attend can be found at [london.rtpi.org.uk](http://london.rtpi.org.uk)

- Make the most of your membership subscription

In return your time to help take forward the work of the Regional Activities Committee is required. The committee meets 6 times a year in Central London on a Tuesday evening 6-8pm.

If you want to learn more contact Lucy Barton Regional Co-ordinator on 02074260680 or email Lucy at [london@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:london@rtpi.org.uk)

You could also attend our Region AGM on 22nd November 2006. To sign up for our events bulletins contact [london@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:london@rtpi.org.uk)

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# Understanding Development Finance

**Brian Whiteley reports the main points coming out of a seminar held at the CB Richard Ellis HQ in Kingsley House, Wimpole Street on 30th May, 2006 featuring two speakers: Andrew Youens (FRICS), Senior Lecturer in Estate Management at the University of Westminster and Robert Evans, a director at Argent Group plc.**

There are no clear reasons why individual investors buy / develop property. They might do so to seek immediate income – selling a building on completion – or seek long term capital value growth from a site (to avoid tax on their existing savings / funds now).

Valuation is more of an art than a science – akin to alchemy in Andrew Youens' view. The long term value of uses changes over time - e.g. particular types of shops come into and out of fashion whilst UK call centres currently tend to be based abroad (notably in India, although Ghana is now understood to be providing a competing alternative by undercutting costs in India).

Residual valuation of a property depends upon many variables and can be challenged at every stage – yet developers rely on these valuations to get funding from banks, etc. & complicated court cases can result if things go wrong.

Property development value will depend on the income stream which results once a building is developed – i.e. the occupiers / tenants provide that stream and in effect create an investment value for a building which can then be sold on. Investors such as banks will thus lend more readily where schemes are already largely prelet. The way a property is managed can also create a higher income stream – property investors might thus dictate to a developer how lease terms should be set so as to ensure a particular rental stream results from a scheme – they might aim for greater returns via frequent rent reviews.

Property is only one medium for investment – a very risky one as judging



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returns is not easy. For these reasons investors tend only to hold a proportion of their portfolios in property, preferring to spread their risks across several sectors. Property is a popular option at present as alternative investment media (stocks, gilts, shares, etc.) are at a historic low point in terms of the returns they offer - and demand in some property sectors (e.g. residential stock in central London) remains very strong. Property investors come from several sectors: pension funds, insurance companies, banks, investment traders and foreign fund holders.

The two greatest issues in any property investment decision tend to revolve

around when to time an investment within the overall property cycle and whether planning permission will be obtained. It can take five years or longer for a large scheme to get through from conception to completion – by which time a downturn in demand for the type of space being provided could leave a developer bankrupted.

Risks can come in many forms and also be very volatile – e.g. construction costs for steel, etc., have started to rise worldwide in response to rising demand for building materials as the Chinese have started work on their sites for the 2008 Olympics.

*Brian Whiteley, LB Waltham Forest*

# Species diversity in London

Protecting species and species diversity is not just something that applies to the leafy green areas of outer London Boroughs, nor is it something that should just be left to those preparing Borough Biodiversity Action Plans.

This need was only too obvious when considering the attendance at a recent CPD event by English Nature's London team and Biodiversity staff from the GLA, with too few inner London Boroughs represented.

Currently involved in raising the profile of species diversity amongst planners in London, English Nature (with London Region support) have already provided a number of free training events to explain the issues around species diversity in London. Here are a few of those issues:

## What legal duties are there?

Recent changes in legislation have placed considerably more emphasis on species protection. This includes PPS9 which places a duty on LPAs to protect, through LDD policy, the habitats of certain species to maintain diversity in England. In addition Councils should protect specific species against the adverse effects of development through the use of planning conditions or obligations. The presence of a protected species is now a material consideration (ODPM Circular 06/2005). LPAs can refuse permission

where harm to a species or its habitat would result, unless the benefits of that development outweigh the harm (but only where those development benefits are considerable). When considering European protected species (in London these are likely to be all species of bats and their roosts, great crested newts and their habitats, or dormice), local authorities failing to fulfil their duties could be held negligent and open to judicial review. A Cornish local authority has already found this, to its cost (JPEL July 2001 p786). Relevant legislation can be found in the 'Wildlife' menu on English Nature web site.

## Which species are protected?

Not just the familiar ones – Badgers, bats, great crested newts etc still retain their high level protection, but a whole range of others from the stag beetle to the house sparrow and brown hare are also now included and should be considered. Lists of protected species for London, including plants, fungi, invertebrates, birds and mammals, are available on the London's Biodiversity Partnership web site [www.lbp.org.uk](http://www.lbp.org.uk)

## What sort of habitats are likely to be important in London?

It's not just outer London open spaces

which are of value. A whole range of habitats may support substantial species diversity even in the heart of built up areas in inner London. Brownfield sites, old buildings, proximity to water bodies, grassland, rail embankments and associated trees and shrubs – all of these can offer potential habitats and may require some level of survey.

## Can't we just move the species or create new habitats?

Collecting and moving populations of protected species has often been undertaken in mitigation of development, so has the creation of new areas to compensate for loss of habitat. But this is now not always considered to be appropriate and planners and developers may need to look to more acceptable solutions. In some cases it may be preferable to refuse the development.

## Where can I find out more?

More detailed articles will appear in future newsletters and on the Region web page when available. Seek out your Council's Biodiversity Plan Officer. Contact English Nature, the government's statutory advisory agency [www.englishnature.org.uk](http://www.englishnature.org.uk)

*Carol Ryall*



# President visits RTPI London Region

The RTPI President Clive Harridge visited the London Region in July this year. The visit started at Kings Cross.

The President met planners from LB Camden, led by Paul Vivien, who are leading the redevelopment of Kings Cross. Acres of virtually derelict land will be transformed into a major mixed use development including high density housing. A number of buildings on the site have strong historical links. The planners explained how some would be incorporated into the development while the difficult decision had been taken to remove others to facilitate access to the site.

After Kings Cross, the President took a boat tour along the River Thames to review the extraordinary amount of new riverside development on both sides of the Thames that has been completed in recent years. During the trip the



RTPI President Clive Harridge (right) chairing the recent infrastructure event. Also pictured are Henry Brougham of Roger Tym & Partners and Mark Dickinson of Thames Water

President had the opportunity to discuss with committee members the work of the RTPI London Region. The trip finished at Waterloo where the President went on to Kings to Chair the RTPI London Region

infrastructure seminar.

The RTPI London Region would like to thank Paul Vivien and the other Camden Planners for hosting the President's visit to Kings Cross.



Doctor Tim Williams emphasises his point! Roger Tym & Partners recently sponsored an RTPI London Region seminar examining the need for new infrastructure in the light of housing growth and major projects in London and the South East. Speakers included Dr Tim Williams, Director of Olympic Legacy at London Borough of Tower Hamlets and former adviser to David Miliband MP, Henry Brougham of Roger Tym & Partners and Mark Dickinson of Thames Water. The event was chaired by RTPI President, Clive Harridge, as part of his visit to the London Region. The speakers addressed a variety of issues, including the provision of new infrastructure associated with London 2012, the cost and funding of growth in south east England, and the implications of housing growth in the Thames Water Region for the provision of water and waste water infrastructure. The speakers' slides will be available shortly at <http://london.rtpi.org.uk>

# Captain's Log Starship PAL

(Music . . . and roll credits) Planning Aid staff and volunteers continue in their ceaseless quest to boldly go (sorry go boldly!) to bring understanding to those individuals and organisations who find it difficult to access the planning system. Extracts from the Captain's log . . .

## 09-08-06

Staff and Volunteers help young human species of planet Earth . . . Tower Hamlets . . . Southwark . . . explain complexities of built environment . . . summer university . . . Volunteer staff assisting . . . placements . . . temporary starship crew likely to gain valuable planning career experience.

### Captain's Action:

Arrange more youth projects . . . potential Tate Modern event . . . involve young people in planning . . . more potential planners . . . Volunteer crew welcome.

## 05-09-06 . . .

June's local elections bring stark changes to political balance of ALG . . . 33%

cut to the voluntary sector funding pot expected . . . threatens very core of PAL's existence . . . ALG one of few grants providers supporting PAL's core service . . . demand for advice from London's communities rising . . . complex regeneration projects all over capital . . . Thames Gateway and Olympics legacy concerns . . . Grants Committee agrees planning as priority to support . . . cuts unlikely to be 33% but some cuts likely . . . no details of 'commissioning' which replaces bidding rounds.

### Captain's action:

Planners and Councils around Earth London requested to maintain contact . . . condition critical. Updates will be communicated.

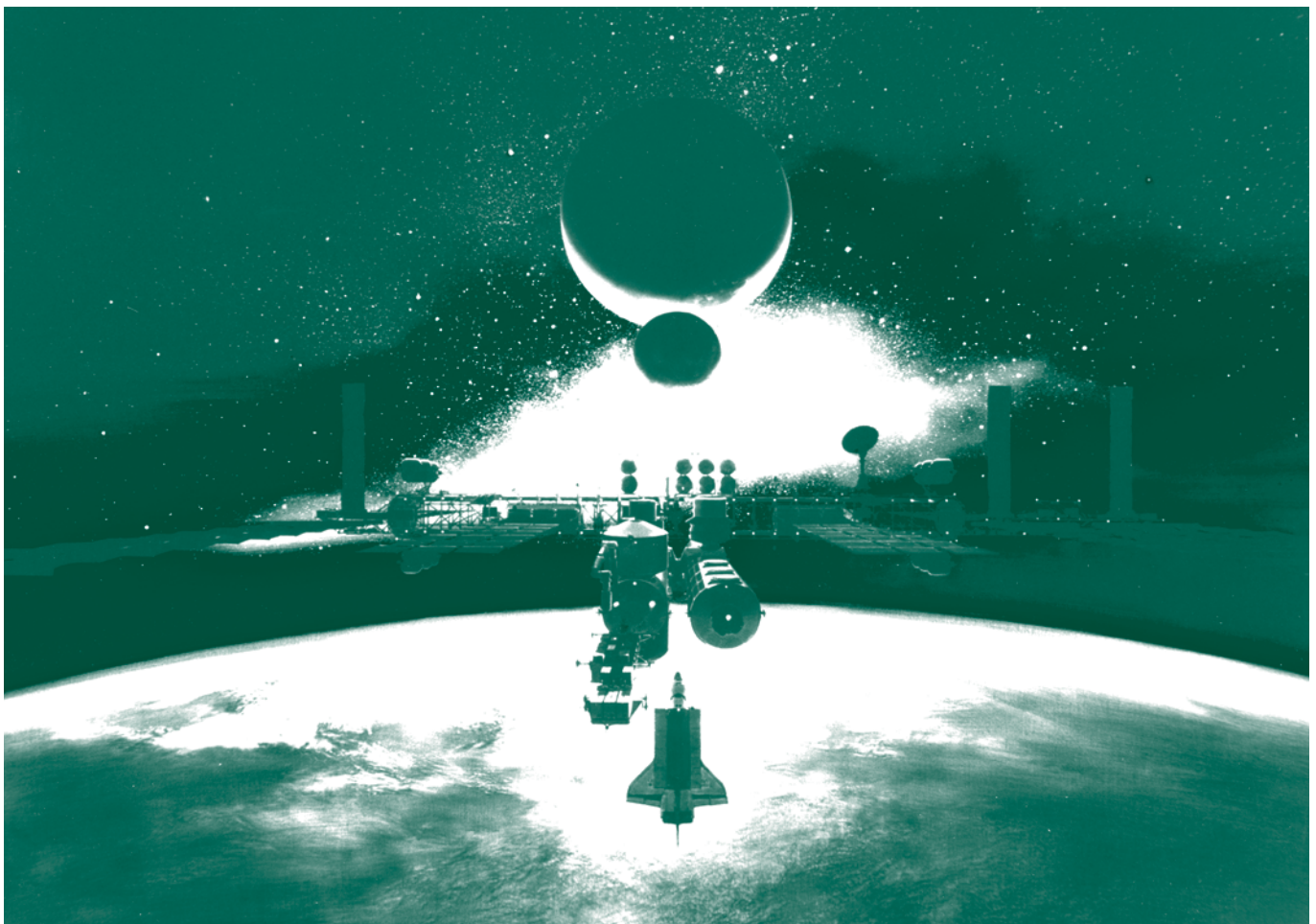
## 06-09-06 . . .

Crew meet potential Volunteers for induction and casework . . . Volunteers learn of brave new world of community planning . . . eat cake . . . drink tea . . . network . . . sign application form . . . leave happy in knowledge that helping fellow man (and woman and young people . . .)

### Captain's action:

Seek more intelligent life beings . . . plan more inductions . . . potential crew to contact earth code 020 7247 4900 . . . internet highway code [info@planningaidforlondon.org.uk](mailto:info@planningaidforlondon.org.uk) for application . . . Community Planner, Warp Factor 5 full ahead please . . . (With thanks to StarTrek)

*Carol Ryall*



# Planners in the Workplace

**Planners in the Workplace (PIWP) is a new service from the RTPI designed to support planners in their roles and help them to develop as planners, as managers and as leaders in the workplace.**

PIWP is developing innovative new services to add value to RTPI membership and help members get more from their profession. The following services form part of your membership subscription and so are free to RTPI members.

## **Employment law helpline**

We provide a 24-hour confidential employment law helpline for RTPI members, whether employers or employees, for all categories of membership, from student and licentiate members to chartered planners in senior positions.

For free advice call our service provider Employment Law Consultants tel: 0141 620 0100

## **Business management guidance**

We have introduced a new range of publications to broaden the range of current business information and guidance available to members. This information, applicable to self-employed consultants, small and medium-sized business and larger public sector organizations includes;

- **RTPI directors briefings and action lists**

RTPI directors briefings are 4-page fact sheets providing quality practical advice on a wide range of business topics. Action lists support and complement much of the information provided in directors briefings and presented in a concise, bullet point style. For a list of available topics please email [piwp@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:piwp@rtpi.org.uk) or visit the RTPI website.

- **small business newsfeed**

A weekly service providing news and information of practical relevance to self-employed consultants and small/medium planning consultancies. The service is provided through the RTPI's



## **Planners in the Workplace**

Independent Consultants Network, enhancing the services the network provides to its members.

To join the network please visit the RTPI website.

## **Guidance and information on a wide range of workplace/practice issues**

Supported by RTPI good practice guides, and drawing on the experience of a network of RTPI members – a 'Planning Aid for Planners' – PIWP is able to provide members with a unique personal support service, helping members' problem solve difficulties at the workplace.

- **professional development opportunities in leadership and management.**

Working with the RTPI's Membership, Education and Lifelong Learning team, RTPI conferences and other training partners, PIWP will sign post members

to sources of training and development that will help them become better managers and leaders in the workplace.

- **collaborative working groups;**

A new knowledge exchange and professional development initiative based on the tried and tested action learning set model of problem solving through group discussion of workplace issues. This new initiative will help with individual members' professional development in a number of key areas including management and communication skills and culture change issues, as well as the promotion of good practice and a wider professional understanding between all those working within the planning system.

For further information please email [piwp@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:piwp@rtpi.org.uk) or visit [www.rtpi.org.uk](http://www.rtpi.org.uk)



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## Spot the Building Competition!

The winner of the 'Spot the Building Competition' in the last London Calling was Scott Bailey of Galliard Homes. Scott correctly identified the building as the Quadriga statue on top of the Wellington Arch. Scott wins a £10 voucher. Thanks to all those who entered.

Answers please by  
30th November 2006 to  
[jon.barker@atkinglobal.com](mailto:jon.barker@atkinglobal.com)

## New Regional Co-Ordinator for London

The Region is pleased to welcome Lucy Barton, its new part time Regional Co-ordinator. Lucy is based in the office of Planning Aid for London and can be contacted on [london@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:london@rtpi.org.uk). She will be contacting members as part of her role to develop new and improved services.

# Events Diary

**Thursday 2nd November 2006**

**Further Draft Alterations to the London Plan – Seminar**

**17:45 for 18:00**

**City Hall, The Queen's Walk, London SE1 2AA**

**Wednesday 8th November 2006**

**World Town Planning Day**

**Thursday 9th November 2006**

**WTPD Young Planner event**

**Friday 10th November 2006**

**Urban Management In The Community**

**09:30**

**CBI Conference Centre, Centre Point,  
103 New Oxford Street, London, WC1A 1DU**

**Organised jointly by the London Branches of: Chartered  
Institute of Housing, Royal Town Planning Institute,  
ROOM at RTPI, Royal Institute of British Architects,  
Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors**

**Wednesday 22nd November 2006**

**London Region AGM & Social Event**

**18:00 for 18:30**

**Venue TBC**

**Tuesday 28th November 2006**

**London Planning Awards**

**City Hall, The Queen's Walk, London SE1 2AA**

## London Region Contacts 2006

### Chair

Vicky Wilshaw, CB Richard Ellis

### Senior Vice-Chair

Mary-Jane O'Neill, Drivers Jonas

### Junior Vice-Chair

Vacant

### Hon Secretary

Ian Bond, Halcrow

### Hon Treasurer

Carol Ryall, Planning Aid for London

### Representative on General Assembly and

### Representative on RIBA LUPG

Joanna Chambers, EDAW

### Immediate Past Chair, Representative on CIC London Executive and Region Web Page Editor

Richard Lemon, Roger Tym & Partners

### Young Planners Representative

Vacant

### Events Coordinator

Hannah Baker, Indigo Planning

### Newsletter Editor

Jon Barker, Atkins

### Black Planners Network Representative

Wilma Daniel, London Borough of Hackney

### Consultations Secretary

Michael Fearn, Shire Consulting

### Representatives on Planning Aid for London Management Committee

Miles Joyce, London Borough of Southwark

Meeta Kaur, SJ Berwin

### University Planning Schools Liaison Officer

Paul Miner, Campaign to Protect Rural England

### Representative on RTPI

### English Planning Policy Forum

Brian Whiteley, London Borough of Waltham Forest

### Other Regional Activities Committee members

Nancy Astley, Planning Aid for London

Roger Chapman, Government Office for London

Giles Dolphin, Greater London Authority

Sophie Hey, EDAW

Matthew Sharpe, EDAW

### Contact: RTPI London Region

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