

# In Perspective

mediation of space • making of place

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROYAL TOWN PLANNING INSTITUTE SOUTH EAST • OCTOBER 2008

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## From the chair

Martin Taylor, Chair, RTPI South East

## CPD – CAN YOU AFFORD TO AVOID IT?

Thanks to those of you who have written to *In Perspective* in support of my last missive on the complexity of the new 'simplified' planning system. Surely there must be someone out there who thinks the new system is an improvement – there have certainly been plenty of Forward Planning Managers singing the praises of the new system at the LDF examinations I have attended.

A key function of the South East Region is to organise accessible and affordable seminars for the region's RTPI membership to help them with their Continuous Professional Development (CPD). As such, we try to bring together experts in topical subjects to help an otherwise busy membership keep up to date with current policy issues, new planning legislation and best practice.

Green Belt policy is perhaps one of the most important tools of planning control in the South East. New development is restricted in large swathes of the region that are covered by Green Belt policy to prevent the coalescence of cities, towns and villages. However the government, with plans to address major housing shortages in the South East, is currently reviewing the role of the Green Belt.

Some might think that such a review is long overdue. The extremely broad bands of Green Belt are a long way from the thin strips of parkland and 'green lungs' originally proposed by Ebenezer Howard.

Others might think that the Green Belt should be given even more protection from the extreme pressure to develop around the region's main conurbations. Whatever you think – it seemed worth a debate! It was therefore disappointing that we had to postpone the recently proposed Green Belt debate at Crawley at the end of September for lack of support.

Obviously, when we sit at our desks with a pile of planning applications to get through, LDF statements to write, and applications or appeals to prepare, the thought of attending a seminar, however interesting and pertinent to your professional development, can fall down the priority list. But can you afford to ignore your own professional development?

Aside from the possibility of being ripped apart by an opposing barrister at a planning inquiry for revealing that you are not completely up to date on a certain piece of planning policy or legislation, your RTPI membership and chartered status require that

you complete an annual Professional Development Plan (PDP) and undertake 50 hours of CPD activity to implement that PDP.

Now there is no reason to suggest that being up to date with emerging Green Belt policy should be on every member's PDP, but with 3,200 members and Green Belt covering almost half of the land area in the region, I would have thought we could have filled a room in Crawley at 5pm in the afternoon!

So where are we going wrong? Was it too expensive at only £25 (thanks to sponsorship)? Is it the wrong time of year – if so, when would be better? Wrong time of day – too late, too early? Wrong place – if so where? Or is no one interested – if so, why?

If you think that there is a better way the Region could help to deliver your CPD requirements, please write to me at [In Perspective via southeast@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:In Perspective via southeast@rtpi.org.uk).

Martin Taylor  
Chair, RTPI South East

## HAVE YOU JOINED ANY OF THE RTPI NETWORKS YET?

Over 6000 people have now signed up to one or more of the RTPI Networks, from all over the world. They benefit not just from the networking opportunities afforded to exchange knowledge, expertise and good practice with their professional colleagues, but also by keeping themselves up-to-date with all the latest news.

### What's on offer?

We can offer you membership of a network in any of these specialist topic areas: Rural Planning, Transport Planning, Urban Design, Regeneration, Housing, Environmental Planning.

And we also have networks just for you if you are a: Young Planner, Independent Consultant, or a Planning Administrator. We can cater for anyone who is in any way involved in: Development Planning, or Development Management. We also have interest and outreach networks where you can enrich your professional knowledge and gain professional friendships: International Development, Politicians in Planning, Planning with Communities, Planning Education and Research, ESPON UK. And we have an association: The National

Association for Planning Enforcement (NAPE). This provides a central voice for all planning enforcement officers and we are working with them to help enhance their professional status. There is a small charge for non-RTPI members to join NAPE but it is free for all RTPI members.

### How to join

The Networks are currently free of charge and joining is easy. Go to the RTPI website at [www.rtpi.org.uk](http://www.rtpi.org.uk) and put your mouse over the 'Events, Awards and Networking' tab at the top of the page. Then click on the 'Networks and

Associations' tab that appears in the dropdown menu and you have access to information about all of our networks. To join any network that interests you, click on the network name, then click on the 'Members' Area' icon at the left-hand side of the network page. This reveals a 'Request access' tab – click on that and we'll do the rest! Over 6,000 people can't be wrong. Come and join them. Visit [www.rtpi.org.uk](http://www.rtpi.org.uk) or contact [networks@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:networks@rtpi.org.uk).

Trish Cookson  
Networks and Associations Developer

## KENT & EAST SUSSEX YOUNG PLANNERS (KESYP)

Following the successful establishment of the South Coast Young Planners' (SCYPN) and Thames Valley Young Planners' (TVYPN) Networks in 2006/07 the South East Region is now looking to set up a Steering Group to coordinate events for the under 35s within Kent and East Sussex. The network is in the process of setting up a program of CPD/ socialising events throughout the counties. If you're interested in helping establish the Network then please contact Robert Offord [Robert.offord@kentarchitecture.co.uk](mailto:Robert.offord@kentarchitecture.co.uk).

■ Send us your articles and ideas at [southeast@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:southeast@rtpi.org.uk) or use it to tell us you would rather receive a paper copy. If you work outside the public sector and want to update your email details, contact [southeast@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:southeast@rtpi.org.uk).



## YOUNG PLANNERS' HIT BRIGHTON

**RTPI National Young Planners' Conference, 10-11 October.** Well it wasn't Mods and Rockers but it was certainly a great social, networking and CPD event, a credit to the Region and the organising group made up of South Coast Young Planners' (SCYPN) and Thames Valley Young Planners' (TVYPN) network members. The South East won the right to host this year's conference in December 2007. The theme was 'Planning the Next 60 Years' and sought to inspire young planners to raise to the game and learn from the past and apply policies and agendas which seek to bridge so-called 'great divides' in social, environmental and economic spheres.

The event, attended by over 150 delegates from the UK (and Australia!) incorporated a range of plenary sessions with speakers including Green Party leader Caroline Lucas, CABE Chief Executive Richard Simmons and TCPA Chief Executive Gideon Amos. The event also incorporated an extensive exhibition, study tours and the Annual Young Planners' Dinner attended by the Mayor of Brighton.

## CHAIR'S REVIEW OF 2008

At the start of my year as Chair of the South East Region I set five key objectives for my term:-

1. To increase the number of trained planners entering the system.
2. To continue to support the growth of the Young Planners Network.
3. Maintain the Continuous Professional Development Programme.
4. Improve Communication with Members.
5. Spread the Word on Planning for Tourism & Leisure.

So in this era of targets and outcomes, here is my report on how well we have done to address those objectives.

During 2008, the Region built closer ties with local Planning Schools to identify the issues they face in recruiting and training the next generation of planners.

As a result of these meetings I have written to all Heads of Planning asking for their support in freeing up 'frozen' places. Meanwhile, I have supported the efforts of the University of Brighton to set up a new planning course in the region and we are pleased that the new course will be starting this October with a view to seeking formal RTPI accreditation.

The region's Young Planners' networks have gone from strength to strength. The South Coast Young Planners and the Thames Valley Young Planners have organised several well attended events with the support and sponsorship of local planning consultancies. In October we hosted the annual National Young Planners Conference in the region in Brighton sponsored by Terence O'Rourke, Savills, Broadway Malyan, Vail Williams and DMH Stallard.

Despite the concerns expressed in my leading article, we have successfully delivered a rolling CPD programme, which has been by and large well attended, but I have my concerns with regard to the membership support for these seminars. In November we are hoping to inject more social networking opportunities into our events calendar with a Regional Awards Dinner and Presentation at Southampton sponsored by White Young Green.

This will be the third 'In Perspective' this year, keeping members in touch with regional activities and events. In addition, we have finally joined the 21st century and overcome technical and legal barriers to issue 7 e-bulletins so far this year, advertising forthcoming events to regional members on the RTPI's email database. If you have not received a copy, please contact us with your email address at [southeast@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:southeast@rtpi.org.uk).

With regard to planning for tourism and leisure, we held a successful two day study tour with the President of the RTPI in June. The first day demonstrated how leisure planning had been used to help North Kent provide a recreational 'green lung' for the actual and projected population growth through the Thames Gateway Parklands initiative. The second day illustrated how leisure planning had been used to assist with the regeneration of Folkestone through a new coastal park. Finally, as regional chair, I have been invited to speak on tourism and regeneration at the RTPI's 4th Annual Leisure and Tourism Conference in November.

Overall, therefore, I think that there has been good progress on the delivery of these five objectives during 2008 and I hope that we can continue this momentum into 2009.

**Martin Taylor**  
Chair, RTPI South East

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE SOUTH EAST REGION

### The David Fryer Memorial Lecture

This popular annual event will be held at Oxford Brookes University on **Monday 3rd November** starting at 6.30pm. This is now a well-established annual event. It's a great opportunity to hear an excellent speaker, and socialise afterwards with many other planners in the region. A free buffet and wine are added incentives! Sponsors this year include West Waddy ADP of Abingdon and Peak Quality Homes, Farnham. The speaker will be Sir David King, former Chief Scientific Adviser to the UK Government, and new Director of the Smith School of Enterprise and Environment at the University of Oxford. His lecture will be entitled "The 21st Century Challenges".

The scientific consensus about human-induced climate change is both unequivocal and urgent. The challenges we face from this and its subsequent implications, whether it's from food security to water resource to population growth mean major challenges for society as we progress through the rest of the century. Sir David King will outline in his speech the environmental challenges we face, and how best they can and should be tackled.

### Annual Legal Update Thursday 6th November 2008 (5.30 - 8pm)

This will be held at Landmark Chambers, 180 Fleet Street, London EC4A 2HG. (We are very grateful for their hospitality, the cost for delegates will be £25 per person) The update will be given by

Rupert Warren & Sasha White, and Phil Hull (Planning Director, RPS, Abingdon) will also give an update on the housing industry.

### Awards Dinner on the Princess Caroline, Ocean Village, Southampton Wednesday 19th November 2008 5.30pm

A first for RTPI South East - come aboard the Princess Caroline, Ocean Village, Southampton for a lively evening with sea air included! Generously sponsored by White Young Green, the evening will include the AGM, addresses by Chief Executives of the Solent and Kent Architecture Centres, presentation of the awards, and a hot buffet dinner. (Dinner is optional at £20 per head) It will be an opportunity to network with other planners in a

relaxed social setting. Don't forget - this is the time for you to get involved in the South East Region. There will be vacancies for a Representative on the General Assembly and also an opportunity to join the Regional Activities Committee.

### Counter Terrorism Exercise Monday 10th November (1.30 - 5pm) £25 per person The Balcony, Great Hall, Hove Town Hall, Norton Road, Hove.

(disabled access to this venue is limited, please contact us for more information) Project Argus is a Counter Terrorism tabletop exercise produced by the National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO) and delivered nationally by the national network of police CTSAs. Argus Professional was launched in 2008 and is

based upon the successful format of project Argus. It was developed by NaCTSO to target planning, architect and design professionals to raise awareness of designing in counter terrorism protective security measures. These professions have been identified as a group that can play a significant role in counter terrorism, hence the aim of Argus professional is to encourage debate, and demonstrate that counter terrorism measures can be designed into structures and space to create safer crowded places. Please circulate details of this event which may be of interest to others in your authority or company.

**Book for all the above events at**  
[southeast@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:southeast@rtpi.org.uk) or phone Carol Dawson on 01304 823494.

