

london calling

RTPI London newsletter

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Autumn/Winter 2009/10

2012-2030 Planning the future capital

RTPI London spends two days
with President Martin Willey



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Editorial

Tom Venables



A feeling of evolution is sweeping the RTPI and a new generation of planners are playing a lead role.

This year's annual visit by RTPI president Martin Willey provided insight into some very positive changes that are

ongoing within the RTPI. The RTPI are finally making strong statements on climate change and the important role that we must play, and it would finally appear to be evolving into a 21st century organisation with a fresh approach to presentation, communication and lobbying on our behalf (see page 16).

RTPI London is starting to see an increasing interest from the non-planning media in our events, and have had recent coverage in the Evening Standard – something that has never happened before. We were very pleased to see Sir Simon Milton use our Planning the Future Capital event as an opportunity to launch the draft replacement London Plan (see page 05).

The president's visit provided our committee with a chance to meet a cross section of planners from across the capital and see for ourselves some of the big development sites that will soon transform our city – all of which have been shaped by London planners. There are of course massive challenges ahead for the profession with the outcome of next year's general election, ongoing economic challenges and public sector cutbacks, along with big questions about how we respond to climate change. However, it is very clear that the need for planners and planning is more important than ever. The increasing influence of young planners is certainly being felt (see page 22), and it is clear that the ideas, energy and spirit to meet these challenges head on are there.

As a region we intend to become stronger and provide more successful events for members in 2010. As ever we rely on volunteers to assist us and we are always happy to welcome people to join our regional activities committee (we especially would like to see more public sector volunteers). If you are interested come along and meet us at our AGM on the 26th November (see page 25).

Lastly, sincere apologies for the late issue of the summer 09 London Calling which had a number of events advertised that had past. We will try to make sure this doesn't happen again. If you want to be kept up to the minute on events please join the mailing list – send your details to london@rtpi.org.uk.

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Comment

Martin Willey, 2009 RTPI President

Message from Martin Willey

My trip to the London Region was exceptional and thanks to all who arranged it!

As a Londoner whose career started as a trainee in the GLC taking external RTPI exams following training at Brixton School of Building then Southbank Poly now LSBU, I know that planning in London is different from anywhere else in the world. It is much more complicated and high profile politically and as the capital city, attracts both professionals and our clients and stakeholders at a different level.

What conclusions did I draw?

Firstly the Regional Board and RAC are full of young enthusiastic planners already making a difference in public and private sectors and as a YP Network clearly going to influence the RTPI at national level.

Secondly the scale of planning project can be extremely large requiring planning skills of the highest calibre. The planners I met at the Olympic site and Kings Cross, are at the top of their profession on both the regulatory and consultant sides.

Thirdly there is scope to improve links between the Region and primary stakeholders even more than currently and following a hugely productive meeting with GOL, watch this space!

Finally, I attended the special event with Sir Simon Milton launching the London Plan who made the best case I have heard for retaining a regional level of planning – let's see what happens after the election?



President's Visit 2009 Planning the Future Capital

This years presidents visit sought to debate the many challenges facing the capital to 2030, and celebrate the achievements of London Planners



Martin Willey (centre) meets the ODA planners responsible for the delivery of the Olympic Park, RTPI London committee members and AECOM planners before a tour of the 2012 site..

Meetings with public and private sector planning professionals, a tour of two of the largest developments in the capital, the launch of the draft London Plan and lively debate with the RTPI London young planners network - it was a busy two days for Martin Willey on his presidential visit to the capital.

Day One: Capital Projects, Olympics, Newham Planners and a new Plan for London

The president's tour of London started with a presentation by AECOM Design + Planning staff on a number of major London focussed projects currently underway in the London office including the Olympics and Legacy Master Framework, Brent Cross Cricklewood, Canning Town, Streatham and West Norwood Masterplans, New Southgate Masterplan, Crossrail, a framework for the redevelopment of Old Oak Common in West London, and innovative approaches to infrastructure planning.

presidents visit



Planning the future capital: (l-r) Andrew Jones, Graham Tulley, Martin Willey, Simon Milton and event Chair Duncan Bowie.

Leaving the site at Pudding Mill Lane, it was a short journey on the DLR to the Newham Dockside and a visit to LB Newham's futuristic new offices where Martin met the Council's Executive Director, Clive Dutton who is newly-arrived from Birmingham. Martin then took the opportunity to walk the floor, meeting policy, DC and enforcement planners and tried to convince those who weren't MRTPI that they should be.

2012-2030 - Planning the Future Capital

An evening talk and reception, sponsored by DTZ and AECOM, was held in the city of London at DTZ's Old Broad Street HQ. This sought to explore the likely future global, economic and political challenges that will shape the future capital with an audience representing a cross section of London planning professionals.

Addressing the event, Andrew Jones, Managing Director of AECOM's Planning, Design and Development division spoke on issues around climate change and the planning challenges that face London's position as a leading global city.

He noted that London still expected to grow over next 20-30 years, more slowly than many other major cities but with a disproportionately higher carbon footprint. Flooding, heating

and pollution are the big three challenges resulting from climate change and much of its commercial heart will be at increased risk from tidal / fluvial flooding. Although London has a relatively dry climate (e.g. rainfall here is lower than Melbourne), rainfall is expected to become more concentrated in future - with greater risk from flash flooding during winter months. Sea level rises are the other threat with an increasing requirement to close the Thames Barrier.

From a design viewpoint Jones argued that London needs to encourage much more greening of its buildings ("living walls and roofs") and open spaces - to absorb CO₂, heat generated by buildings and rainfall. Encouraging more land to be used for small-scale food production would also help with these objectives. London's network of rivers & canals need to be made much greater use of for greening initiatives and water management. Jones made it clear that the public need to be more open to proposals for larger wind turbines and promoting alternative energy generation within the M25.

Graeme Tulley from DTZ outlined the economic challenges for future, highlighting four economic challenges facing London:

presidents visit



Vivienne Ramsey received her Tomorrow's Leader Award from Martkin Willey and Simon Milton.



Martin Willey takes the opportunity to network with London Planners

individual targets for emissions from new developments and a target-based policy on adaptation of buildings;

- There is a greater emphasis on waste management self-sufficiency for London, with waste figures and borough apportionments being reworked;
- The third runway at Heathrow is opposed on noise & air quality grounds;
- Strategic support is given for the Crossrail tariff and strong support is given to cycling (with an aim that it will constitute 5% of modal share by 2026);
- Electric car use is to be promoted by stipulating that one in five new car parking spaces in new development should have charging points provided;
- The Plan introduces a strategic approach to identifying suitable tall building locations;
- Crossrail and affordable housing are identified as two key areas for negotiating planning gain;
- The Mayor will produce a SPG on CIL if it is introduced;

- Finally, the future programme was identified, with consultation ending on 12 January 2010, Examination in July or September 2010, with the replacement plan published during the winter of 2011.

The evening was rounded off with the presentation to Vivienne Ramsey of the RTPI London Today's Leader Award, beating her ODA colleague Niall into second place. Networking and a copious amount of alcohol followed.

Day 2: GOL, RTPI matters, Kings Cross Tour, PAL and an encounter with the RTPI London Young Planners Network

The second day started bright and early with the chance for Martin and RTPI London committee members to meet planners at the Government Office for London. This provided an opportunity to strengthen links between the RTPI and GOL and discuss opportunities for future collaboration and the dissemination of best practice through joint CPD events for London Planners.

It also provided a chance to discuss issues affecting planning in London, notably the lack of LDFs that have been brought forward with only 3 boroughs having adopted core strategies. However, things are not all bleak with 20 London core strategies expected to be published by April

and an apparent increasing confidence amongst London planners in the LDF processes.

After a working lunch with the RTPI London Regional Activities Committee, the president and 20 RTPI London members were treated to a presentation and tour of the Kings Cross Development Site. Joanna Facer, site developer at Argent provided an interesting and in-depth overview of the development, followed by a guided tour of the site. Work is well underway on this major inner city regeneration scheme despite the recession and the tour got to view works ongoing around the old granary buildings and Eastern Transit Shed where the new University of the Arts London Campus is underway.

From Kings Cross it was a tube and a cab ride across town to the Planning Aid London offices in Whitechapel where Martin was introduced to Ros Corbett of PAL and George Knott, (of Knott Architects and a PAL volunteer). They gave a fascinating overview of some of the initiatives PAL are currently pursuing, including the development of a toolkit to engage blind and partially sighted people in the planning process.

The last port of call was at RTPI HQ for a debate with London based young planners, kindly sponsored by The Landscape Partnership. The atmosphere was informal, with food and plenty of wine. The topics discussed ranged from the potential to improve the Planning system, to raising the profile of the Planning profession.

Key issues included the requirement for Universities to better equip graduates for the workplace, the value of gaining MRTPI accreditation, encouraging school leavers into the planning profession and the poor media coverage of Planning.



The President and London Planners take a tour of Kings Cross Central with Argent.

Martin advocated a pro active approach to addressing the issues raised. Young Planners were encouraged to take the initiative to make a difference outside traditional systems. The Young Planners present agreed to encourage a more diverse range of planners into the network, to support graduates who are currently unemployed, to promote the RTPI and to build a better relationship with public sector planners.

A podcast of the Planning the Future Capital event should be available at <http://planningresource.libsyn.com/>

The new London Plan can be viewed at: www.london.gov.uk/shaping-london. Consultation runs from 12 October 2009 to 12 January 2010.


To keep informed on RTPI London events, or if you want to get involved contact london@rtpi.org.uk

Event sponsors:

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Planning for Climate Change - Cascading Consequences



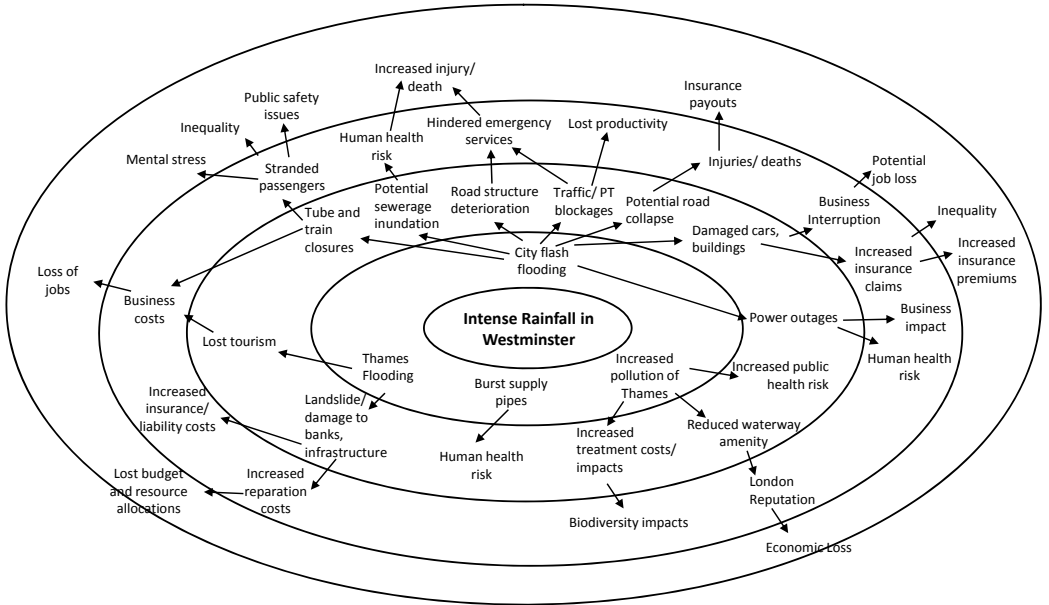
Adapting to climate change is one of the biggest challenges facing humanity and planners have a vital role to play writes Celeste Morgan of AECOM

Climate change is the biggest challenge facing humanity. Serious impacts on our world, our ecosystems and our communities are inevitable within our lifetime and are already beginning to be seen. Planners are at the heart of the challenge. We have an absolutely essential role in recognising and responding to the effects of climate change, and that role should affect every planner and every aspect of planning.

Traditionally, when we see reference to 'climate change' we look directly to environmental planners, as the primary impacts of climate change; heat waves, flooding and water scarcity are those which fall within the realm of environmental management. However, the cascading effects from those primary impacts affect every place and every community and the effects are far from consistent. Certain communities, demographic groups, economies and spatial areas will be affected by varying degrees and in varying ways. For example, a heat wave is likely to cause increased death rates in areas where people who are older, more

deprived, have reduced access to health facilities, or in more urban environments with less open space and vegetated areas that cool local microclimate. Immediately, the scale of effect becomes both spatial and local – two aspects which planners are perfectly placed to manage.

In July this year, AECOM brought over thirty planners from a variety of backgrounds together in an RTPI London event to explore the scope and breadth of the possible effects of climate change. Planners were challenged to think beyond the immediate and well-known environmental effects, to consider what other indirect effects climate events would have on communities and economies at a local scale. The AECOM 'Cascading Consequences' methodology was used to help planners think through and discuss the likely scenarios and explore areas where different societal, environmental, economic and infrastructural impacts are likely to occur and identify priority management areas for intervention through planning.



Example of Cascading Consequences of an extreme rainfall event in Westminster

The results were astounding. All aspects of planning, from health infrastructure planning, to economic resilience, to ecological sensitivity were explored on a local basis, exposing key areas of the planning process that need to consider the impacts of climate change in a more holistic way.

The participants compared and contrasted results and priority areas for two London boroughs; Westminster and Lewisham. Westminster is likely to suffer from intensified heat waves, due to the urban build up, and is at risk from flooding of the Thames or concentrated stormwater runoff in extreme storm events. The wider effects of these climate impacts mean that local communities are at risk, but also London and the UK as a whole could suffer



London Planners considering implications of climate change at AECOM/RTPI London workshop

The future need not all be depressing



due to major economic disruption associated with disruption of key transport infrastructure, effects on tourism and economic loss from direct damage. Thousands of people commute into the Westminster area to work, and disruptions to public transport will effect workers in an inequal manner, with those working on a contract basis and unable to access other forms of transport at risk of added deprivation.

In contrast, Lewisham, with a less dense population, but one which suffers from a range of social deprivation issues, is likely to experience less obvious but longer-lasting effects. With a large number of homes in the floodplain, those without insurance will be catastrophically affected, but wider affects associated with resource insecurity and rising utility prices due to climate change are likely to increase fuel poverty and detrimental effects to health.

The conclusions need not all be depressing. The focus groups highlighted a range of positive effects associated with bringing together communities, fostering education, managing resources more efficiently, preparing for change and encouraging a more sustainable way of living – all of which can be facilitated by planning. There is an urgent need for planners to identify the local response needed to climate change, and integrate response into every aspect of planning. The following actions can be

taken to ensure local and regional planning is responding to the challenge:

- Integrate analysis in Spatial Planning: Every Local Development Framework should take account of the effects of climate change and understand the likely effects locally. This goes beyond flood risk; areas where greater heat intensities are likely to be felt and risks to water supply should also be understood on a spatial scale. Alongside this, it is crucial to spatially understand the social and ecological aspects of areas that make them more vulnerable to the indirect effects of climate change.
- Develop a climate change adaption strategy: London has developed a London-wide adaption strategy, and similarly key interventions that need to be taken to adapt to climate change should be understood on a local authority level. Accordingly, infrastructural projects, integration of strategic green infrastructure, building improvement and community education can be prioritised and coordinated.
- Utilise National Indicator 188: This national indicator requires local authorities to identify climate change risks to the authority services, including planning, and



An early example of sustainable living at BedZed.

sets in place a methodology to manage those risks. Approximately sixty local authorities around the country have committed to NI188.

The RTPI recognises scale and urgency that climate change presents. At this year's Planning Convention, the RTPI launched its 'seven commitments' as to how it will help planners should take action to tackle the challenge of climate change. These are:

1. Promote behavioural change – support individuals, organisations and communities to manage demands for finite natural resources and energy;
2. Adapt existing places – reduce reliance on new building and adapt existing places to be more sustainable;
3. Work towards responsive legislation and policies – identify opportunities to raise standards, practice and delivery through legislation and policy;
4. Improve current practice – produce tool-kits and disseminate best practice to develop climate responsive policies and practices;
5. Celebrate best practice – ensure that tackling climate change is a fundamental requirement in judging RTPI awards schemes;

6. Compile a compendium of best practice – ensure that data is shared and sign-posted through an online resource;
7. Develop climate change education and skills- review of RTPI education and lifelong learning requirements to ensure all members have the knowledge and skills to respond effectively to climate change.

Whilst our profession has now awoken to the future challenges of climate change, the scale, impacts and timeframes are still unknown. What is clear is that planning professionals need to be trailblazers, leading the way in convincing colleagues, politicians and the public into adopting more sustainable ways of living and building.

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The RTPI Seven Commitments can be found at: <http://www.rtpi.org.uk/download/6440/Sevencommitments.pdf>

news plan

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LONDON BOROUGH OF EALING

Boris Johnson has given his backing to the Dickens Yard scheme that will provide a major contribution to the regeneration of Ealing town centre.

In a report to Ealing Planning Services, Boris Johnson says he is "content to allow Ealing Council to determine the case itself, subject to any action that the Secretary of State may take".

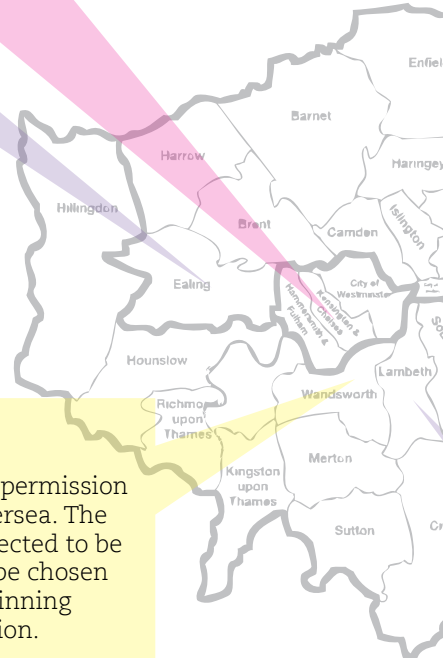
ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA

Planning permission has been granted for the refurbishment and alteration of the former Commonwealth Institute and for the erection of three buildings within the curtilage of the site. The Design Museum will move into this Grade II* listed building once completed.

LONDON BOROUGH OF WANDSWORTH

Wandsworth Council have granted outline planning permission for the new US Embassy building at Nine Elms, Battersea. The building's height is not yet decided however it is expected to be in the regions of 15-20 storeys. The final design will be chosen in a contest for US architects in January 2010. The winning design will then form the detailed planning application.

Meanwhile, a Planning application for Battersea Power Station redevelopment was submitted in October. The scheme is valued at £5.5m and proposes 3,700 homes built alongside 150,000 m² of office space and 50,000 m² of retail and restaurant space on the 40 acre site by the river Thames. Treasury Holdings is the applicant. The application follows discussions with the London borough of Wandsworth, CABE, English Heritage and the Greater London Authority.



LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

As part of the production of their Local Development Framework London Borough of Tower Hamlets are currently consulting on their proposed submission version of the Core Strategy until late October. Following this consultation the Council are expecting to submit this document to the Secretary of State for independent examination.

LONDON BOROUGH OF NEWHAM

The London Development Agency received Outline Planning Permission for the creation of over 750 new homes at a derelict site adjacent to Thames Barrier Park. The site will be developed by Barratt Homes and Taylor Wimpey, who have worked together with Allies and Morrison to create a new neighbourhood which defines the edge of Barrier Park. Dean Williams of the LDA commented “this development represents a collaborative design led approach to regeneration and will bring high quality housing to a vitally important piece of the Thames Gateway”.

LONDON BOROUGH OF LAMBETH

Secretary of state John Denham has rejected P&O and Morgan Stanley Real Estate’s £1bn redevelopment plans for Elizabeth House on London’s South Bank. The Allies & Morrison-designed ‘Three Sisters’ scheme proposes two office blocks of 22 storeys and a 33-storey residential tower. The scheme was called in October last year by the then secretary of state Hazel Blears. It had received outline planning consent from the London Borough of Lambeth in July 2008. A public inquiry was held in April this year at which the inspector recommended the scheme’s refusal. Denham has now agreed with the inspector’s report.

Finding space for growing food: Community Planning and Allotments

Planning Aid London (PAL) explore the benefits of incorporating allotments into new development

Allotments can bring many benefits. They encourage more sustainable food consumption and waste disposal practices and can promote healthier lifestyles and help to tackle obesity and poor nutrition. They can provide a practical educational experience and opportunity to develop skills and have environmental benefits including increased biodiversity and reducing the impact of flooding. They can regenerate derelict urban spaces and promote sustainable communities and community cohesion. In essence, Allotments are a mechanism through which multiple policy goals can be addressed.

The last two years have seen an unprecedented increase in the demand for places to grow food. Nationally the waiting list for allotments is approaching 100,000 applicants while in London all Inner London boroughs have a shortage of allotments with some waiting lists

a decade long. Anecdotal evidence suggests that parents are now registering applications for allotments in the name of their children at birth.

This demand was not unforeseen. Indeed the Companion Guide to Planning Policy Guidance 17 advises that:

“The need for allotments, community gardens and urban farms is likely to rise with the growth of interest in organic farming and as a result of rising housing densities and the consequential reduction in the size of many gardens... It is obviously desirable for local authorities not only to provide and rent allotments; but also to keep a waiting list there is likely to be a need for a population – based provision standard coupled with an accessibility standard”

However, what the companion guide could not have taken into account was the outcome of heightened interest brought about by media involvement and the active promotion of the benefits of growing food. Neither did it predict the outcome of the co-operation between government and the third sector supporting the importance of locally-produced fresh food.



Both these factors have created broader based interest in growing with more active interest from young people and families with children.

The call for growing spaces is not likely to fall. The current economic recession is likely to add significant numbers to waiting lists. And yet the number of plots have reduced by 1,500 over the last decade. In recognition and in response to this situation the National Trust is committed to providing community growing areas within their estates and gardens. Local authorities are assessing the opportunities for opening up new allotments and the Mayor of London is promoting the provision of new food growing spaces by 2012, via the Capital Growth programme (www.capitalgrowth.org). Nevertheless even with these major contributions there will be large shortfall in the supply of food growing areas.

There are many ways in which planning can promote, support and protect allotments in order to meet growing demand. The recent revision of London Plan provides a welcomed support for allotments:

“In reviewing the London Plan the Mayor proposes to: protect, promote and improve access to the network of open spaces, strengthening the promotion of urban greening and urban agriculture”

Explicit support for existing allotments and the creation of new allotments in the forthcoming London Plan is essential. Local Planning Authorities should also be securing land for allotments in their forthcoming LDFs, and developing Open Space Strategies to give a strategic oversight of open spaces in their borough, potential sites for new allotments, standards and guidance on for example the use of S106. Existing under-used land on housing

estates and in other areas should be considered for allotment use.

Planning Aid for London

Involving local residents and communities in consultation on planning policies relating to allotments is essential in order to gather information about needs and challenges for the local area and to empower communities. Planning Aid for London has recently published “Finding Space for Growing Food: Navigating the Land-Use Planning System. An Information Sheet for People & Communities” as a guide for communities and individuals to allotments and Planning.

Planning Aid for London (PAL) provides independent, free or affordable professional advice to individuals and community groups about planning, and can provide assistance on planning and allotments. PAL will be working with community groups and individuals to help them investigate the opportunities, sites and areas for growing food the most important, using key documents in the Local Development Framework, including Core Strategies and, where they exist, strategic plans for food and growing food locally, and Open Space Strategies.

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A Year of Change at RTPI HQ..

2009 has been a year of changes at RTPI HQ with the arrival of a new Managing Director and the departure of Robert Upton the RTPI Secretary General writes Charles Veal, Member Services Manager.

Robert Upton left the RTPI in September to take up a new role as one of the deputy chairs of the Infrastructure Planning Commission. Under Robert's leadership the Institute underwent significant change. The New Vision for Planning was launched setting out the RTPI's commitment to inclusive, integrated, spatial, and sustainable planning. He brought in constitutional and management changes that helped modernise the RTPI; RTPI Networks and Associations were launched; the RTPI Regions and Nations formed; the RTPI campaigned for and promoted planning; and the Assessment of Professional Competence and accredited one year MAs were introduced. One of Robert's most significant achievements has been the development of Planning Aid. Planning Aid has been transformed since the awarding of government funding and has grown to a national body reaching tens of thousands of people each year.

Currently the Trustees of the Institute are in the process of recruiting Robert's successor. To help fill the gap whilst a new Secretary General is appointed, Kelvin MacDonald will be providing part time policy support and advice to the RTPI. Kelvin was the Director of Policy and Practice at the RTPI and is very familiar with how the Institute works and our relationships with Government and other built environment organisations.

The RTPI's Director of Policy and Partnerships, Rynd Smith is also moving on, having recently been appointed to the role of Director of Policy, Quality and Development Plans at the Planning Inspectorate. Rynd originally served the RTPI as Head and then Director of Policy, leading the RTPI's response to the Planning White Paper and preparations for the Planning Act 2008. Until a permanent replacement is recruited Matt Thomson will be Interim Director of Policy and Partnership. Matt joined the RTPI as Head of Policy and Practice, prior to that he was Planning Policy Section Head at Watford Borough Council, and had worked in planning policy in local government for 17 years.

As part of the restructuring of the RTPI Sara Drake was recruited as the Managing Director in late 2008. This is a new post at the RTPI and Sara has overall responsibility for operational management of the RTPI. At the same time two new directorates were created, Professional Services and Policy and Partnerships. Sue Percy was appointed the Director of Professional Services, responsible for delivering education, member services and Planning Aid.

Within the new Professional Services directorate two new posts have been appointed, Tracey Lloyd as Head of Membership and Brian O'Callaghan as Head of Education. Both Tracey and Brian are looking to improve our education and careers material and improve our member services. One of the initiatives Brian is looking to take forward is the pathway from Associate Membership to Chartered Membership and the RTPI hopes to be able to make an announcement in the new year.

The new structure has also created a Communications and Marketing Team headed up by Tino Hernandez. They are focusing on improving the way the RTPI presents itself and

communicates with the membership. One of the visible changes will be the new membership renewal pack which is designed to be fresher, more modern and user friendly. The RTPI will also be issuing membership cards for the first time. The communications team is also working more closely with the press and has been very successful in expanding the number of news stories and coverage of planning and the RTPI. Particularly successful recently has been a series of events at the political party conferences, making sure that Institute's voice is heard. In terms of our website and IT we now have a web editor in post who is working to improve the quality and accessibility of our website to ensure that the website is a useful resource for members. As an example of some of the changes we now have podcasts and blogs and more rapidly changing features and news.

It has been a year of changes for the RTPI which have placed the Institute in a strong position to continue to deliver member services, to engage and promote planning and to be the voice for the profession.

Meanwhile RTPI London continues to provide members with great value benefits, writes James Bompas, Senior Vice Chair and stand-in treasurer...

Even whisper the words RTPI in my offices and you are assured to ignite a rant over subscription fees. Thankfully, as a licentiate member, my subs are £35 per year. Alas, not for much longer and if I succeed in my APC next year then I will see my membership hiked up to £205 overnight. In return, the RTPI provides access to new planning networks, an employment law helpline, best-practice information and a weekly copy of Planning magazine.

This brings me onto the real basis for writing this article. I wanted to shed some light into how the region operates and the membership benefits it brings.

Firstly, I think it is worthwhile mentioning that RTPI London receives an annual grant of nearly £23,000. This may sound a lot, but with in excess of 2,000 members in London this equates to around £11.50 per member. In return this provides members with the opportunity to attend events; for networking and CPD requirements, which to-date have been free. A recently revamped newsletter is posted to members three times a year and the region offers many exciting tours, not to forgetting the annual 5-aside tournament. The grant also funds a part-time Regional Co-ordinator, who essential in overseeing events, assisting volunteer members involved in the regional RTPI and generally providing day-to-day contact with members.

You can help:

In these credit-crunch times the region has been instructed to make an immediate 10% saving. This is going to be tough, but you can help. If you have access to venues, guest speakers or wish to put your name to an event then we would love to hear from you. Also, if you want to support London Calling by sponsoring an issue, or placing an advert then please do not hesitate to get in touch.

We are always looking for members of the Regional Activities Committee (especially from public sector planners) - why not come and meet us at the annual AGM?

london@rtpi.org.uk

Outer London Commission

Whilst Boris Johnson's "blue doughnut strategy" may have won him the mayoral election has he lived up to his election pledges?

Unveiled in February 2009, the Outer London Commission (OLC) was set up by the Mayor, Boris Johnson, to explore how the outer boroughs can better contribute to the capital's economic success. Chaired by Will McKee CBE, the OLC has members from local authorities and the planning and property sector. The Outer London Commission's raison d'être was to explore how different parts of London's suburbs can better realise their economic potential. It was also established to assess the concept of "growth hubs".

Interim findings, published over the summer highlight concerns that investment in outer London "growth hubs" could lead to neglect in other parts of outer London. Instead a more organic pattern of economic growth is promoted by the OLC, dubbed the "star and cluster" model. This approach makes use of the existing town centre network and, therefore, could be construed as more of the same. Those outer London voters wishing for the introduction of an orbital transport links will be left disappointed as the OLC firmly rejected this idea.

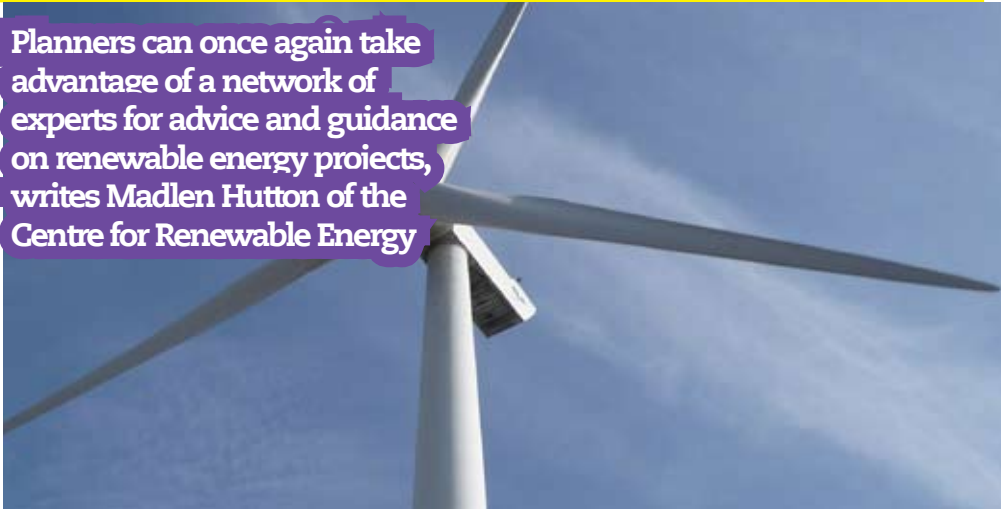
The OLC also concluded that airports act as a major economic catalyst for the region, which will not sit comfortably with Boris Johnson, who fiercely pledged to resist expansion of Heathrow airport during his election campaign. But, perhaps it will strengthen the argument for a Heathrow-on-Sea.

But not all the news is bad. The interim report identifies that outer London receives a



disproportionate level of support for leisure, arts, culture and tourism compared with inner London. Consequently, the OLC consider scope for a "very large" commercial leisure development in outer London, capable of competing on the international stage.

Whilst the main report is not expected until later this year, what this interim review demonstrates is that the OLC is unlikely to recommend anything ground-breaking. Apart from appearing to scrap the "growth hub" model and the orbital linkages the OLC conclude that this strategy should not be universally applied, but instead delivered through other spatial strategies.



Planners can once again take advantage of a network of experts for advice and guidance on renewable energy projects, writes Madlen Hutton of the Centre for Renewable Energy

The initiative, which aims to give public sector planners the opportunity to receive expert advice, information and guidance on specific issues relating to renewable energy and planning, was first trialled in early 2009. It received very positive feedback from officers who used the service to deal with queries on a range of renewable energy developments. Having been re-launched in August 2009, the pilot has been extended until the end of January 2010 and following future evaluation may continue on a permanent basis.

The service is specifically designed to assist local authority planners in both forward planning and development control through the provision of advice, information and guidance from a network of renewable energy experts – for example noise and landscape specialists. Other local authority officers are also able to access the network if they have a relevant query. Councillors benefit indirectly from the service too as the aim is to help produce evidence to support good quality and robust decision making.

Planners are able to submit their queries through the Planning Renewables website at: www.planningrenewables.org.uk. These will then be assessed and, for those that are suitable, free support of up to one-day's worth of an expert's time will be offered.

The expert support network is managed by the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) with funding from the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC), and is run in association with DECC and the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG).

Note: the expert support network is one of a number of activities aimed at ensuring that the right skills and knowledge are available within the planning community at local and regional level. Other activities include workshops for planners, councillors and inspectors on the technical and planning aspects of different renewable energy technologies, and an on-line 'resource bank' of relevant policy and technical information.

For more information see: www.planningrenewables.org.uk.

Sustainable Travel Planning



There is widespread agreement of the need to provide sustainable travel choices for tenants of new developments in order to ensure the planning process contributes to delivering reduced congestion and emissions. However, how best to deliver on these objectives can be a source of contention between planning authorities and developers which is where travel plans can help.

Travel planning not only delivers a comprehensive transport management system but can also add value to the developer, local authority and community through improving accessibility and connectivity, place-shaping and improving the marketability of a site.

In March 2008 Transport for London (TfL) issued guidance for development related travel plans, in accordance with the London Plan. The guidance offers advice on the preparation and implementation of travel plans for new developments. It is designed to help planning professionals in London's local authorities and the wider development sector to deliver high quality travel plans, and to ensure transport demand is managed as a holistic package for the life of a new development. To raise greater awareness of the guidance and to improve the

effectiveness of transport demand management through travel planning, TfL commissioned Steer Davies Gleave to deliver A New Way to Plan.

This three year project, which began in 2008, has a mandate to support the whole development community, both public and private sector, through skills training, knowledge sharing, research and support tools. The aim of the project is to deliver a higher number of effective, correctly monitored, high quality travel plans for new developments, adequately secured through the planning process in London.

In its first year, the project focussed on borough officers - those responsible for overseeing, promoting and evaluating travel plans delivered as part of the planning process - aiming to bring the guidance to life and to develop a consistent approach to travel planning. Activities included London-wide and borough specific training, networking events, and the distribution of policy and technical notes with the first year culminating in a conference attended by over 150 delegates.

Two themes form the cornerstone to delivering A New Way to Plan this year which is aimed at a wider audience including developers and their consultants, elected members and senior officers in boroughs: the value of travel plans and making transport assessments accountable. Key initiatives include training for developers and consultants, bespoke training and topic based clinics for borough officers, collaborations with the RTPI and other agencies, a website dedicated to development travel planning in London, guidance notes, case studies and regular e-bulletins with project updates.

On 1 October, two successful events for London's development community were hosted at the London Transport Museum. A breakfast



New Way to Plan briefing session at London's Transport Museum

briefing for developers included presentations from David Rowe and Matthew Prince of TfL and Geoff Symonds of AEG/The O2, giving an explanation of the value of travel plans in terms of smoothing the planning process, reducing transport impacts and improving accessibility and connectivity. The briefing was followed by a training session for consultants working with developers, and covered the process of securing travel plans through the planning system, and the key elements a travel plan should contain.

This autumn, A New Way to Plan continues to engage both the development sector and boroughs. Bespoke training sessions with a number of London boroughs have been arranged, and a set of themed travel plan clinics for borough officers from across London will be held at Palestra, TfL's offices in Southwark.

A New Way to Plan is also continuing to work with RTPI and other networks to offer training, events and resources to London audiences. Networking events are planned with RTPI London and the Development Management Network, as well as liaison with PIPA to engage elected members in the project.

For further information, contact newwaytoplan@sdgworld.net

RTPI London Young Planners

09/10/09 APC Event, DTZ

An event for licentiate members of the RTPI was held on 9th September, at DTZ's offices, Old Broad Street, in the City of London. Brian O'Callaghan, Head of Life Long Learning at the RTPI gave a presentation to 120 licentiate members offering them helpful guidance on completing their log book and submission for the Assessment of Professional Competence and explained the benefits of chartered membership. The opportunity was taken by many of the licentiates to ask questions about their own submissions, the APC process and preparing for it. Questions were answered by Philip Woodward of the Life Long Learning Team with support from Julia Riddle and Sara Eustace of DTZ who are both APC Assessors.

Whilst the event was a huge success, it highlighted the need for many more events of its kind in the London region and a call for more support for licentiate members. In particular, it highlighted a severe shortage of mentors to assist licentiate members through the APC process. If you are interested in becoming a mentor, please contact Philip at the RTPI for further information philip.woodward@rtpi.org.uk.

The London Young Planners Steering Group and RTPI London are planning to work closely with the Life Long Learning Team to offer more support to licentiate members through the provision of more similar events, where possible, and to promote the benefits of mentoring to existing chartered members. If you have any feedback on the APC, Laura Smith, who is the London Young Planner's Representative will be happy to receive them which will be fed directly to the RTPI's APC steering group. Email Laura at London@rtpi.org.uk. In addition, a

formal consultation process on the APC will be undertaken later this year which you will have the opportunity to be a part of.

02 -03 /10/09 RTPI Young Planners Conference

The RTPI Young Planners Conference held in Newcastle and Gateshead brought together planning professionals from a variety of disciplines to discuss the need to consult, the legal, social and moral implications of engagement over a variety of scales .

The ethos behind this year's conference was to outline innovative engagement techniques that delegates could take and apply within their workplace. The conference allowed for examples of effective engagement across a range of planning disciplines in Tyne and Wear. Study tours covered retail led regeneration focusing on the implications of retail development in the context of the wider city centre.

The Young Planners Micro-Site provides an overview of the whole conference, alongside presentations delivered, photographs, video and audio: <http://www.youngplannersconference.info/>

December 2009 - Christmas Social

A fun Christmas-themed Treasure Hunt and Pub Crawl will be jointly hosted by the RTPI London Young Planners, New Zealand Planning Institute and the Planning Institute of Australia in early December, (most likely the first week). This details of this event have yet to be finalised but it will be somewhere in central London. We will be accepting teams of up to 5 people comprising planners and development professionals. Details will be available from the Young Planner's and RTPI London websites plus the email bulletins. If you would like to be notified of this event please email Lucy on London@rtpi.org.uk.

Past Events

16/08/1980 and 26/06/2009 Thames Barrier 29 Years on

On Wednesday 16th April 1980 the then 'RTPI South Eastern Branch London Chapter' visited the Thames Barrier. 'Planner News' July 1980 featured that visit which took place several years before completion of the Barrier. The visit was arranged with Costain Civil Engineering Ltd. It was organised and led by Branch Member Lester Hillman who 29 years later returned on Friday 26th June 2009. RTPI London invited him to provide a three decade perspective.

Branch Visit 16th April 1980

There were about fifty participants and we required four boats to ferry the visitors out to the Barrier construction works. The RTPI party 29 years ago all came from the public sector, from about fifteen local authorities. There was no Dome, no Canary Wharf, no DLR and no London City Airport. We saw the service tunnel under construction beneath the river. Construction of the Barrier continued on into 1983, the official opening took place in 1984.

Branch Visit 26th June 2009

This year the Barrier is celebrating its 25th Anniversary. The Branch visit with briefing, tour and hospitality, courtesy of the Environment Agency was much appreciated.

In the last 29 years public transport access and the skyline have been transformed. Across the river London City Airport could be seen receiving planes every five minutes and the DLR has trasformed rail access. There were 17 participants on the recent visit but they were drawn from a wider background. There were more women (only 7 had signed up in 1980) and the average age was much younger.



A changing skyline and a changing profession - planners taking a tour of the Thames Barrier, 25 years after it opens.

Harris Hawks and Security

With vessels passing and repassing the river seemed ageless. A Harris Hawk bird of prey, drafted in from duties at the Palace of Westminster, focused attention on the vexed gulls and studiously ignored us. Notwithstanding this the Barrier is protected under very strict security provisions.

A fair amount of the £12m of annual maintenance work was evident and the party was able to climb down to the service tunnel, out onto platforms and up into the distinctive roof structures.

Branch Visit 2038?

'Thames Estuary 2100' was outlined on the recent visit and the consultation period on this flood risk plan for the century ahead has recently been extended. Within the plan 2040 and 2070 have been identified as key option dates. So, another Branch visit in 2038, 29 years time, sounds about right.

Lester Hillman

Past Events



22/05/09 RTPI London Sewers Tour

On 22 May 2009, RTPI members and other disciplines of the built environment met at the Abbey Mills Pumping station in north-east London as part of Sewer Week. Descending into Walter Bazalgette's sewers is an experience. Everything you picture of being dark and smelly is true. The smell you get used to. The fine stonemanship of brickbuilt engineering usually seen by no-one except sewer workers you don't get used to. Or the sheer size of the channels. Above ground is an ostentatious pumping house, standing almost as a glorified token of all the engineering below ground. The day was a fascinating tour of the rising need for sanitary sewerage through the ages, which included being shown hollowed out tree trunk pipes which utilised cannon boring technology of the day, and was definitely something not to be sniffed at.



25/09/09 RTPI London five-a-side tournament

The London Borough of Newham's five-a-side football team was victorious in this year's RTPI London tournament, sponsored by Indigo Planning.

Fifteen teams took part in the competition, at Goals in Wimbledon, on Friday 25 September, with three groups playing four games in the early stages of the tournament.

The final, between Newham and hosts Indigo Planning, ended 2-2 and had to be decided by a tense penalty shoot out – with both sides neck and neck, before Newham edged ahead to win 3-2 on penalties.

Phil Villars, Managing Director of Indigo Planning said:

“It was a great tournament with a strong turn out and plenty of drama for spectators right up until the final whistle. Thanks to all the teams for making it such a success and congratulations to Newham for a well-deserved victory.”



Causing a stink: Planners take a tour of the sewers (top) and LB Newham triumph at this years five-a-side tournament (bottom)

Notice of annual general meeting of the London region of the Royal Town Planning Institute

To be held on Thursday 26th November 2009 at from 6.30pm at the Savoy Tup, 2, Savoy St (off the Strand), London, WC2R 0BA (nearest Tube: Temple/Embankment/Covent Garden)

Agenda

1. Welcome from the Chair
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2008
4. Presentation of Annual Report for 2009
5. Treasurer's Report for 2009
6. Election of Principal Officers (Regional Management Board members)
7. Election of Regional Activities Committee members
8. Chair's Closing Remarks

All RTPI London members are welcome to attend and participate in the AGM. At the discretion of the Chair, members of other RTPI regions and other planners are welcome to attend the AGM as observers.

Nomination forms for the election of Principal Officers and Regional Activities Committee members are available from the Honorary Secretary who can be contacted at london@rtpi.org.uk The AGM will be followed by some social drinks from around 7.30pm. All planners and planning students are very welcome.

Support for Members During the Recession

The RTPI's 'recession support' guidance is published online and set out under four separate headings; 'facing redundancy?', 'finding that next job', 'work for yourself?' and 'how we can help'. Support includes free access to an employment law helpline, the latest planning job adverts and information on updating your CV and 'successful job interviews'.

The recession has led to a contracted jobs market. It is important to remember that RTPI membership provides you with a competitive edge - it is a clear recognition of your professionalism, your competence and your expertise.

For further information and support please visit http://www.rtpi.org.uk/member_services/piwp/

Provisional Events for Early 2010

Planning Law Update - Late January 2010

Annual RTPI London Planning Law Update at SJ Berwin. To register email london@rtpi.org.uk

Are Development Proposals Properly Assessed - 9th February 2010

A multitude of large and small proposals are being assessed daily in both the public and the private sectors. Many are causing controversies because of different approaches to their formal assessment. Many of the disputes derive from not understanding or sharing an approach. This seminar will bring together perspectives from Local Authority, Planning Inspectorate and the Private Sector.

To register email london@rtpi.org.uk

A New Way to Plan - Late February 2010

A New Way to Plan (NWTP) is a three year project created by Transport for London to assist London boroughs and the development community in delivering consistent and high quality travel plans through the development process. The aim is to raise awareness and understanding of the tools available to assist development related travel planning. This will help to develop effective and consistent approaches across the public and private sector in London to the coordination and management of travel planning.

Tour of Olympic Site - March / April 2010

Small group bus tour to explore the new Olympic venues. More information to follow.

RTPI London needs your support

RTPI London is run by planners, for planners and we are always looking at ways to improve our offer, ensuring chartered members get the best value from RTPI membership at the grassroots level. We are always looking for support from businesses and individuals. You can help us in the following ways:

Help provide interesting and innovative CPD/networking events. Do you have any initiatives or areas of expertise that you wish to share with other professionals? Would you be interested in funding networking events where you could meet perspective employees and clients? RTPI London is always on the lookout for partners to assist in the formulation and running our CPD and networking events.

Join the Regional Activities Committee - all RTPI members are welcome to join the RAC. We meet 6 times a year and are responsible for all RTPI London activities. You can contribute as little, or as much as you like.

Sponsor London Calling - For a limited period we are providing the following rates on advertising space, or issue sponsorship:

| | 1 issue | 3 issues (special offer for Spring, Summer and Autumn 2010 issues) |
|---|-----------|--|
| Inside: | | |
| ¼ page | £45 | £100 |
| ½ page | £70 | £150 |
| Full page | £90 | £200 |
| Back page: | | |
| ½ page | £150 | |
| Full page | £200 | |
| Issue Sponsorship (front page logo, double page article and half page advert) | from £400 | |



To get involved or for more information contact Lucy Barton: London@rtpi.org.uk
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