



# RTPI

mediation of space · making of place

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## RTPI UPDATE

### January 2008

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## **MEMBERSHIP, EDUCATION & LIFELONG LEARNING DIRECTORATE**

### **DIRECTOR: SUE PERCY**

#### **MEMBERSHIP**

- 21,157 Members (as of 18 December 2007).
- Currently, 15,251 corporate members (Chartered Members, Fellows and Legal Members), 1082 student members and 2150 retired members.
- 498 applicants elected to Chartered Membership (MRTPI) in the four quarterly meetings of the Membership Panel in 2007 through the outgoing routes (standard and special entry) and reinstated 54 previous members to Chartered Membership.

#### **Licentiate and Student Members**

- 93 Licentiates elected to Chartered membership through the APC, 63 of who submitted their reports by the deadline for the election on 14 December 2007.
- 1337 Licentiates of whom 834 were elected in 2007.
- 366 new fee-paying Student Members in 2007.
- In total, 676 free student members (full- and part-time final-year students in 2007).

#### **Transfers and Resignations**

- 238 members transferred to the Retired class in 2007 of whom 233 transferred from corporate classes.
- 187 resignations of which 108 were corporate members. We have removed 362 members from the register for non-payment of subscription fees; 151 of this number were corporate members.
- Gain of 645 and a loss of 492 corporate members.

#### **Associate Membership**

- 64 Associate Members elected in 2007.

#### **RTPI Learning Partners**

- We are pleased to announce that Cambridge City Council, Charisma Spatial Planning, East Sussex County Council, London South Bank University, Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners, The Planning Inspectorate, The Planning Service Northern Ireland, Savills LLP and Three Rivers District Council have all recently become RTPI Learning Partners.

#### **Education & Lifelong Learning**

- RTPI & CEBE (Centre for Education in the Built Environment) Planning Education to Planning Practice Workshop, Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2008.

A jointly organised workshop to discuss initial planning education and the transition from education to practice. The workshop is aimed at planning academics, practitioners from the public, private and voluntary sectors. The event

is free but spaces are limited. If you would like to attend e-mail [education@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:education@rtpi.org.uk)

- Education Review Group

The department is producing a number of papers on behalf of the group for consultation and guidance on initial planning education to be discussed and circulated to the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee, Membership Panel, Accreditation and Partnership Panel and accredited Planning Schools.

The papers deal with a number of issues including the demonstration of intensity in accredited one-year combined Masters degrees, the continuum of planning education, the Bologna Agreement and the future of undergraduate planning education,

The review process is ongoing and further work is planned during 2008.

- Planning Education and Research Network

The recent Education and Lifelong Learning Committee (ELLC) meeting was asked to comment upon and endorse a proposal by the Research and Knowledge Committee (RKC) to establish an RTPi Planning Education and Research Network. The committee welcomed the initiative and agreed that the network was needed to further encourage engagement between the planning education and practice communities.

## **PROGRAMMES & SERVICES DIRECTORATE**

### **DIRECTOR: DEBBIE SORKIN**

#### **The Planning Convention 2008: 10 – 11 July, QE II Centre, London**

Preparations for next year's Convention are now well advanced. We have had to change the dates from 12 – 13 June to 10 – 11 July, in order to secure the venue and to ensure that we could hold our usual drinks reception at One Whitehall Place, so we will be returning to the QE II Centre in London.

The overall theme for next year starts from the position that planning and planners are facing a world that is not only changing but changing at an increasing rate. Planning no longer works in isolation, and planners need skills to address broad societal issues including crime reduction, community empowerment, improving health outcomes and providing environmentally sustainable communities.

Hence there are key issues around:

- the pace of change;
- the changing policy context;
- changing demands on planners and planning from different stakeholders.

In the middle of all this change are town and country planners, often under-resourced and still under-valued. Spatial planning and spatial approaches are increasingly in demand but the people to deliver them – not just in planning – are few on the ground. So the question is what to do in the circumstances, given where we are.

The answer in part goes back to the actions to support culture change identified in the EPiSP project and in the National Planning Forum's Culture Change Action Plan in England and Wales, and in the culture change agenda taking shape

following the Planning Act in Scotland: essentially deploying the available resources as best whilst at the same time recruiting, training and up-skilling.

So the title for next year's Convention will be *Changing Places: Changing World*, and the sessions will reflect a world of change: in places and place-shaping; in practice; and in politics and societal issues. We will also be changing the format of the Convention, so that rather than having one day of plenaries followed by one day of workshops, we combine the two, having plenary sessions followed by a series of related workshops on both days. The aim is to refresh the programme and to obviate the sense expressed by some delegates of being 'talked at'. Workshops will include topics such as climate change; planning and health; countering the skills gap; planning and public safety; community empowerment; and urban design.

We will be repeating the plenary debate on the Friday afternoon, which was such a success last year. This time, the focus will be on *Changing Planning in a Changing World – Where will we be in 2018?*

We have already invited a range of high-level speakers, including Carolina Barco Isakson (Colombian Ambassador to the USA and a Harvard-trained planner, who was an inspirational speaker at this year's American Planning Association Conference; Dr Gro Harlem Brundtland, who previously led the World Commission on Environment and Development responsible for the report *Our Common Future* which developed the broad political concept of sustainable development and led to a range of initiatives, including Local Agenda 21; Professor Phil Harrison, Executive Director of Development, Planning and Urban Management for the City of Johannesburg; Bernadette Kelly, Executive Director for Planning at CLG; Baroness Susan Greenfield, Director of the Royal Institution; the journalist and columnist Polly Toynbee, and Sunand Prasad, the new President of RIBA.

In addition to changing the format, we will have an expanded programme of study tours and fringe events, and will be holding a gala party/buffet on the Thursday evening, instead of just the usual drinks reception. We will also be looking to expand the Exhibition of Regional Good Practice from around the UK, and to link this to a workshop on good practice led by GA member Mike Ash, former Chief Planner at CLG and Chair of the RTPI Awards Judges' Panel.

As always, we would welcome hearing from GA members who are also interested in playing a part – please contact [debbie.sorkin@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:debbie.sorkin@rtpi.org.uk). A small Core Group is taking forward the detailed work around the programme and will next meet early in the New Year. The first Convention brochure will be out in February but you can already book your place online – go to [www.theplanningconvention.co.uk](http://www.theplanningconvention.co.uk).

### **Other Events**

The new Gender Duty was examined in November at a one-day event, ***Finding a positive balance; gender, planning and regeneration***. The RTPI Guidance Note, ***Gender and Spatial Planning*** and Oxfam's paper, ***A Place for Everyone***, were launched at this event. In January 2008, the new programme kicks off with a research event, ***Improving Sustainability Appraisal***.

Staying in Scotland, the **RTPI in Scotland Annual Conference**, entitled *Fulfilling Planning's Potential*, took place in Edinburgh on 16 November, with Jim Claydon and Jim MacKinnon amongst the speakers. **RTPI North West** held its **Regional Conference and Annual Dinner** on 19 October: the Conference focused on

innovative approaches to sustainability, plan-making and housing provision, with speakers including Leonora Rozee, Jim Claydon, Professor Peter Roberts and Dr Oliver Hartwich of the Policy Exchange Think-tank. We also promoted a joint **RTPI East Midlands and RTPI West Midlands** event to mark World Town Planning Day on 8 November.

In collaboration with the TRICS Consortium of local authorities in England, the RTPI co-hosted a highly successful **Annual Transport and Development Planning Conference** in November, which attracted some 350 delegates. RTPI President Jim Claydon chaired the first day, and speakers included Transport Minister Rosie Winterton, Rt Hon John Gummer MP, Teresa Villiers (Shadow Transport Minister), Chris Shepley, Leonora Rozee and Karen Dee, Head of Infrastructure at the CBI. We will be looking to repeat our partnership with TRICS next year, this time alongside the Transport Planning Society, and also to explore similar opportunities for partnership with other organisations such as the Institute of Highway Engineers.

We also held our third annual **Overseas Planners' Reception** (for planners from overseas working in the UK) on 27 November, and sold out places within a few days of advertising the event, attracting some 100 planners from eight countries across the world working in the UK in both the public and – increasingly – the private sectors. A further event with a CPD session tailored to their needs is planned for Spring 2008.

In addition, **the Second Annual RTPI/Planning Aid Parliamentary Reception** took place on Thursday 6 December, hosted by Rt Hon Nick Raynsford and John Healey, the Minister for Local Government. The event went very well, with the Minister praising both planning and Planning Aid, and with a wide range of stakeholders attending. For the first time, the event was sponsored, with Terence O'Rourke providing generous support, and again, we will be looking to hold a third annual reception in 2008.

### **Awards**

The judges have now selected the winners and commendees for the **2007 RTPI National Awards**, which will be presented at a celebration lunch at the Hilton Hotel, London on **7 February 2008**. 32 projects were shortlisted out of a total of 87 nominations and profiles of the short-listed entries appeared in *Planning* magazine in December. There have been a record number of entries for the **Young Planner of the Year** and the **Consultancy of the Year**, both of which we have promoted more strongly this year: again, the winners will be announced at the lunch in February.

Next year, it is likely that we will introduce three **Planning Education Awards** – one for a planning school, one for a student, and one for a **Learning Partner** – as part of the overall awards scheme. We are currently in the process of drawing up detailed proposals for these awards, which will operate in similar fashion to the Young Planner and Consultancy of the Year awards. As always, the views of General Assembly members would be welcome.

The judging for the **2007 London Planning Awards** has also been completed and the presentation will take place on **15 January 2008** at City Hall. Richard Lemon, Honorary Secretary of RTPI London, has been amongst the judges.

Simon Jenkins, columnist with *The Guardian*, will give the **2008 RTPI Annual Lecture**, which will take place at the Brunei Lecture Theatre, London on **20**

**February 2008.** For more information, please contact Judy Woollett at [judy.woollett@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:judy.woollett@rtpi.org.uk).

### **Planners in the Workplace**

*PIWP* continues to develop, with the number of enquiries increasing across a broad range of issues and monthly features in *Planning*. The **Collaborative Working Groups Guidance Note** is available from the website, and supporting information will be added to encourage members and their employers to use Groups to assist with professional development. Both the Improvement Service in Scotland and the Planning Advisory Service have been consulted on the proposal to develop a 'Planning Management Toolkit', designed to help local planning authority planners to develop their management and leadership skills, and at the same time *PIWP* is reviewing how existing RTPI management advice notes and supporting information can be designed to provide a basic framework of information and guidance via the RTPI website. The RTPI is also represented on the PAS Critical Friends Project Steering Group. To find out more, please contact Chris Sheridan, *PIWP* Manager, at the Institute on 020 7929 9483, or via [chris.sheridan@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:chris.sheridan@rtpi.org.uk).

### **Member Services**

The Regions continue to develop high profile, innovative, training events - Wayne Hemingway of Hemingway Designs addressed the RTPI North West's conference recently, and in Northern Ireland Jonathon Smales was a keynote speaker at the very successful Design for Life conference, which attracted over 200 delegates. Throughout the country the number of attendees continues to rise at Regional events, placing the RTPI at the centre of providing continuing professional development for planners. For information, please contact [charles.veal@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:charles.veal@rtpi.org.uk).

At the same time, we have been out and about engaging with members and promoting the Institute on a face-to-face (and sometimes even one-to-one) basis. With roadshows in Northern Ireland, we have been visiting planners in their workplace to explain the work of the Institute and how membership can benefit them. These roadshows have also been run in England in collaboration with the Planning Portal and we are managing to reach out to planners working in development management and to Planning Administrators to encourage them to look at Institute membership. These roadshows also provide a valuable opportunity for planners and members to feedback to the Institute on what they think of the RTPI.

The RTPI is exploring how it can provide more support to Planning Administrators. Planning Administrators are a key part of the planning process and often in the front line in dealing with the public. We would like to launch a new support service – possibly in the form of a new Network – some time in 2008, and would welcome the views of GA members on the issue.

2008 also looks set to be another great year for Branches and Regions, with packed programmes of CPD ranging from the ever-popular Planning Law Updates to events on many topics including Biodiversity, Heritage, Sustainability and Community Engagement. Continuing the insatiable appetite for partying, more Annual Balls are planned with the return of the West Midlands Planning Ball, and for the sporty there will be enough five-a-side football to make up for England not being in the European Championships.

As always, we are very aware that RTPI Branches, Regions and Nations are hugely dependent on dedicated volunteers. To that end, we are very pleased to announce that Andy Meenagh, a long-standing member of Northern Section of the Irish Branch Executive Committee, will be presented with the RTPI Outstanding Service Award in recognition of his many years of service with the Institute in Northern Ireland.

Next year will see the RTPI continue its support to Branches, Regions and Nations. We have already expanded our policy support for Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales and we are looking at ways of increasing policy support to Regions in England next year. We will also expand the programme of Roadshows and help Regions wishing to run similar events locally. We intend to celebrate and promote best practice with better guides on how Regions operate successfully and also on examples of outstanding planning practice from around the country.

### **RTPI in Scotland**

The RTPI in Scotland hosted Jim Claydon's Presidential visit to Scotland on 15 and 16 November. Jim attended the Annual Conference and visited Dundee Planning Department and Dundee University. There have also been changes in the office: Shirley James has left after many years' service to the Institute in Melville Street; Charles Strang has been appointed Scottish Planning Policy Officer and James Henderson has joined us on a six month contract to work as the Communications Officer.

On the political side, the Scottish Executive Committee Convenor and Vice-Convenor, along with the National Director of RTPI in Scotland met with Stewart Stevenson MSP, Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change on 25 October 2007. Issues discussed included the modernising planning agenda and continuing support for professional development.

The Scottish Government has published consultations on the draft Regulations on Development Planning and Planning Enforcement Regulations. The RTPI in Scotland Task Groups on Development Planning and Development Management will be leading our response to these consultations; a consultation on 'Firm foundations: the future of Housing in Scotland' has also been published.

The Scottish Government has also published SPP 11: Open Space and Physical Activity and Circular 7/2007: consultation on and notification of planning applications for outdoor sports facilities and open space 2007. At the same time, the RTPI in Scotland is preparing written evidence for the Scottish Parliament Rural and Environment Committee's Inquiry on Flooding.

### **RTPI Cymru**

RTPI Cymru's Policy and Research Forum, responsible for leading on the policy debate in Wales for the Institute and for responding to consultations, is keen to engage with the wider membership in Wales. To kick this off, the Forum wrote to all members asking for views on the key and emerging policy areas in October. This has prompted interest from members across Wales, and the Forum is keen to build on this in the future.

Jane Davidson, the Assembly Government's Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing, spoke at RTPI Cymru's Annual Dinner on 30 November, and provided a strong message of the need to work in partnership to meet the challenges laid down in One Wales – the Assembly Government's

agenda for the next four years - including addressing climate change and affordable housing.

RTPI Cymru's 2007 Planning Awards were announced at the Dinner. The outright winner was Galeri Creative Enterprise Centre in Caernarfon. The judges were impressed by the determination and skill of the town planner leading the project in establishing a social enterprise trust and putting together a design and financial package which has created a self sustaining arts and business complex on a difficult derelict site; the quality of the end product which has already won design awards; the impact on the area in terms of job creation and as a catalyst for the regeneration of the adjoining derelict land and buildings; and the involvement and use of the Centre's facilities by the local community. Also commended at the Dinner were Recreating Pride in Cardigan, Ceredigion County Borough Council, and the Wales Spatial Plan, Welsh Assembly Government.

RTPI Cymru's AGM was held on 7 December and Morgan Parry of WWF Cymru spoke about WWF's One Planet Wales report, in which the urgent need to address climate change is set out. Mr Parry gave some clear messages on the role planners can play in this. In early 2008, RTPI Cymru, with support from the Assembly Government, will be organising training for local authority staff across Wales on negotiation and valuation skills to support the use of S106 agreements. This follows from research undertaken by Sheffield University on the use of S106 agreements in Wales. RTPI Cymru is an active partner in the Regeneration Skills Collective, along with five other built environment professional institutes (engineers, architects, landscape architects, housing professionals and surveyors). Miller Research has been commissioned by the RSC to assess the current and anticipated professional and cross-professional skills capacities required to deliver high quality, integrated and sustainable regeneration throughout Wales over the next ten years. Miller are due to report their findings in March 2008.

### **Networks and Associations**

The Institute's 14 Networks and Associations have continued to show strong growth, with membership growing to over 5,200 by December 2007, up from 3,473 in October 2006 – a 50% increase. Growth has been particularly marked in the Young Planners' Network, in the Urban Design Network, in NAPE, and in the three former ROOM@RTPI Associations (PIPA, ROOM for All and Planning with Communities). These three have seen their total membership rise from 395 to over 600 during the period. PIPA in particular has grown from 61 to 233 members.

The growth in the Network numbers has to reflect the continuous value that the Networks provide and are perceived as bringing, through their filtering of key information in the regular bulletins; their provision of a voice for people in different (and sometimes forgotten) sectors; their functions as a conduit for member engagement and a source of expertise; their events; their promotion/dissemination of good practice; and their ability to act as an outreach mechanism with other professions and a means of influence. The growth must also reflect the work of the Networks Team within the RTPI and of the Steering and Core Groups/ Management Committee.

Because of their strong outreach role, the Networks now have approximately 25% non-RTPI membership. A consultation exercise took place over the summer around the issue of charging members of Networks who were not RTPI members for Network membership. The views expressed were taken as the basis for a

proposal to the RTPI Executive Board, which was unanimously agreed by the Board at its meeting in October. The proposal recommended that no fees should be introduced for non-members of Networks. Instead, we should concentrate on encouraging non-members who are eligible for membership of *the Institute* (whether Corporate, Technical, Associate, or other) to join on that basis, and we will work closely with Network Core and Steering Groups to achieve this aim. There will be a target to convert 500 existing non-RTPI members of Networks to RTPI membership by December 2008 and Business Plans have been drafted to guide activities.

A successful conference organised by the **Development Planning and Transport Planning Networks** was held in Birmingham at the end of October which sought to integrate spatial planning and transport planning, and a new Spatial Plans and Transport Planning webpage has now been set up providing a wide variety of resources for members. Also in October, the **Independent Consultants' Network Annual Event** in London was extremely well received. This year, instead of different presentations throughout the day, Professor Janice Morphet gave delegates an **Update on Spatial Planning**, which included group work using test cases. A further success was the **2007 Young Planners' Conference** that took place in Glasgow on 19 – 20 October, with a theme of *Changing Climate – Changing Planning*.

**The Environmental Planning and Protection Network's** spatial planning and health draft policy has now been endorsed by the Planning Policy & Practice Committee. A new Minerals and Waste task group has also been set up by the Environmental Planning and Protection Network. **The Development Planning Network** is looking at comparisons in the development planning systems of the UK administrations and will be progressing comparative learning and information exchange around the development planning systems. **The International Development Network** has a Small Islands Planning task group, which now has a dedicated web page. New **Young Planners' Network** web pages will allow each regional or national young planner group to have their own homepage and associated pages. A greater web presence is something that Young Planners have argued for and it will enable them to promote their work and attract other young planners into the RTPI. A toolkit is now available online aimed at young planners interested in setting up a new group or organise an event. **The Transport Planning and Urban Design Networks** are working in conjunction with CABI on promoting the *Manual for Streets*.

As the Networks continue to expand, we are looking to pilot **Network awards** for the first time next year. Three Networks – Transport Planning, EPPN and Regeneration – will be choosing award-winners from amongst projects nominated by Network members. Judging will take place by the respective Steering Groups at their next meetings and the winners will be announced at the first joint **Annual Networks Conference**, entitled '*Empowerment and influence – planning and learning through the RTPI Networks*', to be held in Birmingham on **23 April 2008**. Debbie Sorkin will be chairing the Conference and Martin Willey, Kelvin MacDonald, Joe Montgomery from CLG and Leonora Rozee will be amongst the speakers. More details are available from Trish Cookson – [trish.cookson@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:trish.cookson@rtpi.org.uk) – or via the RTPI website – [www.rtpi.org.uk](http://www.rtpi.org.uk).

### **Planning Aid**

The profile of Planning Aid in England has continued to grow. In its response to the Planning White Paper, the Government mentioned Planning Aid no fewer

than 15 times, and Planning Aid was also explicitly mentioned by the Secretary of State, Hazel Blears, by Local Government Minister John Healey, and by a number of MPs during the first and second readings of the Planning Bill in the House of Commons. The Planning Bill retains the White Paper commitment to introduce a streamlined planning process for large infrastructure projects with an effective new system of community involvement and engagement, and Planning Aid is seen as integral to this.

Other references to Planning Aid include a mention in the Transport White Paper and in the CLG/LGA Community Empowerment Action Plan launched by Hazel Blears in October. We have also promoted Planning Aid widely amongst key stakeholders inside and outside government (e.g. the Community Empowerment Division), and have started discussions with organisations such as *Partnerships for Schools* on potential involvement of Planning Aid in the 'Building Schools for the Future' Programme. The Government has praised Planning Aid in an official publication for the work we have done in assessing the equalities impact on a major legislative proposal.

We are currently in the process of finalising the core settlement for Planning Aid for the period 2008-2011, and to that end, we have submitted a combined Business Plan and Budget for expanding the core service and providing support on Major Infrastructure Projects, particularly in relation to forward-planning and capacity development to support engagement with National Policy Statements and (post-2009) specific applications. This plan is under discussion within CLG at the time of writing. We have already received written confirmation from CLG that baseline funding for 2008-2009 is secure and have notified Planning Aid staff accordingly.

The 2008 Planning Aid Conference will now take place on Monday 14 April and Tuesday 15 April at King's College Cambridge, with overall themes looking at regional and sub-regional agendas and housing. For more information, please contact the Planning Aid National Unit at [info@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk](mailto:info@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk).

### **International**

Janet O'Neill accompanied RTPI's representatives on the ECTP General Assembly (Robin Thompson and Noel Riordan) to the Autumn meeting of ECTP in Nicosia in October. Delegates heard an inspiring presentation on a plan for Nicosia, Europe's "last remaining divided city" as it describes itself, half defiantly and half ruefully. The central topic of the meeting was mutual recognition of qualifications of professional planners to allow free movement of planners in the EU. An expert Working Group is taking the forward with the next step being a study of mobility in the profession, for which ECTP is joining with the Association of European Schools of Planning. The joint steering group is now seeking a European planning school to carry out the research for this. All ECTP members were asked to consider appropriate ways of celebrating 100 years of spatial planning in Europe, given that French, German and British planning institutions were all founded in the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

Jointly with RTPI, ECTP is organising a conference on 8 February 2008 at CLG on implementation of the EU Action Plan for Territorial Cohesion.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Biennial conference of European Towns and Town Planners took place in Budapest in June and was written up in *Planning* in August. The next Biennial will be held in Nancy, France, in 2009. Preparations are already in hand for a

conference focusing on small and medium-sized cities. RTPI is represented by Cliff Hague on the preparatory committee for this event.

The 7<sup>th</sup> European Urban & Regional Planning Awards are now open for entries. RTPI is asked to select three to four winners from its own recent Awards to go forward as the best of UK and Irish planning in the Europe-wide awards. The Awards will be presented at the ECTP Autumn General Assembly in Dublin Castle in October hosted by the Irish Planning Institute.

RTPI continues to be active with the (now) 16 other members of the Professional Institutes-UKChina network, promoting communications between member institutes and China. For more information visit the website or ask the International Affairs Officer to put you on the mailing list for the PI-UKChina newsletter. RTPI and CAP are working together on one of the key themes of the Global Planners Network: the need to assess the world-wide capacity for planning. With Will French MRTPI working on the preparatory stages, RTPI and CAP are on the point of launching a survey asking practicing planners all over the world what they think are the characteristics of planning education, training, practice and administration in their country. The results should be out in time to be presented at the GPN Congress *Urbanisation, Poverty and Climate Change* in October in Zhenjiang. Preparations are also in hand for a pre-Congress study tour starting in Shanghai, stopping off in Zhenjiang for the Congress and on to Nanjing (a former capital of China) for the UN-Habitat World Urban Forum 4.

A link on the front page of the RTPI website now leads to RTPI International, pages of the website dedicated to the Institute's international links and activities.

## **CORPORATE PLANNING & RESOURCES DIRECTORATE**

### **DIRECTOR: KEITH MITCHELL**

- The last quarter of 2007 was extremely busy for the directorate with preparing budgets, forecasts, subscription notices and collection, information for Planning Aid claims, VAT returns, ongoing recruitment, revising the use of space within 41 Botolph Lane, new copiers, etc.

- Some details by section:

#### **Human Resources**

- Restructuring in Membership, Education & Lifelong Learning Directorate and Office of the Secretary General is progressing
- Review of employment policies is proceeding
- New annual leave entitlements have been agreed: simplifying the previous arrangements, with most staff benefiting by another day's leave p.a.
- Annual leave now being 'controlled' by line manager rather than HR
- Sick leave policy discussed and to be implemented in 2008

- Absence recording to be implemented in 2008
- Independent legal advice established for Trustees
- Information on their contract of employment was sent to those Planning Aid staff on CLG funding once the comfort letter from CLG of funding to 31 March 2009 was received
- HR Officer left in October and presently recruiting at professional level and possibly located in West Midlands

## **Facilities**

- Previous Library space has been replaced with a new Committee Room 1
- Printed materials are located in the book stack and remain available to staff and members
- Library & Information Services Manager has relocated temporarily to the fourth floor
- Old Committee Room 1 is being converted into an office for the Secretary General, supported by the Executive Officer and Secretary
- Replacement photocopiers (on lease) were installed in week commencing 10 December 2007
- Fire alarm system and detector heads have been serviced

## **Governance**

- Fresh Health & Safety training undertaken
- Elections for JVP and General Assembly administered by ERS, those for Executive Board by RTP1
- Website used to publish details of candidates – an increased response to elections resulted
- A bi-monthly random sample of 200 chartered members is being requested to provide evidence (if appropriate) of professional indemnity insurance for the protection of clients and the public

## **Finance**

- Monthly payrolls, weekly BACS, etc continue
- HMRC have completed a review of payroll which resulted in positive confirmation
- Payscale review at April 2007 was finalised in December and arrears paid
- Home working allowance was reviewed also and arrears paid in December

## ICT

- Gift Aid payments from RSL (and Summer School Services) to the relevant charity were completed
- Progressed the design of member/contact database for roll out in 2008
- Taken temporary responsibility for Website
- Audit of content of website pages completed
- Lease at Melville Street, Edinburgh renewed
- Health and Safety policy reviewed and issued for consultation

## Management Accounts and Subscriptions

- 2008 Budget paper prepared
- Year End Forecast prepared for Board meeting
- Renewal subscription notices issued and monies being banked
- Low income, member on maternity leave and World discounts declarations being processed
- Credit card collections continue on a regular basis
- Set up for Direct Debit collection on 2 January 2008

## POLICY & COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTORATE DIRECTOR: RYND SMITH

**Policy** work has continued to be dominated by the implementation of many of the proposals emerging in the Planning White Paper and the Housing Green Paper.

Implementation proposals commenced with a firm government proposal for a **Community Infrastructure Levy** (CIL) to replace the Planning Gain Supplement (PGS) tax proposals. The levy proposals are still taking shape, but their broad principles respond very well to RTPI policy supporting tariff-based charging through the development plan, developed in some detail throughout 2007 to provide a credible alternative to the PGS.

The major policy developments in late 2007 were of course the introduction to Parliament of the **Planning Bill**, the **Climate Change Bill** and the **Housing and Regeneration Bill**, in turn moving the RTPI into a new phase of parliamentary lobbying, the provision of evidence and the drafting of proposed bill amendments.

Policy and administrative changes to the planning system to implement the white and green papers also continue apace, and the period has seen the issue of a raft of consultations, most notably including new **PPS12 (development plans)** and **PPS4 (economic development)** for England

The **Planning Bill** has been a necessary focus of our policy work. The Bill proposes the establishment of a new **Major Infrastructure Projects** (MIPs) planning regime, including the creation of new National Policy Statements for infrastructure (NPS) and the establishment of an Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC). It also makes changes to the existing **(Town and Country**

**Planning**) regime in England, including revisions to the tree preservation system, placing the proposed CIL on a statutory footing and, more significantly, changing the means of appeal for many small to medium scale proposals.

Turning to the detail of the **MIPs** proposals, the RTPI has consistently supported the proposition that the UK requires an integrated national policy framework, which should address infrastructure development amongst other topics. The Planning Bill proposals for **National Policy Statements** for infrastructure (NPS) do not amount to the integrated strategy that the RTPI seeks. However, the proposal for subject specific policies does represent a significant step forward from the current lack of clear or transparent policy for infrastructure development. As can be seen below in our comments on the Climate Change Bill, it is becoming most urgent that a policy framework is developed to underpin the massive renovation of our infrastructures that will be necessary over the next decade to ensure that we maintain adequate service in critical areas such as electricity generation. In such circumstances, the RTPI has broadly supported the policy provisions in the bill, recognising also that once policies are drafted, the linkages and potential for integration between them will become more, rather than less apparent. In short, it is more important to achieve the development of policies for infrastructures, than to oppose the form of the proposed policies in the hope that a better or more integrated form might then emerge, when this benefit is likely to evolve. For similar reasons, the RTPI has broadly supported the establishment of an **Infrastructure Planning Commission** (IPC), focussing infrastructure decision making in an expert and timely body.

It follows that our key concerns for the MIPs elements of the Bill have been to ensure that communities have adequate means to be involved in policy making and in presenting their views to the IPC as decision makers. The RTPI has briefed senior civil servants and 98 MPs with a view to securing the necessary changes to the bill. We have also appeared before the Bill Parliamentary Committee. At mid-January 2008, this detailed work is translating into a significant number of **RTPI crafted bill amendments**, tabled in the committee stage.

Notable amongst these are an amendment to Clause 7 of the Bill to create an unambiguous duty on the Secretary of State to publicise and consult on all draft NPSs and a new clause, seeking to create a duty on a proponent to identify in consultation with the community and mitigate the adverse impacts of proposals as far as is reasonably possible. This new 'front end loaded' processes is supported by a range of further amendments that will take it through the IPC decision making process, enabling hearings to focus on the issues of most concern to impacted parties. Other amendments seek to reduce the significant legal uncertainties inherent in the matters that the IPC must consider under the bill as drafted, aiming to reduce litigation and to ensure that existing PPSs and their equivalents, national planning frameworks in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and the development plan (as relevant) must be considered by the IPC.

Turning to the detail of the **Town and Country Planning** proposals, the RTPI has supported the proposed **CIL** tariff provisions, whilst recognising that significant additional detail will have to be developed in regulations, a process that we will remain strongly committed to. Many members have commented opposing the government's proposals for **Local Member Review Bodies** (LMRB), under which existing rights of appeal to the Secretary of State (through PINS) would be lost for many applicants, in favour of a more limited right to

review by a Panel of local councillors. This ill-founded proposal has been consistently opposed by the RTPI and indeed analysis of the Planning White Paper responses suggests that 87% of business and 95% of government respondents to the relevant consultation paper also opposed it. Nevertheless, the proposal remains as, being seen by government as somehow devolutionary.

The RTPI is working closely with a number of other professional institutions, seeking amendments to remove the LMRB proposals from the Bill. However, it must be noted that the proposals appear to enjoy reasonably widespread parliamentary support.

The RTPI's regularly updated Planning Bill work can be found on the website at <http://www.rtpi.org.uk/item/1348/23/5/3>, where members also have a click link to provide their views to the policy team.

The **Housing and Regeneration Bill** and the **Climate Change Bill** are largely supported by the RTPI and hence have not formed the focus of detailed lobbying.

The **Housing and Regeneration Bill** has substantial planning implications in that a new proposed merged agency formed from English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation will be capable of obtaining the powers (or elements of the powers) of a local planning authority, including the making of the development plan and or development management. We have taken the view that these powers are broadly appropriate to support major new housing development or regeneration and indeed they are no different in broad scope and type to the powers once widely used under the New Towns legislation.

The **Climate Change Bill** is a remarkable and visionary piece of legislation that the RTPI has broadly supported. If passed into to law, it will commit the UK to statutory carbon budgets that will substantially reduce our emissions of climate change gases, making our nation the first in the world to pursue such a route. To this extent it can be read as a practical response to the findings of the Stern Report examining the economic impacts of climate change. The RTPI has called for the inclusion of a wider basket of climate relevant gases into the legislation that CO<sub>2</sub> alone, on the basis that (for example) emissions of say methane, whilst relatively small, have the climatic effects of manifold volumes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, but can typically be controlled with reasonable facility as part of siting and design processes.

There is an important link between the Planning Bill and the Climate Change Bill, in that to meet the proposed reducing carbon budget requirements under the Climate Change Bill, the UK will need to deliver significant volumes of new sustainable infrastructures within expeditious timescales. This requirement is a significant driver towards our support for the MIPs provisions in the Planning Bill broadly as they currently stand.

**Practice work** has continued during this busy time. Landmarks include new good practice note publications, bringing to fruition work on **Extra Care Housing** (housing for an ageing population) and **Planning and Gender**. Case studies on community involvement have also been published to support our existing good practice guidance on this topic. All RTPI good practice notes continue to be available from: [http://www.rtpi.org.uk/the\\_rtpi/practice/](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/the_rtpi/practice/)

Our **media and communications work** has continued to drive high levels of press coverage of the RTPI corporately. A traditionally quiet period has seen continued RTPI presence in the UK and Scottish print media, with a strong focus

on our parliamentary and practice work. A key press debate has been about the controversial Trump golf resort proposals in Scotland: a debate that has provided an excellent vehicle for the well-balanced wisdom of Scottish Chair Alister Stark. Rynd Smith took to BBC Radio 4 You and Yours as part of an hour long 'phone in to examine public opinion on Green Belt policy. Contrary to the established wisdom that the public would only support ever greater protection of Green Belts from development, the debate reflected much wider concerns about the spatial sustainability of cities and the character and quality of cities and towns as places to live.

## **RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE**

### **HEAD OF RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE: JENNY CRAWFORD**

The RTPI has been awarded the contract to deliver the European Spatial Planning Observation Network Contact Point (ECP UK) 2008 - 2013. The ECP UK project will be based at the RTPI in Scotland offices in Edinburgh, with Cliff Hague as Team Leader. ESPON 2013 will be launched in Brussels on 21 January with a call for research proposals on applied research projects covering the following themes:

- Cities and urban agglomerations: their functionality and potentials for European competitiveness and cooperation
- Development opportunities in different types of rural areas
- Demographic and migratory flows affecting European regions and cities
- Climate change and territorial effects on regions and local economies
- Effects of rising energy prices on regional competitiveness
- Territorial Impact Assessment of policies

An ESPON UK Network will be launched in March to enable practitioners and researchers with an involvement or interest in regional planning and research to share information, access updates and input ideas and requests for partnership.

A major workshop, organised by Land /Use Consultants and RTPI, as part of the Sustainable Development Research Network, is being held on 25 January 2008 to explore priorities for research into the practice and development of sustainability appraisal.

The Planning Research Conference, supported by the RTPI, will be taking place in Queen's University Belfast 18 – 20 March. There has been an excellent response to calls for papers. Registration is open to both researchers and practitioners with research interests.

The RTPI is supporting a study by the Live-Work Network into current and emerging practice in the design and development of live-work properties. A conference to discuss the findings is being held in London on 16 April.

Research into the development of spatial planning outcome indicators, commissioned jointly by the RTPI and Communities and Local Government, is now in its final stages. The Universities of Manchester and Sheffield will be presenting a final report in March.