



West Midlands Ball; Right on Cue!

Over 150 West Midlands planners and their partners and guests overcame their superstitions to attend the 3rd West Midlands RTPI Ball on Friday 13th March at the Burlington Hotel in Birmingham – and a good time was had by all!

Our RTPI National President, Martin Willey, together with his wife Phillipa, was in attendance at the event, for his second visit to the West Midlands region, after only 2 months in office and spoke eloquently about his career in planning and his ambitions for the profession.

Ian Dove QC, barrister at No 5 Chambers in Birmingham, and well known to many planners in the profession, also gave an entertaining after dinner speech, paying a special tribute to the late Sean O’Grady, formerly Chief Planner at Stratford on Avon District Council, with many amusing anecdotes which will have jogged a few memories for those present.

The Ball coincided with ‘Red Nose Day’ this year, and over £750 was also raised for the Comic Relief Charities on the night, through the raffle organised by the Young Planners Group. We thank everyone for their generosity and for ‘YPwestmids’ for looking after the fund raising.

Although numbers were a little down on the previous year, especially amongst the corporate sector, the mood was still very buoyant and upbeat. The occasion was loyally supported by sponsors Arup and Judd Farris, and a good number of planning consultants and companies also supported the event, including RPS who booked no less than three tables this year.

Our Chair, Sue Manns, would like to warmly thank everyone who helped make the Ball such an outstanding success, including in particular Claire Bridges, who set the interval quizzes and of course Sue Griffith Jones (and her Committee) who once again organised the event. 🏠



Sue Manns (RTPI West Midlands Chair), joined by Martin Willey (RTPI National President - left) and Ian Dove QC (No 5 Chambers – our after dinner speaker for the evening - right).

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Chair's remarks


Once upon a time, a friend gave me a 1933 copy of 'Town and Country Planning' by Patrick Abercrombie, (remember the name from planning school?). The book opened with the statement, "Mankind might well be divided into two groups, in regard to their surroundings: those who instinctively set about shaping their environment and those who are content to accept the scheme of things as it exists." Further into the work comes the comment, "Where two or three buildings are gathered together, there arises the question of their relationship to each other; when a road cuts across an open stretch of country, there is its relationship to the landscape..... all these are examples of town planning".

Reflecting on these quotes I have little doubt as to why I became a planner, and reading them again still inspires me. Bouncing back to reality, however, I began to wonder why planning had become so complex. What seemed a fairly straightforward, albeit slow and inefficient, old planning system at least provided everyone with a degree of certainty, but not today. Even before the 2008 Act has had time to bed down, the Killian Pretty review now recommends further changes. Add to this the uncertainty as to which political party will be in power after the summer of 2010, and what impact this will have on the 'new system', one begins to wonder if it is not time to leave the planners to get on with the job of 'planning'.



The Country and the profession are facing an uncertain future. We cannot yet anticipate the full impact of the recession on the planning profession, nor on how we can deliver sound spatial planning. The Government has now admitted that house building targets are being badly affected by the credit crunch and that we are unlikely to deliver more than 60,000 new homes this year – against a target of 240,000. This will mean increasing levels of overcrowding in the existing stock and a greater divide between those who have access to finance and those who don't.

As the supply of jobs dries up and affordable houses fail to materialise in places where workers can access employment, travel distances to and from work are bound to increase and the income divide is likely to widen. These are significant challenges for the profession. However I am in little doubt that within the West Midlands we have the capacity to step up to the challenge and deliver some real 'planning' for the future – as a profession we are not content to accept 'things as they are' but seek to shape a better future. As

Charles Dickens said, in *A Tale of Two Cities* 'It was the best of times; it was the worst of times'... , let's hope 2009 is the best of times for the planning profession. 

Sue Manns

West Midlands Regional Chair

Today's and Tomorrow's Leaders' Awards

The planning profession has always faced huge challenges and the current global economic climate is particularly demanding for every planner in whatever sector or specialism they are employed.

Today's and Tomorrow's Leaders' Awards, generously sponsored by Peter Wilbraham and leading legal firm *Cobbetts*, is a new initiative established by Martin Willey, RTPI President for 2009, to spotlight and celebrate the achievements of planners in each region who have shown outstanding leadership qualities or who have already demonstrated the potential for such leadership.

The profession is renowned for 'hiding its light under a bushel' - these awards are intended to help increase the profile of planners within their communities. At the end of the Presidential year, each of the award winners will be invited to London to a special **Today's and Tomorrow's Leaders'** meeting.

The awards are open to student, licentiate or chartered members of the RTPI. The Regions and Nations and Young Planners are all encouraged to join in the process to use it as a celebration of all that is excellent about the profession.

Planners can either be nominated for **Today's Leader** or **Tomorrow's Leader**. The nomination criteria are:

Today's Leader: A chartered planner with more than 5 years of chartered membership who can demonstrate


an outstanding contribution to leadership in the field of planning, whether in the private sector, public service, the academic world or indeed the voluntary sector.

Tomorrow's Leader: A student, licentiate planner or a planner with up to 5 years of chartered membership who can demonstrate the potential to be an outstanding leader in the future in the field of planning.

How do you apply?

If you know of anyone who deserves this award or you wish to nominate yourself please email westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk to request full details and a nomination form. Nominations will need to be accompanied by a 200 word supporting statement and a brief biography of their planning career. The closing date for nominations is **Tuesday 5th May 2009**. Nominations will need to be supported by a chartered RTPI member.

How are the winners chosen?

The **RTPI West Midlands Regional Activities Committee (RAC)** will shortlist 5 entries in each category and then the **Regional Membership** will be asked to vote on each of the 5 nominees. The nomination form details will be uploaded onto the Internet so that the members can read the supporting statements and biography and then vote for the person they would like to win. The winners of each category in each Region or Nation will be presented with an award certificate by the President and also invited to the 'Today's Leaders, Tomorrow's Leader's meeting' towards the end of the Presidential year in London. 

A 'Single Conversation' with Paul Spooner – HCA

The new Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) was formed in December, creating a single Government delivery agency for housing growth, renewal and sustainability with a budget of £17.3bn over the next three financial years. It replaces the Housing Corporation, English Partnerships and parts of DCLG. Paul Spooner, the new Regional Director for the HCA West Midlands talks about his two year investment plans for the region.

Q: What is the new Agency's role?

A: Our job is to support housing growth and renewal, to secure more affordable homes and to help create great places to live. We always work in partnership with local authorities – who are at the heart of everything we do – housing associations, developers, government agencies and of course local communities

Q: The HCA brings together the remit of the Housing Corporation, English Partnerships and other CLG programmes – what will be the difference?

A: We are focused on meeting national and regional targets while supporting the delivery of local ambitions. Over the next 2 years we will secure over 7,500 high quality new affordable homes in the West Midlands. We offer a single point of engagement and a single discussion with local authorities about their housing growth and renewal plans. We aim to tailor programmes to meet these through spatial investment and provide access to expertise in all areas of housing and development. An example of this is ATLAS. We call this dialogue the 'Single Conversation'.

Q: What is the HCA's role in light of the difficult housing market conditions?

Nationally a number of initiatives, like affordable mortgage products and support for households facing repossession, have been launched to provide support for current and potential homeowners. We are working with our housing association and developer partners, to



support the purchase of unsold new homes for rent or part ownership. We are trying to offer as much flexibility as we can in terms of grant rates and the mix of units, to keep the momentum going.


Q: How will this affect the West Midlands?

A: We recognise the important role we can play in supporting the cash-flow of developments with the private sector by increasing our up-front investment in schemes. In particular we are investing in site preparation and infrastructure to help reduce the cost of regeneration schemes. At the North Solihull Regeneration project – a 15 year programme to address the area's physical and social landscape that has currently stalled – we have agreed front-loaded funding to bring forward the delivery of infrastructure, a new primary school, more affordable homes, to maintain the momentum of delivery.

Q: What are HCA's particular priorities in the region?

We will continue to support the region's own growth and renewal priority areas, including ensuring a much greater level of rural affordability in housing. The 'Single Conversation' is at an advanced stage with several local authorities. In Birmingham for example, we have identified clear priorities for major housing growth with the City Council and AWM.

Q: With private investment in housing decreasing, is there a pressure to lower standards to meet targets?

A: It is paramount that we do not compromise on quality or sustainability. We have a responsibility to ensure we deliver the highest quality of developments for the region. We are working very closely with all our partners to develop strategies for long term growth, to ensure that the West Midlands is in the best position to take advantage in the upturn. 

Paul Spooner is Regional Director of the Homes & Communities Agency.

Govt. proposes streamlined planning system, but not quite yet!

In March 2009, the Government formally responded to the Killian Pretty Review, an exercise undertaken to explore the scope for speeding up and simplifying the planning application and decision process and making it more easily understood by consumers.


The Government is keen to make the system clearer, more proportionate and more efficient – although those people with long memories will have heard all this before!

Already measures have been taken to

- Reduce the number of smaller applications,
- Limit the need for call-in's to the Government Office, through Circular 2/09.
- Explore the greater use of Local Development Orders,
- Encourage developers to use Planning Performance Agreements,
- Proposing guidance on Development Management, through a single PPS,
- Encourage greater use of E.planning.

But most of the study recommendations have been absorbed into a forthcoming consultation programme in Summer 2009 which will involve:-

- Draft proposals to streamline information requirements from applicants,
- Options for an improved approach to minor amendments to planning permissions
- Draft proposals to extend permitted development rights for businesses and public services,
- A possible simplified approach for some minor commercial development, such as shop fronts etc.
- Ideas for improving the system for discharging conditions on planning consents.
- More flexible rules for local authorities on public consultation.

For further information, please refer to the 'Killian Pretty Review: Planning applications – a faster and more responsive system (2008)' and also the Government's formal response on the Review which appears on both the DCLG and BERR websites. 

Tesco Judgement may have implications

On 4th March, Tesco succeeded in its bid to overturn the Competition Commission's recommendation to introduce a competition test into the planning process dealing with applications for food stores.

The Competition Commission's two year investigation of the grocery market had previously resulted in a recommendation to introduce a 'fascia test' in to the planning process. The test proposed that new stores of 1,000 m² or more would be referred to the Competition Commission if the proposal would result in 60% of the grocery floorspace in a local area being occupied by a single grocery retailer, and where there are two, or less, different supermarkets in the area.


Tesco appealed to the Competition Appeal Tribunal (CAT) against the introduction of this test and CAT subsequently ruled in favour of Tesco stating that the Commission did, *"not fully and properly assess and take account of the risk that the application of the test might have adverse effects for consumers as a result of their being denied the benefit of developments which would enhance their welfare, including by leaving demand 'unmet'"* (para. 111).

This was, of course, the result that Tesco were hoping for and they were also supported by ASDA, Marks and Spencer, and Waitrose. It will be interesting to see how



the supermarket operators react to the judgement, particularly where they may have had recent successes in the ongoing store operator 'patch wars', including at Bristol Street, Birmingham and other sites within the West Midlands.

Arguably, the planning system could benefit from the inclusion of formal provisions that promote retail competition and customer choice. Although PPS6 (Planning for Town Centres) already recognises that competition is beneficial, the point made by advocates of the competition test is that planning decisions rarely reflect competition and customer choice considerations and local planning authorities hitherto often struggled to assess this concept. Moreover, the current economic climate has meant that choice and price competition have become even greater factors.

The Government had been expected to publish a revised version of PPS6 within the next few months. However, the recent announcement that they will now issue a streamlined "super-PPS" amalgamating a number of existing statements (PPG 4, PPG 5, PPS 6, PPS 7 & PPG 13) could now mean that we will have to wait a while longer to see how the Government responds to the Competition Commission's findings and the CAT judgement. 

Mathew Jones (Partner) Drivers Jonas

Editor's thoughts

Nobody ever became a planner to become popular! But it would be nice if the media made an effort to present the facts fairly for a change. The recent television series 'The Planners are Coming', following hard on the heels of a similar programme 'Planning Wars', screened over Christmas both depicted planners in their usual role of 'bureaucratic busybodies'.

One moment they are trying to intervene in situations where cowboy builders have completely ignored a planning consent, and built something larger, taller, further forward or more likely completely different from what was written on the consent. In the next moment, they are trying to separate objectors from applicants, where, once again, a developer has proposed a perfectly legitimate scheme, albeit one which spoils someone's view. Needless to say, 'nimbyism' is alive and well and conflict is the name of the game, where television reality shows are concerned.

So once again, the planners' role is seen as entirely negative, not a means to create and encourage good design and facilitate much needed positive development – whether for homes, jobs or services – but as a means of stopping things happening in the public's constant urge to maintain the status quo at all costs – and of course to achieve ratings!


Things are not helped by the likes of Kevin McCloud, surely the most pretentious presenter on the box, who constantly lauds the most controversial of designs, (which often stick out like sore thumbs), and applauds the most reckless and irresponsible applicants (who invariably go well over-budget and over-time). Viewers were recently encouraged to condemn a near neighbour who had complained

because a building was 1 metre too high (but never appeared on screen). It was the design which mattered – never mind about the width, feel the quality!

Of course we all suffer from shocking double standards. We want to fly to the sun, but abhor air transport, we relish our mobility, but hate traffic and we value our view, but resent others who are trying to improve theirs. Above all, we all want a decent home and a good job, but many people would prefer not to see new development, or if it is going to occur, then it should be somewhere else.

Planners are qualified to weigh up alternatives, to judge risks and to measure impact. We work to agreed principles and adhere to approved policies. They may not always be very clear. They may not be particularly logical. But they provide a sound benchmark for decisions.

What a shame therefore, that the positive side of planning – the Local Development Framework process – has become such an unmitigated disaster, running years behind schedule and becoming more and more complex for the general public. What started out in 2004 as a 2 year programme to achieve full LDF coverage, has become a ongoing saga of delay and deferral as one plan after another has either been rejected, or re-scheduled.

Once the West Midlands RSS is in place we must focus on delivering Spatial Plans for every local planning authority so that decisions will be simpler and controversy and conflict will be reduced. But then that wouldn't make such good television would it? 

John Acres Editor

Coping with the credit crunch!

RTPI offers support during the economic downturn:

What to do if you are facing redundancy or hardship due to the economic downturn.

These are difficult times. The economic downturn has created uncertainty for employed planners, those who run their own practice and graduates looking to gain employment - the jobs market will become more challenging in the months ahead. In a competitive market it is important to remember that RTPI membership provides you with a competitive edge.

If you are affected by the current economic climate then we have developed the following guidance to help you consider some of the options open to you;

If you are facing redundancy, then your employer must follow proper procedures. Any concerns members have concerning their employer should contact the RTPI's *employment law helpline* (other sources of information include ACAS).

If you are a member of a trade union, then contact them as soon as possible, Unions are almost always consulted by employers when there is a potential redundancy situation, and they may be able to offer additional guidance.

Planning magazine offers a range of vacancies, and most planning consultancies can be approached through the RTPI's *planning consultants directory*.

Have you considered setting yourself up as a consultant? Keep a note of all the people and organisations you deal with. If you are made redundant then this note may well prove an invaluable first step in generating work. You will need to ensure you comply with any client protection clauses your previous employer may have put into your contract of employment. *For further advice contact the RTPI's employment law helpline.*

Advise your contacts that you will continue to offer consultancy services. It may be that they will not use them, but they may still pass your details onto their own contacts.

The RTPI provides a range of information and services to members who are *considering consultancy work*, including our *starting in private practice* guide and *professional indemnity insurance*.

Check your insurance policies. Some insurers offer a range of other products that you can add to your home contents policy, such as help with legal fees should a proposed redundancy result in you considering possible action against your employer. Income protection is another insurance product that you may consider appropriate. Insurers details can be found in *Yellow Pages* or through established insurer websites (*insurers and insurance brokers must be registered with the Financial Services Authority – FSA*)

RTPI subscriptions include discounts to those on lower income. For further information contact subscriptions@rtpi.org.uk.

The *RTPI Trust* provides support to members of the RTPI and their families who are in genuine financial hardship.

Other issues to think about include updating your CV, interview techniques and local RTPI professional networks (*RTPI Regions and Nations*).

RTPI members can claim tax relief on their membership subscriptions. For further information *contact your local tax office*.

What to do if the economic downturn is affecting your business.

Some planning consultants are reporting a slowdown in work. If the economic downturn is affecting you, or you want to ensure your business is prepared, then the suggestions below will help you plan ahead.

With the pressure off you can turn your attention to outstanding payments. Good practice shows that *debts* should never be allowed to build up. Always keep on top of *payments*, further guidance can be found from the RTPI's *consultancy support webpages*.

Review your terms of engagement. Have you included *interest on payments*? This will help encourage new clients to pay promptly.

With a slowdown in the housing market some homeowners will consider extending rather than moving home. Many consultants are usually called in when there is a problem to be resolved so contact the public's first port of call - local architects, developers, and domestic builders. Promotion during an economic slowdown needn't be expensive and may well extend your potential client base. Good practice points to targeted and specific marketing.

Business Link - free advice and support to keep your business fighting fit.


The Open University Small Enterprise Research Team (SERT) surveyed 700 businesses and found that 49 per cent saw increasing marketing expenditure as a way to beat the downturn, while 42 per cent advocated targeting new markets. A spokesperson for the SERT said: 'Normally the first thing businesses think of cutting back on is marketing and PR. To increase spending in these areas may seem counterintuitive, but this is exactly what [businesses] should be doing to survive.' (<http://www.smallbusiness.co.uk/channels/small-business-finance/news/610726/increase-marketing-spend-to-survive.shtml>) -For further information on *marketing* consult the RTPI's consultancy support pages.

An increase in house extensions (including unauthorised developments) may lead to an increase in appeal work.

Review your insurances – PII, house/office cover. Shop around to see whether you can save money.

Some consultants survived the recession in the early 90s by undertaking additional work not related to planning (for example short term agency work, admin/clerical work). Think about other skills and services that you and your business have to offer.

Please send us your thoughts, comments and experiences in confidence to piwp@rtpi.org.uk

For further information please contact Chris Sheridan (Planners in the Workplace Manager) at RTPI HQ, 41 Botolph Lane, London EC3R 8DL or phone 0207 929 9483 (Direct) or email piwp@rtpi.org.uk. 

Young Planners' Group debates 'Big City Plan'


Around 90 young planners gathered on 1st April for the first 'YPwestmids' seminar of 2009 focused on the **Birmingham Big City Plan**. Following welcome drinks at the Auditorium, Cornwall Court, mainly spent trying to avoid the 'paparazzi', hush descended as Jo Hooper, Chair of the Young Planners' Group, welcomed everyone.

First up, the Chair for the evening, Gary Cardin, Partner of Drivers Jonas who introduced Philip Singleton, Assistant Director of City Centre Development & Design at Birmingham City Council who gave the presentation on the 'Big City Plan' and led a constructive debate on the future of Birmingham.

Philip explained how the aims and aspirations of the 'Big City Plan' will shape and revitalise Birmingham's City Centre over the next 20 years. The themes of sustainability, culture, creativity, technology and enterprise would be at the heart of all future plans, activities and development within the City. Philip introduced examples of regeneration initiatives leading

the City's renaissance, designed to "polish the diamond" that is the City of Birmingham, such as the redevelopment of New Street Station and the subsequent 'arc of opportunity', and the proposals for Eastside.

Following a Q&A session which considered the impact of the Credit Crunch on the deliverability of the Plan and the transportation and ecological legacy of the Masterplan, the Young Planners headed down to their favourite watering hole, Bennett's Pub, where a good time was had by all.

The YPwestmids Core Group would like to thank both speakers for their time, PWC for the use of the Auditorium and RTPI West Midlands and BBT for sponsoring the event. For details of the next YPwestmids event, please keep an eye out for regular updates on the YPwestmids section of the RTPI website. 

A.Thornton

West Midlands RTPI Urban Design Forum AGM

Katy and Annie prepare to lead the WM RTPI Urban Design Forum for 2009!

The West Midlands Urban Design Forum held their AGM on 4th February 2009 and spent the day focussing on key issues of joint concern in an excellent event organised and warmly hosted by Hannah Barter and Mick Downs on Urban Vision North Staffs.

After two very active years as both Vice-Chair and Chair, Hannah was replaced as Chair by Katy Craddock of Walsall Council, with Annabel Stott of Turley Associates voted in as Vice-Chair.

There were three presentations from keynote speakers on topics raised by Forum members as being of key concerns in current urban design and planning practice;

Kenny Brown of Townscape Solutions reflected on the use of Design and Access Statements since they were introduced in 2006 from the experiences of both designers and local authorities,

Adrian Passmore of RegenWM and David Tittle of MADE provided an update on 'Building for Life' (BfL) which may well be adopted as part of the West Midlands RSS, meaning that local authorities may soon need to address it in their local policies. Initially award for excellent housing development, BfL can now be used as a tool for housing audits, assessing planning proposals and for reporting on local authority achievement of housing quality. In December 2009, the annual monitoring returns will need to record the BfL levels achieved for all residential schemes of 10 units or more completed in 2008-2009. To deliver this, CABE has provided funding for training and accrediting one in-house BfL assessor in each local authority. For more information on

this please contact David Tittle at MADE on david@made.org.uk or 0121 633 9403.

Chris Green of Dudley Council and Katy Craddock lead an open discussion on how to recognise and measure good design quality, focussing on; firstly how to demonstrate the quality that urban design services bring to the development and planning process, and secondly, how to monitor and measure design quality as part Annual Monitoring Reports. A common theme was the difficulty in demonstrating the measurability of qualitative information. It was decided to keep this as a rolling item on the agenda to enable ideas and progress to be shared as they arise.

RegenWM Design Fair

The RTPI was represented at the Design Fair held at the Custard Factory on Wednesday 25th February at a shared stand for West Midlands Planning Aid Service and the Urban Design Forum. Sincere thanks are extended to all those members who volunteered to attend the stand on behalf of the Forum - Mike Vout, Chris Green, Chris Jones, Annie Stott and Noha Nasser - which saw a number of new members sign up to join.

Forthcoming Urban Design Forum meetings


Watch this space for further notice on Urban Design Forum meetings, including dates and special events. All enquiries and suggestions on the Forum are very welcome and should be directed to Katy and Annie via the following contact details:

Katy Craddock (Chair) • Annabel Stott (Vice-Chair)

Email - craddockk@walsall.gov.uk

Email - astott@turleyassociates.co.uk

Phone - 01922 653653


Phone - 0121 233 0902 

West Midlands Biodiversity Conference

By the time you read this, the West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership will probably have held their Annual Conference in Birmingham (See CPD events).

Last year, the West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership issued a document entitled 'Enhancing Biodiversity in the West Midlands' which sought to demonstrate to local authorities

how 'Local Opportunity Mapping' for biodiversity in the West Midlands can make a contribution to achieving national and regional policy objectives for enhancing biodiversity.

In our next issue, we will include a short article exploring the issue on more detail and reporting back on the conference. 

The Ball: A gallery of guests



Top row left: left to right - Danny Parkinson, John Adderley & Martin Buxton.
 Top row middle: left to right - Tony Blake, Fran Chick, Andrea Caplan & Mike Orr.
 Top row right: left to right - Kimberley Jeakings, Ben Simm & Gemma Field.
 Middle row left: left to right - Doug Lee, Rob Flavell & Gerry Sheedy.
 Middle row middle: left to right - Stuart Buckley, Simon Best, Tracy Ofarn & Richard Kimblin.
 Middle row right: left to right - Jenny Clark, John Acres, Martin Walker & Dominic Harman.
 Bottom row left: left to right - William Bhageerutty, Simon Onions & Rebecca Ford.
 Bottom row middle: left to right - Sarah Williams, Ginny Jukes, Steve Sheasby, Sam Tarling & Laura Smith.
 Bottom row right: left to right - Rosemary Willaims, Rod Griffin, Liz Jesper, Andrew Close, Gill Griggs & Sheena Terrace.

New Community Planner for WMPAS

WMPAS is pleased to welcome Kiran Williams as our full time Community Planner. Kiran started with WMPAS in March 2009 and will mainly work within the conurbation (Birmingham, The Black Country, Coventry and Solihull).

Kiran is a qualified Town Planner with over eight years professional experience, gained mainly within the private sector.

Kiran Commented: "I'm looking forward to bringing my wealth of commercial experience to WMPAS. I have gained a range of experience and skills during my professional career in organising and attending community consultation events. I have gained a range of skills whilst working within the community which will be valuable within my role as Community Planner. I'm particularly looking forward to working with groups and communities to enable them to better understand the planning process and to enable them to participate more effectively in the future planning of their area". 🏠



WMPAS Community Planner, Kiran Williams (left) with student volunteer, Patrick Gallagher.

Kiran can be contacted on: 0121 766 7260 or by email: wmcp1@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk

Events Calendar :: April ❖ November

REGIONAL PROGRAMME

MONDAY 27 APRIL Infrastructure Planning – Strategy & Delivery at Local & National Level

Programme & speakers
1.15pm - 2.00pm Lunch & registration
2.00pm - 4.30pm Seminar to include:

Richard Ford, Partner and Head of Planning and Environment, Pinsent Masons:
Introduction and welcome
Janice Morphet, Director, rmjm consulting & Visiting Professor UCL:
Practical approach to planning and delivery including aligning budgets and strategic plans of infrastructure and service providers, identifying baseline facilities and developing an infrastructure delivery strategy
Hector Pearson, Land & Development Stakeholder, Policy Manager, National Grid:
Major infrastructure energy planning including the Infrastructure Planning Commission consenting process, development of National Planning Statements and the shape of major energy issues

Venue: Offices of Pinsent Masons, 3 Colmore Circus, Birmingham, B4 6BH
Time: 1.15pm - 4.30pm
Cost: **£50 incl. VAT** (£15 for full-time students & unwaged)
Details & Booking: Sue Griffith-Jones
Tel 0121 709 1599
Email: westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk

MONDAY 27 APRIL
RTPI West Midlands AGM & Supper
Venue: Old Joint Stock Pub, 4 Temple Row West, Birmingham, B2 5NY
Time: 6.15pm
Cost: AGM free, Supper **£8.95 incl. VAT**.

Details & booking: Sue Griffith-Jones
Tel 0121 709 1599
Email: westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk

THURSDAY 14 MAY
Visit to Wolsley Sustainable Building Center
Venue: Leamington Spa, CV31 3HH
Time: 2pm - 4pm
Cost: Free but booking essential
Details & Booking: Sue Griffith-Jones
Tel 0121 709 1599
Email: westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk

WEDNESDAY 20 MAY
Planning Law Update
Speakers: Peter Taylor & David Brammer of DLA Piper
Venue: Offices of DLA Piper, Victoria Square House, Victoria Square, Birmingham B2 4DL
Time: 9.30am - 2pm including lunch
Cost: **£50 incl. VAT** (£20 for full-time students & unwaged)
Details & Booking: Sue Griffith-Jones
Tel 0121 709 1599
Email: westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk

OTHER EVENTS

THURSDAY 23 APRIL
Annual Biodiversity Conference 2009
Working with Local Authorities and the Biodiversity Duty
Venue: Birmingham
Time: 10am - 3pm
Cost: Free
Organisers: West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership
Details & booking email:
Audrey.Mcgrath@Naturalengland.org.uk

WEDNESDAY 29 - THURSDAY 30 APRIL
Historic Towns & Smarter Growth
Venue: Cambridge

Cost: **£175 - £235**
Organiser: Historic Towns Forum
Details & booking:
www.ehtf.org.uk/email/cambridge_form2.htm

THURSDAY 30 APRIL
**Planning to achieve:
Addressing new challenges facing EHPs and Planners**
Venue: London
Time: 9am - 4.30pm
Cost: **£241.50 - £299**
Organisers: CIEH & RTPI
Details & booking:
www.cieh.org/events/planning_to_achieve.html

WEDNESDAY 17 JUNE - FRIDAY 19 JUNE
**2009 RTPI Planning Convention
Planning in a Changing Climate**
Venue: London
Cost: **£138 - £539.35**
Organiser: RTPI
Details & booking: 0845 082 1171
Email: services@rtpiconferences.co.uk

THURSDAY 9 JULY
Introduction to Health Impact Assessment (HIA)
Venue: Birmingham
Cost: **£110 - £130**
Organiser: West Midlands Public Health Observatory
Details & booking: www.wmpho.org.uk/resources/HIAcourseflyer.doc

THURSDAY 19 - FRIDAY 20 NOVEMBER
**International Journal of Neighbourhood Renewal
Annual Conference & Awards**
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RTPI

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WEST MIDLANDS REGION

RTPI West Midlands AGM & Supper 2009
MONDAY 27 APRIL at 6.15pm

**at the Old Joint Stock Pub (in upstairs function room),
4 Temple Row West, Birmingham B2 5NY**

This year the RTPI West Midlands AGM will be in the first floor function room at the Old Joint Stock Pub in central Birmingham on the evening of **Monday 27 April**. It is anticipated that the AGM will be brief and we are very pleased that RTPI West Midlands member **Louise Brooke Smith** has accepted our invitation to join us for the evening as a post-AGM/pre-supper speaker.

Louise, a Director in the Birmingham office of CSJ Brooke Smith (Chartered Planning and Development Consultants), will give us the "inside story" following the programmes she made for the BBC's Politics Show on "Women, the Recession and the Construction Industry", which were screened in March and included interviews with Cherie Blair, Teresa May, Jo Swinson and Harriet Harman.

The programme for the evening will be:

Arrival at 6.15pm (you may like to get a drink as you pass the bar)
AGM will start at 6.30pm
Louise will speak at 6.45pm
Supper will be served at about 7.30pm.

Editor - John Acres, Ripon Cottage, 5 Manor Road, Kilsby, Near Rugby, Warks, CV23 8XS

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Mar / Apr 8