

# RTPI NEWS

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## Knowledge network helps to shape future policy of UK regions in Europe

This week a call was launched for research bids and user proposals to expand the European spatial analysis programme and assess how careful design intervention can deliver infrastructure, reports *Jenny Crawford*

The ESPON 2013 spatial analysis programme was launched last year to develop the European Observation Network on Territorial Cohesion and Development. Since then, more than 12 partnership research projects have been launched. Six British research institutions are involved so far including the UHI Millennium Institute in Inverness, the Universities of Gloucestershire, Leeds, Manchester and Newcastle and the Scottish Agricultural College.

Four UK public bodies have won funding of more than €400,000 for evidencebuilding. Manchester Enterprises has secured a partnership with the Dublin, Lyon and Barcelona regional planning authorities, while Dumfries and Galloway Council, North Yorkshire County Council and the Welsh Assembly Government have joined forces in a second partnership investigating rural development potential.

The programme is mapping trends and helping build the capacity of urban and rural research and policy-making. For example, the Future Orientation of Cities project is analysing the drivers of Europe's largest agglomerations. This enables city-regions to assess their own development indicators against those of potential competitors or partners and understand the impacts of policies such as decentralisation or concentration. This will be complemented by a project on the differential economic impacts of climate change.

Proposals are invited by 11 November. These analyses will build on the ESPON 2006 programme, which scoped the spatial characteristics of markets in terms of accessibility, competitiveness, labour and specialisation. Contrasting scenarios for Europe in 2030 have been modelled to allow for ground-breaking debate on the relative impacts of social and



**UK contact point team: Crawford, Gracie and Hague provide guidance**

economic policy on different parts of the EU. This continues to inform discussions on the merits of enhancing cohesion between urban centres and regions in a global economy.

The new call involves the largest number of projects so far. It introduces a set of themes designed to enrich shared understanding of policy drivers in urban and rural developments across Europe. These cover the attractiveness of areas for residents and visitors, the significance of land-use patterns and marine areas' role in territorial development.

Key to this analysis is an understanding of alternative development pathways. The UK government has stressed the importance of quality of place to economic, social and physical health in its world-class places strategy. It states that quality-of-life factors are increasingly important in private development and skilled workers.

The competitiveness of UK cities is indicated by the Mercer list,

which is designed to help governments and large companies place employees on international assignments. It suggests that UK cities are not performing well in the international context. Only London is in the top 50, even though European cities dominate the top ranks.

The values ascribed to a place depend on the way it fulfils critical functions supporting homes, jobs and services. In this context, spatial relationships matter at all scales, whether at the level of buildings and streets or at the level of businesses' relationship to the infrastructures underpinning their markets.

Appreciation of such relationships is driving investigations by the Work Foundation, the Northern Way and the DCLG in partnership with the Centre for Cities and the Centre for Sustainable Urban and Regional Futures in Salford on improving links between urban centres and neighbouring towns such as Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield and Tyne and Wear.

The drive for efficiency in using public resources is on the agenda for UK governments. In the face of devolved governance, policy-makers must identify good practice. We must share understanding of how to design and monitor effective policy interventions for urban infrastructure supporting social, economic and environmental objectives.

The RTPI was commissioned by the government to provide the UK contact point for the ESPON programme. Its team of Jenny Crawford, Kendra Gracie and Cliff Hague can advise authorities who want to develop partnerships and keep up-to-date with the research.

*Jenny Crawford is RTPI head of research. For details of the programme, visit [www.espon.org.uk](http://www.espon.org.uk)*

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The programme is mapping trends and helping to build the capacity of urban and rural research and policy-making

# Young planner to take lead in Wales

Before she becomes RTPI Cymru chairwoman, *Lucie Taylor* explains why she will embrace the inclusive themes of sport, culture and heritage next year



**Taylor: sport has community role**

I will be proud to become chairwoman of RTPI Cymru on 4 December and reach great heights in the planning profession. But it means that I will no longer be able to organise events for young planners in Wales. I have greatly enjoyed taking this fulfilling role and will be sad to let go of the reins. But I am confident that Young Planners Cymru (YPC) will be in capable hands.

I started organising quiz nights in 2004 at Planning Aid Wales (PAW). On leaving the organisation, I began organising events for young planners in south Wales on topics such as access statements and climate change. I arranged quiz nights in association with PAW and a walking tour of Swansea's SA1 area. These seem to pale in comparison with the programme of forthcoming events that the YPC steering group has planned that, I am proud to say, is very exciting indeed.

Over the past year, we have developed an enthusiastic and skilled steering group without much persuasion and I feel sure that we will be inundated with further candidates in December. In Wales, the planning profession is gaining in popularity and finally achieving the status it so rightly deserves. I am happy to witness the rise in numbers of young practitioners.

Looking ahead, my chosen theme for the year is embracing culture, heritage and sport. I believe that the planning system in Wales has an important role to play in encouraging communities to get involved with the promotion of physical activity. Where we build and more importantly the way in which we build can increase levels of walking and cycling as well as other valuable physical activities.

We can surely realise our goals of increasing physical activity more frequently by using a little effort and imagination when setting out residential, employment, retail and sports developments. It is vital that planners play an active role in encouraging the construction of quality open and public spaces and

in improving levels of access to the countryside.

Since the Welsh Assembly Government adopted its TAN16 on sport, recreation and open space in January, planners in Wales have recognised that our environment is critical to achieving an active, healthy and inclusive Wales. Our open space functions as a platform that is critical to improving participation in sport.

The TAN sets out the duty of the planning system in Wales to make provision for sport and recreation facilities along with informal open spaces, as well as protecting existing facilities and open spaces in urban and rural areas in Wales. When I launch the theme of my year as chairwoman on 4 December, RTPI Cymru will host a seminar at the SWALEC Stadium in Cardiff on the topic of planning for sport and enhancing communities.

Every local planning authority in Wales is working hard to produce a local development plan for its area. Even though some authorities are nearing examination stage, a fair number are in the early stages of ingesting the types of policies that could potentially be included in their plan for their area. I believe that the time is just right to raise awareness of the key issue of physical activity.

*Lucie Taylor is a planning policy liaison officer at Newport City Council. She is currently Young Planners Cymru events manager and the RTPI Cymru management board's senior vice-chairwoman.*

## Bulletin Board

### West Midlands young planners learn about energy challenges

Hordes of young planners gathered at the consultancy King Sturge in Birmingham on 30 July for the latest West Midlands network seminar, which focused on the infrastructure planning commission (IPC). King Sturge partner Elle Cass introduced IPC head of planning casework Vincent Mayer who has been seconded to its transition team to set up the agency, charged with considering applications for development consent under the Planning Act 2008. He set the context for the proposed reform of national infrastructure planning.

Following the talk, National Grid land and development stakeholder and policy manager Hector Pearson outlined important challenges facing major energy infrastructure projects, drawing on experience in national gas transmission systems and gas supply and demand. From an industrial perspective, he explained that effective planning is key to meeting the national need for energy in view of the scale of climate change. The group would like to thank Mayer, Pearson and Cass for their time and King Sturge for the use of its offices.

For details of forthcoming events, please visit [www.rtpi.org.uk/west\\_midlands\\_young\\_planners](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/west_midlands_young_planners).

### Eastern members take time out in Norwich for a pubs tour

East of England young planners went on a walking tour around historic pubs in Norwich city centre on 27 August. Institute of Historic Building Conservation East Anglia chairman Chris Bennett pointed out buildings that were once popular pubs but in many cases have been converted into shops. Bennett showed photographs of the pubs as they once stood so everyone could see how their use had altered. Another young planners' event will take place in Norwich later this year.

For details, please email [robert.hobbs@ipswich.gov.uk](mailto:robert.hobbs@ipswich.gov.uk)

## Events

### Young Planners' Conference 2009

2-3 October. The Castlegate, Melbourne Street, Newcastle. This conference deals with the issue of participation in planning and looks at how positive stakeholder engagement can improve places. This is your chance to join workshops led by engagement experts, learn about key local projects through study tours and network during social events at a conference that is excellent value for money. Cost: £150 + VAT; full-time students £45 + VAT (limited places). Conference dinner £25 + VAT.

For full programme, please visit [www.youngplannersconference.info](http://www.youngplannersconference.info)

### Presidential discussion

13 October. RTPI, 41 Botolph Lane, London. RTPI president Martin Willey will visit London in the autumn. He is interested in canvassing the views of young planners, so is hosting a forum on 13 October to discuss means by which to raise the profile of planning. The Landscape Partnership is sponsoring this event. Cost: Free; limited places.

Please email [Lucy.Barton@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:Lucy.Barton@rtpi.org.uk) and explain in 100 words what you would contribute to the discussion.



**Thirst quenching: planners take historic pubs tour in Norwich**

ROBHOBBS

# Steering group plans to look at professional development

Formal consultation on the professional competence assessment will maintain clarity, writes *Tracey Lloyd*

The assessment of professional competence (APC) was launched in 2005 as the route to chartered membership of the RTPI for graduates of accredited degrees.

All those working towards chartered membership keep a log book, make a professional development plan and can benefit from a mentor's support. After a period of professional work, these licentiate members submit a report showing APC assessors how they have achieved appropriate professional competence.

The APC was introduced to offer a more rigorous test of competence for chartered membership and a more supportive process by which graduates can structure their learning and professional development towards clear objectives.

Overall the structure works well, but it is clear from professionals' feedback that some revision of the requirements would provide greater support and clarity for licentiates, mentors and employers alike. This would certainly not overhaul what is an effective process, but instead improve the guidance.

A steering group has been assembled from the profession to include licentiates, chartered members, mentors, employers and assessors. Drawn from the public sector, private practice and academia, they bring a wide range of experience of the APC and different perspectives on its operation.

The steering group meets for the first time this month. However, there will be plenty of time for all members to get involved. A consultation will be launched in the coming months to tackle key questions as well as opening out to wider input.



**Lloyd: professional development**

The consultation will be formally launched through the usual channels of the RTPI regions and nations and networks and *Planning*, with notification also being sent directly to all licentiates and mentors. We advise you to wait for this launch before submitting your views to ensure that they are taken into account.

Steering group member and young planner Laura Smith has first-hand experience of the APC after gaining chartered membership through the process. "The APC has raised standards in the planning profession. The review provides the opportunity to ensure that guidance is clear and the process is valuable to licentiates, mentors and employers," she says.

"As a steering group, we are looking forward to incorporating comments from the wider profession into the APC through the formal consultation process," she explains.

*Tracey Lloyd is RTPI head of membership and careers.*

# RTPI Bulletin Board

## Last chance to enter most prestigious awards in planning

Teams and individuals are invited to submit nominations for the Young Planner of the Year, Planning Consultancy of the Year and Education and Lifelong Learning Awards. Categories in the Planning Consultancy of the Year Award include small planning consultancy and planning consultant, which are ideal for small practices and sole practitioners. The closing date for nominations is 28 September. Please visit [www.haymarketevents.com/awarddetail/214](http://www.haymarketevents.com/awarddetail/214) to download the entry form, which must be completed for each entry.

## Nominations invited for RTPI annual elections

The RTPI is holding its annual elections for junior vice-president, the executive board and the general assembly. The closing date for nominations is 30 September, the ballot will take place in November and the results will be announced in early December. For details and to download a relevant nomination form, please visit [www.rtpi.org.uk/item/2928&ap=1](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/item/2928&ap=1) or email [james.taylor@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:james.taylor@rtpi.org.uk)

## Events

### Nature After Minerals Workshop

14 October. RSPB London Office. 2nd Floor, 65 Petty France, SW1H 9EU. Strategic consideration of biodiversity in development is critical to tackling the impact of climate change and contributing to sustainable development. This workshop, hosted by the RTPI environmental planning and protection network and RSPB, will explore issues and solutions using case studies from Surrey County Council and industrial insights from the Mineral Products Association. Cost: Free.

To reserve your place, please email [epp@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:epp@rtpi.org.uk) or for more information, visit [www.rtpi.org.uk/item/2081&ap=1](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/item/2081&ap=1)

### International Comparisons on Liveability of Cities

19 November. RTPI Offices. 41 Botolph Lane, London. Cities came into being because they were necessary for defence, manufacturing and trade and other functional imperatives. Now, although millions in developing countries are driven by economic necessity to migrate from the countryside to the city, living in cities is becoming a matter of choice in the post-industrial west. Correspondingly, cities compete with each other for resources, residents and visitors on the basis of their liveability or the quality of life they offer. Much of the consequent marketing and city branding is superficial. This joint workshop, held by the RTPI urban design and regeneration networks, will examine what the physical realities of urban design can contribute to the dimensions of liveability. It will be presented by architect and urban designer Joe Holyoak, director of the Birmingham City University MA course in urban design and principal of his own urban design consultancy, and supported by the Urban Renaissance Institute and Townscape Solutions. Cost: Free; lunch provided.

To book, please email [urban.design@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:urban.design@rtpi.org.uk)



**RTPI**  
mediation of space - making of place

MASTERCLASS

## An introduction to design appraisal – The Masterclass

29 September 2009 • London  
18 March 2010 • London

- Appraising urban design qualities
- Design appraisal walkabout
- Appraising development proposals
- Design appraisal in the planning process

**Trainers:** **Rob Cowan**, Director, Urban Design Skills and  
**Scott Adams**, Director, Urban Design Skills



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