

Climate Change Champions: summary report of meeting on 5th May 2010

1. Introduction to the RTPI's [Climate Change Initiative](#) by Matt Thomson, RTPI Head of Policy and Practice
2. Climate Change Champion example: the Development Planning Network. John Hack gave a [presentation](#) of his experience as a Network climate change champion and activities currently on-going within the Network. On the Network's [climate change website](#) are posed a series of questions on LDFs, Regional Strategies and Climate Change to generate a discussion, although there has been a limited response to date. Only two have responded, although both are high quality. Other networks could perhaps consider a similar exercise.
3. Discussion Groups: what are our key sectoral/regional priorities and what can we do?

Group 1 summary:

Nicola Gough (**chair**), James Gleave, John Hack, Lester Hicks, Michael Russell, Dermot Scanlon, Chris Tivey

- **Key issues:** Breaking the link between economic growth and travel demand; political acceptability of changing lifestyles and encouraging adaptability to change; integration of spatial planning and assessment; importance of liaison with other institutions concerned with the built environment and development, notably RICS, ICE and RIBA, and bodies such as TCPA and FoE that also talk to government on planning matters
- **Proposed actions:** dissemination of information; evaluation of existing tools (e.g. EIA, masterplanning) and signposting to best practice; development of new tools; events; campaigning; briefing government; more work with other professional bodies and interest groups

Group 2 summary:

Andrew Matheson (**chair**), Trish Cookson, Neil Gulliver, Stephen Isaac, Stephen Lorimer, Jon Morris, Paul Tomlinson

- **Key issues:** health effects of climate change; poor knowledge of the bigger picture; lack of skills and expertise; too much innovation – always waiting for the next development instead of implementation now
- **Proposed actions:** build networks between planners and health professionals; disseminate good practice examples via webpages; collaborate with other professional bodies; develop project on lifestyle and health in relation to sustainability; study visit to Scandinavia to learn from good practice and disseminate knowledge; identify groups that would benefit from receipt of e-bulletin and send wider (e.g.

PCTs); every member of networks to identify two people who could get involved; help to increase skills and expertise; develop matrix of pilot projects to understand the bigger picture and identify gaps; help development management planners and planning inspectors to understand climate change policies; contact Regional Centres of Excellence; pull together list of potential funders; RTPI approved list of technologies; events; promotion of urban design as an enabler; more use of network discussion forums; links on website to work of other professional bodies on climate change

Group 3 summary:

Catherine Middleton (**Chair**), Lucy Botterill, Richard Garland, Sarah Lewis, Michael Lloyd Hughes, Richard Summers, Adrien Waite

- Key issues: poor awareness of issues amongst enforcement officers; harnessing wind energy;
 - Proposed actions: think pieces enabling discussion of key issues; bring together young planners regionally; increased resources on NAPE's website; dissemination of case studies; use of *Planning* magazine to disseminate information (e.g. young planners' page); link with other professionals, e.g. RICS; emphasis on young planners and what they can do; drip feed approach; use Discussion Forums
4. Brian O'Callaghan, RTPI Head of Education & Lifelong Learning: advised that £100,000 had been received from CLG to set up an online distance learning CPD resource aimed at planners in practice. The 1st topic area (in approx 8 months time) will be on planning for climate change. An e-learning project officer is in the process of being appointed. A Steering Group is to be appointed and Brian invited one of the Climate Change Champions to sit on the Group. The Climate Change Champions were also invited to contribute to a consultation to be launched shortly on the learning outcomes from accredited planning schools in particularly in respect of climate change content. Contact has been made with the CLG climate change skills fund.
 5. Ben Lee, RTPI Communications & Public Affairs Officer: explained that the Communications Team would be happy to advise Climate Change Champions on working with the media to get messages across.
 6. Sarah Lewis, RTPI Planning Practice Officer: demonstrated the [Climate Change Compendium](#) and invited comment on:
 - Is it the right information – should it only include practice guidance, or are research reports useful for making the case for change?
 - How helpful are case studies showing how initiatives have worked elsewhere?
 - Is it presented in the best way – is it logical and easy to navigate?
 - What is missing – individual pieces of guidance, topic areas?
 7. [Planning Policy Statement: Planning for a Low Carbon Future in a Changing Climate](#): consultation discussion. The Institute's final submission to government will be available on [policy pages](#) of the RTPI website in due course.
 8. [Planning Policy Statement: Planning for a Natural and Healthy Environment](#): consultation discussion. The Institute's final submission to government will be available on [policy pages](#) of the RTPI website in due course.

9. Planning and Research.

Research aware of:

- UCL Energy Institute: work on Building Regulations, energy use in homes, redesign of sustainable cities
- UWE: climate change and mitigation in suburbs
- Birmingham City Council: commissioning an energy strategy for the city
- Planning Advisory Service: commissioning a tool for planners to assess the impact of renewable energy on buildings
- Planning Advisory Service; will be guidance to support new climate change PPSs
- UCL: looking for funding to revise GLA Housing Design Manual

Research needed:

- Consolidate research findings - bring together good practice, advice and pilots (RTPI as broker?)
- What will a sustainable city look like?
- Practice guidance for urban designers, development management officers
- From core strategies to allocations – climate change input
- Signposting
- Advice and training on commercial sector
- Do vision statements in LDFs take account of climate change?

10. Questions and general discussion

- Conditions are not always enforced. Need to make provision for post-consent monitoring of environmental issues if serious about climate change, but there are staff resource issues. This was tightened up in respect of minerals and fees were introduced to monitor minerals conditions. Current situation needs to be monitored to inform future planning, although it may not be possible to amend a planning permission. One solution might be to pay a bond up-front, which would get back if complied – however a bond is not always set at a sufficient level to ensure compliance (cheaper not to comply).
- How are planners measuring up to climate change since the RTPI introduced the 7 Commitments? Everyone has been busy and engaged, but Copenhagen didn't help, nor the UEA data scandal. And the economy is now dominating the political agenda, climate change needs to fight for attention.
- Is climate change mainstream in planning thinking if not in practice? It will be if educational requirements are implemented. But with a lack of commitment, economic growth will come out on top. There is always an assumption that we can carry on growing, without taking 'living on one planet' seriously enough. There needs to be resource resilience but there is no political will to say e.g. not to travel on holiday. The green agenda is not yet biting, it is more focused at a micro level, e.g. on green corridors, forests etc., and the Stern report has lost impetus.

11. Summary (Richard Summers)

- Example from core strategies in the South East showed that policies on climate change were now getting into documents
- Still a focus on the built environment and not on spatial planning. Some progress but more is needed
- The Climate Change Champions will disseminate good practice and case studies via the website and e-bulletins, and invite debate via think pieces
- The political acceptability of climate change was questioned
- The RTPPI has received funding for online training, and is consulting on learning outcomes. Contact has been made with the CLG climate change skills fund.
- The RTPPI Communications Team will help with promotion
- The Climate Change Compendium has no spatial planning overview yet but is an on-going project
- The PPS consultations are missing a spatial planning overview; the consultation on the PPS on Planning for a Natural and Healthy Environment is not fully integrated with planning for health
- Need research to consolidate existing findings and to provide guidance for planners and designers
- The planning profession has embraced climate change, despite setbacks (e.g. failures at Copenhagen, problems at UEA)
- Climate change is sufficiently mainstreamed in planning thinking and will be supported by the RTPPI

12. Pledges

Dermot Scanlon: Will implement climate change projections in work undertaking and disseminate to network members

Paul Tomlinson: Will build bridges between the health sector and planners, and will review climate change page on the EPP *Healthy Communities* Group website

Trish Cookson: Will continue to support the RTPPI climate change champion initiative

Catherine Middleton: Will review NAPE's climate change webpage

Nicola Gough: Will help climate change champions to identify appropriate activities

Sarah Lewis: Will link work with that of other organisations

Adrien Waite: Will speak with young planners at TCPA etc to see if there is scope for collaborative working

Lucy Botterill: Will share experience of working on planning applications that incorporate sustainable buildings

Jon Morris: Will provide good practice examples for the Compendium

Neil Gulliver: Will promote PIPA and politicians' support for projects

Stephen Lorimer: Will try and give urban designers confidence as enablers

Lester Hicks: Will brief the POS minerals group on climate change and provide information for the website

Stephen Isaac: Will spread RTPI climate change work in own organisation and other networks

Chris Tivey: will focus on the networks and get more people involved, and will talk to Brain O'Callaghan about the new CPD resource

Andrew Matheson: Will organise climate change events and ensure is on the agenda at the PIPA conference

James Gleave: Will update the webpage (Transport Planning Network) and invite others to contribute

John Hack: Will increase visibility of climate change champions and canvass others in the regions, taking advantage of the change in government to raise the profile of climate change issues

Richard Garland: Will act as a mouthpiece for the Rural Planning Network, providing case studies and promoting the RTPI role

Michael Russell: Will be more proactive in the Development Management Network, looking at differences in local authorities and demonstrating good practice

Richard Summers: Will keep the climate change champion initiative going through his presidential year

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Annex 1:

Attending:

Name	Network
Lucy Botterill	Young Planners' Network
Trish Cookson	RTPI Networks & Associations Developer + manager of Young Planners and EPP Network
Richard Garland	Rural Planning Network
James Gleave	Transport Planning Network
Nicola Gough	RTPI Network Manager: Development Management, Development Planning, Transport

	Planning
Neil Gulliver	PIPA (Politicians in Planning Network)
John Hack	Development Planning Network
Lester Hicks	EPP Network (Minerals & Waste)
Stephen Isaac	EPP Network (Biodiversity & Countryside Management)
Ben Lee (for part)	RTPI Communications & Public Affairs Officer
Sarah Lewis	RTPI Planning Practice Officer
Michael Lloyd Hughes	NAPE (National Association for Planning Enforcement)
Stephen Lorimer	Urban Design Network
Andrew Matheson	RTPI Network Manager: PIPA, Urban Design, Planning for Housing
Catherine Middleton	RTPI Network Manager: Regeneration, NAPE, Rural Planning
Jon Morris	Planning for Housing Network
Brian O'Callaghan (for part)	RTPI Head of Education & Lifelong Learning
Michael Russell	Development Management Network
Dermot Scanlon	EPP Network (Environmental Assessment)
Richard Summers (Chair)	RTPI Senior Vice President
Chris Tivey	EPP Network (Energy Generation)
Matt Thomson (for part)	RTPI Head of Policy and Practice
Paul Tomlinson	EPP Network (Healthy Communities)
Adrien Waite	Young Planners' Network

Apologies:

Name	Network
Sue Brett	EPP Network (Minerals & Waste)
Roisin Corry	NAPE
Scott Elliott Adams	Urban Design Network
Adiba Farrah	Regeneration Network