



## Best Public Building in Britain – Joseph Chamberlain College

Joseph Chamberlain Sixth Form College in Birmingham has recently won the Prime Minister's Award as the 'Best Public Building in Britain'. Since it opened in September 2008 the high quality design has inspired many more young people to continue with their studies and to appreciate the new facilities it provides.

The West Midlands Urban Design Forum, was treated to a guided tour of the new College just before Christmas, hosted by Elly Tobin, the College's Principal and Lynne Morris, the College's previous Principal whose drive, vision and commitment was responsible for initiating the project and seeing it through to fruition. David Lowe and Ruth Saxton from Nicholas Hare Architects in London provided a stimulating overview of the project.


Katy Craddock, Chair of the WMUDF describes the building:

*'Built to replace a crumbling concrete institution, the design of the new college has evolved around some key principles, leading to a building framed around two courtyards of contrasting characters that simultaneously provides a buffer to the noise and pollution from the adjacent Belgrave*

*Middleway. Accessibility, safety and legibility were at the heart of the college's drive and the resulting building has clearly delivered on these objectives'.*

*'Moving around the college is a delight. The high quality of the materials and use of natural light combines with the buzz and vibrant sense of energy that radiates from the student community. At the centre of the college two courtyards provide a stunning internal landscape; the larger of the two is semi-circular and beautifully landscaped and laid out, overlooked by a copper clad viewing balcony that houses the library and learning resource centre while the smaller courtyard constitutes an elegant tree-lined square, overlooked on all sides from the glazed corridors that connect all corner of the college'.*

*'A clear vision coupled with a commitment to teamwork throughout the project has allowed successful master planning, high quality design and the creation of a focal hub for the wider community. I would recommend a visit to anyone who gets the opportunity'.*

Many thanks to Katy Craddock who after a very successful year will shortly be standing down as Chairman of the Forum. 



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## Chair's remarks

**A** belated Happy New Year to you all. I have now officially taken over as Chairman for the Region. In a year in which we will be 'blessed' with a general election and therefore undoubted changes to the political, economic and planning landscape (whatever the outcome), we in the West Midlands still await a conclusion to the long running saga of the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy.

Whilst I know for a fact that those in Government Office for the West Midlands made every effort to keep to their promise to publish the Secretary of State's changes before Christmas, we are still awaiting a conclusion and the chances of this being resolved prior to the general election appears remote, given the need for further consultation on the Changes and the possibility of legal challenges.

Whilst this sorry story drags on, Council's across the West Midlands are still attempting to progress their Core Strategies and the development industry is crying out for some certainty in the plan making process. 13% of core strategies approved over a 5 year period is hardly a record to be proud of. We only have one in this region, Telford.

Even if we can get to grips with the ever expanding evidence base, how can we plan against an uncertain and ever changing regional backdrop? The Local Development Framework promised to change planning from a *process driven* system to an *outcome focussed* system – a new age in which we would work together, in partnership, to deliver change against a strong vision for our area (wherever that may be).

Strangely enough, although this aspiration has largely failed to materialise, I still hold to the ideal (maybe naively) that the only way we'll truly recover from the worst recession since the Second World War, is to move away from the adversarial approach that has

increasingly dogged planning over the years, to a collaborative approach in which component parts of the development industry work together to find solutions. The problem we therefore have to solve is how we create and deliver quality developments in the West Midlands in spite of and not with the help of the development plan system!

On a lighter note, I had the great honour to be invited to the RICS West Midlands dinner (as your RTPI representative) and to meet '*the world's greatest living explorer*' (according to the Guinness Book of Records, and who am I to argue), Sir Ranulph Feinnes. Quite what his connection is to surveying in the West Midlands I still haven't worked out, but to be honest I didn't particularly mind. To have the opportunity to listen to his incredible exploits over the last 40 years is something that will always stay with me. It is hard to believe that so many impressive qualities can be contained within one person. He described 'man-hauling' his 500lb sledge of equipment across the Antarctic (with various



crevasses and ice mountains along the way) as the equivalent of pulling 3 burly 6 foot men, lying in a bath tub across the Sahara Desert! At 66 (and after a heart by-pass) he's still not finished and promises a major expedition in 2 years time – the details of which he did not divulge, so keep a look out. Whilst I would never dream of trying to compare planning with the exploits of such a great explorer, maybe those of you currently trying to progress your Core Strategy will have some empathy with Sir Ranulph's 'bath tub' analogy!

Finally, I must congratulate Julie Morgan on her election to the RTPI General Assembly, as I know she'll be an excellent representative. 🏠

**Steve Hill**  
West Midlands Regional Chair

## The Great Debate lives On

🏠 *I sell here what all the world desires* said Matthew Boulton, one of the key fathers of the West Midlands.

Chaired this year by Dhiran Vagdia of the RIBA, the Great Debate held on 19th January 2010 at the Arup Campus in Solihull, posed the question, '*In a time of change, can the West Midlands construction sector re-establish the region's credentials for enterprise and innovation*' and was overshadowed by the takeover of Cadbury's by Kraft, which had been announced only minutes earlier.

The panel included Mark Williets, Advantage West Midlands (appearing for the RTPI), Noel Street, (RIBA), Michael Thompson, (ICE), and Martin Perks, (RICS). Together they explored a variety of topics

such as the sustainability of economic growth in the region, the means of harnessing innovation and skills, the costs of funding S106 agreement, and the implications of the recent disappointing outcome of the Copenhagen conference.

In a debate which was heavily focused upon design and construction rather than 'bigger picture' planning issues, there emerged a broad consensus that there were no major pioneers like Cadbury in the offing and that rather than expecting a 'big idea' to emerge we should focus on a combination of many 'smaller ideas'.

Thanks go to RIBA for organising the Debate, to Arup for hosting the occasion and to Mercedes Benz for sponsoring the event. 🏠

## The “need-less” PPS – new PPS4 replaces PPS6

The Government published *PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Growth* on 29th December 2009. Setting out national guidance on economic development, the new PPS4 replaces PPG4, PPG5, PPS6 and parts of PPS7 and PPG13.

PPS4 puts town centre and retail development in a wider ‘economic development’ context, contributing to the overarching objective of ‘sustainable economic growth’. As such, the PPS covers all B class uses, leisure uses, main town centre uses, public and community uses, and any other development that generates employment or wealth.

The new PPS4 specifically records “planning applications that secure sustainable economic growth should be treated favourably”.

In terms of objectives, in addition to the well established Government aims of seeking economic growth and building prosperous communities, PPS4 specifically records that proving that new schemes are resilient to climate change is now a must. In addition, there is a significant emphasis on seeking to meet the needs of deprived areas.

The ‘town centre first’ approach is maintained, as is the ‘sequential’ test. However, the ‘needs’ test for determining retail applications is partly removed and replaced by a revised wider six-point impact test which includes investment, vitality and viability, allocated sites, trade, turnover, and scale, and any other locally important impacts.

Whilst need as a test for planning applications has been abolished, it still forms an important part of the Development Plan making process. The need for comparison / non-food retail is to be assessed at both regional and local level, whilst the need for food retail is only to be assessed at the local level.

Joanne Hooper, Senior Planner at Drivers Jonas LLP’s Planning and Development team in Birmingham, commented:

*“Any expansion, redevelopment, or indeed new out of centre regional or sub-regional shopping centres must be considered through the regional planning function. This is likely to prove interesting in the context of the Conservatives’ pledge to abolish regional planning as one of their early actions should they form the next Government”.*

Specific proposals for a competition test are not included pending the Government’s response to recent Competition Commission recommendations.

The document can be found at [www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/planningpolicystatement4](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/planningpolicystatement4).

If you have any queries in respect of how the new PPS4 could impact on your work or organisation, please contact Joanne Hooper of Drivers Jonas on [joanne.hooper@driversjonas.com](mailto:joanne.hooper@driversjonas.com) or 0121 237 4444. 📞

## Editor’s thoughts

It was always told that two wrongs don’t make a right. The recent news item about a couple in Potters Bar who had managed to disguise a £500,000 4 bedroomed house within the green belt as a barn was bound to capture the eye of the press as yet another loophole in the planning system. The owners evidently admitted they had deceived the planning authority when they applied for consent, but since the house had remained hidden for over 4 years, 3 Court of Appeal judges ruled that they could claim immunity and granted a certificate of lawfulness.

Paradoxically only a week or so later, a similar case was lost when the owner of a tudor-fronted building hidden behind bales of straw was ordered to demolish the property when he removed the obstructions after the 4 year limit - presumably to let a bit more light into the house!

These examples, which are the latest in a long string of similar cases over the years, highlight the problem of the immunity laws which specify that provided a transgression can go undetected for 4 years, the owners can then benefit from the fraud – implying presumably that planners ought to be patrolling their areas, not just to see if emerging schemes conflict with planning controls but also past consents too.

There are some worrying parallels here with the social care profession where hard pressed social workers are

expected both to anticipate and indeed prevent harm to children and vulnerable people, when by definition, the offenders are devious and illusive and the victims are unable to cry for help.

The ongoing furore over MP’s expenses has shown very clearly that the public does not like to see people exploiting the system and merely wants to ensure that everyone including politicians are treated like the rest of us. They simply want to see fair play. Against that background, perhaps the 4 year immunity rule ought to be removed and applicants will then have to face up to the consequence of their actions – maybe then people won’t be encouraged to deceive the planners in the hope of escaping justice. 📞

**John Acres**  
Tripwire Editor



*David Burton of University of Birmingham and Simon Day of Birmingham City University receiving their awards for the most promising first year student.*

## Common sense and nosiness – Ann Skippers, your new RTPI President

**T**hose attending the last RTPI General Assembly, were inspired by the inaugural speech delivered by Ann Skippers, our new RTPI President, who has recently taken over from Martin Willey. I am therefore reproducing her speech more or less verbatim below:-

*‘Ladies and Gentlemen. Any incoming President finds themselves in awe of the distinguished names and legacies of past Presidents and I am deeply honoured and very humbled to have been given the opportunity to represent you in this way. The RTPI is an organisation that I am immensely proud to be associated with.*

*When I was a little girl my family lived in Scotland, in a small village about an hour or so north of Glasgow. We lived next door to the local doctor who lived in a big house with a large garden. One day playing in the garden on the other side of the hedge, things began to happen, builders arrived and stakes were knocked into the ground. I watched rather nosily through the hedge as the building took shape, transfixed by this thing emerging up from the ground...someone had created something which would be someone’s home. I was completely hooked. I wanted to know who decided whether this new house could be built? Whether it was ok? How did they make that judgement? And this early fascination has never left me.*

*I have a photograph album that documents my life, with a photo taken on each birthday and friends, favourite games, inoculations and so on recorded annually right up to the age of 21. I don’t know if you have anything similar. Dad and I spent many happy hours every year filling the album in, and it has proved to be a very precious keepsake.*

*It has always amazed me, that at age 16 whilst other interests are listed as discos and beach parties, well we did live in Mallorca, - I was obviously as single minded then as I am now...it’s written down in black and white - my ambition was to be a town planner!*

*This ambition evolved from that early fascination with the world around me and the nurturing of teachers, particularly geography teachers. So how might we capture that imagination at an early age?*

*One of the areas I will be focusing on is working with schools. This is an area which is very dear to my heart as I’ve been lucky enough to do some teaching on planning courses at various Universities and for the Open University too.*

*In common with many of you, I have been to schools career evenings and of course quickly found out that*

*the kids are interested in three things; the qualifications needed to become a planner, how interesting the job is, you know, what a typical day might be and how much they would be paid. My answer was always the same; the qualities needed are common sense and nosiness...there is no such thing as a typical day...and whilst more is always welcome, the money is ok.*

*Wouldn’t it be wonderful if we could develop a project based initiative to take into schools, at primary as well as secondary level, that helped people to better understand what planning is about, to capture that fascination that I’m sure young children have, to generate enthusiasm about planning? Wouldn’t it be wonderful if other professionals would join in with us? What great local publicity that would create too. By doing this, we might capture young people’s imaginations and inspire the next generation of planners.*



*I thought it would be interesting to share some thoughts from Wilfred Burns, who was President in 1967, the year I was born. Sir Wilfred was a leading planning figure, City Planning Officer of Newcastle, a member of the influential Planning Advisory Group and went on to*

*become Chief Planner cutting his Presidential year short to take up that role. In his Presidential address, he urged us not to be afraid of fighting for town planning and the role of the chartered town planner. Here I am, forty years on, going to say pretty much the same thing.*

*Planning has been taken for granted for too long, by too many. Today we are facing immense challenges; an economic recession, climate change, an uncertain political future as we move towards a general election. But these are challenges which every sector is facing. The difference is that we can offer solutions.*

*From the Institute’s very humble beginnings when a group of architects, surveyors, engineers and lawyers came together to form the new profession of town planning, Thomas Adams, our first President, recognised there was a need for ideas and imagination to fuse with more technical competencies and that by bringing together all these different skills, better solutions would be found.*

*This year I particularly hope to build on our existing relationships with our colleagues in our sister professions, making sure that we work closely with RICS, RIBA and ICE and others.*

*Sir Wilfred too urged us to constantly look forward into the field of professional cooperation saying this*

would often need patience and goodwill. A friend, whose surname happens also to be 'Goodwill', urged me to seek sponsorship for a series of interprofessional round-tables. I promised to see what I could do. And so with more than a passing nod to Sir Wilfred and my friend Roger for his good idea, I hope to start a series of round-tables with our fellow professionals to be known as the 'Goodwill series' and I aim to start with a round-table on inclusive design and accessibility.

This leads me onto the third thing that I particularly wish to focus on this year.

The image of planning and the public perception of it is something which has dogged us through the ages. There is no doubt that people have a raw interest in their locality, their doorstep – just think of how people galvanise and come together when there is a proposal or scheme they don't want in their area. Interest, passion and drive are therefore alive and well. But can we harness these things and turn them into a positive?

One of the biggest challenges we face is how to connect the local interest in planning with the bigger picture stuff; strategic planning. Just think for a moment of our transport system, our infrastructure, services or energy supply. We need to continue to make the case for national spatial planning, for plans at an appropriate scale and long term planning which is so critical to this country's future well being.

But we need to seek new ways of capturing and harnessing the raw interest in planning and connecting it to the bigger picture. I am reminded of my old school motto which is 'knowledge is the key to understanding'. Through knowledge of the rationale behind a policy, legislation or regulations comes understanding - understanding of planning and its potential.

Having worked at the coalface in local government and now as a consultant I know how difficult this can be. I am merely an ordinary planner, but planning is extraordinary and we need to get this message across. We should be proud to say at the dinner party when we are asked that we are planners. Say it well and say it loudly, and say it again if you need too. For me once asked and the role explained, people do get it, people say how exciting it sounds – they didn't realise that that was we do.

Sometimes called jack of all trades, we have so many different facets to our make up it's not surprising that there are lots of people out there doing planning, calling themselves planners who aren't members of this Institute. We must ensure that the added value of being a member of this Institute, and in particular of being a chartered town planner is recognised. Let's really demonstrate to our members what it means to be able to call yourself chartered town planner.

But how will we make these things happen? As a planning consultant and a planning inspector I am living my dream...I am still peeping over walls and fences and peering nosily through hedges to see what's going on on the other side. We are here in this room because we passionately believe in planning.

There is one Institute, with lots of component parts. Individuals can and do, make an enormous difference. We, here today, have decided to put our heads above the parapet. You have inspired, cajoled, challenged and supported the Institute. Singly and together we can encourage others to become involved and make a difference. Most of us are happy to be asked to do something, to make a contribution because we feel valued. We must ensure that all of our members feel valued and motivated to get involved and stay involved and encourage others to get involved.

And what about our staff? They are a committed group of individuals who have worked flat out, often in uncertain circumstances and turbulent times. Thank you all for keeping the show on the road.

So let's continue to do what the Institute has always done, but let's do it with pride, and increased confidence. Let's stand up for planning. Let's fight for planning. Let's embed the concept of planning in our youngsters so that it becomes the bedrock of our future. Let's share its successes with an often sceptical public, let's show the potential of planning to our politicians. Let's use our imagination. Let's show our members we mean business. Let's be stronger and bolder than we have ever been before. Let's work with others. Let's pay homage to our past and great traditions. Let's let in the new and bold. It's time to stand up for planning. Thank you'. 🏠

**Ann Skippers**  
RTPI President

## Julie Morgan elected to General Assembly

In 2003, Julie Morgan chaired the RTPI Future Strategy Group, a team of young planners set up to steer the RTPI Executive Board and Council in implementing the RTPI New Vision. Now, 7 years later (and with only the fourth female President, Ann Skippers recently taking office), Julie has been elected to General Assembly.

Julie joins five colleagues from the region; Hector Pearson, Ismail Mohammed, Professor David Chapman, Professor Alan Wenban-Smith, and Clive

Harridge in what is clearly a very strong West Midlands team.

Julie has said she looks forward to representing colleagues again at this pivotal time and urges other members to take the plunge and get involved in the RTPI at either National or Regional level. 'It's a members' organisation that returns what you put in to it' she said. Julie says she will continue to be an active member of Regional Activities Committee. 🏠

## RTPI Planning Awards 2010 (Entry deadline: Monday, 12th April)

**N**o sooner has the last set of RTPI Planning Awards been announced, but invitations have been circulated for the 2010 awards.

The list of categories is as follows:

**Sustainable Communities:** including proposals for and the creation of sustainable, mixed use, developments in rural or urban contexts which balance and integrate the social, economic, environmental and resource needs of the community. This award is sponsored by *The Crown Estate*.

**City and Metropolitan Areas:** including major schemes and regeneration in larger urban areas;

**Local Regeneration and Renewal:** including physical and community regeneration of neighbourhoods, districts and urban centres;

**Rural Areas and the Natural Environment:** including all aspects of planning in rural areas from development guidance to village regeneration and the protection and enhancement of the natural environment including responses to the new agendas for landowners and farmers;

**Heritage:** including planning strategies for heritage areas and enhancement of groups of buildings or larger areas of heritage significance;

**Planning Process:** innovative and imaginative use of the planning process to achieve positive results, including through active and effective involvement of communities and integration with other strategies.

**E-government:** making planning more accessible and efficient by the imaginative use of information technology. This award is sponsored by *Planning Officers Society*;

**Arts Culture Sport:** where public/performing art, cultural and sports proposals have assisted with the regeneration of places, including for example where local people have benefited from greater access to the opportunities provided;

**Public Realm:** including all aspects of townscape and landscape enhancement.

**Spatial Strategies:** spatial frameworks that are soundly based and have a demonstrable prospect of delivering sustainable development via coordinated action from public, private, voluntary and community sectors. This award is sponsored by *Communities and Local Government*;

**Equality and Diversity:** including good practice in the promotion of equality and diversity through planning within a local planning authority, consultancy or other body.

**Other Category:** for submissions that do not fall readily into any of the above categories. The judges may identify other categories of special awards once they have reviewed the entries. Awards will not necessarily be made in every category in the event that no submissions of sufficient merit are received.

The **Premier award** is marked by the presentation of the **Silver Jubilee Cup**, donated to the Institute which is held by the winning group for one year.

### HOW TO ENTER


**Project Summary:** The project summary should comprise no more than 4 sides of A4. It should draw attention to the particular nature of the achievement, for example in terms of methodology, approach, design, co-ordination or implementation of the plan, process, project or completed scheme. It should include basic facts about the entry, including where appropriate:

- 1) The location of the project
- 2) A description of the area
- 3) The timescale over which the project evolved
- 4) The problems tackled by the project
- 5) The solutions devised
- 6) The results achieved
- 7) Building elements and financial aspects
- 8) How the entry fits into its statutory planning context, and sustainable development requirements.

All the major parties involved in the project should be listed so that their contribution to the achievement can be evaluated. These may include local authority departments, planning and other consultancies, developers, public agencies and voluntary and community organisations.

**Support Material:** Any additional support materials must be sent to the RTPI directly by post. We require **two** copies of this material as one copy is sent to the relevant RTPI Region for use in their own awards programme. Support material may include professional quality photographs or other illustrations showing the nature of the achievement and other succinct and relevant supporting material that illustrates the key points and which will assist the judges.

**Judging criteria:** To merit a national award, entries must demonstrate outstanding achievement judged to have advanced significantly the science and art of town planning for the benefit of the community, or to provide an outstanding example of the beneficial impact of positive planning.

For further information please contact Judy Woollett at RTPI, 41 Botolph Lane, London EC2 0207 949 9292 or email: [judy.woollett@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:judy.woollett@rtpi.org.uk). 


## WMCCE announces award finalists

**W**est Midlands Centre for Construction Excellence has just announced the finalists for its 5th Constructing Excellence Annual Awards. The winners will be declared at the Celebrating Construction Awards Dinner on Friday 30th April at the ICC, Birmingham.

This prestigious annual event is co-hosted by WMCCE and the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) and brings together construction companies of the region to share excellence in best practice and to celebrate their achievements. 19 companies have made the finals in categories such as the 'Leadership in People Development Award' – sponsored by CIOB, the 'Sustainability Award' -

sponsored by Business Link WM and the 'Innovation Award' – sponsored by University of Wolverhampton.

The winner of the 'Project of the Year' Award, will be announced on the night. WMCCE say that they have been highly impressed by the high standard of applications received, despite the current economic climate.

For information on booking tickets for **Celebrating Construction 10**, please contact Jo Webb at CIOB on 0845 070 6137 or [jwebb@ciob.org.uk](mailto:jwebb@ciob.org.uk). or Dorota Deptula on 0121 688 4050 or [d.deptula@wmcce.org](mailto:d.deptula@wmcce.org). 

## Politics and Planning – the YPwestmids debate

As the General Election looms, over 100 young planners gathered on Wednesday 27th January at the PriceWaterhouseCoopers Auditorium, in Birmingham for the inaugural YPwestmids seminar of 2010. The high profile event, sponsored by Reed Recruitment, featured the opposition parties' manifestos, in the wake of the Election.

Hugh Ellis, Chief Planner at the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA), outlined his concerns with the current planning system and urged that if effective change is to become a reality, then planning needs to be given a greater priority in Whitehall. Hugh felt that the expected change in political leadership represented an opportunity to strengthen the profession to meet the spatial reorganisation and sustainability pressures within the current climate change agenda.

Bob Neill MP, Shadow Local Government and Planning Minister felt that 'planning on the ground' has become disconnected from those who actually regulate the profession. Bob argued that a successful planning system needs to engage with ordinary citizens to ensure public ownership of the profession rather than simply imposing it on communities from above. Decisions taken at a high spatial level only serve to reduce the confidence that individuals and communities have with the planning process and consequently any review will need to focus on delivering effective 'front-loading' mechanisms.


Lord Greaves, Liberal Democrat Spokesman for Communities and Local Government drew on his personal experience, outlining the perceived tension between politicians and planners. He felt that the premise of a successful and efficient

planning system rests on achieving democratic legitimacy, in both the formation of national and local planning policy guidance which may help to remove uncertainty.

During a lively and constructive debate which principally considered the impact of political change on the wider planning profession, a general consensus was reached that whatever Government is next in power the system needs to be simplified, streamlined and more transparent to the communities it affects. However, a system which is in constant change then needs time to 'bed in'. Following the debate, delegates headed to the *Pub Du Vin* for welcome drinks and networking opportunities.

Joanne Hooper, Chair of YPwestmids and a Senior Planner at Drivers Jonas, commented:

*"It was fantastic to see so many planners turn out to hear about the opposition parties' proposals to reform the planning system. The fact that this event attracted a wide range of planning professionals in the region, including both students and leading planners alike, shows just how timely and important the issue is for our profession. Organising events like this is also a great way to form links with high level politicians who are at the forefront of policy reform".*

YPwestmids would like to thank the speakers for their time and Reed Recruitment for sponsoring the evening. 

**Alastair Thornton**  
Walsall Council

## Reinstatement to Chartered Membership


Former members of the RTPI whose membership has lapsed can for a short time take advantage of a one-off subscription arrears amnesty.

For a limited period, the RTPI will waive any outstanding membership subscriptions for those who wish to reinstate their membership. This offer will be available for a six month period from 1st January until 30th June 2010. After this point, reinstating members will once again become liable for their outstanding arrears.

Reinstatement to Chartered Membership will involve the following:

- Completion of a reinstatement application form, including evidence of continuing professional development (CPD) activity for the last two years.
- Payment of a £50 administrative fee.
- Applications for Reinstatement under this amnesty will be considered by the Membership Panel through the normal process.

For an application form and more details, please visit [www.rtpi.org.uk/join](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/join) or contact [membership@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:membership@rtpi.org.uk)

Kate Webster, Marketing Officer, Royal Town Planning Institute, 41 Botolph Lane, London EC3R 8DL. Tel: 020 7929 9470 Fax: 020 7929 9490 [www.rtpi.org.uk](http://www.rtpi.org.uk) 

## WMPAS Rural Community Involvement Project starts in Shrops

West Midlands Planning Aid has launched a new 'Community Involvement Project supported by Shropshire Council. The 6 month project aims to support disadvantaged rural communities to get involved in producing a sustainability audit of their areas as a prelude to identifying locations for future housing development within Local Development Framework documents.


We will be working with Shropshire's Local Joint Committees which have been recently established in Shropshire. These are effectively combinations of several Parish Council areas and are seen as a key route into the local community.

Richard Cobb; WMPAS's part time Community Planner, will be working 2-3 days per week to involve communities using a rural sustainability toolkit which has been chosen by Shropshire Council as a technique to engage different sections of the community. In addition to facilitating large scale parish wide

events, he will be going out to 'hard to reach' communities including Gypsy & Traveller communities, small businesses, young and older people to engage them in the process.

The results of the consultation will be considered alongside the outcome of the Shropshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment to identify those areas that may be suitable as locations for future development which may be included in the forthcoming Site Allocations DPD which is being consulted on in parallel.

A programme of events is currently being finalised and Richard is looking to involve our volunteers in helping to deliver the project.

For further information please contact Richard Cobb at WMPAS on: 0121 236 8896 or [richard.cobb@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk](mailto:richard.cobb@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk) 

# Continuing Professional Development

..... Events Calendar :: March > May .....

## ..... REGIONAL PROGRAMME .....

Non-members of RTPI welcome to attend.

### TUESDAY 30 MARCH

#### Town Centres & Retail Planning Update

Venue: Council House, Lichfield  
Time: 10am – 1.30pm (includes lunch)  
Cost: **£50 incl VAT** (reductions for unwaged & group bookings)  
Details & Booking: Sue Griffith-Jones  
Tel 0121 709 1599  
Email [westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk)

### WEDNESDAY 21 APRIL

#### Prevention is better than cure – Planning for Health & Well-being

This seminar will:

- Highlight how the planning system can support increased active recreation and have a major positive impact on the quality of life
- Identify best practice in writing planning policy at regional, sub-regional and local levels including through CSS/CSs, LDFs, SPDs and masterplanning as well as PPG17 and other Government Guidance
- Identify best advice and best practice in delivery of planning policy including producing robust evidence based policy background, flexible land use allocations and co-location
- Help justify the case for a higher priority for planning policy and investment in infrastructure in sport, active recreation, schools and green infrastructure.
- Show how to strengthen delivery through S106/tariff/CIL processes
- Highlight the role of “Total Place” in planning for health and social well-being

#### Speakers include:

**David Moorcroft OBE**, Chair of West Midlands London 2012 Olympics Leadership Group, former Chief Executive of UK Athletics and 5000m World Record Holder  
**Clr Phil Townshend**, Chair of the University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust, Coventry City Councillor  
**David O’Neil**, Managing Director of Nortoft, one of the UK’s leading sports, leisure, health and regeneration planning consultancies  
Venue: Alan Higgs Centre, Coventry  
Time: 10am – 3.30pm (Registration from 9.45pm)

Cost: **£50 incl VAT** (reductions for unwaged & group bookings)  
Details & Booking: Sue Griffith-Jones  
Tel 0121 709 1599  
Email [westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk)

### WEDNESDAY 12 MAY

#### The Infrastructure Planning Commission

Joint event with the Compulsory Purchase Association  
Speakers include:  
**Jonathan Bore**, Director of Case Management IPC  
**Hector Pearson**, Land & Development Manager, National Grid  
**Dr Malcolm Bell**, Independent rural planning specialist  
Venue: Offices of Pinsent Masons Birmingham  
Time: Afternoon seminar preceded by lunch  
Cost: **£50 incl VAT** (reductions for unwaged & group bookings)  
Details & Booking: Sue Griffith-Jones  
Tel 0121 709 1599  
Email [westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk)

## ..... OTHER EVENTS .....

### WEDNESDAY 24 FEBRUARY

#### Low Emission Developments

Venue: De Montfort University, Leicester  
Time: 1pm – 5pm  
Cost: **Free**  
Organiser: RTPI East Midlands  
Details & booking: [epp@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:epp@rtpi.org.uk)

### THURSDAY 25 FEBRUARY

#### West Midlands Built Environment & Design Fair

Venue: Space2, Custard Factory, Birmingham  
Time: 4 - 7pm  
Cost: **Free**. Registration recommended  
Organiser: Designed Environment West Mids Network  
Details & booking: [www.regenwm.org](http://www.regenwm.org)

### MONDAY 1 MARCH

#### Low Carbon Dissemination Programme

Venue: Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham  
Time: 12 – 3.30pm  
Cost: **Free** including lunch  
Organiser: Nottingham Trent University  
Details & booking: [chinwe.isiadins@ntu.ac.uk](mailto:chinwe.isiadins@ntu.ac.uk)

### TUESDAY 2 MARCH

#### The Future of the Modern City

Venue: Belgrade Theatre, Coventry  
Time: 8.30am – 8pm  
Cost: **£75 incl VAT** before 14 February, £175 after  
Organiser: Coventry City Council & Partners  
Details & booking: [www.coventry.gov.uk/moderncity](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/moderncity)  
Tel Maureen Leigh Tel 024 7683 2764

### WEDNESDAY 3 MARCH

#### Health in SEA

Venue: Birmingham  
Time: 9.30am – 4pm  
Cost: **Free**  
Organiser: WMPHO  
Details & booking: Freya Cooper  
Tel 0121 414 8190  
Email [Freya.Cooper@wmpho.org.uk](mailto:Freya.Cooper@wmpho.org.uk)

### MONDAY 8 MARCH

#### A Healthy Environment

Venue: BVSC, Birmingham  
Time: 9.30am – 4pm  
Cost: **Free**  
Organiser: Health Protection Agency  
Details & booking: [paul.fisher@hpa.org.uk](mailto:paul.fisher@hpa.org.uk)

### WEDNESDAY 17 MARCH

#### Healthy Rural Communities National Conference

Venue: Albrighton Hall, near Shrewsbury  
Time: 10.30am – 4pm  
Cost: **Free**  
Organiser: Improvement and Development Agency  
Details & booking: Further details and on line booking at [www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelid=16445953](http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelid=16445953)  
Tel: 020 7296 6178.

### THURSDAY 25 MARCH

#### Hydrogen & Fuel Cells for Clean Cities, Vehicles & Buildings

Venue: Galley Suite, NEC, Birmingham  
Time: 8.30am – 6.30pm  
Cost: **£143.75 incl VAT** (students £57.50)  
Organiser: Climate Change Solutions  
Details & Booking: Tony McNally  
Tel 024 7621 7749  
Email [info@climate-change-solutions.co.uk](mailto:info@climate-change-solutions.co.uk)  
Webpage [www.climate-change-solutions.co.uk](http://www.climate-change-solutions.co.uk)

## Coventry ‘The Future of the Modern City’, 2nd March 2010

Coventry will host a star studded cast of speakers at the ‘*Future of the Modern City*’ national symposium in Coventry on 2nd March.

Paresh Shingadia from the RTPI West Midlands Branch has been engaging with Coventry City Council to organise a national symposium entitled “*The Future of the Modern City*” which is being promoted widely throughout the UK to Local Authorities, private consultants in the built environment, regeneration agencies, developers, the voluntary sector, Universities and professional institutes.

The Symposium has been organised in partnership with the RTPI, RICS, RIBA, Landscape Institute, Transport Planning Society, English Heritage, Midlands Architecture and Designed Environment (MADE), RegenWM, Advantage West Midlands, Association of Town Centre Managers, and Coventry University.

As the world emerges from global economic recession and faces up to the challenges of adapting to climate change,

the symposium will address emerging problems and innovative thinking on future solutions to help cities shape themselves for the future.

The aim is to discuss creating socially, environmentally and economically successful city and town centres which are well planned, well designed and well managed. Leading thinkers and exponents of change in the built environment will cover the following key themes:

- Oliver Shulze - Places
- James Woodhuysen - Innovation in investment and sustainability
- Wayne Hemingway - Regeneration and living
- TBC - Buildings and design
- Professor Glen Lyons - Transport
- Mayor Greg Nikels (Seattle) ‘World City’ exemplar.
- Mike Simpson “The City at Night”.

Further information can be found at [www.coventry.gov.uk/moderncity](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/moderncity)

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CPD

Jan / Feb 8

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