



RTPI

mediation of space · making of place

PLANNING WITH COMMUNITIES NETWORK MONITORING REPORT 2007

This year the 'old' Community Planning Forum morphed into the Planning with Communities Network – to ensure that the name properly reflected its important work. However, the Network continued to work closely with the Community Planning Project, now being run from within the CLG, and building working relations with the Community Planners of the RTPI Planning Aid service.

Membership numbers have continued to rise. The annual Regeneration Convention provided a useful recruitment opportunity with 600 delegates attending the event at Loughborough University. And the Network has been doing its own outreach with a member event in the Summerfield Eco-Neighbourhood in Birmingham – for which there was such interest that one event very quickly became five! And the initiative gained a ringing endorsement from the Merton Policy Team – the authors of the much vaunted 'Merton Rule'.

A very enlightening strand of debate has been going on through the medium of the Network Bulletin and the Network's website. The 'Status of Parish Plans' it seems varies widely across the country and the Network has been treated to some excellent practice examples as well as at least one where the local community appears to have been ill-served. The Network's Discussion Forum will hopefully see other lively contributions in 2008.

The Core Group has had generally poor attendance in 2007 but it has provided a mechanism to keep the Forum and the Community Planning Project operating effectively together. 2008 sees prospects of benefits from the closer working with the Planning Aid Community Planners and thereby greater community outreach on behalf of the RTPI.

Membership profile:

Figures current at 25.11.07

Total members: 218

(Members 2006 for comparison: 157)

RTPI members on register: roughly 50% (membership data has been accumulated in such a way that this figure is difficult to derive more accurately at present)

Core Group

Don Alder has continued to chair the meetings of the Core Group but it is intended that the role of 'Chair' will rotate around the Group members.

Current members of the Steering Group (attendance at meetings given in brackets) are:

Don Alder (3 of 2; Chair attended a planning meeting) Consultant (retired)
Jas Atwal (1 of 2) Consultant in Community Engagement
Mike Hayes (corresponding member) Watford DC
Stephen Hill (2 of 2) CO2
David Levitt (0 of 2) Levitt & Bernstein
Sheena McCambley (0 of 2) Ballymun Regeneration Project
Craig McLaren (corresponding member) Communities Scotland

The Core Group aims to meet 4 times a year. Meetings were held in March & December but the two others that were scheduled had to be cancelled because of conflicts with the other activities of busy Group members.

SWOT analysis

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linking spatial planning with other elements of local government • Where it's at! • Strong links with the RTPI/CLG Community Planning Project • Strong links with Planning Aid • Annual Regeneration Convention – source of new members and opportunity to demonstrate network outputs • Bottom-up approach • Embraces 'local' level of planning • Diversity 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antipathy amongst communities to professional planning • Issues seen in parochial way • Poor support from and communication with Community Planners (Planning Aid)
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding ways of overcoming antipathy • Potential for engagement with many communities • Ability to provide continuity following end of Community Planning Project (anticipated March 2008) • Can provide a 'buddying' system • Can fill the gaps that Planning Aid doesn't reach – PA only works with people unable to pay for a professional service • Able to disseminate work undertaken by Community Planning Project • Links to community.net – provides case studies • Parish Plans 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fee charged to join – likely to be off-putting • A crowded sector – Community Development Forum, Urban Forum etc providing similar work • Considerable overlap with work done under 'regeneration' banner • Confusion about remit • Tension between the Local Government White Paper and the Planning White Paper (top-down/bottom-up)

E-bulletins

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

Unsolicited Feedback received in 2007

“Very useful”

“A joy to read as ever!”

“Another valuable and useful bulletin”

“Thanks for these ‘notes’. Very helpful, especially when I miss something.”

“Many thanks for your assistance and advice”

“Thank you for the coverage of the resistance to PPS 14. It's much appreciated!”

“A big thank you for the opportunity and time you gave me to be able to visit Summerfield recently”

“I wish to thank you and the Family Housing Association for taking great pains in organising the tour of Summerfield and a very useful visit to the show home”

Policy consultations

Network members have been invited to contribute to consultations on the following during 2006:

Housing an ageing population - developing guidance for planners - The RTPi and the Housing Learning and Improvement Network at the Department for Health

Community Investment - HM Treasury and the Office of the Third Sector

Demonstrating sustainability - The Welsh Assembly

Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites - - The Welsh Assembly

Revised planning guidance in relation to Travelling Showpeople - CLG

Guidance on tall buildings - CLG

Amendments to the Temporary Stop Notice Regulations - CLG

Simpler consultation? - GLA

Draft ‘Public Benefit’ Guidance - The Charity Commission

Energy Efficiency and Microgeneration Strategy - The Scottish Executive

Tax incentives for development of brownfield land - The Treasury

The Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations - The Scottish Executive

Statutory Guidance on Planning and Sustainable Development- The Scottish Executive

Communities Scotland Sustainable Development Policy – Communities Scotland

Changes to Permitted Development – CLG

Consultation Bill – Private Member’s Bill

Monitoring and Evaluation practice - Charities Evaluation Services

Strengthening the Role of Rural Councillors - The Commission for Rural Communities

Community Assets Fund – Cabinet Office

Third Sector £80m Small Grants Programme - Urban Forum

Working Together – The Environment Agency

Charity protection - The Home Office and HM Treasury

Planning White Paper - CLG

Draft Guidance on the Design of Sites for Gypsies and Travellers – CLG

Draft Guidance on the Management of Gypsy and Traveller Sites – CLG

Local Transport Bill - The Department for Transport

The Energy White Paper and Consultation on the Future of Nuclear Energy – DTI

The impact of climate change on health - The Department of Health

Right to Apply for Orders to Extinguish and Divert Public Rights of Way - DEFRA

Discrimination Law Review - CLG

Third Sector Strategy for Communities and Local Government – CLG

Communities England – CLG

Consultation on Consultations – Cabinet Office

Implementation of the Carbon Reduction Commitment – DEFRA

Europe must take adaptation measures to lessen impacts of current and future warming – EU

Housing Green Paper - CLG

Ideas for the future of social enterprise - The Office of the Third Sector

Overriding Easements and Other Rights CLG

Draft Minority Ethnic Housing Action Plan 2008-2011 – The Welsh Assembly
Cycling Infrastructure Design - The Department of Transport
Transfer of Planning Appeals to Inspectors - CLG
Community Learning and Development - Lifelong Learning UK
Unitary Local Government: An Approach to Implementation – CLG
Affordable Rural Housing - The Housing Corporation
Local Vision, Preparing Community Strategies - The Welsh Assembly
A Shared Community - The Welsh Assembly Government
The Disposal of Land by Local Authorities (Scotland) Regulations – The Scottish Executive
TAN17: Planning and Managing Development - - The Welsh Assembly
Building better incentives for local economic growth - HM Treasury & CLG
Consultation on consultation – BURA
Third Sector Research Centre - The Office of the Third Sector
Principles of Representation - CLG
Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities Statutory Guidance – CLG
A Defra Third Sector Strategy - DEFRA

Awards

Network members have been informed of and/or invited to participate in the following during 2007:

Academy of Urbanism Awards <http://www.academyofurbanism.org.uk/awards.htm>
ASC Awards for Sustainable Communities <http://ascskills.org.uk/pages/awards>
ASC Future Vision Awards <http://www.ascskills.org.uk/pages/careers/futurevision>
Beacon Council Awards <http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelid=719259>
BURA Awards for Best Practice in Regeneration <http://firsthand.bura.org.uk/Default.aspx>
BURA Awards for Community Inspired Regeneration <http://firsthand.bura.org.uk/Default.aspx>
CABE Parkforce Awards <http://www.cabe.org.uk/default.aspx?contentitemid=1435>
Community Empowerment Awards
http://www.nalc.gov.uk/Conferences_and_Events/Awards/Awards_for_Local_Councils.aspx
Enterprising Solutions Awards <http://www.enterprisingsolutions.org/>
LGN Street Design Awards <http://www.lgnnet.co.uk/street>
Market Towns Regional & National Awards <http://www.towns.org.uk/awards/index.php>
Neighbourhood Awards <http://www.neighbourhoodawards.org.uk/>
Public:Private Finance Awards http://www.centaur.co.uk/communities/public_sector/ppfa/
Regeneration and Renewal Awards <http://www.haymarketevents.com/awards/?fuseaction=eventIntro&eventID=2817>
Scottish Awards for Quality in Planning (administered by RTPi Scotland)
<http://www.rtpi.org.uk/item/556/23/5/3>
Scottish Excellence in Community Regeneration Award
<http://www.cih.org/scotland/regeneration-award.htm>
SURF Awards for Best Practice - Urban Regeneration
<http://www.scotregen.co.uk/knowledge/good.asp?p=fc>
The Beacon Prize <http://www.beaconfellowship.org.uk/>
The ePolitix.com Charity Champion Awards <http://www.charitychampionawards.com/>
The Guardian Charity Awards <http://society.guardian.co.uk/>
The Guardian Public Service Awards <http://society.guardian.co.uk/>
The Guardian Social Entrepreneurship Awards <http://society.guardian.co.uk/>
The Philip Lawrence Awards <http://www.4children.org.uk/pla/about/>
Woman of the Year Awards <http://www.dods.co.uk/womansawards/default.htm> &
<http://www.woyla.co.uk/awards.htm>
World Habitat Awards <http://www.bshf.org/en/?topselected=World%20Habitat%20Awards>

Requests to/from Members

Members helped with arranging a **volunteering opportunity** for a new member.

For an RTPI Conferences the Network located a speaker able to give a **presentation on eco-communities**

Network members were asked for case studies on how planning can help to achieve **accessible environments**.

The Network Bulletin helped to promote '**Planning Together, LSPs and Spatial Planning a practical guide**' which the Community Planning Project had been commissioned by CLG to produce.

A government pathfinder authority for **community engagement in the commissioning of school provision** asked Members for case studies.

The RTPI looked to Network members for good examples of how the consideration of gender can make a real difference to planning outcomes at all levels for a publication '**Good practice on gender and spatial planning**'

Members responded within the very tight deadline to a request from **The Guardian's Peter Hetherington** who asked the RTPI to help with research towards an article he was writing which aimed to tie together the 60th anniversary of the 1947 Act and the new Planning White Paper.

The University of Bath requested participation in a research project that required 'objective observer' access to several different case studies (over the next 6 months) where the public are being given an opportunity to **participate in the design process**.

Member experiences were sought around the issues raised by the **Northern Ireland PPS14: Sustainable Development in the Countryside**

A New Zealander asked Members for assistance in finding **work in community planning** in the UK

Members were asked whether there was a member in or around Warwickshire willing to talk on **Low-carbon Villages** to a group of town/parish Councillors.

Members were canvassed for interest in becoming **Planning Aid volunteers**

A postgraduate student requested case studies for a **dissertation** on "Climate Change - Where Does Planning Fit In?"

Network Members BSHF made available to Members their Report '**Out in the Open: Providing accommodation, promoting understanding and recognising rights of Gypsies and Travellers**'

Task Groups

There have been no task groups as such but the Core Group discussions with Louise Waring have assisted the progress and development of the CLG funded Community Planning Project. Members have been invited to contribute case-studies to build the good practice resource at communityplanning.net

Events

Date: 24th January 2007

Event: Community-led Plans: integrating with the planning system

The Network held a Reception during this important event
 Venue: London
 Participants: 30

Date: 16th March 2007
 Event: Planning and Climate Change
 The Network assisted with speakers for this event
 Venue: London

Date: 27th April 2007
 Event: National Planning Aid Conference
 The Network Manager attended and arranged to meet Network members at this annual event
 Venue: Newcastle

Date: 25th – 27th July 2007
 Event: The 2007 Regeneration Convention
 Network members were offered a Reception during this important event
 Venue: Loughborough University

Date: 5 events in September/October 2007
 Event: Tour of Summerfield Eco-Neighbourhood
 Venue: Birmingham
 Participants: 70

Date: 29th November 2007
 Event: Finding a positive balance; gender, planning and regeneration
 An event actively promoted via the Network following earlier consultation on the topic
 Venue: London

Presentations when available from the events are included in the members' area of the website.