



RTPI

mediation of space · making of place

RTPI PRESIDENTS' REPORT 2008-09



PLANNING CHANGE



ROLLERCOASTER OR A SLIDE?



Last year began inauspiciously enough. When choosing my presidential theme I looked at the Institute's major priorities of promoting spatial planning and a greater awareness of the impacts of climate change. The introduction of spatial planning into legislation has been a major revision and has led to questions over the extent to which Chartered

Town Planners and our delivery partners have made the necessary culture change. On climate change, its magnitude and significance were beyond dispute, but the role of planners in action and mitigation needed to be developed. Both issues are high on the agenda for action at the RTPI.

In the end, I fixed my theme on the promotion of education and lifelong learning, which incorporated both of these issues along with many other topics. This is a call to existing and future planners to understand that the completion of a planning course is only the beginning of a career: one in which planners could and should be committed to improving their knowledge and skills to meet the shifting challenges of the profession. Planners beginning their careers over 30 years ago were not required, as they are today, to understand the need for renewable energy generation or sustainable construction. Planners 30 years from now will undoubtedly face new challenges.

My year included visits to planning schools, to give encouragement to those about to launch into a planning career, as well as to practitioners in public service and the private sector. The message is clear: ensure that your skills and knowledge are fit for purpose if you wish to have a challenging and rewarding career. As the year progressed the shadow of the credit crunch, which became a recession, began to impact on the planning agenda. Reductions in the number of job vacancies were followed by news of redundancies, initially in the private sector, then also in the public sector. My enthusiasm for planning as a career had to be tempered with realism that final year students could well find it very difficult to secure appropriate employment to start in the profession. This remains a major concern of the Institute. The fact that other built environment professions are as badly hit or worse, and that it is a global recession, is little consolation. The promotion of planning as a stimulating and exciting career must continue. New people must be attracted to planning courses and professional membership to meet the challenges that are before us.

The growth and influence of the RTPI Networks over the past couple of years is palpable. The Politicians in Planning Network (PIPA), for example, has filled a vacuum in linking and informing elected members

with planning responsibilities. I chaired its conference in Manchester in October, which was attended by the then Secretary of State Hazel Blears, signifying the respect with which it is held by CLG. In September I attended a Networks workshop held to review progress and share experiences between the different topic groups that make up the Networks. The fact that the Networks are open to all comers, RTPI members or not, and are free of charge, has helped foster genuine reflection and debate where common interests exist.

The Young Planners Network, with their members' enthusiasm and energy, has also thrived. They hold a high quality annual conference and numerous regional events. These young people do invaluable work in contacting their former school or college to spread their enthusiasm to sixth formers or undergraduates who have not heard of planning as a career,

The international dimension of the Institute's involvements has been retained, with the use of the internet essential in maintaining overseas contacts and disseminating good practice. The growing problems of rapid urbanisation, poverty, disaster planning and climate change led, in 2006, to the formation of the Global Planners Network, a largely web-based organisation which shares knowledge and practice with national groupings who sign up to the altruistic objectives of the Network. The RTPI's particular contribution has been to set a web-based tool for individual planners worldwide to articulate their particular problems and challenges and then analyse their capacity to deal with the problems. The resultant contacts, from over 100 countries, have been reviewed by the Institute and the results shared. This has allowed UN HABITAT better to understand the problems of human settlements and the needs of practitioners who attempt to alleviate them.

Planning Aid has gone from strength to strength over the last year, particularly as a result of the significant funding provided by CLG. Capacity-building amongst communities has been a particular focus, explaining to non-specialists how the planning system works and how they can participate in the process to have their voices heard.

The current year has seen the economy continue to slide downwards, despite talk of green shoots appearing. This is particularly disappointing to our profession where regeneration partners have withdrawn from projects, despite the painstaking efforts that had been invested in assembling proposals. We can hope that revival of the economy is early and sustained, so that planners are, once again, able to operate to their full potential.

Janet O'Neill
RTPI President 2008

DELIVERING SOLUTIONS



We live in challenging times.

Climate change requiring immediate action; shortage of investment for much needed services, facilities and infrastructure; job losses; increased regulatory requirements; the Local Development Frameworks (LDF) programme underperforming and political uncertainty to boot.

As planners, of course, we are used to these ups and downs. We plan for the medium to long term. Our responsibilities are as the “stewards” of the economy, environment and society.

But increasingly, carefully prepared plans and conditioned schemes are challenged by the current economic conditions. We have to demonstrate that we are quick on our feet to respond in a sustainable manner to changes in the viability circumstances of projects, deferring section 106 contributions without throwing the baby out with the bathwater by recovering cash when the market returns. We need to update those LDFs that are approved, or complete the preparation of those underway, to create conditions to attract economic development rather than simply “manage” applications for new proposals. We need to take the initiative to innovate in our dealings in the plan-making and planning application decision landscapes. We absolutely have to complete LDFs in the next 12 months if we are to sustain the plan-led system as a route out of market failure, and as a contribution to market recovery.

My 2009 presidential theme is Planning – Delivering Solutions, and from my travels on your behalf around the UK I am exhilarated by the quality of what I see. Theatre regeneration schemes in Northern Ireland, eco-design in Scotland, community engagement in London, sustainable housing schemes in the South West. My initiative to recognise “Today’s and Tomorrow’s Leaders” in the Regions and Nations has uncovered some wonderful ambassadors for positive planning, peers for us all to recognise and celebrate - especially from the Young Planners.

But we as professional planners and the RTPI need to do more.

The recent RTPI management restructuring provides additional capacity in strategic thought, financial efficiency, communications; influencing major stakeholders and delivering member services. Our current review of governance should provide increased member engagement in defining what members want and need, and in ensuring services are delivered. The RTPI Executive Board and Executive Team will shortly consult members in our General Assembly and elsewhere on up-to-date corporate and business plans. This will give a vision on planning, planners and the RTPI and then offer a fund-raising and investment plan to serve the profession and deliver our public responsibilities. “Planning to Live with Climate Change” is a significant RTPI initiative committing the profession to provide leadership in tackling a global calamity. We intend to demonstrate that the planning

process can change behaviour and lead in providing solutions for existing and new development that will make a substantial contribution to mitigate the impact and rate of climate change.

My first six months as President have included some interesting international commitments which confirmed the value of global co-operation in anything from integrating ethnic minorities, through to addressing NIMBYism and to fulfilling professional support obligations to less prosperous countries. We have even offered our own experience of effective public intervention, especially in delivering affordable housing, to our international cousins. Domestically, the RTPI has refreshed relationships with important stakeholders such as the Department of Communities & Local Government and the Homes and Communities Agency to press home our offer to support the delivery of good planning policy and outcomes and in a market relevant manner. Our discussions with the Local Government Association have identified opportunities to provide evidence of how good planning, when managed at the most senior level in local authorities, delivers results on the ground in a well-designed, community-owned manner, providing the evidence for politicians to understand where planning can effectively manage change.

What else do we need to do?

The profession has to collect and present evidence of the beneficial impact of planning on the economy, environment and society. At the moment it’s the economy that’s top of the list. Planning provides a secure, risk appraised environment for public and private investment. Planning provides a policy, service, facility and practice rationale for public service alignment and then demonstrates the spatial needs and consequences, providing a framework for decisions. Fundamentally, planning provides the means for joined-up government.

Planning has a long track record in engaging our communities and we need to regularly remind our political leaders that any delay in resourcing LDFs deprives the public of their legal right to have a say in their future. We need to marshal arguments to “vote for good planning” and present them nationally, regionally and locally. We need to clearly articulate, in terms the public can understand, what is meant by “spatial” planning and “strategic” planning and why they are essential forms of public governance.

As an election approaches, an RTPI planning manifesto must lay down what the aims of planning are and where the current system can be simplified and improved to achieve appropriate political aims. With the limited resources at our disposal the RTPI must engage even more effectively with our members so that we invest in services you want and need.

Above all we need to increase our voice in this media mad world so that the RTPI is the first port of call for opinions on climate change, NIMBYism, affordable housing needs, energy and transport in a sustainable world: all areas where planning provides solutions.

Martin Willey FRTPI FCIS
RTPI President 2009

MEMBER SERVICES

The RTPI is the premier body for planners. Whether corporate, non-corporate, student or retired, the broad range of RTPI membership options offers professional development and support as well as the best opportunities to interact professionally and socially with other planners.

Events

Through nine regional offices in England as well as offices in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland the RTPI offers regular, low-cost and locally accessible events, helping members keep pace with frequent alterations to planning law as well as the latest thinking on spatial planning issues. With major changes to the planning system on the legislative agenda in parliaments across the UK and Ireland, being well-informed has never been more important.

For more information on coming events in your area visit www.rtpi.org.uk



Networks and Associations

Keeping up to date is easy, even for those who can't attend our events. The RTPI's 16 Networks and Associations not only keep our members up to date on the latest changes in planning practice and policy, but also offer a forum to share ideas.

The Networks offer swift notification of fresh information, keep members informed via email about developments in their specialist areas, and offer them free or low-cost events.

If you would like to join the 7,000 members already signed up to one of the Networks or Associations contact networks@rtpi.org.uk

RTPI Online

www.rtpi.org.uk offers one of the most comprehensive planning resources on the web, featuring the latest in policy and good practice, current planning news and discussion forums, as well as links to the RTPI's Networks and Associations.

Our monthly e-Bulletin helps members keep up to date with developments both inside and outside the Institute. To sign up to the e-Bulletin contact charles.veal@rtpi.org.uk

In addition, our refreshed Planning Matters online training resource offers an overview of what's happening across the world of planning as well as access to detailed specialist modules so members can keep their professional knowledge up to date.

For more information on Planning Matters visit www.planningmatters.co.uk, e-mail services@planningmatters.co.uk or call 0845 082 1171





Planners in the Workplace

Through *Planners in the Workplace* (PIWP) we provide a range of information, guidance and services designed to support you throughout your career.

PIWP offers bespoke guidance on a broad range of issues affecting members in the workplace, including topics as diverse as professional conduct, the recession, professional indemnity insurance, job evaluation and starting your own practice.

PIWP also provides a range of free management guidance notes covering many business issues, and has piloted two collaborative working groups - an RTPI CPD initiative based on action learning – helping members to develop practical skills when dealing with the Code for Sustainable Homes and Urban Design.

For more information on PIWP contact piwp@rtpi.org.uk or call the PIWP Manager on **020 7929 9494**



Awards

Through our Regional, National and Network awards we showcase good practice from around the UK and Ireland, raising the profile of planning both publicly and within the organisations that employ our members.

As ever, a phenomenal number of entries have been received for the 2009 RTPI Planning Awards and judging is underway.

For more information on the range of RTPI awards contact awards@rtpi.org.uk

RTPI Annual Planning Convention

The Annual Planning Convention continues to grow in strength, this year attracting more than 500 delegates and a line-up of speakers including international experts, industry leaders and leading academics. For more information go to www.theplanningconvention.co.uk

For any membership enquiries visit www.rtpi.org.uk, membership@rtpi.org.uk or dial **020 7929 9494**

EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

The RTPI believes that education and lifelong learning is at the heart of a healthy, progressive profession. Regardless of career stage, education and professional development is a continuous process, supported by the RTPI through a wide range of programmes and resources available nationally, regionally and online.

The professional demands placed on planners are constantly evolving, as factors such as climate change, population growth, increased urbanisation and new technologies take hold. It is vital that the RTPI and education providers respond.

As a result, a number of reviews have begun this year to ensure that all stages of planning education are able to rise to these challenges. We are also exploring new pathways into the profession, ensuring that high quality education and membership options are available to all.

For more information contact education@rtpi.org.uk



Initial Planning Education

The RTPI accredits undergraduate and postgraduate planning courses, to ensure that those who are beginning their journey to Chartered Membership receive the best quality initial education. With two new schools winning full accreditation in 2008, and the addition of a new provisionally accredited school, students now have a choice between 29 schools in the UK and overseas to begin their planning education.

Studying at an RTPI accredited school means you have access to the highest quality educational experience, established against set learning outcomes. It also means your qualification is widely recognised by employers and the profession. Successfully completing an accredited qualification allows you to pursue RTPI Chartered Membership through the Assessment of Professional Competence (APC).

For information on currently accredited courses contact membership@rtpi.org.uk. For information on gaining accreditation contact education@rtpi.org.uk





Lifelong Learning

Learning does not end once a planner leaves university, or even on election to Chartered Membership. Chartered Planners make a commitment to keeping up-to-date in their professional practice through continuing professional development (CPD).

Many of your membership benefits can support you in this undertaking – whether you prefer large scale conferences, local events, online learning or private study, there is something for you.

For more information contact lifelonglearning@rtpi.org.uk or memberservices@rtpi.org.uk

Support for CPD – RTPI Learning Partners

The RTPI firmly believes that the commitment that you as a Member make to continuing professional development should be supported by the RTPI and employers alike. We therefore award RTPI Learning Partner status only to those employers who have demonstrated excellent support for training and professional development. Working for an RTPI Learning Partner, you are assured of the best possible support in setting and meeting your professional goals.

Twenty eight organisations have achieved RTPI Learning Partners status to date, with growing interest across both the public and private sectors.

For more information on the RTPI Learning Partners initiative and what it can do for you or your organisation contact lifelonglearning@rtpi.org.uk



INFLUENCING LEGISLATION AND POLICY

The RTPI aims to positively influence the legislative and policy agenda at all levels of government, for the benefit of our members, the community and the practice of planning.

The last year has seen a significant change in economic activity. Reduced lending and reduced land values have significantly slowed the pace of development, meaning that housing delivery and related initiatives, such as the Eco-town programme, have significantly reduced. A downturn in employment opportunities for planners has followed.

The RTPI has been working hard to promote sound and up-to-date development plans as the foundation stone for renewed economic prosperity. Planning employers have been encouraged by us to retain the skills and capacity needed to ensure that plan-making can drive and respond to the economic up-turn when it comes. We have also been working closely with governments to ensure that planning systems are further simplified. The Killian Pretty Review in England, and the similar initiative recently announced by Welsh Assembly Planning Minister Jane Davidson have been the two key developments.

With a general election due before the end of next year the RTPI will continue to work closely with the main political parties to inform the development of their manifestos for planning. In autumn 2009 we will develop our own manifesto.

We have been working hard to consider how planning can deliver mitigation and adaptation to climate change in the context of significant carbon reduction targets set in the Climate Change Act 2008. A wide-ranging consultation of RTPI members has led to the development of an RTPI action plan. The 'Planning to Live with Climate Change' document includes seven new climate change commitments.

The Planning Bill has now become the Planning Act 2008. RTPI campaigns secured the retention of National Policy Statements for major infrastructures against the prospect of a back-bench rebellion in the House of Commons. We worked with the CBI and other stakeholders to promote the need for effective and integrated infrastructure policies in the House of Commons and the House of Lords. Our campaign to secure amendments to the Bill on the government's proposals for Local Member Review Bodies, removing the right for all applicants to appeal to the Planning Inspectorate, was successful, and the Act does not contain any Local Member Review Body provisions.

Two important pieces of legislation with implications for planning are currently before parliament. The Local Democracy Bill implements the Sub-National Review in England and includes proposals for new single regional strategies and sub-regional economic development arrangements. The RTPI is actively promoting amendments to this Bill in the House of Commons committee stage. The Marine Bill is largely supported by the RTPI.

Thirty nine policy responses to government consultations have been prepared since June 2008, making increasingly wide use of expertise in the Nations, Regions and Networks. Key consultations responded to in the past year include PPS 4, PPS 6 and the new combined PPS 4 for economic development and town centres; the draft Eco-towns PPS; initial consultations around the regulatory and policy development of the new major infrastructure regime; and the Killian Pretty Review of development management.

The RTPI's online policy programme at <http://www.rtpi.org.uk/item/248/23/5/3> enables all members to access current consultation documents, to email Policy and Networks staff leading the development of new policy positions and to contribute your views.

For more information on the RTPI's policy work contact Rynd Smith, Director Policy and Partnerships on **020 7929 9472** or Matt Thomson, Head of Policy and Practice on **020 7929 9178** or email policy@rtpi.org.uk

PIPA – Supporting democratic planning

The Politicians in Planning Network (PIPA) has continued to develop connections between planners and the people who make the final decisions on planning issues, from Parish and Local Authority Councillors to Secretaries of State. PIPA was prominent at the Annual Conference of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and was honoured that the then Secretary of State Hazel Blears gave the keynote address at PIPA's own Conference. Right at the outset of her speech the Minister said "how glad I am that PIPA exists". We also achieved our ambition of a first conference in Scotland which was very well received. For 2009 we have an ambition for a PIPA Member in every local authority across the UK, particularly as planning goes local in Northern Ireland.

For more information on the work of PIPA contact pipa@rtpi.org.uk





Raising the profile of the RTPI

Ensuring the voice of the profession is heard both in the media and at the highest levels of national, regional and local government is an ongoing challenge but also one that regularly provides fresh opportunities. Rarely has the overall profile of planning been higher than it has been as the first decade of this century draws to a close.

As an Institute, we have an enviable record of making the news as well as influencing the policy makers on behalf of our members but that record of achievement does not mean we can rest on our laurels. While the number of broadcast, print and digital outlets continues to grow year on year at a rapid rate, so too do the numbers of organisations and groups, many of them bodies similar to our own, wanting to gain coverage for their particular viewpoint on an issue. The competition to communicate has therefore never been greater. This is why, in part, the RTPI organisational restructure has included the creation of a dedicated marketing and communications department, bringing together new skills, expertise and experience in order to ensure we fully integrate our marketing and communications activities into an effective programme of work.

New staff with experience in dealing with the local and national media have joined the RTPI to help us improve what we do in this field. A marketing manager and a web editor have also been recruited to maximise the effectiveness of all our profile raising activities. Needing to raise our profile has also meant that we are dedicating more resources and effort into the way in which we manage and seek to influence our stakeholders; how we form partnerships; and how we translate our key goals for the profession into tangible results and outcomes.

Regions and Nations are already beginning to feel the benefits of increased support from the new marketing and communications team, another reason for the restructure, and this will increase in coming months. While there is much past success to celebrate, a new strategy is being drawn up to take the RTPI forward in many areas. One of our aims is to transform our digital communications. We also need to do more to engage with a range of different government departments, away from simply those where the traditional planning functions lies. Our web site and how we interact with our members are also under review. In addition, we are positioning ourselves to be more able to harness and take swift advantage of the latest technological developments to support our work. As the RTPI approaches its centenary, raising its profile has never been more important and necessary.

For more information on the RTPI's media activities contact rtpinews@rtpi.org.uk

Research

Research is increasingly recognised as a vital input to the planning process.

In 2008, we published a report by the Universities of Manchester and Sheffield, commissioned jointly with CLG, which highlighted the importance of linking locally relevant measurements, in cross-cutting frameworks, to test the effectiveness of policies and ensure informed decision-making and review.

The RTPI is also the UK contact point for the European research network on spatial analysis, ESPON, which provides exciting opportunities for benchmarking key indicators between local and regional areas across Europe.

The RTPI Planning Education and Research Network offers a new forum for members to share experience and views on research and educational activity. Likewise, the Planning Theory and Practice journal, which is published in conjunction with the RTPI, seeks not only to provide an arena for high quality planning scholarship but also to encourage dialogue between the practitioner and academic communities.

The RTPI also submitted evidence to the Government's Foresight studies of sustainable energy management in the built environment and of future land use. Climate change is a key driver of change and the RTPI is working closely with researchers to ensure that research outputs are targeted at planning practice.

For more information on the RTPI's research projects contact research@rtpi.org.uk

International Engagement

The RTPI has over a thousand members overseas. That's about five per cent of its total membership; many other members also work internationally for UK and other consultancies.

The acquisition of RTPI recognition and membership is highly valued and is seen by many as the global standard of professionalism. The Institute now makes a significant contribution to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and is a member of the International Federation for Housing and Planning.

The RTPI helped to found the Commonwealth Association of Planners, the European Council of Spatial Planners and most recently the Global Planners Network.

The Institute is currently involved in three major externally-funded pieces of work. Firstly, work on the global capacity for planning; secondly, a scoping study for a report on the state of the Commonwealth cities; and thirdly, it runs the UK ESPON Contact Point, funded by CLG.

For more information on the RTPI's international engagement contact international@rtpi.org.uk

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Planning Aid

Planning Aid has had an excellent year, with a significant increase in all its activities. It has provided professional planning advice to more than 31,000 people and 1,100 community groups from across England. It has reached out to communities who in the past may have felt excluded from the planning system, empowering them to shape their neighborhoods positively. The overall increase in performance has been achieved with the growth in the regional staff teams, thanks to extra funding from CLG.

Planning Aid offers free, independent and professional planning advice to individuals and community groups that can't afford professional fees. Its casework service offers help and advice on a wide range of subjects including: planning law, development management procedures; enforcement; appeals; and other issues, including flood risk management; agricultural development, mobile phone masts, minerals and waste, and wind farms.

Last year its community service provided training and support to help communities engage with the planning system. Projects included working with the blind on planning issues; providing learning support programmes for primary and secondary students; delivering training for black and minority ethnic communities; and helping residents shape planning policy. With the help of more than 900 volunteers, over the past year it has conducted more than 500 community planning events, 370 training and educational events and participated in nearly 300 additional awareness raising activities.

Our volunteers are planning professionals, mostly retired, licentiate and student RTPI members. Each one makes a difference in helping people to understand the complexities of the planning system and to identify solutions to their planning problems.

Planning Aid aims to expand its service further in the coming year, reaching out to engage even more communities and individuals in the planning system. In particular, it aims to explore ways to involve communities in the development of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs).

For more information on Planning Aid contact info@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk or call 0121 214 2900



“Planning Aid is of increasing importance – helping people get a grip on the new planning system and get involved.”

Iain Wright MP, Communities and Local Government.

“Thank goodness you are there. Planning is so complex for the lay person, you need someone to guide you through it.”

Planning Aid client.

“Your workshop was really informative; people especially liked speaking with members of the Irish Traveller community and learning from their perspective.”

Planning Aid event attendee.

“Working with Planning Aid has given the children the benefit of working with people from outside the school... it has certainly enhanced their skills and confidence.”

Teacher.

31,264 people received professional planning advice and training from Planning Aid

4,447 helpline calls received

514 community planning events held

370 training and education events

900 volunteers help Planning Aid deliver the service.



REGIONS AND NATIONS

Scotland

The RTPI in Scotland's work in improving communication through the Scottish Planner, the monthly e-Bulletin and web resources; and in holding more CPD events at Chapter level, aims to support members in implementing the new planning system in Scotland.

Links have been strengthened with the Heads of Planning in Scotland; other built environment professional groups; and Planning Aid for Scotland, and progress is being made on the production of careers materials.

Other highlights have included the Scottish RTPI annual conference, the Geddes Lecture, and the Scottish Young Planners' conference.

For more information on RTPI in Scotland contact
Veronica Burbridge at scotland@rtpi.org.uk

Northern Ireland

The Northern Ireland Branch has had a busy and successful year.

It participated and chaired the main conference of the year in Belfast on Planning Reform in March 2009.

The Branch organised conferences on regional development strategies, urban design and the revised rural planning policy PPS21. A series of roadshows attracted large audiences and resulted in 200 new members.

The Minister for the Environment hosted an awards ceremony backed by the RTPI NI and the RSPB NI which was followed by a dinner for 150 guests.

In addition, the Branch has been responding to policy issues, lobbying the Assembly on climate change, and responding to key Northern Irish planning issues during a time of planning reform.

A key priority for 2009 will be the development of planning reform training sessions, for planners and politicians, to be held in the lead up to the major review of public administration in the province in 2011.

For more information contact nipolicy@rtpi.org.uk

RTPI Regions and Nations Report

The RTPI is represented locally in England by nine Regions based on the Government regions for England. They are managed and run by dedicated RTPI members.

Regions provide a large range of exciting and varied CPD events, from development control conferences, through to seminars on wind energy, and study tours of sewage systems.

The Regions also organise a wide range of social events, from five-a-side football championships, through to glittering balls and summer days out. They also run awards schemes that recognise the best in regional planning.

The regions also provide members with a way to keep in touch with what is happening in planning. They produce newsletters, e-Bulletins and their own web pages, as well as providing members with plenty of opportunities to meet, network and discuss planning.

The full RTPI Nations and Regions Report can be found at www.rtpi.org.uk

Ireland

The Republic of Ireland, like the UK, is currently experiencing a period of economic recession that has led to a considerable decline in development activity and has set new challenges for the planning system.

May 2009 saw the publication of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Bill in which the government seeks further planning reforms to support economic renewal and promote sustainable development.

Ministers are placing a strong emphasis on the production of sound development plans, built from an evidence based core strategy, which must also demonstrate consistency with regional planning guidelines and the national spatial strategy.

The Branch will continue to work to support and advise the government in the design and delivery of this new legislation, whilst delivering an active CPD and social events programme.

For more information contact roipolicy@rtpi.org.uk

RTPI Cymru

Developing CPD opportunities for planners operating in Wales remains a priority for RTPI Cymru. One of its focuses has been on developing training and CPD, leading to closer working links with the Planning Officers Society for Wales (POSW).

A Welsh Assembly Government grant allowed us to commission planning training for local authorities and Welsh Planning Inspectors, among others.

Work to raise the profile of planning as a career is underway. Initiatives include training planning ambassadors to deliver key messages, and the production of bilingual materials explaining planning to children and planning careers to older groups.

RTPI Cymru's policy and research forum continues to debate policy and practice issues for Wales and respond to consultations. A second successful Wales Planning Conference was also held.

For more information on RTPI Cymru contact Roisin Willmott,
RTPI Cymru National Director, at roisin.willmott@rtpi.org.uk



The RTPI is a dynamic organisation leading the way in the creation of places that work now, and in the future.

The RTPI understands that, just as people develop places, places develop people. We are committed to the enhancement of our natural and human environment.

Good planning combines an awareness and an ability to manage the competing pressures on our built environments and the very real effects on the spaces we use.

Through its membership, the RTPI constantly seeks to create areas and places in which people want to live and work.

The RTPI seeks to:

- Promote good planning
- Ensure that the public are aware of the roles and potential of planning and receive an excellent service from it
- Develop and shape policy affecting the built and natural environments
- Consistently raise the standards of the planning profession
- Support our membership through continuing professional development
- Educate and train future planners

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