

The Business Case for Sustainable Development - helping developers construct sustainable buildings in a challenging economic climate
9am - 5pm Wednesday 1 October 2008
The Pierian Centre, Bristol

Sustainable construction legislation is being introduced thick and fast in the UK despite the market downturn. Many developers are struggling to understand what the implications are for them. It is now a requirement to assess all new dwellings against The Code for Sustainable Homes, and planning policies such as the Climate Change addendum to PPS1, The Merton Rule and revisions to the Building Regulations are placing tough demands on developers. Discussion about when to introduce a Code for non-domestic buildings has begun. This seminar will help developers meet the challenge to construct substantially more robust, airtight, low energy buildings in a challenging economic climate.

The seminar is aimed at developers and architects as well as local authorities and is presented in partnership with Bristol City Council.

Cost: £150 for Green Register members, £180 non-members

Sustainable Construction: Are we there yet?
A one-day conference organised by The Green Register and RIBA South East
9am - 5pm Thursday 16 October 2008
HG Wells Conference Centre, Woking

The speakers at this unusual conference will be making joint presentations as architect/engineer and owner/user discussing the successes and challenges of some very interesting case studies. Using extensive post-occupancy data, the speakers will discuss whether the sustainable projects they have been involved with are performing as expected and where they are not, what can be done to improve performance.

Bill Gething, Sustainability Advisor to the President of the RIBA since 2003 and long-standing partner of Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios, will be chairing the day and hosting an open debate. Ray Morgan, Chief Executive of Woking Borough Council and Bill Dunster of ZEDfactory are among the other distinguished speakers.

Cost: RIBA/TGR members £110 + VAT before 2/10/08; £130 + VAT after 2/10/08
Non-members: £130 + VAT before 2/10/08; £150 + VAT after 2/10/08

To book a place or for further information contact: Sarah Derryman, Manager, The Green Register, The Create Centre, Smeaton Road, Bristol BS1 6XN
 t: 0117 377 3490 e: mail@greenregister.org.uk
 w: www.greenregister.org.uk

All contributions for Branchout to:

Branchout Editor: Kath Haddrell, **Contact details:**

E-mail: kath.haddrell@pins.gsi.gov.uk Tel (day): 07976 898360. Address for correspondence: Ground Floor, East Reach House, East Reach, Taunton. TA1 3EN.

The deadline for the next edition is **31st October 2008**.

The Royal Town Planning Institute is a registered charity in England and Wales
 No 262865 Registered Office: 41 Botolph Lane, London EC3R 8DL.

Harry Calder
01/01/1921 – 07/07/2008

Harry Calder, Chair of the RTPI SW Branch for the year 1973/1974 has died. Harry was active for many years on planning activities in Cornwall and during his time as Chair was the Deputy County Planning Officer. The Branch programme during his year included presentations by Sir Colin Buchanan and Professor Ashworth, the latter then being the National RTPI President. The Branch weekend held in St Ives at the Porthminster Hotel included as the Dinner guest speaker, Sir Desmond Heap, then the Comptroller and Solicitor to the City of London.



DIARY

Friday 10th October 2008

LDFs emerging best practice.
 Venue: The Lighthouse, Poole

11th November 2008

This Green and Pleasant Land....? A candid look at sustainable land management, building design and construction. Venue: The Watershed, Bristol
 Organiser: RIBA South West/Wessex, The Green Register and the West of England Sustainable Construction Network (WESCON)
 Further details available from The Green Register e: mail@greenregister.org.uk, w: www.greenregister.org.uk or RIBA Wessex and South West, t: 0844 800 2767, e: riba.wessex@inst.riba.org w: www.architecture.com

Friday 5th December 2008

Retail Planning. Venue: Thistle Hotel, Bristol

Friday 11th December 2008

Habitats Regulation Assessment of Spatial Planning Documents (Free event).
 Venue: The Brewhouse, Theatre, Taunton

Friday 23rd January 2009

Achieving Housing Volumes & Quality.
 Venue: The Brewhouse Theatre, Taunton

Further details available from Helen Clarke, RTPI SW Administrator, t: 01823 250822 or e: southwest@rtpi.org.uk.

Message from the chair

Chris Dadds



What we laughably call "summer" is nearing an end and I guess that we're all holding on to the desperate hope that there may be a last minute reprieve in the form of an Indian summer.

As a resident of Weston-super-Mare, the summer has been dominated by the loss of the pier. No doubt "the planners" will have a central role in the redevelopment of the pier and local headlines illustrate both the important role that planners have and the fact that this role is little understood by "ordinary" folk. This is something that the RTPI continues to strive with and the appointment of our Policy & Media officer, Geoff Walker, in July should help us increasingly to do so.

July saw the 60th anniversary of the Town and Country Planning Act 1947. In the SW, we celebrated the event

In this edition:

- 2 Planning Aid Report
- 3 PPS12 Local Spatial Planning
- 4-5 RTPI SW Dinner and Conference
- 6 Defra policy on releasing and developing common land and town and village green / Research.
- 7 Habitats regulation assessment of spatial planning documents/RTPI Networks/South West Policy & Media Officer
- 8 Editors Page, Diary Dates

with a highly successful formal dinner and a conference which looked back at the last 60 years & a little forward to the future. Attendance at the conference was slightly lower than our average of 100 delegates, which was a pity as it was a great opportunity to consider some of the wider aspects of what we do and why, something that we often dismiss as an indulgence in hectic lives. However, I think we should all take time out every so often just to think about the wider picture.

It is hard to pick up a paper or turn on the TV at the moment without being confronted with the unfortunate truth, that things just aren't too good out there in the economy and particularly in the development industry. The process of planning in all its various forms goes on, but it is clear that there are few places to hide from the global downturn and no doubt all of us are feeling the effects somewhere along the line.

The present situation is impacting very forcibly on some and I'm afraid that it will no doubt envelop more of us in the future. To everyone who is finding it difficult, I can offer not a lot more than my sympathy and also the reminder that the RTPI does have member services for employees and employers and it may be that a call to Boltolph Lane might provide you with some advice and guidance.

The process of determining of applications and plan making continues apace. The issue of the Proposed Changes of the RSS continues to provide impetus for both the public and private sectors to get

on with it. The RTPI SW is no different and we will be preparing comments on the process and deliverability. However, it will be interesting to see how plans and requirements set in the context of a property bubble will now be implemented in the period after the burst.

Key performance indicators set in a period when the adage "if you allocate it, they will build" may not be quite so easy to hit in the current climate. Apologies to fans of Field of Dreams for the direct rip off of "If you build it, they will come." How this will be accommodated in the distribution of Housing & Planning Delivery Grant is, no doubt, already being discussed in various offices across the country.

I, along with everyone else, don't know where it will all end. I just know that it will be a bumpy ride. The RTPI SW will continue to provide what services we can, central to these will be the provision of CPD opportunities of the highest quality at a phenomenally competitive rate. However, even we are not immune from the impact of inflation and after holding the costs of conferences at the same rate for a number of years, we will have to increase the price by a £5 per person for next year. I think that £72 for a whole day event remains great value and should continue to ensure that training budgets can stretch to many individuals within an organization.

I look forward to seeing some of you at the remaining events this year.

Chris Dadds



Notes from South West Planning Aid

The community involvement roller coaster

A bit of a blog for this time's Branchout. I don't know about you but I wonder whether other people are as confused as I am over the Government's attitude to community involvement in planning?

Take the recent White Paper on empowerment, Communities in control. This tells us that the Government "aims to pass power into the hands of local communities ... to generate vibrant local democracy in every part of the country ... to give real control over local decisions and services to a wider pool of active citizens ... to shift power, influence and responsibility away from existing centres of power into the hands of communities and individual citizens". And specifically for planning, the Government proposes a host of new initiatives. They are exploring how to give local communities more information about S106 contributions (including how they have been spent) and more opportunity to shape how contributions are used. A new Empowerment Fund (of up to £1.5 million over three years) is to be established for organisations involved in community engagement, and a further £4 million is to be allocated to local planning authorities to promote community participation. They are going to work with the Royal Town Planning Institute on the community planning content of their education and lifelong learning programmes and with the Planning Advisory Service to ensure professionals have access to appropriate good practice and information. And finally, they are going to extend the planning bursary scheme to bring another 45 planners a year into the system to ease staff pressure "so that more time can be spent directly and proactively with communities".

But then compare this with the new PPS12: Local Spatial Planning.

A huge number of the supportive statements for community involvement in Local Development Documents have been dropped: for example, statements that community involvement is essential to achieve local ownership and legitimacy for planning policies; that Statements of Community Involvement (SCIs) should set out a vision, a strategy and standards for community involvement, in addition to just 'policy' and descriptions of methods, process and procedure; that involvement should be tailored to the community and use methods that are relevant to the communities concerned and 'fit for purpose'; and that SCIs should clearly show that the process of involvement can be resourced and managed effectively and how the results will feed into planning documents.

To replace what has been taken out we are told that community involvement should now simply be 'proportionate to the scale of issues involved'. An example is provided: "If it is proposed to produce a new or revised core strategy, for example, to respond to a major change in circumstances, such as receiving eco town or town growth point status, it will in the government's view be appropriate to involve the community in considering the options for the strategy before the final document is produced. A rather different level of consultation [presumably much less] may be appropriate where some specific aspect of the core strategy is being revised such as the approach to the delivery of affordable housing." The implication is that consultation on options, for example, won't be needed if the change is not major.

The new PPS12 also now demands that councils strip out policies from their DPDs if they merely repeat or reformulate national planning policies;² and PINS has been enthusiastically implementing the new approach already. The trouble is, these are often the very policies requested by local communities.

So there are some quite mixed messages. On the one hand the Government's rhetoric is positive. It introduces new initiatives giving community involvement fresh impetus. But then it seems to get the colly-wobbles over what it has just done and pulls back again. Worryingly, there seems to be a division between the 'community' and the 'planning' sides of CLG. The community side keeps moving things on, but the planning side keeps slowing things down.

One wonders about the consistency here, and where it will all end up?

Barry Pearce, SWPA Regional Manager
 0117 929 7292
 swco@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk

International Planning

Does your authority, organisation, or practice have links with similar bodies in Europe and around the world?

Many cities and towns have formal twinning arrangements and the RTPi SW is keen to develop, enhance and foster such links with planning colleagues around the globe. Richard

Williamson, RTPi SW Honorary International Office, would welcome details. *Email address:*
 richard@rlwilliamson.freemove.co.uk

Habitats Regulation Assessment of Spatial Planning Documents

Location: The Brewhouse Theatre, Taunton
 Date: 11 December 2008
 Time 10.30am to 4.15pm
 (10am coffee and registration - lunch provided)

Presented by DAVID TYLDESLEY MIEEM, FRTPI, FRSA. – Principal David Tyldesley and Associates.

David Tyldesley is a Chartered Town Planner, with some 40 years experience in planning and environmental work. Elected a Member of the RTPi in 1973 and elected a Fellow in 1994, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to planning for landscape and nature conservation. He is a former Council member of the RTPi

and Convenor of the Institute's Countryside and Natural Environment Panel. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society for the Arts and a founder Member and a former Council Member of the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management. David has extensive experience of the application of the Habitats Regulations to plans and projects and has developed methodologies and guidance for Natural England, CCW and SNH.

To book a place please contact Helen Clarke on 01823 250822 or email southwest@rtpi.org.uk. Limited places available so book early to avoid disappointment.

RTPi NETWORKS

The 2009 Network Awards will focus on the Environmental Planning & Protection; Transport Planning; Regeneration; Urban Design; and Politicians in Planning (PIPA) Networks. The 16 networks and associations now embrace 6,000

members. The RTPi SW Regional Actives Committee member Richard Williamson is the Networks Champion for the South West. Further details can be found on the RTPi web site www.rtpi.org.uk.

South West Policy & Media Officer



The RTPi SW announced in the last edition (No. 136) that Geoff Walker had been appointed to the new South West Policy & Media Officer. This new post, which has been set up initially for a period of two years, is funded entirely by RTPi South West and could be seen as a pilot for similar initiatives in other English Regions. The

contracted work hours are 7.5 hours per week, the formal 'work day' is Tuesday and Geoff is based at home in Bath. The post became 'live' on Tuesday 3 June 2008. Scotland and Wales have their own respective 'nations' arrangements with employed staff doing similar work, whilst the nearest equivalent to this post is that of the part-time policy officer for Northern Ireland, Brian Sore.

The South West post has been set up in response to an agreed need to raise the profile of the Institute in relation to key spatial issues within the region and to become more involved, on an ongoing basis, in the development of the South West Regional Spatial Strategy and other important policy development with a regional dimension. This will involve not only working with a range of agencies and other professional bodies, but also with the wider community as appropriate. In this respect in particular, contact with the media is seen as important, with the Region's recently adopted Communications Protocol providing the operational framework for this. It is also

hoped that the work in the South West can benefit from and possibly contribute to that of the newly established national Planning Policy and Practice Committee, which met for the first time in April of this year.

Geoff's work programme for June-December 2008 is as follows:

- To continue the active involvement of the RTPi SW in the development of the South West Regional Spatial Strategy, in particular drafting a response to the Secretary of State's proposed changes to the Draft RSS.
- To participate, on behalf of the RTPi SW, in the development of the proposed 'single strategy' for the region.
- To bring to the Regional Management Board/Activities Committee appropriate update reports on emerging national and regional planning policy issues which relate to the South West.
- To prepare draft responses to consultation documents on planning and environmental matters issued by the Institute nationally.
- To act as a point of contact for the media and in particular, facilitating the availability of an appropriate RTPi SW Officer to respond to media requests. On occasions, as appropriate, to act directly as the spokesperson for the RTPi SW.
- To draft press releases in relation to the RTPi SW conferences and other activities over this period.

Geoff's contact details are:
 Tel 01225 464310
 Email: SWPolicy@rtpi.org.uk

DEFRA policy on releasing and developing common land and town and village greens

Planners, agents and developers dealing with wind farm schemes will be familiar with the fact that many of those schemes are proposed to be located on common land. New policy guidance was published in June 2008 by DEFRA which sets out the Government's approach to applications for the release of common land and town and village greens.

Decision making tests

DEFRA's key decision making tests when considering both applications to release common land, and to carry out works on common land will include:

1. the interest of occupiers and anyone who has a right over common land;
2. the interests of the neighbourhood - including whether the proposal has a positive benefit for the neighbourhood;
3. the public interest including
 - 3.1.1 nature conservation
 - 3.1.2 conservation of the landscape
 - 3.1.3 the protection of public rights of access to any area of land
 - 3.1.4 the protection of archaeological remains and features of historic interest
4. any other relevant matter - this may include looking at the wider public interest which may arise for example in major infrastructure projects;

5. If an application is made to release more than 200 square metres but does not include a proposal to exchange land to replace that which is being released, the extent to which the absence of such a proposal is detrimental to the interest of the public, the neighbourhood and those with rights over the original land.

General aim

DEFRA's general aim is to ensure that the stock of common land, and town and village greens is not diminished, and that works only take place on commons if they maintain or improve the condition of the common for public interest, or its value in the community. The focus on protection and conservation is emphasised in the decision making tests above. When considering applications, the Secretary of State will take account of whether an application proposes the best possible outcome, and he may impose conditions where he thinks that there could be a better approach. An absence of objections will not be assumed to mean that the proposed works will not have any adverse impact. Consent will not normally be given for permanent buildings, unless they are intrinsically related to the enjoyment or management of the common. Commons will be expected to be maintained or improved as a result of any works on them.

To deregister or to apply to carry out works?

Applications which have underlying public benefit will include wind farms. However, this must be in balance with the policy of maintaining the overall stock of common land, that works on common land must improve or maintain the condition of the common, and the use is consistent with the land's status as a common. DEFRA believes that applications for infrastructure projects, including wind farms, are more likely to succeed where an exchange of land is proposed to replace that which is being released.

Christian Silk – TLT Solicitors
 Contact Details: *TLT Solicitors, One Radcliff Street, Bristol BS1 6TP. Tel: 0117 917 7777*

Research & innovative Spatial Planning Initiative (RISPI)

The next half day workshop / seminar under the RTPI SW's RISPI initiative will be in Plymouth on Tuesday 7 October. Richard Williamson and Bryan Smith are leading this work, which aims to:

- Promote the sharing of knowledge about, and access to, spatial planning research and effective practice;
- Strengthen links between research, policy, practice & implementation;
- Enhance the standing of spatial planning research;
- Contribute a SW perspective to evolving RTPI research strategy.

The focus is on adding value and filling gaps.
 For further details please contact Helen Clarke at helen.clarke@rtpi.org.uk

Introduction

PPS12 *Local Spatial Planning* was published on 4 June 2008 accompanying amendments to the 2004 Regulations. It, together with the online *Plan-Making Manual*, replaces PPS12 *Local Development Frameworks* and the companion guide *Creating LDFs (2004)*.

Three years on from the commencement of the new system introduced in an attempt to simplify and speed up the plan making process by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, this PPS and the Plan-Making Manual reflect the lessons learnt and aim to further clarify, simplify and speed up the system.

This article looks at some of the changes introduced by the new PPS together with the recent Court of Appeal judgement in *Blyth Valley Borough Council v Persimmon Homes (North East) Ltd [2008] EWCA Civ 861* and considers whether the new PPS has the potential to rectify the delays and uncertainties experienced with the new system so far.

Preparation of Development Plan Documents

Much of the new PPS is concerned with the production of Core Strategies although the new process will also apply to other DPDs.

New Procedure

Under the old PPS, the procedure for the preparation of DPDs involved a Preferred Options stage prior to preparation of the submission DPD and representations on the question of "soundness" of the published DPD could only be made after the plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination.

The new PPS has removed the time consuming Preferred Options stage with an encouragement on earlier public involvement at the Issues and Options stage in the hope that fewer objections and issues to the plan will arise at a late stage. Representations can now be made on the DPD prior to submission for Examination which will allow any issues raised to be addressed before the Examination.

New Tests

The independent examination of any DPD involves two separate matters; firstly legal compliance and secondly "soundness".

1. Legal Requirements

The former 'procedural' and 'conformity' tests have been replaced with the new legal requirements that the plan:

- has been prepared in accordance with the Local Development Scheme and in compliance with the Statement of Community Involvement and 2004 Regulations;

- has been subject to sustainability appraisal;
- has regard to national policy;
- conforms generally to the Regional Spatial Strategy; and
- has regard to any sustainable community strategy for its area.

2. "Soundness"

Similarly, former 'consistency, coherence and effectiveness' tests have been replaced with a new simplified test for "soundness". The old PPS contained a presumption that a document was sound unless evidence was produced demonstrating the contrary. Under the new PPS, the starting point for the examination is the assumption that the local authority has submitted what it considers to be a sound plan. To be "sound", the DPD should be:

- JUSTIFIED - founded on a robust and credible evidence base and the most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives
- EFFECTIVE - deliverable; flexible and able to be monitored and
- consistent with NATIONAL POLICY.

Core Strategy as "key document"

The core strategy is to be the principal DPD. The new PPS makes provision for core strategies to allocate strategic sites for development with the intention that the number of DPDs and SPDs will be less and only necessary to allocate land which has not been allocated in the core strategy or to provide the level of detail which cannot be incorporated into the core strategy.

There is an increased emphasis on the need for deliverability of core strategies in the new PPS and in particular, the requirement that core strategies be supported by the necessary infrastructure to enable the amount of proposed development in the area.

However, planning applications are being submitted for quantities of development that are less than the site specific targets stipulated in the core strategy but subject to *variations* in the core strategy. If such qualifications and subsequent variations are accepted, one has to question whether core strategies will in reality become the authoritative documents, allocating the type and amount of development appropriate for an area, that the new PPS intends them to be.

Blyth Valley Judgement

Recently, three developers successfully challenged a policy contained in Blyth

Valley Borough Council's core strategy in the High Court. The policy in question set a target of 30% affordable housing for all new housing developments of 10 dwellings or more. The Council appealed against the decision but the Court of Appeal dismissed the appeal and upheld the High Court's decision to quash the policy.

The court held that the process leading to the adoption of the affordable housing policy was legally flawed and that the core strategy in this respect was not within the appropriate power. The main reasoning was that the inspector had failed to reflect the requirement of PPS 3 as to the need for an informed economic viability study as part of the process leading to a policy requiring a particular percentage of affordable housing. He also failed to recognise that the 'housing need study' on which the 30% target was based proceeded on a different concept of affordable housing from that introduced by PPS 3 which no longer includes low cost market housing within the definition of affordable housing. Similarly, he erroneously applied a presumption of soundness and incomprehensibly found that there was no evidence that sites would not come forward if a 30% requirement were imposed.

This case shows that the policies contained in core strategies are not necessarily set in stone and there may well be scope for bringing successful legal challenges against onerous policies, particularly where new national policies have been introduced during the course of the preparation of the development plan document.

Conclusion

One of the primary aims of the new plan making system and the new PPS 12 is to enhance the plan-led development system and for DPDs, particularly core strategies, to clearly and accurately set out acceptable development for an area. However, the potential for variation of and/or challenge to adopted policies seriously undermines this aim and brings into question the weight that should be given to core strategies. This may of course, be good news for developers who are seeking to obtain permission for developments which may not accord with specific policies and may open up a potential avenue to be explored further.

If you would like further information regarding PPS12 please contact Suzanne Leedham at suzanne.leedham@burges-salmon.com or Patrick Robinson at patrick.robinson@burges-salmon.com.



Planners from across the SW Region descended on the Thistle Hotel in Exeter to celebrate 60 years of the Town and Country Planning Act 1947 and to reflect on planning over that time. The hotel appeared to be under renovation...a bit like the planning system at the moment with lots of noise and banging, but not yet much



Mind the Gong!

to show for it. I'll resist the temptation to refer to "Penguins" and "Exotic Birds of Paradise", but needless to say, everyone who tipped up for the black tie and fancy frock formal dinner made a fantastic effort to dispel the stereotype of planners as grey-suited old duffers.

The RTPI president kicked off the evening by recounting her wardrobe malfunction whereby the presidential chains of office had become lost for a time in her cleavage. (I suffered a similar fate with the SW gong, why are these things always made for men, or at least not adjustable? Ed!) Thankfully it was retrieved in time and was firmly fixed in place for the RTPI birthday celebrations, and there was no encore "Judy Finnegan" moment.

The presentation from Rob Cowan was a hilarious medley of planning blunders through the ages, which displayed an astonishing range of cock-ups and bad judgement. Supermarket windows consisting of giant pictures of fruit and vegetables featured strongly, continuing the theme of active frontages begun by the President.

The following morning some rather bleary-eyed planners gathered in quiet corners, sharing painkillers and water, waiting for the Conference to begin. The theme was "How Far Have We Come?" and I must admit I thought at first someone had forgotten to add the word "Look" to the start of the title and an

exclamation mark at the end. All was made clear as the presentations began..... it turns out we are all living through some sort of planning policy "Ground Hog Day", and the current system is almost identical to the reforms set out in previous planning acts from days of yore. Being a relatively young planner

at the age of 34 I was frankly gutted that the dawn of this bold new age of spatial planning was all a bit of a sham. I thought it was all shiny, exotic and new and very "European".



PINS Planning Officers always look like this.....

Janet O'Neill once again kicked off the proceedings and set out some of the recent changes and innovations that the RTPI have put in place to reflect the changes to the planning system; this included the promotion of Networks and Associations in order to facilitate more joint working with other professionals and disciplines. The president reaffirmed the RTPI's vision and declared that it was fit for purpose now and for the future.

Kelvin MacDonald commented how important planning was to the current Government's agenda, citing the PM's priorities of building more affordable homes and creating sustainable communities. He talked about how the Government first proposed an extension of permitted development rights in 1976 and that Eco Towns were first proposed in 1983.

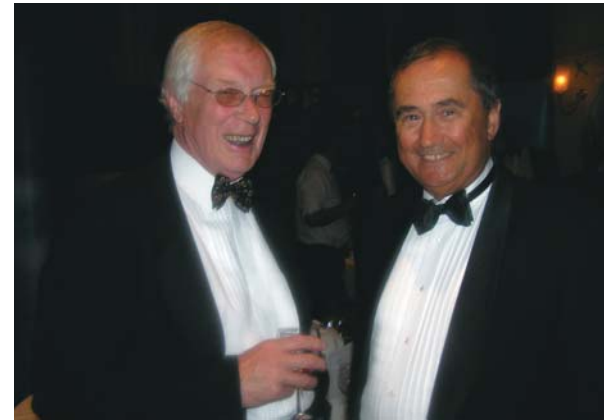
Jeremy Gould's presentation, "The Road to Cappuccino City" sounded like a sequel to the Wizard of Oz, but was a very interesting journey through how we have used urban space and created places over the last 60 years. Jeremy talked of how cars and youth culture have had a profound effect on the shape and design of our towns and cities since the war. He pointed out that since WW2 more money has been spent on making provision for cars in the UK than on anything else, apart from the NHS.

Liz Peace, Chief Executive of the British Property Federation, surprised us all by commenting on how her members actually liked the idea of planning and the protection it affords to her members investments. However, she also reiterated her members' views that the planning system is too slow, unpredictable, complex, politicised and

under resourced. In particular she considered that there was a need to reconcile local democracy with the need to get things built.

Leonora Rozee from the Planning Inspectorate explained through her presentation how planning policy had recycled itself and she took us through the various reforms and changes that have occurred to the planning system since the 1947 Act. It was interesting to note how far we have come since the 1980's when the

Government promoted the idea that it was not for planning to control design and when the presumption was in favour of development and not the development plan. It was particularly



The name's Smith, Bryan Smith

interesting to hear Leonora's views that the reforms to the planning system need to be cemented by reform of local government.

Finally, Andrew Gilg, formally of Exeter University, provided a very academic assessment of "Where now for rural Planning" considering the three inter-related elements of Agriculture, Settlements and Transport. The use of a model reflecting the Windows hourglass provided a mechanism for concentrating on the core issues and not getting lost in the details - which is something we can all do with from time to time. Unfortunately the outlook was far from rosy, with the thought that fundamental changes to the way we live are required, and time is running out. "A cheery way to finish the day".

Everyone agreed that the event was a huge success and I for one hope it is repeated again next year; apart from anything else I need to get my money's worth out of my tux and bow tie before the moths devour them.



*Mark Wilson
Stride Treglown
(Author)*

The President's Tour of Exeter - 4th July 2008.

Janet and I had to leave the conference early in order to go and meet some of the planners at Exeter City Council and were then given an excellent and informative guided tour of the Princesshay development by John Rigby, Director Economy & Development at Exeter City Council. The Princesshay development has



John Rigby, Exeter City Council & Janet O'Neill, RTPI President

been one the major projects delivered by the City (in partnership with Land Securities) though was not without a long and controversial gestation period, including a call in inquiry. As we had found out from Jeremy Gould's presentation, much of Exeter City Centre was raised to the ground in April 1942 as part of the Baedeker bombing raids (in retaliation for the RAF bombing of the ancient cathedral city of Lubeck). The Cathedral remained like a phoenix rising from the ashes with over 400 shops, 150 offices, 1,500 homes and over 50 warehouses destroyed.

The rebuilding of Exeter began in 1945 but the development did not stand the test of time, although the Princesshay scheme of the late 1940's (named after the then Princess Elizabeth) claimed the first pedestrianised street in England.

As far as I am concerned, the Princesshay of the "noughties" is a triumph and a joy. The development respects and reflects the Roman wall, provides glimpsed views of the

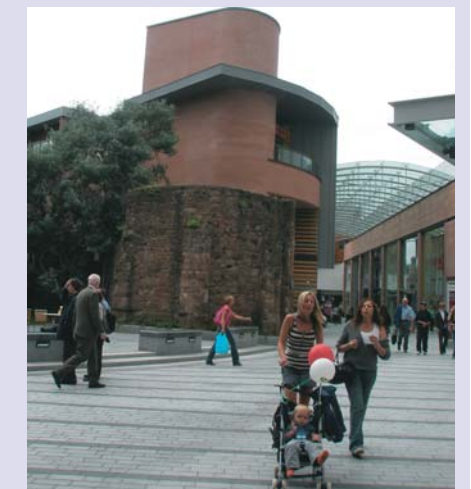
Cathedral, provides a mix of uses creating a vital and vibrant city centre before delivering shoppers, office workers and visitors into the more reflective area of Cathedral Green.

I particularly loved the attention to detail, the use of materials and the way the sandstone of the FatFace building reflects the Roman wall as well as the use of public art throughout.

Now I just have to go back and spend some money!

On the Friday evening, Janet travelled to Bristol to meet Young Planners who work in the city. Approximately 15 Young Planners met in the Pitcher and Piano on the waterfront for informal drinks as part of her visit to the South West. As president of

the institute, Janet O'Neill has pledged to support the next generation of planners and promote their development and within each



region she has been keen to meet young planners from both the public and private sector. Janet had the opportunity to speak to a number of Young Planners over the course of the evening and appeared genuinely interested in the views of planners at the beginning of their career within the region.

Kath Haddrell (Editor)

With special thanks to all our sponsors for their support with this event.

Terence O'Rourke
creating successful environments

Bryan Smith Associates
Planning & Development
Consultants

Peter Evans
Partnership

Stride Treglown

BAKER
ASSOCIATES
planning consultants

savills

PCL
PLANNING