



## West Midlands Oscar Ceremony and Hollywood Ball: Friday 23rd July 2010

This year, for the first time, the **RTPI West Midlands** is combining the presentation of the Annual Award for **Planning Achievement** with an exciting and lavish ‘Oscars’ style awards ceremony and **Hollywood themed Ball** for members, partners and guests in the company of RTPI President, Ann Skippers.

This new event, which will be held on **Friday 23rd July 2010** at the stunning Birmingham **Botanical Gardens**, is bound to prove popular, both as a key opportunity to celebrate **planning excellence** in the Region as well as a lively social occasion not to be missed.

In addition to the main award for **Planning Achievement** (and possible commendations), there will be awards for the **Best Consultancy, Best Local Authority, Team of the Year** and a **Special Chairman’s award!!!** Nomination forms will be circulated shortly.

**Tickets are now available**, please book before the end of June to take advantage of the



‘earlybird’ rate of £40. Tables of ten are also available to book at a cost of £400. Please note the ticket prices will increase from the 1st of July.

We’d like to thank GVA Grimley for taking the lead sponsorship package. There are five opportunities still available to brand elements of the dinner and awards ceremony, promoting your authority, company or consultancy (see page 10 for details).

This will be a black tie event, for the gentlemen at least, with live music, good food and warm company and a real chance to see Birmingham at its best! See you there!

**Please book early to avoid disappointment, we anticipate demand will be high for this event.**

For more details, to book your places or to enquire further on sponsorship packages please contact Sue Griffith Jones, Regional Co-ordinator: Telephone: 0121 709 1599 or email: [westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk)



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## Chair's remarks

**A**nd so the general election has finally been called and we have moved from the phoney war to the real one. Whilst many of us may already be feeling election fatigue, the RTPI has responded by launching their manifesto, which stands up for planning as a catalyst for economic recovery.

The RTPI has been working hard behind the scenes at a national level to influence the emerging planning policies of the main parties, but there must be some dismay at how little influence it has had over the Conservative Party Green Paper on planning. We in the West Midlands debated the paper at our March Regional Activities Committee with a view to passing on our comments to the national RTPI, to assist them in their official response. The general feeling was that the paper is rather simplistic and naive and lacks any real substance or detail on how concepts such as 'localism' will actually work in practice. In particular, the proposed removal of the regional planning tier could seriously undermine the competitiveness of the economically fragile West Midlands, by limiting our ability to create and coordinate a common vision. We now await with interest the official RTPI comments and any subsequent Tory party response.

As Regional Chairman, I am very keen for us as professionals to consider what planning really stands for locally, regionally and nationally and how we can work, both as individuals and collectively (through the RTPI) to make our voices heard in influencing, whichever Government is formed post May 6th.

With this in mind, it seems perfect timing for our inaugural Planning Panel Debate. On Thursday 29th April at the Guildhall in Worcester, Worcester City Council will host the first in a series of four debates across the region to encourage and facilitate a positive discussion over the role that planning should play in the economic recovery. The Worcester panel consists of a cross section of politicians, public and private sector planners (as well as young planners), to reflect the breadth of our profession in what should be a lively and interactive debate.

In my experience, we are all often so busy concentrating on getting a good job done, that there is little time for us to stand back and reflect on why we went into planning in the first place and what we as individuals and a profession believe needs to be done to make the planning system more responsive, engaging and effective. These debates are deliberately free of charge to encourage as many of you as possible to be persuaded to put a couple of hours aside and join us in the discussion. It is also an excellent opportunity for people like me, who are active within the Regional RTPI, to gather your views on how we can best meet your professional development needs and also pass on any relevant issues, concerns and ideas to the national RTPI.

On June 17th a similar event will be held in Leamington Spa (with a different albeit locally based panel) the

timing of which will allow us to focus on any relevant emerging policies from the new Government. Two further debates will be held during the autumn, in the north of the region and in Birmingham. Thanks to John Wrightson of Worcester City Council and Gary Stevens of Warwick District Council for assisting in the venues and organising panel members for the first two debates. I am also grateful to those who have agreed to take part on the respective panels. It epitomises my intention over the year to encourage as many Members of the profession as possible to take part in our events. The more of us who are actively engaged in the operations of the West Midlands RTPI Region, the stronger and more effective we will become.



On that note, we are continuing our drive to strengthen the role and network of local convenors. Local convenors can play a key role both in promoting events within their local workplace and also providing feedback to the Regional Activities Committee. There is also scope to utilise the network of convenors to share good practice with one another. Convenors will therefore be invited to their local Panel Debate to meet with RAC Members and discuss how we can improve on what is a vital role.

Finally, I must give a plug for the forthcoming RTPI Summer Reception and Ball. As you may be aware, we have previously held 3 very successful Planning Balls during February 2007-09, but this winter we reluctantly took the decision that, given the tough economic conditions, we should not take the risk. On recent reflection, we felt that the absence of a social occasion to celebrate the excellent work within the Region has left quite a gap in our calendar and, given the improving economic mood we have decided to take the brave step of combining the traditional Summer Reception with a wider social event to create a Summer Ball.

In an attempt to make the event more appealing, we are proposing to present the 'Regional Award for Planning Achievement' at the Ball and have also expanded this year's awards to include three other categories. This gives you an opportunity to take part in the nominations for the awards and details of how you can do this are provided on the front page of Tripwire. We will be holding the event at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens, a wonderful location for a summers evening, in the presence of our National RTPI President Ann Skippers. Hopefully as many of you as possible will be encouraged to attend/ the event and enjoy what should be a very special occasion. We have sought to keep the ticket prices as low as possible in order to encourage a good attendance (whilst still having to break even) when we can celebrate the achievements of West Midlands planners in the appropriate, social setting. I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible during the course of these forthcoming events and thank you in anticipation for your support. 🏠

**Steve Hill**  
West Midlands Regional Chair

## RTPI Planning Manifesto Launched


In the wake of the declaration of the General Election, the RTPI has recently published its Manifesto, 'Planning: Shaping the Future'.

Clearly, debate about the planning system will play an important role in the general election campaign, with each of the parties having significantly different views on what the planning system should look like. The manifesto sets out what the Institute believes in and how it will seek to influence the next Government to ensure that the planning system is effective, responsive and fit for purpose, and delivering truly sustainable development.

The Manifesto has been developed by the RTPI Executive Board following in-depth discussion of principles by the General Assembly. It also takes account of extensive meetings over the past twelve months with the political parties.

Martin Willey, Chair of the Planning Policy and Practice Committee said: "The RTPI's Manifesto for Planning could not come at a more important moment.

*It is absolutely essential that the importance and value of planning is restated to an incoming government and that a clear view of what the profession stands for and seeks in the future is widely promoted. The Manifesto sets out the way forward for an effective and responsive planning system, and the Institute and its members are ready to play their key role in shaping economic recovery through the planning system, ensuring that development is sustainable and climate change proof."*

You can visit our special election page on the RTPI website at [www.rtpi.org.uk/election](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/election) to see where each of the political parties stand on planning. This page, which will be regularly updated as Manifestos are published, also highlights ways in which members might want to get engaged in the campaign on planning matters. We will, in addition, have interviews with the key planning spokespeople of the main parties and other items of interest. 

**Sara Drake**  
Managing Director, RTPI


## RTPI Convenors

**S**andra Ford, a member of the Regional Activities Committee and well known to most of you, is currently 'convening' the convenors.

Sandra is trying to get an accurate list of all the public sector and private sector convenors and is holding gatherings of convenors alongside the Regional Debates in Worcester and Warwick, so that they can meet each other and clarify their roles and responsibilities.

If you are a convenor and would like to attend one of these meetings, please just turn up at the date

and time advertised elsewhere in the magazine. Alternatively, if your office lacks a convenor who can act as a focus for distribution of the magazine and a channel for comments, why not volunteer to become a convenor. It's a good way of meeting people, making contacts and finding out more about the profession.


For more information please call:  
**Sandra Ford, Planning Manager, ATLAS, 5 St Phillips Place, Colmore Row, Birmingham B3 2PW.**  
**Tel: 0121 234 9940 Fax: 0121 352 5160** 

## Wow! Louise wins top award!

**L**ouise Brooke-Smith, Director of planning & development in her own practice 'CSJ Brooke Smith' in Birmingham has won a major award entitled 'Women on their Way' (WOW) for 'Woman in Construction/ Engineering'.

Louise who is a member of RTPI West Midlands and indeed spoke at last year's RTPI West Midlands AGM is a former RTPI Regional Committee member and past President of the RICS West Midlands. The RICS, in fact, nominated her for the award.

Louise was widely acknowledged by the judging panel as being someone whose busy life and achievements make her stand out from her peers, while also taking the time to aid the development of the careers of other women.

The awards ceremony was held at the Aston Villa Football ground. For more details of Women on their Way see their website <http://www.womenontheirway.co.uk/> 



## Government Funding for Planning Aid Boosts Community Engagement Work

The Royal Town Planning Institute has welcomed the news that Planning Aid England's funding will increase to £4.5m this year allowing it to extend its valuable work in engaging communities in planning.

John Healey, Planning Minister, made the announcement whilst unveiling new measures designed to speed up decision-making in councils.

Planning Aid England provides free, independent and professional planning advice to individuals and communities who cannot afford to pay professional fees.

Last year the service provided planning advice and support to more than 31,000 individuals and groups.

Planning Aid England is part of the Royal Town Planning Institute and it has nine regional offices across England. In London the service is provided by Planning Aid for London, a separate organisation.

**Sue Percy, Director of Planning Aid England, said:**

"Planning Aid England is extremely effective at empowering local communities and helping them have a real influence over the development of their areas.

"The excellent news on funding will allow us to extend our work and give even greater numbers of people a say in shaping the future of the areas where they live and work.

"The funding we get from government means we can help more people, empowering them to influence planning decisions. Planning Aid England is completely independent and impartial and aims to help people to understand the planning system so they can put their views forward effectively."

**Ben Lee, Communications and Public Affairs Officer, Planning Aid. Royal Town Planning Institute, 41 Botolph Lane, London, EC3R 8DL**

## Young Planners Group (YPwestmids)

A very warm thank you to Joanne Hooper who has now stepped down from her role as Chair of YPwestmids and the YPN advisory group. Joanne has been a first class Chair of the group organising some very high profile and well attended events for young planners in the region. Some will remember that last year Jo was voted as 'Tomorrow's leader' in an RTPI regional poll. Jo will still be on the RAC as a corporate member.

In an open email to all the young planners, Jo said 'I'd just like to thank you all for your help and support over the last few years from a YPwestmids perspective. I've really enjoyed working with the group'. A replacement has not been appointed yet, however Alastair Thornton has offered to be temporary 'public face' for YPwestmids until someone takes on the role as Chair. Laura Smith will of course continue to be on the Committee and will act as RAC Liaison officer, and I will still be involved in the Committee as an 'advisor'.

## RTPI West Midlands AGM: Tuesday 25th May 2010

Just a short note to say that the RTPI West Midlands Annual General Meeting will be held on Tuesday 25th May 2010 at the Old Joint Stock pub at St Phillips Square in Birmingham. All members are very welcome to attend.

The meeting this year will be held in conjunction with one of the regular Regional Activities Meetings so if you are not a member of the RAC you will be welcome to stay and join in the discussion. Light refreshments will be served. Full details will be circulated shortly.

## Presidential Award for RTPI Volunteers

At the recent RTPI National Planning Awards in London all the volunteers and active members of the RTPI were given the 'Presidential Special Award'.

Ann Skippers, the new President said, 'can I say a big congratulations and thank you to you all, without your ongoing hard work and support the RTPI would not be the successful organisation that it is, nor we would be able to offer the wide range of member services that you organise and provide. Please would

you mention this award to your RAC and RMB and in your magazines and e bulletins and extend the congratulations of the RTPI'.

More information can be found at <http://www.rtpi.org.uk/item/436&ap=1>

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## Is development in Stratford on Avon 'As you like it' or a 'Comedy of Errors'?

**W**hen the recession lifts and new build gets underway again, planning for new housing promises to throw up some real controversy in the shires.

The inevitable root and branch opposition to any new development will capture the headlines but a more enduring problem is that of how new housing should be planned and designed. This was well illustrated at a one-day workshop on housing design organised by the Stratford-upon-Avon Society towards the end of last year to impress on local planners and councillors that design should not be left entirely to the builders themselves. If a town such as Stratford is not to be surrounded by a sea of mediocrity, there must be strong local input to designs and layout.

The day threw up a fascinating clash over the question of the cost of good design. On the one hand James Hulme from the Prince's Foundation and Julia Ellis from MADE set out the case that sustainable and liveable urban extensions are not optional extras and can, in any event be achieved at very little additional cost. On the other, James Stevens of the Home Builders Federation said that cost must be the overriding driver; house purchasers' primary interest is price and planners should guard against adding to prices or undermining the delivery of affordable housing.

The day's other main speakers offered examples of ways in which authorities can take a clear lead in promoting designs and layouts to produce places in which people enjoy living and which enhance the urban landscape. Erica Davies of the Homes and Communities Agency described the use of the Enquiry by Design process at the Upton extension of Northampton. The process brings all parties – including residents –

together to thrash out principles for overall development and for design of individual units. Results are still coming through but it seems clear that this degree of local involvement produces results which are appreciated by those mainly affected, namely the local residents.

On a different tack, Simon Payne, Director of Environment and Planning at Cambridge City Council (and formerly at Stratford on Avon DC) described the strong input which the City had made to the development of the Accordia scheme. In this case, the authority had given a clear steer to the developers through a design brief and a quality charter. The scheme has achieved a density of 40 dwelling per ha yet with its innovative designs and incorporation of green spaces is much appreciated by residents. And it was the first housing scheme in the UK to win the RIBA's Sterling Prize.

For the moment no new houses are being approved in Stratford on Avon district as a whole due to the continuing moratorium, although it is widely known that as many as 2000 units (the town's present stock is some 12,000) are in the pipeline within the emerging Local Development Framework, for the town itself. Both the Council's Portfolio Holder for Planning and Chief Planner spoke at the workshop and picked up on a number of points which emerged, notably the need for the district to appoint a design champion. The Stratford Society clearly has the bit between its teeth and will continue to put pressure on the authority to take a pro-active role in the further development of the town. Watch this space. [📄](#)

**Peter Burgess**  
Stratford upon Avon Society

## Sense of place: Is the masterplan dead?

**O**n 11th February, a wide range of people with an interest in planning and regeneration gathered in Birmingham to discuss the intriguing question of whether the traditional masterplan has become outdated. The event was organised by 'Midlands Architecture and the Designed Environment' (MADE) in association with 'Urban Living', the housing market renewal pathfinder for Sandwell and Birmingham.

The event was structured into four parts. Scene-setting was provided by Nick Corbett from 'Urban Living' who outlined the challenges facing major regeneration programmes as they grapple with the issue of community planning and the need to have meaningful involvement of local people in plans that affect their areas. Professor Nabeel Hamdi from Oxford Brookes University then looked at alternatives to traditional plan-making using techniques such as Community Action Planning, which relies more on the knowledge and experience of local people.

A number of presentations then focused on some specific community planning projects underway in the Soho Road area of Birmingham. The projects were led by various teams of specialists working with local

residents and businesses using a range of tools and techniques to capture local people's stories of 'sense of place'. The work has added value to the master-planning process for Soho Road and has fed into the wider strategic framework being prepared for the area by GVA Grimley on behalf of Birmingham City Council.

After lunch, the conference broke out into small groups to discuss how local projects and initiatives might be employed to inform the master-planning process. The day concluded with a Q&A session involving a panel of experts and the audience.

Overall the event provided a very interesting and stimulating debate on the future of master-planning with differing views expressed on the subject. It was clear that master-plans, in the traditional sense, still do have a part to play in the regeneration of places, but that they must also be complimented, directed and informed by the needs, knowledge and aspirations of the local community and by those who are directly affected by and have an important stake in any change. [📄](#)

**Darren Oakley**  
Principal Development Planner, Telford & Wrekin Council

## Town Centre and Retail Planning – a review of PPS4




**W**ith the new PPS4 and its Practice Guidance published at the end of 2009, it was with great interest that a packed house listened and discussed the implications of the new guidance on PPS4 on 30th March 2010 at Lichfield District Council. The event was sponsored by Ansons LLP and attracted a wide and varied audience, from all sectors.

Following a welcome from Councillor David Smith (Leader of Lichfield DC), John Rowe of Ansons gave a comprehensive overview of the new PPS4 and the policy context contained within. It is clear that there is the dichotomy between an 'evidence-based' approach and the need to make the planning system quicker and more efficient; not to mention the rationale to make public sector budgetary savings. The presentation showed that there is a clear requirement from Government for a plan-led system but plenty of scope for differing interpretation.

Nick Hardy of GVA Grimley, a regional lead on retail policy, then gave excellent insight into the 'impact test' and some of the key issues arising from his experience at GVA's and his involvement in the Practice Guidance. The recent appeal decision at Broadwalk Retail Park, Walsall raised some interesting points for consideration. Nick highlighted the many similarities between PPS6 and PPS4; the reinforced 'centres first' policy; and also the requirements for an evidence-led approach to ensuring delivery. In terms of Development Management, the guidance seems to point heavily towards pre-application discussions and constructive

discussion, as well as making it clear that development with a significant adverse impact should be refused. As to the definition of "significant", that appears a little more complex.

After a short break, Richard King, Strategic Director at Lichfield DC, gave an overview of Lichfield's forthcoming projects and history. With Garrick Square completed and the Friarsgate Development due to commence soon, exciting times lie ahead for Lichfield and show a qualitative and flexible approach to town centre development can be planned and delivered in a historic context. Other projects such as Bird Street Car Park and Friary Outer show that there is a strategic overview to development aspirations, whilst key components, like views of the Cathedral and historic parts of Lichfield, can still be maintained.

The event ended with questions and comments. As a profession, we await further appeal casework to provide guidance and clarification on the 'Impact tests' and the General Election to provide, maybe new, political influences and direction (the implications of the Tory Green Paper are wide reaching). My thanks, as Chair of the event, go to the excellent speakers, Ansons, the sponsors and Lichfield DC for hosting the event as well as Sue-Griffiths-Jones for her assistance in organising the event. Copies of the presentations are available by email from Sue Griffiths-Jones. 

**Andrew Thompson, Principal Planner at Walsall MBC and Member of the Regional Activities Committee.**

## RTPI appears at House of Commons Select Committee


**T**he RTPI was represented at the House of Commons Select Committee session set up specifically to examine the implications of the new Single Regional Strategy on the West Midlands.

The session held at Worcester was divided into two parts, the first hearing evidence from Dave Carter from Birmingham City Council, officers and members from Malvern Hills and from the National Housing Federation and the second part hearing from John Acres from the RTPI, Debbie Walsh from the RICS and Gerald Kells from the CPRE. A separate session held in London heard from the Government Office civil

servants and from Mark Middleton from the West Midlands Regional Assembly.



The House of Commons Select Committee report which has since been published emphasises the importance of the regional tier in creating a strategic role where all authorities can fit into a jigsaw where the elements combine to create a consistent whole. It also stresses the strong role played by the West Midlands Assembly and other organisations in producing a co-ordinated planning strategy for the region and underlines the critical lack of affordable

housing in the West Midlands arising from the slow delivery of LDF's and the impact of the recession. 

## Letters to the editor – the readers fight back

Dear Sir,

I disagree vehemently with your suggestion that the 4 year immunity rule ought to be removed (Tripwire, Jan/Feb 2010). If you consider the *theory* behind the immunity rule it makes perfect sense: imagine a scenario where an individual constructs a low carbon home from local renewable materials in a woods in the middle of nowhere. They live a low impact, self sufficient lifestyle there, unnoticed for a period in excess of 4 years. They have not harmed anyone or anything. They are immune from enforcement *because the development is acceptable*.

Similarly if a couple live in a disused building as a family for a period in excess of 4 years, contributing to (and as part of) the local community, they have not harmed anyone or anything. Again the change of use is acceptable and should rightly be immune from enforcement.

I cannot comment on the Potters Bar case as I am not familiar with it. However in the “Castle-behind-the-bales” case the judge decided the building operations were not complete until the screen of bales was removed. If the building had not been hidden from view, it would have been noticed earlier and would have been enforced against. The outcome of this case makes logical sense, and I believe is the right decision.

However your suggestion that the 4 year rule ought to be removed is just another example of power-mad planners trying to take control over everyone and everything, does little to engage with the *theory* behind planning law, and flies in the face of common sense. Not all immunity cases are “fraud” (to use your term), and are no worse than the lengths LPA’s will go to in order to prevent perfectly acceptable development or changes of use that have little or no real harm, with the most tenuous of justification.

Let those without sin cast the first stone - as long as they do not live in glass houses (or ivory towers for that matter).

Regards,

**Dominic Cooney**

Master Glassmaker and also Planner

*Another correspondent commented on the December edition of Tripwire,*

Dear Tripwire,


I feel I must respond to your editorial applauding the efforts of Birmingham City Council and its ‘Declaration’ on ‘climate change’. Whilst I agree on the broad ‘green’ initiatives which encourage more recycling, use of electric cars and more energy efficient homes, I am not in agreement with some of the assumptions behind it.

As is all too common in the media now, the debate is biased and obsessed with CO2 emissions while the views of the growing number of sceptics (scientists and non-scientists) on so called man-made ‘climate change’ are not heard. I believe the Copenhagen Summit will prove another waste of time and diversion from the real practical environmental and economic issues facing us – eg. use of water resources (which have local effects on the land), over population and energy supplies etc.

You comment that..... “*It seems most unlikely that any scientist will be able to prove conclusively whether climate variations are caused by mankind, what is much more certain is that the human race is a major contributor to climate change and therefore we must all do something positive about it.*”..... If scientists are unable to prove conclusively that climate change is caused by mankind, as you admit, then equally they are unable to prove conclusively that mankind is a major contributor to climate change, surely?

It is what is behind those leaked emails at University of East Anglia and what is being hidden and not reported that is worrying and stifling the real debate. We really need to open up the debate and to question seriously the claims made by ‘climate change’ scientists. Planners should equally be more willing to question what they are hearing.


**Anon**

If you have any comments on anything you read in Tripwire – or on any other planning matters – please send your letter or email to the Editor at the normal Tripwire address – at the bottom of this edition. 

## WMRSS phase 2 revision Secretary of State’s proposed changes

**O**n 12 March 2010 Lord McKenzie, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG), wrote to the Chairman of the Assembly advising that, following detailed consideration of the RSS process to date, CLG has decided that further work is required before the Secretary of State can publish his Proposed Changes. In his letter Lord McKenzie advised that CLG hopes to be in a position to publish the Proposed Changes by July 2010.

To access the letter please view the Government Office West Midlands (GOWMs) website: <http://www.gos.gov.uk/gowm/Planning/515750/863204/>

Any queries relating to the Proposed Changes should be directed to the GOWM on telephone: 0121 352 5050 or email: [rss.team@gowm.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:rss.team@gowm.gsi.gov.uk) 

**John Pattinson**  
Head of Planning

*tripwire*

Mar / Apr 7

## John Ridgley: 1943-2010

**A professional, a man of integrity, a generous, very sociable individual who really enjoyed being with people.**

John Ridgley who died from cancer after a very short illness will be well remembered by many planners, friends and communities across Warwickshire. This tribute to him includes contributions from Linda, his wife, and Don Foster, whom John worked with at Warwickshire County Council for many years.

My thoughts are from knowing John as a 'boss' and friend from summer 1974 and beyond. I met John when I joined the Planning Department at Warwickshire County Council from the London Borough of Southwark. He was open, friendly and very engaging.

John, who started his planning career with Huntingdon before moving to Lincolnshire, joined Warwickshire County Council in 1971. He was involved with Derelict Land Reclamation and later became an important cog in the development of Warwickshire's Country Parks – especially at Kingsbury. He was a good listener with a fine design appreciation and above all he had a strong belief in serving the community. He was the County Council's link with the Countryside Commission and helped set up the *Warwickshire Landscapes Project* in 1987. This innovative work was the basis for developing the methodology behind the character based approach in understanding our landscapes.

John later prepared Warwickshire's Rural Strategy and then headed up the Regeneration Group becoming a key figure in shaping the market towns policy across the county. He was also a representative on many of the Authorities partnership projects.

Don Foster noted – *'John's calmness in a crisis always stood him in good stead, self-assured but always ready to seek and take advice, working with absolute integrity and a natural professionalism'*.

Even after he retired John was still deeply involved in working with Parish Path Initiatives, rural planning and sat upon the Stratford CVS and the Veolia Landfill Trust.

So what was he like as a boss? He allowed those about him to use their initiative, he was understanding and supportive but above all he was a

good guy. He was a frustrated thespian and he enjoyed a beer or two when discussing the rights and wrongs of the world. I can well recall his interpretation of a well choreographed '3 Degrees' numbers at a Christmas Office party – brilliant! Whilst his opportunity to take on a new persona was evident at every Carnival in his home village of Harbury, including the Incredible Hulk, Pope John Paul, Pc Percival, Noddy & Big Ears, the Flasher, Dracula, Nelson, A Pair of Dimmocks, Holmes and Watson, Two Fat Ladies, Kim & Aggie, Gandalf and Froddo, Hagrid & Harry, Wallace & Gromitt, The Hunchback of Notre Dame and on and on.

Linda added at his Service – *'The Carnival was his one competitive event. He really wanted to win those rosettes and displayed them proudly in his workshop. He had an abiding interest in all aspects of architecture, design, and fashion - especially ladies' lingerie'*.

A keen cyclist in his youth, he learnt his 'cycling trade' working in a bike shop in Slough when he was young. He followed the *Tour de France* with great interest. He had an interest in sport and was often asked whether he played rugby and speculations about the position he might have taken were often discussed.

He was a tad frustrating at times as he was so well

organised, the complete opposite of me. His desk was a model of efficiency and he had a habit of retaining information – though I could never understand why he choose to keep about 10 years of monthly staff clock cards in his desk. When asked he merely replied that 'Audit may need them.'

A huge loss of one of the good guys in life and along with Linda, Sarah and Vicky and their partners and children we grieve the passing of a thoughtful and caring husband, dad, grandfather, colleague and mate. Linda ought to have the last words as these very much encapsulate John.....

*'He was generous, very sociable and really enjoyed being with people. He was never happier than when he was in a pub, with a pint in his hand surrounded by villagers and friends, discussing football or politics or all the other inexplicable things that men talk about when they are together. He enjoyed making people happy and he did throw exceedingly good parties'*. 🍷

**Jerry Birkbeck**



## Strategic Planning – and the CPRE

**A**s we approach the General Election the role and purpose of planning is very much up for debate. The models for future planning could look very different. For CPRE and other environmental and social organisations attempting to put their case, there are a number of significant challenges. The new central bodies set up to oversee development in the region are much more closely knit and have yet to demonstrate how they will truly engage with external organisations like ours to ensure that the productive working relationship we enjoyed under the Regional Assembly will continue.

But more sweeping changes could remove the regional tier altogether and deny the main forum for debate on how economic, social and environmental needs of our region

we should be balanced. Our experience with ad-hoc sub-regional bodies has been that they have rarely had the same broad base of input that the Regional Assembly has built up. However, it may be that as Strategic Planning passes down to the local level new accountable structures emerge, but that cannot be guaranteed.

It could be argued that planning and economic development can be achieved without the input of organisations like the CPRE. Indeed some might argue that it would be a smoother process. Those people tend to remember the occasions where environmentalists have questioned the direction of

policy and not the many times where we have supported regional proposals.

Those of us who remember the days before the Regional Assembly, when engagement was poor and misunderstandings resulted from lack of discussion, will know that it is far better to have robust mechanisms for strategic planning than to argue cases one at a time, often with inconsistent results in different local authorities.



*Will a change at No. 10 also change the approach to strategic planning?*

The role of critical friend is an important one for environmentalists to fulfil and, equally importantly, policies need to be tested against environmental imperatives. Ignoring the environment will only undermine the long term prosperity and attractiveness of the region.

Whatever the outcome of the General Election and the resulting approach to strategic planning, the CPRE expects to be working harder than ever, but we need assistance. Fragmentation, as the three phase review of RSS has proved, creates more work. We are looking for volunteers to help us develop our policies, both at regional and sub-regional level, and ensure that the value of the countryside is taken into account when looking at where to place development in the future. Can you help us? 🏡

**Gerald Kells** – [admin@cprewm.org.uk](mailto:admin@cprewm.org.uk)  
Regional Policy Officer, Campaign to Protect Rural England, West Midlands

## RTPI Director General Post

**M**any of you will know that for some months, the RTPI has been seeking to recruit a Director General for the Institute, to replace Robert Upton MBE (the former Secretary General) who resigned late last year to join the Infrastructure Planning Commission.

Richard Summers (Senior Vice President and Board Chairman), recently wrote to all RTPI staff to notify them about the current situation. He said:

*‘As you know, the Trustees have been conducting a process to recruit a Director General to lead the RTPI since Robert Upton’s departure last year.*

*After a great deal of careful consideration, the Executive Board decided on Wednesday not to make an appointment from amongst the short listed candidates.*

*The Director General is obviously a crucial post for the organisation, RTPI members and the profession as a whole and it is therefore important that we get the right person for the job.*

*The Executive Team are now considering a range of options to increase available resources in some key areas of activity, some of which can be put in place very soon.*

*The Trustees are keen to support Directors and staff in the busy programme of activities this year and are grateful to everyone for their continuing efforts in the absence of a Director General’.*

We will obviously let you know if and when there are any further developments. 🏡

# Continuing Professional Development

..... Events Calendar :: May > July .....

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

Non-members of RTPI welcome to attend.

### WEDNESDAY 12 MAY

#### The Infrastructure Planning Commission, Major Infrastructure Projects & Compulsory Purchase

Joint event with the Compulsory Purchase Association  
Speakers include  
**Pauleen Lane**, Deputy Chair IPC  
**Hector Pearson**, Land & Development Manager, National Grid  
**Dr Malcolm Bell**, Independent planning consultant  
**Chris Haynes**, Birmingham City Council

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

### TUESDAY 25 MAY

#### RTPI West Midlands AGM & Supper

Venue: Old Joint Stock Pub, 4 Temple Row West, **Birmingham**  
Time: 6.15pm  
Details & booking: Sue Griffith-Jones  
Tel 0121 709 1599  
Email: westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk

### THURSDAY 17 JUNE

#### RTPI West Midlands Debate on the Future of Planning

During 2010 RTPI West Midlands plan to hold a series of panel debates around the region to debate the future role of planning both nationally and regionally. The second of these will be held in Leamington Spa.

Venue: **Leamington Spa**

Time: 6-8pm

Cost: **Free**

Details: Sue Griffith-Jones  
Tel 0121 709 1599  
Email westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk

### FRIDAY 23 JULY

#### RTPI West Midlands Summer Reception & Awards Ceremony

Venue: Botanical Gardens, **Birmingham**

Time: 7.30pm

Cost: **£40 incl VAT**

Details & booking: Sue Griffith-Jones  
Tel 0121 709 1599  
Email: westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk

Venue: Race Course, **Wolverhampton**

Time: 9.15am – 4.10pm

Cost: **£146 + VAT**

Organiser: RTPI Environmental Planning & Protection Network  
Details & booking: epp@rtpi.org.uk

### THURSDAY 13 MAY

#### Quality Streets are for Sharing

Venue: School of Jewellery, **Birmingham**

Time: 5.45pm

Cost: **£10**

Organiser: MADE Talking Cities Lecture Series  
Details & booking: info@made.org.uk

### WEDNESDAY 30 JUNE

#### Planning Health & Fast Food Lifestyles

Venue: The Public, **West Bromwich**

Time: Day conference

Cost: **£89**

Organiser: MADE  
Details & booking: info@made.org.uk

### MONDAY 28 – WEDNESDAY 30 JUNE

#### 2010 Planning Convention Planning; Shaping the Future

Venue: **London**

Organiser: RTPI  
Details & booking: www.theplanningconvention.co.uk

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

### THURSDAY 13 MAY

#### RTPI-MPA Annual Minerals Planning Conference

Planning for minerals: try to see it my way

## RTPI West Midlands Summer Ball

– Opportunities for Sponsorship –

**Platinum Package – Lead sponsor of event:**  
**TAKEN BY GVA GRIMLEY**

**Gold Package – Drinks on arrival: AVAILABLE**

To sponsor the arrival drinks, your company will be allocated a prime advertising location at the drinks reception and be named on the menu. Cost - £750

**Silver Package – Drinks on table: AVAILABLE**

To sponsor the drinks on the table, your company will be named on the menu card – ‘Drinks supplied by...’ Along with a location at the drinks reception to advertise. Cost - £500

**Bronze packages – Sponsorship of awards:**

**Regional Award for Planning Achievement:**  
**TAKEN BY ALLIANCE PLANNING**

**Best Local Authority award: AVAILABLE**  
**Best Consultancy award: AVAILABLE**  
**Team of the Year award: AVAILABLE**

You will have the opportunity to provide a trophy of your choice\*, a bottle of champagne. Your company representative will have the honour of presenting the award on the night. Your company will have its name on the menu card and will appear in Tripwire magazine. In addition a location at the drinks reception to advertise.

\* Cost - £450 (£500 if you want RTPI West Midlands to provide the trophy / champagne)

If you are interested in more than one package, we are happy to negotiate a price. Please contact Sue Griffith-Jones on 0121 709 1599 with all sponsorship enquiries.

**The deadline for sponsorship applications is 14 May 2010**

Email Sue on westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk to confirm which sponsorship opportunity you want to take up.



tripwire

CPD

Mar / Apr 10

Editor - John Acres, Ripon Cottage, 5 Manor Road, Kilsby, Near Rugby, Warks, CV23 8XS

# Use Classes Order

Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Order 2010

For further information and more detailed professional advice please contact FBC Manby Bowdler's  
Town and Country Planning Team (Niall Blackie, Alison Sargent & Suzanne Tucker) on  
**01952 292129** or **n.blackie@fbcmb.co.uk**

**S O L I C I T O R S**

| Class      | Category                            | Description  | Permitted Change  |
|------------|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| <b>A1</b>  | Shops                               | To visiting members of the public: the retail sale of goods other than hot food, post offices, travel agencies, ticket agencies, premises where cold food is to be consumed off the premises, hair dressers, funeral directors, shops, domestic hire shops, dry cleaners, and internet cafes (where the primary purpose is to provide access to the internet) alone)   | Only to a mixed use comprised of A1 and a single flat above. (Likewise a mixed A1 use and flat above can change to A1 alone)                        |
| <b>A2</b>  | Financial and Professional Services | To visiting members of the public: financial services, professional services (but excluding health and medical services), and other services that it is appropriate to provide in a shopping area. Examples are banks and building societies, estate agents, solicitors and employment centres, betting offices  | To A1 (where there is a ground floor display window). (Class A2 with a single flat above may change to A2 alone, A1 alone or to A1 with flat above) |
| <b>A3</b>  | Food and Drink                      | The sale of food and drink for consumption <u>on</u> the premises, including restaurants and cafes   | A1 or A2  |
| <b>A4</b>  | Drinking Establishments             | Use as a public house, wine bar or other such drinking establishment   | A1, A2 or A3  |
| <b>A5</b>  | Hot Food Take-away                  | Use for the sale of hot food for consumption <u>off</u> the premises   | A1, A2 or A3  |
| <b>B1</b>  | Business                            | Uses able to be carried out in any residential area without detriment to the amenity of the area by reason of noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash, dust or grit and being either the use as an office other than one falling within Class A2; use for research and development of products / processes; or use for any industrial process   | B8 (where area no greater than 235 sq m)  |
| <b>B2</b>  | General Industrial                  | Use for the carrying on of an industrial process other than one falling within Class B1  | B1 or B8 (A change to B8 is limited to an area not greater than 235 sq m)   |
| <b>B8</b>  | Storage or Distribution             | Use for storage or as a distribution centre  | B1 (where area no greater than 235 sq m)  |
| <b>C1</b>  | Hotels                              | Use as a hotel or as a boarding or guest house, where no significant element of care is provided   | No permitted changes  |
| <b>C2</b>  | Residential Institutions            | Use for the provision of residential accommodation and care to people in need of care other than a use within Class C3. Use as a hospital or nursing home. Use as a residential school, college or training centre   | No permitted changes  |
| <b>C2A</b> | Secure Residential Institutions     | Use for the provision of secure residential accommodation including use as a prison, young offenders institution, detention centre, secure training centre, custody centre, short-term holding centre, secure hospital, secure local authority accommodation or use as military barracks   | No permitted changes  |
| <b>C3</b>  | Dwellings                           | Use as a dwellinghouse by a single person or by people forming a single household; or use by not more than 6 people living as a single household where care is provided for the residents; or use by not more than 6 people living as a single household where no care is provided to residents (other than a use within Class C4)   | No permitted changes  |
| <b>C4</b>  | Houses in Multiple Occupation       | Use of a dwellinghouse by not more than 6 residents as a "house in multiple occupation" (Note: does not include converted block of flats - s257 Housing Act 2004, but otherwise has the same meaning as in s254 Housing Act 2004.)   | No permitted changes  |
| <b>D1</b>  | Non Residential Institutions        | Non-residential use for the provision of medical or health services (except premises attached to the residence of the consultant/practitioner), use as a crèche, day nursery or day centre, for provision of education, for the display or art, as a museum, as a library or reading room, as a hall or exhibition hall, or use in connection with public worship or religious instruction, or use as a law court    | No permitted changes  |
| <b>D2</b>  | Assembly and Leisure                | Use as a cinema, concert hall, bingo hall, dance hall, swimming bath, skating rink, gymnasium or area for indoor or outdoor sports and recreation (but not those involving motor vehicles or firearms)   | No permitted changes  |
|            | Sui-generis                         | Not all uses fall within one of the classes. Examples of such uses include:<br>Theatres, amusement arcades, funfairs, laundrettes, petrol/fuel stations, car showrooms, taxi and vehicle hire businesses, scrap yards and breaker's yards, hostels, waste disposal / incineration / chemical treatment / landfill and alkali works, retail warehouse clubs, night-clubs, and casinos. This is a non-exhaustive list. | No permitted changes  |

The contents of this table are intended for general information purposes only and shall not be deemed to be, or constitute legal advice. We cannot accept responsibility for any loss as a result of acts or omissions taken in respect of this table.

# **Policy, Heritage and Design Manager**

## **Full time, one year fixed term contract**

Grade E – £36,315 - £38,961

Post Ref: PLA700

The Planning Department at Stratford-on-Avon District Council is looking for a strong and committed team builder to manage and lead the work of the Department's Policy, Heritage and Design Team. The successful candidate will be required to drive forward the Development Plan process at a time of national and regional change and local concerns about the future planning of the district.

You will need at least 5 years' experience as a fully qualified town planner, commitment to corporate working, excellent presentation, communication and negotiation skills, and the ability to work under pressure. As this is a key role it is important that you are committed to strategic management, including issues such as continuous improvement and other performance management measures.

**For an informal chat please phone Tony Perks, Interim Head of Planning Services 01789 260620**

In addition to an open and friendly environment, you'll enjoy an excellent benefits package including a minimum of 25 days' annual leave, flexi-time and a final salary pension scheme.

An application form and job description can be accessed via the website, [www.stratford.gov.uk](http://www.stratford.gov.uk), alternatively telephone the 24 hour answering service on **(01789) 260711**, or e-mail [sitsvac@stratford-dc.gov.uk](mailto:sitsvac@stratford-dc.gov.uk). The minicom number for Elizabeth House is **(01789) 260747**.

The closing date for applications is **noon on Wednesday 5 May 2010**, interviews will be held **Thursday 20 May 2010**.

The Council supports Equal Opportunity of employment, and positively encourages applications from people with disabilities.

Internal/External/PLA700/Grade E