



New Shakespeare Theatre plan 'as you like it'?

Will it be a Midsummer Night's Dream or just another Winter's Tale?

The Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) has unveiled £100m plans to transform the famous Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon and change the face of the riverside. The design will open up the 1932 Royal Shakespeare Theatre and bring the audience and actors closer together in an auditorium seating over 1,000 people.


The proposals will restore the key Art Deco elements of the Grade II* listed theatre. So far the Company has already received pledges for 85 per cent of the £100 million required for the project.

Key elements of the scheme include:

- A new 1,000 seat thrust stage for the Royal Shakespeare Theatre;
- Restoration of the valued heritage elements of the building;
- A theatre tower marking a new entrance, providing circulation to all parts of the building and unrivalled views across Stratford;
- An accessible riverside walkway running alongside the RSC's theatres enhancing access to the river and gardens;
- More accessible public areas with improved facilities for audiences, including a rooftop café/restaurant and two new café/bars, with foyers linking the Royal Shakespeare and Swan Theatres;
- A public square, providing a meeting place and outdoor stage for music and performance that connects the theatres and their surrounding environment;

The RSC, which contributes £57 million a year to the economy of the West Midlands, will continue performing in Stratford throughout the transformation at a temporary venue which opened earlier this summer, The Courtyard Theatre, just along the riverside. Advantage West Midlands has pledged to invest £20 million in the project to reflect the RSC's position as a flagship for cultural tourism and a significant economic force in the region.

The RSC's plans have been developed in tandem with the proposals from Stratford-upon-Avon District Council and Warwickshire County Council to develop the waterfront area in the town as part of a shared vision and master-plan.

The Company expects to submit a planning and listed building application later this year with work scheduled to start in Spring 2007. The Royal Shakespeare and Swan Theatres will re-open in 2010. 

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Chair's remarks

A U K L D F ?

It is a continuing amazement to me that there is no spatial plan for the whole of England, if not the UK. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland all have a plan for their territories. In England, we just seem to muddle through.

Currently in England, at the highest level, we have our emerging Regional Spatial Strategies, and we're reliant on the various Government Offices to ensure they correlate. Then we factor in the product of Kate Barker's latest review, the DTI's Energy Review, together with any other government review which happens to be underway, and we're left with some sort of national level (or English) plan: a sort-of national 'Local Development Framework'.

In this 'national LDF', the RSSs would have to be not only the Core Strategies, but the Site Specific Allocations and the Adopted Proposals Map as well. The Energy Review would be a Supplementary Planning Document; and perhaps the Sustainable Communities Plan would be an Action Area Plan. Perhaps PPS's would be Other Development Plan Documents. I'm not sure what the Statement of Community Involvement would be – perhaps the results of the next general election?

And what about the test of soundness? The whole national LDF gets a bit creaky at this point. In fact it fails. Any super-inspector would find the English Development Framework to be unsound. The super-inspector would definitely find the strategies and the policies in this national spatial plan to be inconsistent; he or she would find that it didn't meet any national sustainability appraisal and had no regard to the plans of other adjoining areas (such as Wales and EU countries). And it all starts to get a bit worrying. Which is exactly why we need a National Development Framework.

Many people say that this is too difficult: they say that councils, city-regions and regional assemblies would not agree to a national set of strategies, in case some constituencies would lose out. Of course they would; but they do now, however the fudge is so great and the transparency so opaque that success or failure of a region or an area cannot be clearly linked to policy.


However, other people believe it can be done. And they don't have to go far, in a national sense to find a working example. Scotland has a National Planning Framework. Not only has it got one; it's being revised at present.

In Scotland, in the context of the National Planning Framework, two traditional rivals, Edinburgh and Glasgow, have buried their competitive hatchets and come together to develop a strategy which they, and the other key cities, believe will benefit the whole of Scotland. They believe that the 'greater good' will benefit both cities. This polycentric approach has a resonance across Europe – Europe with the exception of England, that is. In England, we prefer wasteful competition between regions.



There is criticism from some Scottish rural areas that feel they are being disadvantaged in this approach, and they may have a point. However, it does demonstrate that a national planning framework can be achieved, and that political rivals can come together. There is some concern that the NPF is not subject to an EIP, as it will be scrutinised in the Scottish Parliament instead. But all this just goes to demonstrate that the Scots are concerned with the fine tuning of their NPF, not with the principle of having one.

The Scottish approach just has to be better, more sustainable, more coordinated, more planned, than our southern spatial policy vacuum. A national planning policy would enable a national strategy to guide national priorities, such as road and rail investment, location of airports, future energy projects, and so on.

The RTPI and the TCPA came together to champion the cause of a 'development framework for England' earlier this year. National infrastructure issues make the need for such a strategy ever more pressing as the months go by. As planners, we must support the concept of a spatial strategy for England. 


Hector Pearson, Chairman
RTPI West Midlands

South Staffordshire Green belt saved

In a 'landmark' appeal decision, the Secretary of State has supported her appeal Inspector in dismissing to related appeals by George Wimpey for development on a major chunk of green belt land (100 acres) on land between Great Wryley and Cheslyn Hay in South Staffordshire.

Despite a significant shortfall in housing land supply in the District and the location of the site in a broad area identified for housing in Policy H1 of the

Staffordshire Structure Plan, the Secretary of State concludes that this should not outweigh green belt policy nor undermine the regional strategy of focusing development on the Major Urban Areas.

If there are key appeal decisions you feel should be brought to the attention of planners in the region, please send the information to the usual Tripwire address. 

The West Midlands on the Horns of A Dilemma

Despite its abstruse title and snail-like pace, the current 'Phase 2' review of the Regional Spatial Strategy is grappling with some big issues about the future of the West Midlands. Having convinced ministers only two years ago that a strategy focusing on the regeneration of the major urban areas and the pegging back of growth outside them was appropriate and indeed essential, the Regional Assembly now find the strategy under assault, not least from the Government, whose new found enthusiasm for housing growth at all costs has 'ripped up' much of the previous PPG3 policy advice.

It is vital that the Assembly hold their nerve and defend their strategy. The Government have been led astray by Kate Barker's over-simplified view that meeting housing *need* (which everyone agrees is important) means meeting *demand* in full. On the contrary, I believe that it is about building the right types of dwelling in the places they are genuinely needed rather than surrendering to the dictates of the market, driven by the profit motive often responding to ephemeral or even illusory consumer preferences.

The Government has published household projections that (by their own admission) have a very high range of uncertainty, assume a continuation of past trends and take no account of future policy. Yet they now seem to expect us to take them as gospel. Other government policies, for example on the environment and sustainable transport, are (by implication) downgraded in importance.

If we swallow this approach, we may risk losing, amongst other things:

- The prospects of long-term success in urban regeneration, and in particular reviving areas of currently low demand;
- The strong and welcome emphasis on brownfield development;
- The more efficient use of land stemming from an increase in urban densities;
- The prospect of reducing and eventually eliminating the exodus of population from the major urban areas to the rest of the region;
- Parts of the green belts that protect our conurbations from sprawling outwards;
- The character of some smaller towns and rural areas;

- The opportunity to achieve significant modal shift away from the current over-reliance on the private car;
- Any prospect of keeping the region's 'environmental footprint' (including its contribution to climate change) within manageable levels.

If I am right, this would be a high price to pay for a short-term, politically inspired but misguided fixation with meeting housing demand.

There is a further, more specifically geographical implication from going down this path. A few short years ago, we had a planning strategy in the West Midlands that sought to steer development towards the north and west of the region in an effort to counteract the natural bias towards development in areas bordering the vibrant South East of England. Now we are edging towards the opposite approach of letting development rip in the south and east, even if that means leaving the rest of the region to rot. I believe this short-sighted and divisive approach would do as much damage to parts of the West Midlands as the Government's failure to get a grip on regional economic development has done to the flagging northern regions.

In an ideal world, it might be possible to find a way of reconciling the Government's latest policy initiative with the existing regional strategy. However I am far from convinced that such a compromise exists. In searching for it, we run the risk of arriving at a lowest common denominator which fatally weakens the regional planning strategy and leaves individual planning decisions at the mercy of ad hocery, prejudice and political whim.

So we have to choose. In my view it would be madness to abandon the path we have chosen so soon after we have set foot on it. It needs 20 or 30 years of concentrated effort to work – perhaps more. Are we really ready as a region to smile weakly, throw up our hands in resignation and just give in? I think not. 🏠

Peter Langley: Vice Chairman, Campaign to Protect Rural England (West Midlands)

West Midlands faces major challenges

The forthcoming review of the West Midlands RSS is creating some major headaches for the region. Faced with a growing need for new housing, the 'section 4.4 authorities' (County Councils and Metropolitan authorities), have been testing alternative growth scenarios rising to a 50% increase in growth. But Councils have found that the capacity for significant growth in the conurbations is limited.

Recent research work both by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and housing experts Alan Holmans and Christine Whitehead has shown that far from being exaggerated the Government's household projections are likely to be a gross under-estimate.

Will the higher housing targets undermine the Regional Strategy or will it enable the West Midlands (including the provincial towns) to grow into a more vibrant economy and take some of the pressures of the south east?

The issues facing the West Midlands region and the possible future direction of policy will be discussed at an informal Open Debate provisionally fixed for the evening of Monday 4th December 2006 at the offices of Arup Associates, Blythe Business Park, Solihull at 6.30pm. Please put the date in your diaries. Full details to follow. 🏠

The New Development Plan System...

It was not supposed to happen this way.... In August, after some 18 months of preparation, the first two Local Development Framework Core Strategies – in Lichfield and Stafford - were found by their examining Inspectors to be ‘unsound’.

Just when the planning system was getting into ‘top gear’ the whole process seems to have come to a grinding halt. Have the wheels fallen off the new planning process or were the authorities concerned simply trying to drive too fast?

In a special feature article, John Acres talks to Craig Jordan and Paul Ansell of Lichfield District Council and Alex Yendole of Stafford Borough Council about the implications of the LDF Inspectors’ reports.

Setting the scene.

It all seemed so optimistic. The Government promised a fully integrated development plan system which would be speedy, efficient, effective and responsive. The concept included a Core Strategy followed by a suite of Development Plan Documents, all prepared and adopted within just 3 years. The plans would be subjected to full public consultation according to a pre-prepared Statement of Public Involvement so everyone would be signed up to the new plans. It signalled the birth of consensus planning.

In fact, when the Inspectors reported on the first two LDF’s, both Core Strategies were found to be ‘unsound’ – in Lichfield’s case, because the Plan failed to identify a clear 10 year housing land supply and there was an inadequate evidence base, and in Stafford’s case because the Core Strategy did not display sufficient local distinctiveness and clarity and because alternative spatial options had not been properly explored.

Sadly, the reality is that in September 2006, two years into the new process, Lichfield and Stafford Councils now have to go back to square one and start afresh and the rest of the planning world is now wondering whether the new planning system – never mind the first two LDF’s – is actually fit for purpose.

Initial reactions?

Shocked and surprised – were the first sentiments felt by the planning officers at Lichfield and Stafford on discovering the outcome of the two Inspector’s reports into their LDF Core Strategies. It is not easy to accept that 2 years of work undertaken by a team of dedicated staff could be simply be rejected as being ‘unsound’ – worse still that so much time, money and effort has been wasted and that all the work will now have to be repeated, leaving a potential policy vacuum until the revised LDF’s are in place. Inevitably, the Members were also unhappy. After the Inspectors’ reports were published, Lichfield and Stafford issued a joint press release in which they criticised the Government for the lack of advice and support. Yet Government advice was forthcoming throughout the process and a GOWM

representative attended both Examinations. Everyone was doing their best.

In truth of course, it is generally accepted that all parties – officers, members, Government officers and objectors - were all tentatively feeling their way through the process during the early days. No-one quite knew how the new system would work. But it was perhaps predictable that the first LDF’s to be tested would have to set the standard for the rest. In going first, Lichfield and Stafford chose to take that risk.

So how did we get here?

It would be easy to jump to the conclusion that the authorities cut corners in their enthusiasm to be first to adopt. Officers firmly deny this. Indeed, they feel they were simply adhering to the tight and ambitious timetable set by Government guidance for LDF’s. However, both Councils now accept that it might have been preferable to wait until the wrinkles had been ironed out of the new system, before pressing ahead. But then someone had to go first!

In both cases, the authorities were given comfort by the Statements of Conformity issued by the West Midlands Regional Assembly. Yet despite the significance of the Examinations, in neither case did representatives from the Assembly attend. In Lichfield’s case, there was a terse exchange of letters between the Assembly and the Inspector on this point. This clearly didn’t help, when important questions were raised about the direction of strategic policy.

Both authorities decided to take a pragmatic view. In neither case did they feel able to look sufficiently far forward into the future (within the context of the existing RSS) to satisfy the requirements of longevity and flexibility sought by the ‘tests of soundness’. Officers felt that the imminence of the Regional Spatial Strategy review, with its forecast of much higher housing targets, meant that longer term planning would be problematic. Objectors to the Core Strategies on the other hand, saw this as political cowardice – a reluctance by local Members to make longer term and possibly difficult decisions about future development options.

Under the new system, a Core Strategy needs to contain sufficient information about land allocations to be robust, and yet paradoxically must be fully adopted before the merits of individual sites can be debated in a separate DPD. This seems unnecessarily awkward. Whilst on the one hand the Core Strategy must be fully integrated and consistent with the Community Strategy, the RSS and other policy documents, seemingly the LDF itself must be prepared and adopted in bits, with inevitable time lags in between. This seems both inconsistent and unwieldy.

Finally, it is perhaps tempting to speculate whether the Inspectorate, who are known to have severe misgivings about their capacity to service the new system, were

...Are we on a collision course?

maybe trying to send a clear message to Government about the deficiencies in the process. More likely, the two very experienced Inspectors examining the Lichfield and Stafford LDF's were simply judging the Core Strategies against a very demanding set of standards – the 9 'tests of soundness'.

Were the tests of soundness sufficiently clear?

Possibly not. The conformity and consistency tests with PPS12 are reasonably clear, but lacking in any detail. But the Inspectorate's own Guidance on 'Assessing the Soundness of Development Plan documents' (set out in an article by Stephen Pratt – a senior Inspector - printed in Issue 29 of Tripwire in July/August 2005) is rather more explicit.

But the fact that Government hurriedly issued a letter to all local authority Chief Executives on 11th August (just days after the release of the two reports) spelling out the 'tests of soundness' (albeit with little further detail), suggests that they acknowledge there might have been a lack of clarity. Even now, the soundness tests are still open to wide interpretation.

Previously, for example, Local Plan Inspectors had 'turned a blind eye' to the Government's 10 year Housing Land requirement, often waving through Local Plans with a 5 year supply or less. This time, with the support of more firm Ministerial advice, and the need for a clear housing trajectory, a more robust stance was taken. Perhaps the authorities were lulled into a sense of false security.

The presence or absence of a robust evidence base is more difficult to prove. Both authorities had clearly done an immense amount of work in getting to the Examination, but inevitably in a climate of cost constraints and with information having a limited 'sell by date', it is not easy to amass a pool of survey data which is sufficiently thorough and up to date to meet the test of robustness. Perfect knowledge is always a panacea.

What have been the implications of the Lichfield and Stafford results?

It is probably too early to say. But certainly many authorities are now taking stock. Some, for example Shrewsbury and Atcham, have asked to withdraw their Core Strategies, others are now reviewing their plans before submitting Core Strategies. It seems likely that Lichfield and Stafford will now wait for the review of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy before re-submitting their Core Strategies in a year or so.

The officers at Lichfield and Stafford have taken calls from all over the country and are now monitoring the progress of other authorities themselves. The next LDF's due to be tested are at Ryedale, South Cambridgeshire and South Hams (none of them in the West Midlands). Clearly it remains to be seen whether those (which are already in the pipeline) meet the stringent tests of soundness, or whether they too will find themselves 'sliding down the snake

of unsoundness' which now forms part of the new system. This can only result in a hiatus whilst officers and Members consider their positions, anxious to avoid the cost implications of failure.

So what conclusions can we draw from the Lichfield and Stafford results?

A number of clear pointers emerge from the first two examinations:-

- Make no mistake – the new development plan system is far more complex and difficult to understand than the old Local Plan process – whether for planners, politicians or the public. It was supposed to be more efficient and effective.
- The new system was intended to be more flexible, yet the very first Inspector's reports have shown that a major deficiency in the 'soundness' of a Core Strategy can mean going back and starting from scratch rather than making adjustments. That can't be right. However, once the LDF is in place, the ability to amend individual elements of the LDF without reviewing the whole plan – must be seen as an advantage.
- The fragmented nature of the LDF with its separate (albeit inter-linked) DPD's also seems to be a drawback in achieving speed and consistency. Whilst it may be sensible to set (and adopt) a broad strategy at the outset (like a Structure Plan), in practice the determination of policy and proposals must be an iterative process – one can't decide one without the other. What's more, the Core Strategy is not complete without a housing trajectory that must, at least implicitly, identify sites, in order to test the delivery of the Core Strategy. So fragmenting the process simply adds time and complexity and results in consultation fatigue.
- The new system is expensive and demanding of participants. The 'front loaded' nature of the system requires 'sound' evidence at a very early stage, both from the local authority (promoting the plan), the developers (promoting their sites) and the public (defending their communities). For developers this means spending money 'up front' and 'at risk'. For authorities it means aiming for 'perfect knowledge' before the Core Strategy is submitted – the scope for adding information afterwards is very limited. The costs likely to be incurred are significant and likewise the implications of failure in terms of both time and expense are immense.
- Finally, on a more positive note, whilst the Lichfield and Stafford decisions will undoubtedly have temporarily dented the morale of the planning profession, the longer term outlook may in due course turn out to be more positive if it means that those plans which emerge as 'sound' have more confidence and consistency. 🏠

John Acres Tripwire Editor

Restoration – Another win for the West Midlands

Extraordinary...Exquisite...Exceptional!

Just three of the superlatives that might well have been used by the somewhat **eccentric** Ptolemy Dean to describe Chedham's Yard, a virtually undisturbed mid 19th century shed in Wellesbourne in the heart of Warwickshire, complete with its craftsmans' tools and equipment.

The building – together with its contents – somewhat unexpectedly won the 2006 edition of the BBC2 Restoration Programme and now receives a £1.9m Heritage lottery grant. The property formerly owned by William Chedham had remained in the same family for over 100 years. It was bought by the Parish




Council in 1992 and represents a virtual 'time capsule' of village working life.

When Bill Chedham laid down his tools at the end of his final day of work, closed the door and walked away he left behind a perfectly preserved portrait of the professional

wheelwright and blacksmith. Commenting on the win, English Heritage said; *'Although the building is conventional and unassuming in its construction form, it is this quality that makes it archetypal of workshop provision in rural industries in the 19th century.'*

This success for the West Midlands comes hard on the heels of the previous winner of the BBC2 Restoration 2004 competition, the Old Grammar School and Saracens Head, at Kings Norton on the edge of Birmingham, also in our region.

So if anyone would like to give me a cool £1.9m to clear up my old shed please just contact the usual tripwire Address! 



Editor's thoughts – on the image of the profession

Planning is increasingly rising up the political and publicity profile – albeit not always for the right reasons. In introducing the Sterling Architectural Awards, last weekend, Kevin McCloud, took the usual side-swipe at planners by pointing out that it had taken longer for Heathrow 5 to travel through the planning system than it has taken the award winner, the new Madrid Airport, (designed by the ubiquitous Lord Rogers), to be planned, designed and built – from start to finish.


The results of the first two Examinations into Local Development Framework Core Strategies at Lichfield and Stafford have cast further doubts on the effectiveness of the planning system to deliver. Whatever the merits of the individual cases, it must raise serious questions when the outcome of the Government's new streamlined development plan process means that if those Core Strategies are rejected as being 'unsound' the authorities concerned have to go back and start from scratch.

Our RTPI West Midlands survey reveals a similar concern amongst planners about the image of our profession, with only 5% of respondents feeling that planning shapes up better than other related professions in terms of its image, against 74% who consider that it figures worse. Moreover, there is a worrying scepticism amongst members in the region about the new planning process. The majority seem to feel that the new procedures will not improve the efficiency of the system nor will they speed up the planning process. There are also mixed feelings

about whether the new system will improve job satisfaction for planners.

Our National President, writing in the latest edition of 'Planning' magazine reminds us that any system is likely to experience teething problems and that we should stick with it. Clearly we should. But having recently attended one of the seminars led by the Barker Review Team it is apparent that the Government is looking carefully about how both the Development Plan system and the Development Control process can be further refined in order to improve speed and delivery.

As planners we should not shy away from change – after all it is our job to manage change – but the drawbacks in the current planning system are not the consequence of any failures by professional planners, far from it. They are largely the result of an over-complex system introduced by Ministers and civil servants remote from the sharp end of planning. If there are failings at the local level they are primarily the result of intervention and delays by politicians, reluctant to face up to change which might affect their electoral prospects.

Rather than become pre-occupied with the poor image of planning, we should perhaps take a leaf out of the architects' book and try and celebrate our successes more, because for the most part, I suspect us planners are all doing a Sterling job. 

John Acres Tripwire Editor

2006 RTPI West Midlands Membership Survey – your views

In our March/April issue of Tripwire we included a 4 page Membership survey of RTPI members. The returns have now been collated and analysed and we have the results.

We have highlighted the key findings and then gone on to look at the main findings of the survey under 3 main headings:-

- Planners' views on the image of the profession and the Institute
- Your response on the services the Institute provides, both at National and Regional level, and
- Members' feelings and expectations on the success or failure of the new planning system.

A full summary of the results of the survey are available, by email, on request, through the normal Tripwire address (NB. All the individual responses will remain confidential).

RTPI Members' Survey – Key findings

Response rate: Number of replies 61

Gender	Male	59%
	Female	41%

Age groups	18-25	12%
	26-35	15%
	36-45	21%
	46-55	33%
	65+	5%

RTPI Members (Corporate members)	95% (75%)
Non-RTPI members	5%

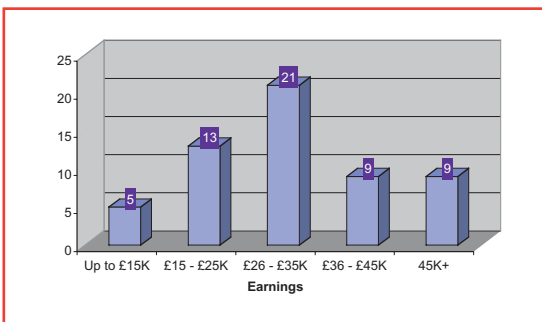
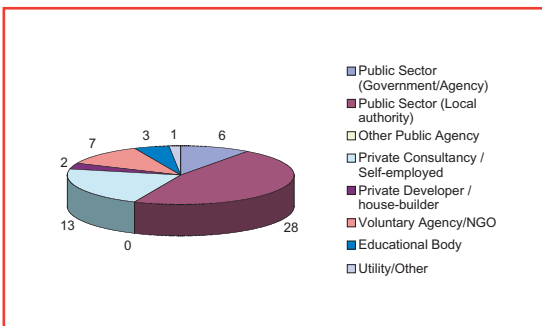
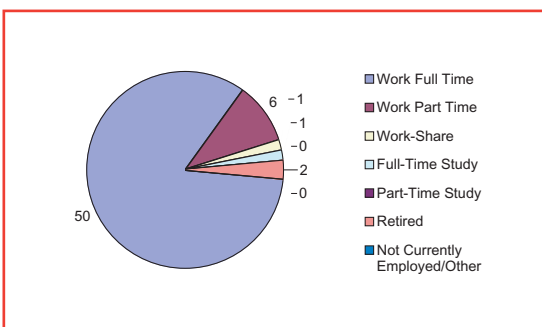
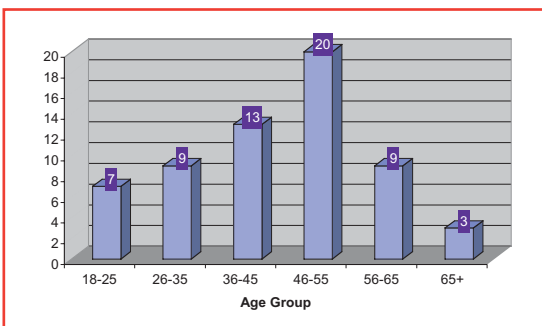
Activity	Work full-time	82%
	Work part-time	10%
	Retired	4%
	Workshare	2%
	Student	2%

Employer	Government	10%
	Local Government	46%
	Consultancy	21%
	House-builder	3%
	Voluntary Agency	12%
	Educational body	5%
Other/utility	2%	

Income level	Up to £15,000	8%
	£15,000-£25,000	21%
	£25,000-£35,000	34%
	£36,000-£45,000	15%
	£45,000+	15%

Length of service	Less than 1 year	2%
	1-5 years	13%
	5-10 years	10%
	10-25 years	34%
	More than 25 years	34%

Work from home	Yes	24%
	No	76%



NB: Figures may not add up to 100% due to non-responses.

Survey 2006

RTPI Members' Survey: Your views on the Image of Planning

Are you proud to be a planner? Well not quite.

One day, we may be able to go to parties and admit that we are planners without attracting adverse comments, or worse still ridicule. The West Midlands RTPI Membership Survey shows that only 5% of respondents felt that the image of the planning profession compares well with other professions with a massive 74% saying it compares poorly. The remainder considered its image was roughly comparable. So plenty of room for improvement there.

Many respondents to the survey suggested that planning needs a more positive image in the media and a higher profile politically – something that we clearly need to tackle at both regional and national level. We need to celebrate success more, was one particular comment.

Pay and conditions were one aspect which some planners mentioned as influencing the image and morale of the profession. Indeed, the survey asked whether respondents had been through a formal job evaluation or not – just under half had done so. Interestingly, of those who had been subject to evaluation, the outcome of the review was quite varied. In some cases it resulted in a higher salary, in other cases lower. Other people simply found themselves taking on more responsibility or maybe a slightly different role. Our Institute HQ is looking at the results of job evaluation more closely, albeit on a confidential and non-attributable basis.

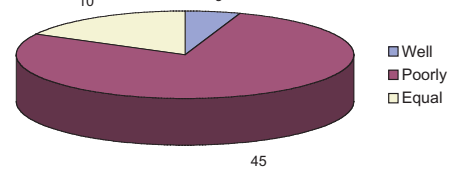
There has been considerable concern in recent years about the shortage of qualified planners. Although it is difficult to come to any clear conclusions about the balance between the supply and demand for planners, due to the different nature of peoples' workplace, about half of those who responded said there was shortage of planners in their office / consultancy / company, with just over half finding difficulty in recruiting planners to the authority/company. Perhaps, in time, the market for professional planners will result in an improvement in terms and conditions.

We asked people specifically what they enjoyed or not about their profession and their jobs. Perhaps predictably many respondents disliked aspects like political interference, delays, complaints from residents, administration, jargon, pressure of work and being simply stuck in the office. On the other hand, planners cited; working with the community, achieving results, the variety of the work and the constant challenges they faced as being positive elements of the job. In many ways, some of these are simply the opposite sides of the same coin.

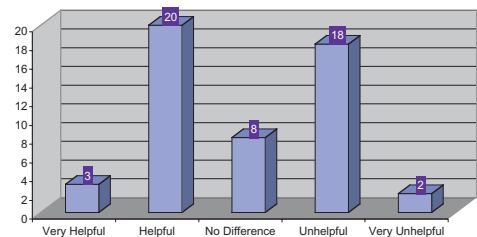
Many planners in the survey rejected the plethora of performance standards and the current 'target

driven' philosophy within planning and its impact in terms of job satisfaction although curiously when asked in a later question whether the target orientated approach to planning – for example through Planning Delivery Grant - was helpful or not, the figures were more or less evenly split, with 37% feeling that a target driven approach was either helpful or very helpful, whilst only 32% felt it was unhelpful/very unhelpful. Perhaps some of us feel that 'the system' needs to be targeted and monitored, but we are not so keen when those targets apply to us – but then we planners are used to applying policies which are intended for society as a whole rather than for ourselves!

The image of planning - how does it compare with other professions?

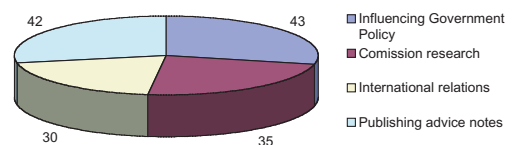


Views by planners on the merits of the target driven planning process

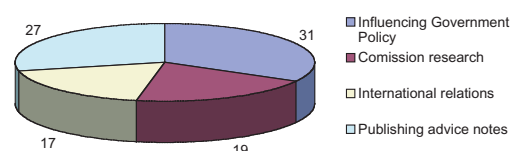


Services provided at National Level

Aware of Service



Scope for Improvement



RTPI Members' Survey: Your views on services to members

One of the Institute's primary functions is to deliver services to the membership. The RTPI West Midlands Membership survey asked a number of questions about Members' awareness of specific services and the extent to which you use them – and more important, the value of the services which are available. The survey distinguished between those services provided nationally, from our headquarters in London, and those which are delivered regionally, largely through voluntary effort in the West Midlands.

A high percentage of planners (70%) were generally aware of the Institute's broader role in influencing Government policy, although 50% felt there was scope for improvement in this area. A similarly high proportion were conscious of the RTPI's role in preparing Advice Notes, though 44% felt this could be done better. There was somewhat less appreciation of the Institute's role in Commissioning research (57%) of which 31% would welcome an improvement and less than 50% were aware of the RTPI's influence in international relations, with 28% seeing scope for an improvement.

However, most respondents, about 75% or more, were well aware of the key services such as Member Advice, the Conference Programme and Summer School, with somewhat fewer being aware of the more recent innovations, such as Planning Resource on-line (69%), Planning Matters (67%) and Planners in the Workplace (56%), which is a fairly new service. (Members may recall there was an article about 'Planners in the Workplace' in the Jan/Feb 2006 edition of Tripwire). There was a relatively high level of awareness of the RTPI Networks, though only 25% of respondents are actually subscribed to them. However, a rather more encouraging (38%) of respondents use Planning Resource on-line.

Although most people were well aware of the positive changes which have occurred in the Institute over the last few years, sadly only 23% said they had noticed a specific improvement in services since the 'New Institute' changes were introduced.

At the regional level, the responses were in little more positive, with 84% of planners being aware of the Summer Reception and AGM, with a similar proportion being aware of the Planning Aid service. Nearly 80% knew about the various Specialist Groups although perhaps surprisingly, only 74% said they were aware of the low cost CPD programme – something which is advertised in every issue of Tripwire. It is worth bearing in mind that the Region runs regular low-cost (and sometimes free) CPD events on a variety of topics – good value compared with a recent two day 'Regeneration' conference in Rotherham priced at £930!

However, although there appears to be a high level of awareness, relatively few members take an active part in RTPI Regional affairs, with only a handful

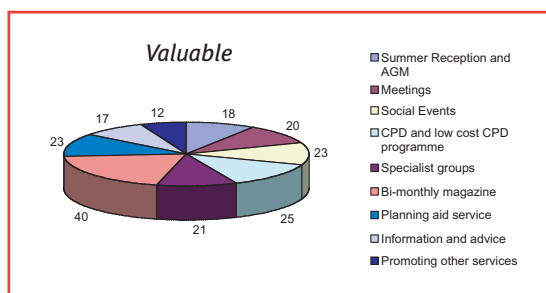
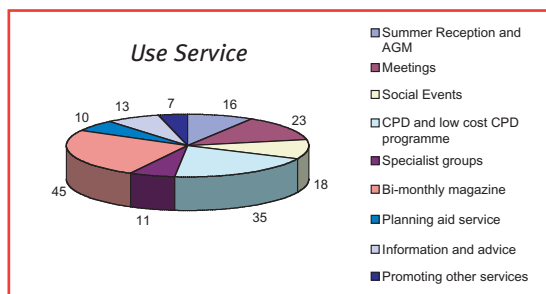
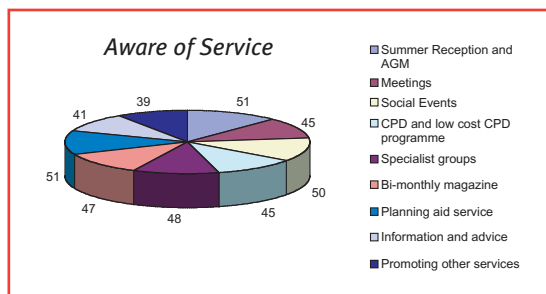
saying they are active in the various Specialist Groups – although a quarter of the respondents do get involved in Planning Aid. It would seem that those who do, generally find the experience worthwhile.

We are always looking for ways in which to improve our services to members and it would seem that most people (74%), would like to take part in future events. The replies given about potential times, venues and topics for CDP meetings were very helpful and will be used by our Regional Co-ordinator, Sue Griffith Jones and the Member Services Group, to plan future meetings and visits.

Encouragingly, 95% (all but 2 of the respondents) read Tripwire and all but three find it interesting and worthwhile. (However, since the questionnaire was actually published in Tripwire magazine, the result of the first question may not be too surprising). It is perhaps more intriguing how the 2 who don't read the magazine saw the survey in the first place!

We asked what sort of features planners would like to see in Tripwire magazine and whether the 'themed' editions are popular. About half of you wanted 'themed' editions, the suggestions about possible future topics for Tripwire will all be taken on board to try and improve the magazine as best we can.

Services provided by the West Midlands region



Survey 2006

RTPI Members' Survey: Your views on the New Planning System

How do the professionals think the new planning system is working?

It is timely, following the results of the first two Examinations into LDF Core Strategies, that the RTPI West Midlands Membership survey should explore members' views on the new development plan system, although clearly the questionnaire was circulated well before the two Inspectors' reports relating to Lichfield and Stafford were published.

We asked; will the new development plan system speed up the planning process? Interestingly, only 17% of planners who responded felt that it would, whilst over 52% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. (About 23% thought the effect would be neutral). Similarly, only 18% felt that the efficiency of the system would be improved, whilst again 52% felt that it would be less efficient. There were 23% undecided.

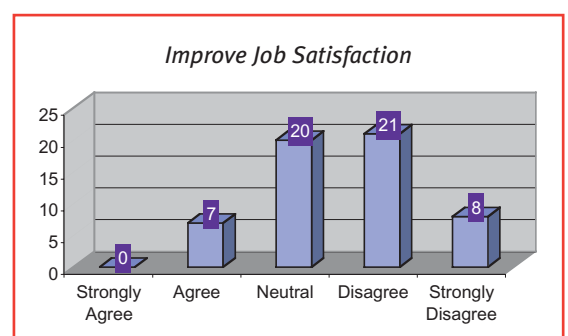
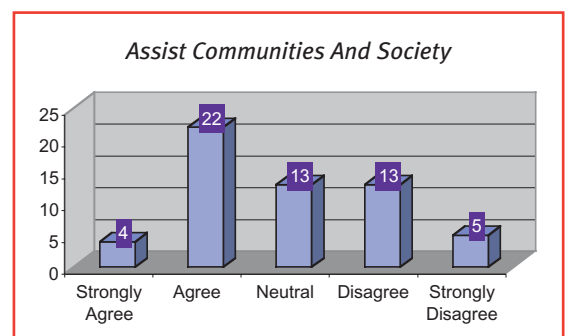
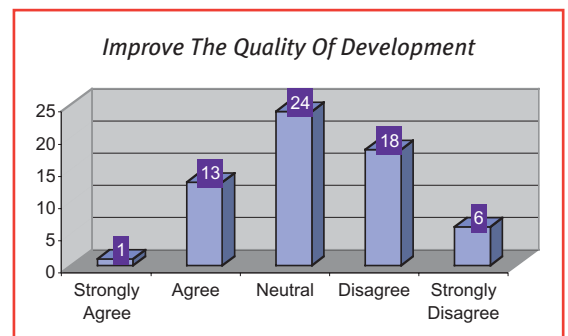
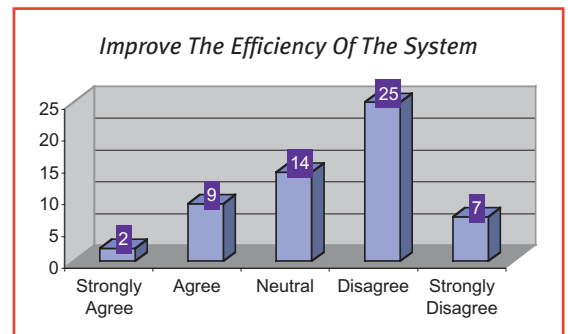
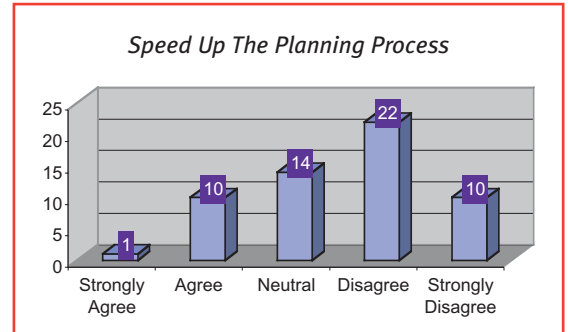
There was similar scepticism about the effect on the quality of development, with about 22% feeling that the new system would improve the quality of development and 39% feeling it would have an adverse effect. Another 39% were neutral on the issue.

Worse still, only 12% thought that the new system would enhance job satisfaction with some 47% (4 times as many) feeling that job satisfaction would deteriorate. Although there were 32% who felt that it would have no discernable impact.

However, on the positive side, some 42% considered that the new system would assist communities and society, with only 29% feeling that it wouldn't – a reflection perhaps of the increased measures for public consultation in the new system.

These results will come as no surprise to most practicing planners many of whom remain sceptical about the merits of a new system which is proving to be rather more cumbersome than the one it replaced. Clearly it is very early days and the new system needs time to 'bed in'. Perhaps another survey in 5 years time may yield different results.

See pages 4 and 5 of this edition for an in depth article on the implications of the Lichfield and Stafford Core Strategy Inspector's reports.



A retirement message from Costas Georghiou

In praise of Wolverhampton...

Many planners, both in the public and private sector world will know Costas Georghiou, either personally or by reputation. On 29th September, Costas retired from public service for Wolverhampton City Council. The following is an edited version of his retirement speech.

When I was a boy, my father who was a civil servant all his life, gave me this piece of advice: *'My son, he said, whatever you do when you grow up, do not work for central or local government or any kind of government. They will never thank you; they will claim all the good things you have done as their own and will blame you for anything that went wrong'*.

Well, my father was not altogether right. I have been thanked. Twice in fact ...in my 13 years of service with the Council. But the biggest thanks, the greatest appreciation which makes it all worthwhile, comes from the people of Wolverhampton who speak to me, often not knowing who I am, and say how much Wolverhampton has improved in the last few years and that somebody out there must be doing a good job. Like the couple who emigrated to Canada thirty years ago who came back and bought an apartment in the New Market Square development and said: *"We love it here, we are back home"*.

Soon after I came to Wolverhampton, I went to see the Head Teacher at the Wolverhampton Girls' High School regarding an extension. It was early in the morning and the students were singing the school song which ended like this:-

We will strive increasingly to quicken the public sense of civic duty

Thus in all these ways we will transmit this city, not only, not less, but to a great extent better and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us.

This sounded very familiar to me and I wondered if the students fully understood what it really meant. It is in fact a translation of the Holy Oath taken by the young men coming of age in 5th Century BC Classical Athens, the inventors of participatory democracy.

When we were formulating our first Community Plan, I was involved in a participatory workshop which asked the public; *'What do you want Wolverhampton to be'*? The usual things came out: a safe city, a prosperous city and a clean city. I said *'How about a Beautiful City'*? Someone raised an eyebrow – What? Wolverhampton beautiful? – but as there was no dissension, 'Beautiful' was put down. The list then went to the inner echelons of power in the Council and was dumbed down to 'Greener'.

During the public consultation on the 'Learning Quarter Master Plan' at Old Hall Street, which proposed the removal of some car parking and the creation of a public square as a focal point, a retired Chief Officer of the Council, went to the former Chief Executive and complained about me: *"This Chief Planning Officer of yours has some crazy ideas – he wants to make Wolverhampton like York and bring tourists here (God forbid!) – What we need is more parking and no frills"*.

My colleagues and I have fought hard to reverse Wolverhampton's negative image with some success. Wolverhampton has now been deleted from the latest edition of the *'Idler book of Crap Towns'* – the dubious honour having been bestowed on Luton – and our city now gets some good press, occasionally. However, we have a long way to go before we change our cultural attitudes and create a positive image. The vital connection between the shape and appearance of the city and its economic prosperity, well-being and sustainability is still not properly understood and acted upon. *"One shall not live by bread alone"*. We shape our cities and they shape us thereafter.

My proudest moments? When the Deputy Prime Minister opened the New Market Square development and said things about planners we do not often hear: How they can create great places for people to live and work in and prosper. And when the Council, at the eleventh hour, showed leadership, rose to its civic responsibility and saved the Molineux Hotel from demolition. As I watched the restored clock tower being hoisted to the rooftop of the building I said to myself, *"Now we are a City!"*

As a citizen, I look to the Council to be courageous in its defence of local democracy against all those who want to undermine it and that its actions and decisions are guided by the long term public interest and sustainability of Wolverhampton - because if the Council doesn't do it, nobody else will.

I have always seen and practised Town Planning as more than a public service – more as a Mission, to create a better place for people to live in and to contribute to a better, more civilised society, whose secular and spiritual values are reflected in the city's physical form. My hope is that I am handing back Wolverhampton a greater, not lesser – and yes – a more beautiful city than I received it. 🏡

Costas Georghiou retires as Chief Planning & Highways Officer for Wolverhampton City Council and is now working as a Planning and Urban Design Consultant (CNG Planning Consultancy) and has also been appointed Visiting Professor of Architecture and Urban Design at the University of Wolverhampton. costas-georghiou@supanet.com

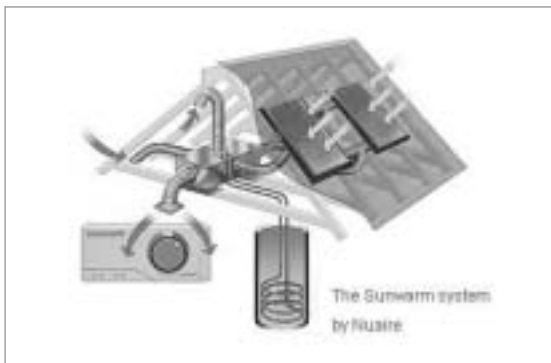
Sustainability by Design...

On 20th September Wolverhampton played host to a half-day conference organised by RTPI, RIBA and RICS to celebrate Urban Design Alliance's 7th Urban Design Week. The following is a personal account of the proceedings.

The aim of the Conference was to highlight how to promote **sustainable development by design**. The venue was the Chubb Building, a converted former lock factory in Wolverhampton which in itself demonstrated how existing robust buildings might be converted through sustainable design for a wide variety of different uses.



The Chairman, **Alan McBeth**, gave a harrowing review of climate change and the increasing rate of food miles, traffic congestion, accidents and pollution. He explained how Chetwoods Architects have attempted to rise to the challenge of articulating sustainable developments by creating innovative designs, for example at the Greenwich Eco Supermarket built in 2000 which uses 50% less power than a standard supermarket. More recently, a sustainable logistics unit in Bedford completed earlier in 2006 includes photo-voltaics, (powering 20% of the external lighting), solar heating, (which provides 50% of office hot water) efficient office lighting (where consumption has been reduced by 25%), and uses less water (where 300,000 litres of water is saved and 400,000 litres of water is re-used). The roof light areas have been increased by 5%, which saves significant energy running costs.



Nick Hewitt of BRE highlighted the impact that the building industry can make on carbon omissions, in so far as materials, production and construction amount to 122m tonnes per annum of waste, or 30%

of the UK total. Energy used within the buildings amounts to nearly 50% of UK carbon omissions. Nick pointed out that we could learn lessons from the natural world, via their vernacular architecture and bio-mimicry. Vernacular form and function enables comfortable conditions to be achieved (often in very hostile climatic conditions), uses optimum and sustainable indigenous materials, and has a low environmental impact.

Nick stressed the need to 'incentivise' and reward sustainable designs according to four key principles.

- 1 Reducing embodied energy and resource depletion.
- 2 Reducing energy in use.
- 3 Minimising external pollution and environmental damage.
- 4 Minimising internal pollution and damage to health.

Poorly ventilated buildings lead to sick building syndrome and ill health for their inhabitants. There is a need to consider integrating the design process with site considerations, built form, ventilation strategies, daylight strategies, and services.

He cited the Cardiff Exchange Hall, built by Seward and Thomas 1884-1886, as a good example where natural ventilation system was built into the design, illustrating the fact that these concepts are not new.

A new practical tool to assist in achieving sustainability by design is the newly emerging **regionally specific sustainability checklist**. It is consistent with national and regional policy and will be owned by the West Midlands Region. Reports are generated once the checklist is completed on a development proposal project to evaluate their sustainable credentials. The project, chaired by AWM is almost complete and due for publication in Autumn 2006. Watch this space!!

Jim Chapman then gave an overview of the *Regenerating North Solihull* strategic regeneration project to redevelop this Radburn layout residential area. One of the key physical issues for North Solihull is the illegibility of the outdated 'Radburn' layout which seems to function successfully elsewhere but does not seem to work in the UK.

A starting point is a baseline study, intended to feed into a strategic framework for statutory planning. Neighbourhood plans complete this work. These elements will also tie into a business plan to take forward the project for the next 15 years. The approach is a holistic one, encompassing social, environmental and economic improvements.

The initial baseline study intends to address the socio-economic sustainability of the area by creating a mix of homes and jobs and diversifying the range of housing. The strong community ties will be reinforced



implemented by Wolverhampton City Council. A Masterplan prepared by Atkins adhered to a brief written by the City Council. The house type designs are not particularly radical, and use traditional materials with a contemporary aesthetic design, but the scheme uses solar heating on south facing roofs either on the front or the back elevations enabling homeowners to reap the rewards from lower energy bills. More importantly, this scheme demonstrates to all developers that renewable energy can be utilised within any residential project.



through the introduction of village centres, well served by local buses. People-friendly streets, access to open green spaces and local amenities are key features of this ‘neighbourhood’ approach, reinforcing sustainable places to live. Delivery will be via the use of Design codes and will focus on achieving “good eco homes” standard with a reduced ecological footprint. There will also be a full environmental/sustainability audit to follow.

Finally a presentation by **John Brothers** of Wolverhampton City Council assisted by **James Boulter** of BM3 Architects; **Shaun Fielding** of Haslam Homes, and **Nick Thompson** of Cole Thompson Anders outlined schemes at **Showell Park**, Low Hill South, Wolverhampton & **Cross Street**, Wolverhampton.

The Cross Street, scheme is located near Wolverhampton City centre, and represents a flagship project consisting of a mix of houses and flats, an Eco-park and exhibition and incorporated an Education & Communication programme. Design principles aim to ensure privacy, security and accessibility; with simple, robust details and a clear and legible form. The scheme maximises day lighting and minimises maintenance costs. Integrated Technologies have been harnessed including;

- Community heating with wood chip boiler
- Provision for future installation of photovoltaic panels
- Stack effect ventilators & cross ventilation
- Communal digital TV provision
- Disability /elderly care support



Wolverhampton City Council have worked in partnership with the developer to create active engagement with the community and deliver a World Class Flagship Project which achieves excellent performance and adds significantly to the local townscape. Let’s hope all local authorities and developers in the Region can aim to keep up with the drive of these case studies outlined today!

Julie Morgan is Chair of the RTPI West Midlands Urban Design Forum.

The 5.5ha **Showell Park** site is located within a large residential estate 2 miles NE of the city centre and forms part of a major regeneration programme being

Solihull Council complains about 'garden grabbing'


Solihull Council, which won a commendation in the recent RTPI West Midlands awards for their Design Guidance on 'New Housing in Context', has decided to write to the Government about the impact of windfall development in the Borough.

A combination of high land prices coupled with Government policy in PPG3 which focuses new development on 'brownfield' land rather than greenfield land, has resulted in an intense pressure for the redevelopment of large houses with gardens in the area.

The Council say that they intend to write to Government in a bid to stop what they call 'garden grabbing' by property developers in the Borough which they complain is leading to a tendency to build larger apartment blocks. Cllr Ian Courts, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, says that *'Designating private gardens as 'brownfield sites' has encouraged developers to target these as windfall opportunities to the detriment of the environment and character of local communities rather than concentrating on the redevelopment of genuine brownfield sites'*.

He suggests that the Government should *'provide greater powers and discretion for local planning authorities to protect private gardens from development which is out of character with their surrounding area and/or which may threaten the local environment and bio-diversity and to remove the status as brownfield land in the planning system'*.

Cllr Ted Richards, Leader of the Council adds *'We hope the Government listens to the people of Solihull on this issue, which is of great concern to us all. Our Borough gardens are under attack from unscrupulous developers, who pay no heed to the character of Solihull. We want to protect Solihull for our future generations and put a stop to this garden grabbing mentality'*.

It is not entirely clear from the press release whether the award winning policy document is failing to have an impact or indeed who is actually selling the land to the unscrupulous developers – could it be the good people of Solihull? 

Community Involvement – your views!

The news that RTPI Conferences had organised a 'Community Consultation' event in Birmingham for £399 (plus VAT), reduced to £99, has generated a fascinating exchange of Emails (on the blog, so to speak).

Initial comments wondered why such a seminar should cost £99, never mind £399!

One correspondent took a rather more critical view:-

'Consultation Institute, whatever next! Get a life RTPI! Who exactly is behind the newly formed Institute? Why has the RTPI chosen to involve itself with this newly formed Institute with all of 125 members of whom approximately half are stated to be local authorities? In my view the RTPI is already far too close to local authorities for its own good and too often, it seems to me, the Institute appears to be a mouthpiece for LPA's particularly the egos of Councillors rather than for its own members and their profession. I don't pay vast quantities of money each year to the RTPI to waste collaborating on this sort of event by some 'newly formed Institute' If 60 odd authorities think this newly formed Institute is so wonderful let them pay for this event.'

However Claire Bridges took a rather different angle. She said:-


'Interesting viewpoint, because I rang up the source of the promotional material and got the opposite impression – that this was another private sector orientated initiative capitalising on the need for planners in all sectors to get a grip with the real and more accessible and interactive ways of community engagement in determining future development

plans. There seems to be a sudden growth in private sector "community experts" setting up consultancies trying to professionalise this part of the market and play on planners' fears about new inter-active forms of frontline consultation and participation – completely ignoring the wealth and range of community workers who have substantial experience, knowledge and skills from many years of frontline work (private, public and voluntary sector). Perhaps we should share experiences from all sectors in the profession intends to make advances in this field'.

Two local authority respondents, took a more positive view:-

'I think we should investigate the Consultation Institute before joining in the brouhaha about it. We are using their consultation principles in our SCI as we think they add value to the deliberations. It would be a pity to sour relations with a newish venture just because a few people have issues with it. Planning is not well endowed with resources at present and it behoves us to be fair to any venture which might just make our job easier'.

'I attended a Consultation Institute seminar at the Lowry Centre last November on 'Engaging the Hard to Reach' and found it fine. It was well run and the content was useful particularly since it involved participants and agencies from various professions, although it was slightly expensive at £200.'

What do you think? Do you have a view on the content, delivery and cost of events from different providers? Is there a gap here which the RTPI, either nationally or regionally should be trying to fill? 

A Model Approach...

A Model Approach - to help residents have their say on the look of Walsall

West Midlands Planning Aid Service and Walsall MBC have developed a special model as a “hands-on” way for young people to express their likes and dislikes of the way Walsall might look in the future when new buildings and spaces are designed.


The model was unveiled for the first time in August at Walsall Art Gallery in conjunction with ‘*Ready Steady Summer*’ part of the Council’s summer activities programme, where young people were asked for their ideas about what they consider to be good designs for buildings, such as new homes and offices and open spaces like parks and playgrounds.

Cllr Andrews, Cabinet Member for Regeneration praised the scheme. “*Young people hold the key to unlocking the potential of Walsall and we want to find out what sort of borough they would like to see in the future,*” he said.

The model gives young people an opportunity to play at planning an area by having shops, houses, cinemas, offices and even bus stops that can be set out on boards to show how they would like to see their local area. It also provides an opportunity for the young people to learn about design and planning. Well designed new developments can improve how people feel about an area and help to create a sense of identity and community.

Councillor Adrian Andrews also confirmed Walsall’s backing for West Midlands Planning Aid Service by signing the Planning Aid Concordat

Walsall Council is seeking the views of residents about what the unique characteristics of Walsall are before producing its Design Guide. The guide will provide advice for developers and planners on the design of all types of new development in Walsall.

To help with the production of the Design Guide the council is encouraging those who live, work or visit the borough to say what is good, what is not so good and what is important to them about the design of a building or area. 



Councillor Adrian Andrews signs the Planning Aid Concordat with Sheena Terrace.



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steve.simmonds@juddfarris.co.uk Ref: SS/17690

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A superb opportunity exists within a highly respected international property advisor in Birmingham. You will have at least 12 months planning experience and will be either working towards or recently completed RTPI status. You will have the chance to work on a variety of projects including Retail, Residential and Mixed Used developments. In return you will benefit from a supportive environment combined with a highly competitive salary and benefits package. This role would suit somebody considering a move from local authority.

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tripwire

Events • Events • Events • Events • Events

REGIONAL PROGRAMME

Non-members of RTPI welcome to attend.

WEDNESDAY 1 NOVEMBER

Dongtan Eco City, Shanghai, China

- The World's First Sustainable City

Speaker: Nicola White, Arup

Venue: Nyquist Theatre, Arup Campus,,

Blythe Valley Business Park, Solihull

Time: 5pm – 7pm

Cost: **Free** (booking essential)

To book email: Heather.Wren@arup.com

THURSDAY 16 NOVEMBER

Planning for Waste Recovery – Waste or Resource?

One day conference with RTPI East Midlands, sponsored by Alliance, Environment and Planning Ltd, on waste recycling & recovery and the issues which have to be addressed in planning for and operating these facilities.

Venue: Bosworth Hall Hotel, **Market**

Bosworth, Warwickshire CV13 0LP

Time: 10am – 4pm (registration from 9.30am)

Cost: **£88.13 incl. VAT** (£44.07 incl. VAT for full-time students & unwaged).

Details & booking: Sue Griffith-Jones,

Tel 0121 709 1599

Email: rtpiwestmids@btinternet.com

WEDNESDAY 22 NOVEMBER

Development Control Conference

Joint event with Landmark Planning

Venue: Central Baptist Church, **Leicester**

(close to railway station)

Time: 10am – 4pm

(Registration from 9.45am)

Cost: **£99.88 incl. VAT**

(full-time students & unwaged £20)

Speakers:

Peter Taylor (DLA)

“A year is a long time in planning law”

Simon Stanion (Marrons)

“Gypsies: policy & case law changes”

Laura Roper (Browne Jacobson)

“Section 215 Notices”

Paul Hunt (Harvey Ingram)

“LDFs for Development Controllers”

Tony Goodchild & Iqbal Rassool (BWB Consulting)

“The Implications of PPS25 for Development Control”

Simon Barrett & Graham Whitaker (NHBC)

“Practical resolution of the contaminated land problem”

David Head (Gillespies)

“How to deal with tall buildings”

Details & Booking: Sue Griffith-Jones

Tel & Fax: 0121 709 1599

Email: rtpiwestmids@btinternet.com

MONDAY 27 NOVEMBER

Rural Live/Work Developments

Venue: Offices of Wychavon DC, **Pershore,**

Worcestershire **WR10 1PT**

Time: Afternoon

Cost: **£10 incl. VAT**

(full-time students & unwaged £5)

Details & booking: Sue Griffith-Jones

Tel: 0121 709 1599

Email: rtpiwestmids@btinternet.com

MONDAY 4 DECEMBER

RTPI Open Debate

An opportunity to participate in a debate about the future of the West Midlands region led by the National RTPI President, Clive Harridge.

Venue: Nyquist Theatre, Arup Campus,

Blythe Business Park, Solihull

Details: To follow

Cost: The Event will be free of charge.

OTHER EVENTS

FRIDAY 27 & SATURDAY 28 OCTOBER

Young Planners Annual Conference

Manchester united in sport & design

Organiser: RTPI

Venue: **Manchester** Conference Centre

Cost: **£40 - £125 + VAT**

Details & booking: Emma Tozer

Tel: 020 7929 9489

Email: emma.tozer@rtpi.org.uk

TUESDAY 21 NOVEMBER

Streets Ahead

Part of the Arts & Architecture Lecture Series
Peter Piet, Director of Urban Design, Project Centre

will talk about how urban design principles can be applied to traditional streetscape engineering design.

Venue: Burslem School of Art,

Stoke-on-Trent

Time: 7.30pm

Organiser: Urban Vision North Staffordshire,

part of the Arts & Architecture Lecture Series

Cost: **Free**

Details & booking: Suzanne 01782 575321

Email: info@uvns.org

Registered charity number 262865
Registered Office Address:
Royal Town Planning Institute
41 Botolph Lane, London, EC3R 8DL

Trip tease

Our last competition generated a record number of entries. The winner of the *Region & Renaissance* Book (first out of the hat) was Hannah Cash from Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council. Well done Hannah, and hard luck to the many other entrants who also sent in a correct set of answers.

The answers to the last competition were as follows:

- 1 Which state of the USA has the capital of Trenton? *Answer: New Jersey.*
- 2 Which fortified wine has 4 types, Malvasia, Bual, Verdelho and Sercial? *Answer: Madeira.*
- 3 Which of the 7 Wonders of the World was a statue of Helios? *Answer: Colossus of Rhodes.*
- 4 What is the world's largest surviving carnivorous marsupial? *Answer: Tasmanian Devil.*
- 5 What is celebrated on the 40th day after Easter Sunday? *Answer: Feast of Ascension.*
- 6 On what day does Annie Lennox of Eurythmics, celebrate her birthday? *Answer: Christmas Day.*

The theme which linked them all together was of course; **Islands.**

Once again, we have another set of questions which all have something in common. The first correct set of answers to be drawn

out of the hat will win a copy of the RTPI book 'Region & Renaissance' which charts the planning history of the West Midlands Region over the 50 years from 1950 – 2000 and is a must for all planners. We still have a few left, so anyone keen to buy a copy for Christmas at a price of £14.95 should contact the editor by email.

So...the questions for this competition are as follows.

1. What was the title of the UB40 September 1983 No.1 hit?
2. Which Premier Rugby Union Team is known as the Tigers?
3. What is the common name of the herb *Salvia Officinalis*?
4. Which was the most southerly city that Bonnie Prince Charlie reached in England during the Jacobite rebellion?
5. What was the title of the collection of poems about childhood written by A E Housman published 1896?
6. Which childrens' TV programme hosts have included Christopher Trace, Valerie Singleton, Sarah Greene, Janet Ellis and Diane-Louise Jordan?

And what is the theme which is common to all 6 questions.

Answers by email (or post) to the editor at the usual Tripwire address, at the bottom of the page. Good luck!

tripwire

CPD

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