



**RTPI South West**  
Royal Town Planning Institute

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# BRANCHOUT NEWS

No 186

SPRING 2022

# Message from the Chair

**This is my first Branchout as Chair and I would like to start by thanking my predecessor, Angharad Williams who was Chair in 2021. Angharad has been an inspiration over the last year and has championed health and well-being and inclusive environments for all. I have appreciated Angharad's support and guidance over the past weeks and would like to wish her all the best and thank her again for an amazing year. Furthermore, I would like to thank Charlotte Daborn, the Regional Coordinator for all her hard work and for keeping the whole RTPI Regional committee in check.**

I am extremely proud to be Chair this year and I am looking forward to contributing to raising the profile of planners across the South West and how we make a real difference to our communities and environments around us.

Over the next year, my focus will be on championing collaboration and engagement; bridging the gap between the private and public sector and supporting our Young Planners. Collaboration and engagement are essential to sharing knowledge across sectors and between professions to build relationships, to develop conversations and a tool to listen to different perspectives and to promote planning. These principles have always been important to me as a planner and something which I have always championed throughout my career. I believe that sustainable development can only be delivered if we work together as professionals and involve the community from the start. I appreciate that this is not new and is not a silver bullet to resolving the many issues which are affecting the planning profession at present. However, I think it is an important component and we can get more done by working together. As Helen Keller said:

**“Alone we can do so little:  
together we can do so much”.**

To build upon my theme, we have developed six in person seminars and several webinars throughout the year which will have a private, public and third sector voice, to enable discussion and debate. Furthermore, the Young Planners have been invited to be involved in every event and to contribute their ideas and knowledge. We hope the events are representative of the planners within our region and includes views and opinions from a range of speakers. Furthermore, the seminars and webinars will also have practical elements, for the participants to take away. The first event, 'Planning for Housing Delivery' on 5 April 2022 which will be held in Bournemouth. This is my first event that I am chairing, and it is going to be great to network and to reflect on the discussions and views put forward-something which I feel that many of us have missed over the last couple of years. To book a place, click here: [www.rtpi.org.uk/swhousing2022](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/swhousing2022)

In addition to championing engagement and collaboration this year, I would also like to celebrate and highlight the accomplishments and achievements of our planners across the region. Therefore, to start I would like to send my congratulations to the individuals who have been elected as Members of the Royal Town Planning Institute in January and February 2022. After being chartered a few years ago, I fully understand all the hard work which goes into preparing a submission. If you were unsuccessful this time, I wish you all the best for your next attempt and if I can offer any support, please get in contact.

After a two year break, the annual dinner will be held on 10 June 2022 at We the Curious in Bristol. As Dawn DeVries and Angharad (the 2020 and 2021 Chairs) were unable to celebrate their years, this years event will be a celebration of the last three years and all three of us will be hosting. We are also really excited about our after dinner speaker who will be telling us about their adventures of looking for spitfires in Burma. It should be a wonderful celebration.

I wish you all good health and hope to meet as many of you as possible this year at our in person events or at the annual dinner.

All the best,  
Julie



**Julie O'Rourke**  
RTPI South West Chair 2022  
& Planner at Stantec

# Editor's blog

**It's that time again: new year, new you, new housing minister, and new Branchout editor. Thank you, Ian Perry, for all you did over the past year. Looking forward with this first Branchout of 2022, we hear from our new Chair, Julie O'Rourke, who has organised an interesting year with a focus on championing collaboration and engagement across the sector at its heart.**

Spring has finally sprung, the green shoots of yet more planning reform are starting to appear, and we have a jam-packed edition to get stuck into. And what a chockfull edition it is! Hopefully, there is something for everyone, and let us know what you think.

Our young planners have been busy across the region. The South West Young Planners continue to go from strength to strength, delivering a range of interesting social and CPD events in person and virtually. If you have less than 10 years experience in planning there is also a call to get involved in your local branch.

Amelia, one of our young planners, talks us through the challenges of rethinking our town centres. The co-creative design progress piloted with local communities is very much in line with Julie's theme for the year. Elliot another of our young planners highlights the good work he has been doing to raise awareness of planning as a career. Continuing with the future of planning theme the planning students at the South West Universities have been busy.

Fearful by planners more than dementors and just as dangerous, transport models are the subject of a thought-provoking article on the do's and don'ts of transport modelling. In the same vein of providing something a little bit different, and to generate some debate, we have an appeal to planners everywhere to embrace Triple Access Planning.

If heritage is more to your liking, then we have an excellent piece on Plymouth's Heritage Action Zone and the work to restore the municipal garden square to its former glory. You can quite easily disappear down a historical rabbit hole thanks to the extensive Heritage Action Zone microsite.

As part of a three-part series celebrating the diversity of our region, we have an article examining the challenges and benefits of planning in Guernsey. Whilst the problems facing planners are the same across the sea, there are some lessons for us mainland planners in the nimbleness and integration that arises from being one of the South West's smallest councils (and governments).

Given the ever increasing importance placed on good (if not beautiful) design and the recent success in the South West with securing funding to develop design codes, Create Streets have kindly offered to share their top tips on planning for beautiful prosperous places. As with many of the articles in this edition, the importance of collaboration and engagement is strongly highlighted.

Our South West Planning Aid Task Group provides an update on their recent work in supporting disadvantaged communities in Bristol engage with planning activities through online training. If you want to give something back to your local community using your skills look no further than Planning Aid.

As we approach the end of the issue, we have updates on the work of the Regional Management Board and the Regional Activities Committee. After two years of virtual meetings the RMB/RAC have taken forward a hybrid approach mixing in person with virtual attendance. This new model has certainly tested our regional coordinator abilities to the limit!

To conclude this edition, we have interviews with two of our new committee members, Tim Burton and Dr Rebecca Windemer and their journeys in to planning.  
**Happy reading!**



**Alexis Edwards**  
RTPI South West  
Junior Vice Chair

# South West Young Planners Round Up

## Dorset Young Planners

### Jess Glover, Pure Town Planning and Chair of Dorset Young Planners

The Dorset Young Planners have had a great start to 2022. Our recent online CPD 'Understanding Habitats and Environmental Impact Assessments' was our most well-attended webinar yet, with almost 200 delegates watching live! (See image below right). We heard firstly from our key speaker Dr Katie Pollard of KP Ecology who discussed the types of habitats you would typically find in the UK, the wide range of protected species you might find on a site and shared some really useful signs to look out for which may indicate there are protected species on a site. We then heard from Erin Banks of Savills who discussed what an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is and its objectives, the process from screening at the start through to the decision and post-consent matters and also ran through some key areas of scrutiny. It was a really insightful webinar – who would have thought that there are bats in one third of all buildings in Dorset?! Thank you again to Katie and Erin and to all those who tuned in.

Our long-awaited social and quiz on 10th March was also great fun, thank you to everyone who attended and to Rob McDonald, our quiz extraordinaire! It was great to re-connect with young planners in the Dorset area and also to see some new faces. Sadly it was my last event as Chair of the committee as I will be stepping down in April to take a sabbatical to go travelling in South America and Canada. However I am delighted to announce that Frances Summers and Amelia Rose will be taking over as Co-Chairs; I know they will be a brilliant team! Thank you to all of the members of the committee for your support over the last year, you have been a great group to work with and will be missed.

### Other news:

We have an in-person CPD event in the pipeline for June 2022. Further details for this event will be announced shortly.

### Call for new members

Are you a Young Planner who would be interested in joining the committee to help organise CPD events and socials for the Dorset area? We sadly have a few members leaving our committee this year and therefore will have a few spaces available for a few enthusiastic individuals. As a committee member you would be expected to attend monthly in-person or virtual meetings (which often involve a meal afterwards) and also assist in the organisation of our events throughout the year.

**We would love to hear from you if this would be of interest!**

Contact [southwest@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:southwest@rtpi.org.uk)

### Understanding Habitats and EIA



Top: The current Dorset Young Planners Committee members  
Bottom: Photo from recent quiz and social night

# South West Young Planners Round Up

## Devon, Cornwall & Somerset Young Planners (DCSYP)

### Steering Group update

After over four years of Young Planners Steering Group work for both Dorset Young Planners and Devon, Cornwall and Somerset Young Planners we are sad to say goodbye to Opani Mudalige. Opani, has been a key part of the team, bringing great enthusiasm to help to organise numerous successful events and socials. She will be greatly missed, but we wish her every success on her new venture!

That said, we are very pleased to welcome Mary-Ellen, who is a Planner at Torridge District Council, to the team and is already proving to be a positive addition to the group. Below Mary-Ellen briefly introduces herself:

Now that life is starting to return to “normal”, we’ve got some exciting events planned for this year that we hope to be able to release more information on soon - so watch this space! These will include a possible tour of a Passivhaus development, a panel discussion on how we can ensure what gets permitted is deliverable on the ground, and of course some socials.

If you think you might be interested in joining the Devon, Cornwall and Somerset Young Planners Steering Group then please **email** [southwest@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:southwest@rtpi.org.uk) for further information. We’re always keen to welcome new members and it’s a great opportunity to grow your network and contribute to what happens in our region for Young Planners and get involved with the RTPI.

“

*“I am very new to the world of planning, joining Torridge district council in mid-December as a graduate planner. I am not really a graduate, having graduated with a degree in Environmental Sciences in 1996 and a Masters in water resources. I worked as hydrologist for 7 years before retraining as a secondary geography teacher. I have taught A level geography for the last 15 years and felt I was in need of a new challenge. I enjoy learning and being challenged and I have found both in equal measure over the last few months. I have realised quickly that the sector is lacking trained professionals and would like to be involved in helping promote a career in planning more widely. I enjoy running and taking part in other outdoor activities along with the rest of the family my husband, two boys and our cockapoo Macy.”*



**Mary-Ellen**

Planner at Torridge District Council

# Future Lab - Rethinking our Town Centres Post-Pandemic

I started a new role in January 2022 as the **Urban Planner, Researcher and Studio Manager** at **Feria Urbanism**, an urban design and planning consultancy based in Bournemouth. **Feria Urbanism** work on a range of design and planning projects from neighbourhood plans to city centre visioning schemes. We put public engagement at the heart of all our projects, delivering local change by making community aspiration the foundation of our activity. We give people a voice in the design of playful, multifaceted places that enhance local ecologies and community life.

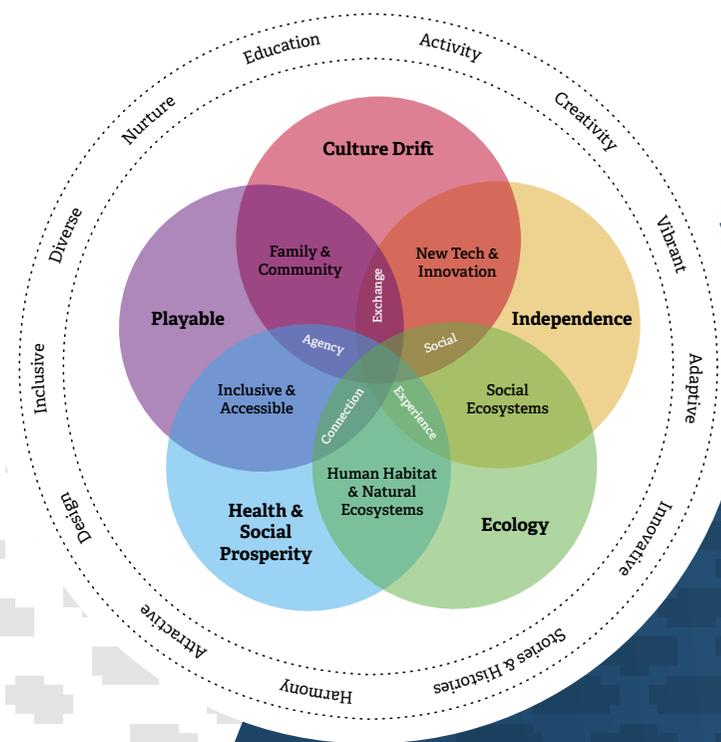
This existing body of work has been recognised by giving Feria Urbanism the RTPI SW Chair's **Award** for teams that have or are clearly demonstrating how planning can have a positive influence on health, well-being and/or inclusivity. We won because the judges noted our "... commitment to demonstrating relationships with the community, and with people of all ages and abilities" and that our extensive range of projects "... take inspiration from art and design".

An exciting project that our team is working on, and that has this inclusive attitude at its heart, is being run under the title of "BCP Future Lab". This project re-imagines and future-proofs the town centres of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) for a post-pandemic world.

Like other practice projects, this project has been developed through a co-creative design process. This means the consultancy team have worked directly with members of the public through a variety of qualitative research approaches to draw out key themes and concepts. These were then translated into ideas to reinvigorate the three town centres. This approach foregrounds the experience and values of people who live, work, or use the three town centres to create spaces that respond to their wants, needs and aspirations.

The project has involved collaborative working and extensive public engagement with 537 residents through ten different consultation settings, three social media channels and one website, as shown on the timeline image. This research involved a range of venues including on the street, in libraries, at universities and using online focus group sessions. It gave a variety of people of different ages and backgrounds a voice, through consultation with schools and universities, shop and business owners, events industry specialists and the general public on the street.

Our team used what we have learned through this extensive public engagement to create a book full of bold ideas and visionary changes to the three town centres. From this, a series of five overlapping and interlinking principles for change were created, through direct translation and also deeper analysis, which resulted in emergence of many other themes in more nuanced or indirect ways. For example, how people talked about mental health, loneliness, the need for community and a desire for there to be more ways to connect with and meet people in real life.



# Future Lab - Rethinking our Town Centres Post-Pandemic cont...

The five principles that emerged from this are presented as concepts and include independence, ecology, health & social prosperity, playable, and cultural drift (see image). The principles are also applied in a practical way, in the form of bold and exciting urban interventions to specific locations across the three town centres of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. This includes urban design and architectural interventions alongside suggestions around programming of events, all of which were inspired and informed directly by what was learned.

Taken together, these different approaches have helped the team to understand how people feel about town centres and their future aspirations for these places. On 17th March 2022, the team held a book launch at Bobby's in Bournemouth town centre. An associated exhibition ran for ten days displaying key themes from the book and the work of stakeholders and contributing photographers.

The projects outlined within the book are embryonic. Our advocates continuing a co-creative design progress with local communities to develop more focused project outcomes using the five principles and ideas for practical specific urban interventions.

Designing and running the BCP Future Lab project has been a fantastic opportunity for to work with local communities and to explore and refine Feria Urbanism's co-creative methods which we will be taking forward into future projects.

**If you would like a copy of the exclusive BCP Future Lab book, please email me directly at [amelia@feria-urbanism.com](mailto:amelia@feria-urbanism.com).**

**You can find out more** about Feria Urbanism and our ethos at [feria-urbanism.com/](http://feria-urbanism.com/), and visit [www.bcpfuturelab.org/](http://www.bcpfuturelab.org/) to find out more about the BCP Future Lab project.



*Book Launch Event*



**Amelia Rose** Urban Planner

Researcher and Studio Manager  
at Feria Urbanism and Co-Chair of the  
RTPI SW Dorset Young Planners  
Steering Group  
(soon to be Co-Chair for 2022-2023).

# Raising Awareness of Planning Careers

**Planning is often not considered a career option by college or secondary school students. But it should be. Not many career paths can offer something so fulfilling, with a chance to genuinely shape a place and positively impact its communities in a way that will be experienced for generations. I have made it my mission to remedy this as much as I can by raising awareness of the benefits of a planning career and improving accessibility to further and higher planning education.**

It's delightful to work for Stantec, which share my mission. With their support, I have had numerous opportunities in local schools and colleges in the South West, including holding events, delivering bespoke activities and presenting to student groups. I'm hoping now in sharing one of my experiences I might inspire you to realise the social value of outreach too.

Our Stantec STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) programme has been the ideal launchpad for our planning outreach. We have been able to utilise our network of education providers, the Local Enterprise Partnership's Career Hub and other stakeholders. All who have been happy to facilitate events, activities, and talks.

In Taunton, we are working with Heathfield Community School, and recently took our 'Planning, Engineering and Construction - Creating Places' activity to their Year 8 STEM club students. Over six weeks students gradually built up a large model of a sustainable town, with each week focusing on a different stage of design or discipline.

In week two the students were given a short presentation on planning for sustainable development. This included aspects like locating jobs near homes or public transport hubs to reduce car reliance, ensuring everyone has access to green space, and why it's important to have a range of house types. Using a base map of an area overlaid with a small grid and a crib sheet showing a list of possible

buildings, facilities or services and their associated 'cost', the students were given a budget and tasked with designing a small sustainable town.

As the weeks progressed, students built up their designs. One week, students constructed their model villages with recycled materials and we discussed the importance of recycling and using sustainable materials. We also looked at locating and designing bridges; connecting their buildings with utilities, using pumping stations and substations; and discussed land-use planning issues, such as mixed-use planning and settlement identity. Finally, we ended the course with our awards week and focussed on the creation of healthy places as we assessed the teams' designs. It was great to hear positive feedback from students and teachers, who had a lot of fun and said they had learnt a lot about what Town and Country Planning entails.

**So now it's over to you. Want to get involved with outreach but not sure where to start?** I'm happy to share what I've learned. Whether that be how to contact schools and colleges or to discuss activity ideas you have. Perhaps you share the same passion as me.

**[elliott.dommett@stantec.com](mailto:elliott.dommett@stantec.com)**



## Elliot Dommett

Stantec - Vice-Chair of Devon,  
Cornwall and Somerset Young Planners

## Could you volunteer to bring planning into the classroom?

If you are an RTPI member and would like to represent the profession, are willing to adapt and relate planning to interesting and everyday issues, and are confident to talk engagingly about your job to young people then you may find being an RTPI ambassador rewarding.

Please note our organised programme for schools engagement is currently paused, however if you would like to register your interest, **please email [ambassadors@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:ambassadors@rtpi.org.uk)**

If you are undertaking engagement activities in schools to promote planning as a career, we ask you register the event or report on the outcome via this **[online form](#)**. Please also **[access this member area](#)** for advice and policies prior to the event as part of the expectations of the Code of Professional Conduct.

# Mentoring Programme for early career planners

## Introduction

The RTPI South West is actively seeking expressions of interest for planning mentors and mentees to take part in a potential new mentorship scheme specifically aimed at planners at the start of their career (between 1-5 years following graduation), including those that are considering or actively preparing from their upcoming L-APC or DA-APC submission.

## Background and Context

It is widely commented within the media that a lack of planning staff is compounding the industry's ability to process applications, engage in best practice within planning negotiations and deliver development on the ground. This staffing crisis is being experienced across the sector, but is perhaps most acutely felt within local planning authorities, where high caseloads are reducing time for continuing professional development activities and the opportunity for mentoring of junior colleagues. The consequence is significantly affecting the careers of new planners. Senior colleagues, who already have high caseloads or are simply not in post means that finding support and time to mentor more junior colleagues becomes very difficult.

Whilst resourcing is an issue, there remains a keen aspiration to share learning and best practice amongst planning professionals. The RTPI South West is seeking to understand the extent of interest in the region for mentorship support or those who are able to offer mentoring to others. Through a potential new mentorship scheme specifically aimed at planners at the start of their career, we want to be able to create a one-stop shop to match mentors and mentees, so that planners have a dedicated place to find the support that they need to get the best out of their first few years in work.

## Benefits

Mentoring has significant benefits for both mentors and mentees:

- Having a mentor can improve your chances of APC success, particularly if the mentors have recent experience of the process.
- Provides an opportunity to engage with planners that you may not have worked with before and network with their wider connections.
- Mentoring can encourage recruitment opportunities through increased networking.
- Provides opportunities for like-minded planners to discuss projects and, indeed, for those with different backgrounds to also consider each other's perspective.
- There are potential mental health benefits, simply just by talking issues through with other professionals, but also by having a space outside of your employment to discuss planning-related matters and professional development.
- Mentoring can boost the confidence of both the mentor and mentee.
- Broadens and improves experience for inclusion on a CV.
- Matching mentors and mentees will encourage skill sharing and could identify new ways of problem solving by discussing work issues. In the long-term, and if widespread, this scheme could see planning processes improved as professionals work together.



As a mentor and a recently Chartered Member I find it rewarding to share the knowledge which my mentor passed on to me and assist another planner towards getting their letters and recognition. Mentoring also helps me to personally reflect on my work practices to ensure I am upholding the RTPI's Code of Conduct and reputation."

## Jess Glover,

Senior Planning Consultant at Pure Town Planning  
MENTOR



Register your interest [here](#)



# Mentoring Programme for early career planners cont...

## What's Needed

We are looking for initial expressions of interest from all planners who would be able to be involved in an upcoming mentorship programme aimed at planners within their first stages of their career. In general, planners with up to 5 years' experience will be considered as a mentee and those with 5+ years for mentor roles. However, these conditions can be flexible depending on circumstances and feedback from respondents.

We are looking for individuals from all parts of the planning sector. Whilst some mentee candidates may have very specific requirements in terms of background experience or time commitments from their prospective mentor, mentorship can be provided by like-minded planners or indeed those from a very different planning background, who can equally contribute to the start of a planner's career.

The skills and resources required to mentor a junior planner will vary significantly from person to person. That is why it is important to develop a programme which matches individuals based on their specific skills set and development needs. There will be opportunities to mentor with monthly or fortnightly zoom catch-ups or email exchanges right through to face-to-face meeting and review of APC submissions. The key is to enable a flexible programme to meet individuals' needs and for those involved to be realistic about the resource that they are able to give.

## How to get involved

If you are interested in getting involved, please complete this expressions of interest form.

## Next Steps

Once all expressions of interest are received, we will work to agree a process and criteria for matching candidates and provide an update for all those who have been in touch.



Register your interest [here](#)



# University News - UWE Sustainopia Competition

**In November 2021, UWE Bristol had been in a partnership with the Chinese City of Guangzhou for 20-years. To help commemorate the anniversary of Bristol being twinned with Guangzhou for twenty years, a three-day student competition was held between the 3rd and 5th November. The main purpose of the competition was to challenge us students to create our very own 'Sustainopia' city. The fictitious 'Sustainopia' Portville city sought to design a place that could embrace sustainable methods through the latest technology and have a healthy community that is well-designed, whilst responding to the climate and ecological crisis of our time. The main themes that needed to be covered during the presentation are transport; energy; facilities and services; blue and green infrastructure; social considerations/community buildings and lastly layout and design.**

Fifteen students from UWE Bristol were selected to work alongside 15 students who had been selected from seven institutions from across Guangzhou<sup>1</sup>. To encourage students and help showcase global best practice, lightning talks had been recorded before the event and were provided by Dr. Aida Abzhaparova, Professor Dr. Jessica Lamond, Dr. Steve Melia, and Dr. Rebecca Windermer.

During the first day of the competition, further encouragement came through a series of open talks by Professor Dr. James Longhurst (Assistant Vice-Chancellor: Environment and Sustainability), Alex Minshull (Head of Climate and Sustainable Cities, Bristol City Council), and Professor Kaijun Wu (Vice President for International Relations and Student Affairs, Guangzhou University). Nick Smith (Associate Head in Geography and Environmental Management) helped to organise the project alongside David Gee (Global Employability Development Manager).

The three-day competition had six students per group; three from UWE Bristol and three from universities in Guangzhou. In my group, also known as Group 4 consisted of UWE Bristol students Iwan Evans, Omolola Oluwatosin and Guangzhou students, Chao Tang, Rong Huang and Siting Liu. Since there were six themes, we decided to choose one theme each to focus on.

On the first day of the competition, it was mainly an introduction of the competition and there were keynote presentations by the speakers. Moreover, it was key to understand the site and the project needs in order to create a successful Sustainopia city. Therefore, the first meeting with the group was essential to discuss the project, to get to know each other and structure the PowerPoint. Microsoft Teams was the primary platform to communicate with other members of the group. By the end of the first meeting, we needed to decide on a suitable time for all of us to meet up on the second day. When setting the next meeting time, we had to bear in mind the time difference between Bristol and Guangzhou, which is eight hours difference. The second day consisted of presenting our own ideas for our focused theme to the team. The competition has taught me various things, however one skill that I have gained is teamwork skills. In order to have a successful project, communication is key and sharing ideas and improving each other's PowerPoint slides helped us to enhance our knowledge.

The third day was the presentation day of Sustainopia. Our group decides to do a mock presentation prior to the final presentation and to time ourselves. Time management was something we needed to be aware of, because the maximum time limit of 10 minutes to present. By the end of the presentation all of the groups were praised for the quality of their work and group 4 (my team) was ultimately selected as the winning team.

Our PowerPoint was mainly focused on the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), which are the "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all" (UN, 2020). Although all SDGs are important, for the six themes, we mainly focused on achieving eight goals which are:

**Goal 3** - Good Health and Well-Being

**Goal 4** - Quality Education

**Goal 7** - Affordable and Clean Energy

**Goal 8** - Decent Work and Economic Growth

**Goal 9** - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

**Goal 10** - Reduced Inequalities

**Goal 11** - Sustainable Cities and Communities

**Goal 13** - Climate Action

# University News - UWE Sustainopia Competition

The site we were given was 873 hectares and primarily made up of brownfield land. It was located in a very close proximity to the sea. It is a former industrial site and has a docking point (figure 1).



Figure 1: Sustainopia - Portville Site

The last part of the presentation focuses on the layout and design, which is the masterplan for the site. Iwan focused on this and presented the idea of a 20-minute neighbourhood. A 20-minute neighbourhood means that the overall urban area has a range of neighbourhoods where residents are in a convenient reach of all of the services that they use on a day-to-day basis such as healthcare, places of work and green spaces through to the provision of a walkable urban environment that has an engaging public realm. The benefits of a 20-minute neighbourhood are often cited as facilitators to improvements in health, the economy and the environment whilst also promoting a sense of community.

Everyone in the group pitched in ideas for the initial design concept for the different land uses on the map and figure 2 shows the final masterplan of the site that Iwan produced. Some features of the design that were put forward during the presentation includes the provision of a mix of housing options to suit a diverse range of needs and a level of self-sufficiency through publicly available farmland which will help deliver close and sustainable farming option. In terms

of connectivity, the site is designed at the convenience of residents with everything they need within a walkable distance with the promotion of a pedestrian first movement pattern.

Overall, it was great to be part of the competition. It has deepened my knowledge, broadened my horizons and ignited an interest in working internationally. Although it was challenging working across time zones, I had a great time and have made some new friends. After finishing my MSc in Planning and Urban Leadership, I have recently joined a planning consultancy as an Assistant Planner with CarneySweeney in Cardiff and I am aiming to achieve my L-APC in 2 years' time and become a Chartered Town Planner.



Figure 2: Masterplan

**Rahma Dwimunali**  
Assistant Planner at CarneySweeney  
MSc Planning and Urban Leadership, City/  
Urban, Community and Regional Planning

# University News - UWE Student dissertations

**Name:** Gemma Hyde

**Degree programme:** MSc Urban and Rural Planning  
(Joint Distance Learning Programme)

**University:** University of the West of England

**Current employment:** Project and Policy Officer -  
Healthier Places, TCPA

## Dissertation title:

**Let's start at the very beginning: Exploring how planning policy in England can contribute to achieving beneficial infant health and wellbeing outcomes in the 'First 1001 Days' and beyond.**

## What was the planning issue and research question that you addressed in your dissertation?

The research sought to examine the interface between the 'First 1001 Days' and planning policy and practice in England. The 'First 1001 Days' from pregnancy to age two, is an age of opportunity and a critically important stage of rapid development in babies that lays the foundations for later health, wellbeing and happiness. It is also a period of unique vulnerability, when babies are particularly reliant on adults and susceptible to their environment.

The evidence base for intervening in the first 1001 days is striking, but planning has yet to meaningfully or widely engage in this space. The multifaceted nature of the risks to children in this early period requires a whole system rather than a fragmented response, both nationally and locally. A long-term, holistic and coordinated approach to the first 1001 days should consist of interventions across and between: people's healthy behaviours and lifestyles; the places and communities where people live; the health and social care system that people use; and the wider social determinants that impact on their health. The COVID-19 pandemic has only highlighted the importance of wellbeing and place and raised these issues as priorities in more people's minds.

The overall aim of the research was to advance understanding of the complex issue of the first 1001 days and the role of English planning policy in this space to influence and lead to better health and wellbeing outcomes for infants across their life course.

## How did you set about investigating this issue (methods and study area)?

The research strategy focused on England and comprised of a literature review, followed by semi-structured interviews with five planning professionals and one infant healthcare professional.

The research acknowledged that health and the first 1001 days are complex and 'messy' problems. In an attempt to engage meaningfully with that complexity and not fragment the issues, the research explored the first 1001 days from systems thinking perspective.

The semi-structured interviews allowed the collection of detailed data and provided insights, explanations and a contemporary exploration of the issue of how the health and wellbeing outcomes for infants in a 'real life' context can be positively impacted by planning policy.

## What were your main findings?

The Literature Review identified the first 1001 days as a complex system, subject to micro and macro influences some of which fall comfortably within the purview of planning, whilst others sit beyond the scope of planning as a practice and profession. The research did not uncover any direct research or guidance linking the first 1001 days to planning policy at the national or local level, but rather research and policy appeared directed at older children's health and wellbeing or other health pathways such as activity levels, mental health or initiatives focused on older people.



# University News - UWE Student dissertations cont...

The research did however support viewing the first 1001 days, within the developing health integration agenda in planning, in a systemic or whole system approach, in cooperation with a wide range of other disciplines and stakeholders with an interest in population health.

The empirical study showed that knowledge and awareness of the first 1001 days amongst the planning professionals interviewed was very limited. In terms of understanding the evidence base for the first 1001 days, none of the planning professionals, unlike the health professional, had been exposed to any level of detailed education on child development and as such had not explored how their practice may influence the first 1001 days.

All of the interview cohort acknowledged the complexity of the first 1001 days and health in planning and recognised health as a driver in planning policy, yet they all also identified the following barriers and challenges to integrating consideration of the first 1001 days into planning policy and practice:

- **Lack of awareness**
- **Lack of training and expertise**
- **Lack of evidence**
- **National and local policy structures**
- **Challenges around interdisciplinary working**
- **Insufficient resourcing**

The first 1001 days is not currently seen as a planning issue despite the potential health, wellbeing, economic and societal benefits.

The economic benefits of intervening in the first 1001 days are well established but actualising them requires a shift to a longer-term strategy for tackling health and inequalities in society as benefits will accrue over a life course and into subsequent generations. The way that society and the current planning system attribute economic benefit and value to schemes would need to be radically overhauled in order to take a more holistic and long-term view.

Planners as a profession are not engaged with the evidence base for the first 1001 days, and struggle to systemically engage with, and integrate health into, planning policy making and decision taking due to lack of training and expertise, a lack of interdisciplinary working culture and a resourcing crisis.

The lack of a national imperative or statutory duty to embed health in planning policy is also hindering attempts at the local level to implement healthier place-making, even where there is a desire to do so. The role of Health Impact Assessments and other Supplementary Planning Documents in securing local health agendas is patchy and has not generally led to a cultural, systemic shift in local authorities, or amongst developers, to address the potential health impacts of development beyond a 'tick box' exercise or addressing the 'low hanging fruit' in terms of provision of green spaces, play spaces and active travel. Without explicit adopted policy, based on robust local evidence of need, health will continue to be side-lined in the planning process which must balance development proposals against material considerations - adopted policy and sustainability as currently outlined in the NPPF.

## What implications do your results have for planning practice and policy?

The research made the following initial recommendations in relation to the first 1001 days and planning:

- **Commit to a systems thinking approach to policy making and decision taking**
- **Increase awareness, training and knowledge of how to access expertise at a local level**
- **Create and adopt policy at all levels through interdisciplinary and stakeholder collaborative working that supports healthy placemaking - including a focus on the first 1001 days**
- **Embed health in planning education**

The research recommendations are all predicated on a requirement for planning in England to be appropriately resourced and politically supported nationally and locally. If planning has a vital role to play in the health and wellbeing of society in the widest possible sense, then it needs to be resourced and prioritised with a long-term plan to allow it to function, establish and develop into a broader practice of salutogenic place-making.

# University News - UWE Student dissertations cont...

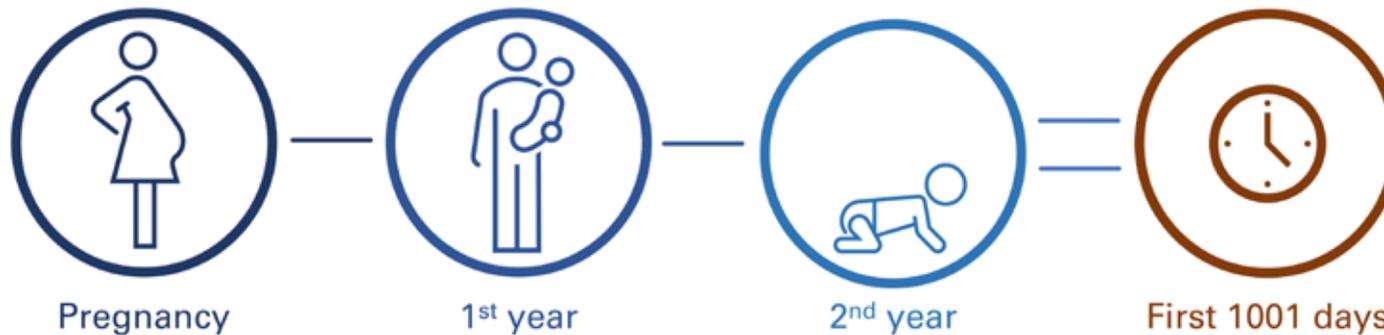
To date research, guidance and practice in the areas of health and children in planning policy have not focused on the first 1001 days despite the role of the environment as a determinant of health. Place-making and planning policy have the potential to positively influence the first 1001 days and transform the life chances of infants and their families. The research highlighted the current gap in the literature, making the above recommendations and identifying possible research opportunities to continue the inquiry – including examining the 20-minute neighbourhood concept through a first 1001 days lens.

As life expectancy increases and century-long lives become the norm, it is imperative that planners appreciate the cumulative effects of urban environments on healthy longevity, and design and reshape cities to optimize very long lives. By starting well, people go on to live well and age well.

## The Town & Country Planning Association (TCPA)

The TCPA has long championed an approach to the way that we plan, design, build and maintain our built and natural environments to support people's physical health and mental wellbeing.

Nationally, the TCPA have published influential reports highlighting the ways in which the built and natural environments can be improved to facilitate healthier living. Since 2010, the TCPA's Reuniting Health with Planning workstream has facilitated more than 60 workshops between local authority planners and public health teams across England, Wales and Northern Ireland to embed health and wellbeing in Local Plans. The TCPA is collaborating with Sport England on a project to engage with local planning authorities to support them to create healthier, more active places through creating 20-minute neighbourhoods.



For further information  
please contact Gemma Hyde  
at [gemma.hyde@tcpa.org.uk](mailto:gemma.hyde@tcpa.org.uk)

# University News - Plymouth dissertation summary

**Name:** Josie-Alice Kirby

**Degree programme:** PhD Researcher within the Coastal Processes Research Group (CPRG) in the School of Biological and Marine Sciences at the University: University of Plymouth  
**Current employment:** Plymouth Coastal Observatory delivering the SW Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme.

## Research title:

**Coastal adaptation to climate change through zonation: A review of coastal change management areas (CCMAs) in England**

## What was the planning issue and research question that you addressed in the research paper?

The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) mandates local planning authorities to include climate change adaptation policies within local planning strategies (NPPF, 2021, para.152-173). The concept of 'Coastal Change Management Areas' (CCMAs) were introduced in the first edition of the NPPF in 2012. CCMAs are defined within the Planning Practice Guidance for Flood Risk and Coastal Change (2021) as 'an area identified in Local Plans (LP) as likely to be affected by coastal change (physical change to the shoreline through erosion, coastal landslip, permanent inundation or coastal accretion)'. This research reviewed the implementation of CCMAs in England, with attention to the methodology used to delineate the physical coastal change area, and examined what justifications have been used in the implementation of CCMAs.

## How did you set about investigating the issue (methods and study area)?

A desk-based study investigated all online material related to local plans produced by any local planning authority with jurisdiction over coastline covered with a Shoreline Management Plan (SMP). Local plans were interrogated

for reference to CCMAs using searches which included (but not limited to) CCMA, coastal change, flooding and erosion. If references were discovered, further investigation into the methodology, implementation, evidence bases and policy maps was conducted. Correspondence was also sent to several LAs to gain further insights into CCMA implementation.

## What were your main findings?

Uptake of CCMAs in England has been limited. Of the 100 coastal planning authorities (CPA) investigated, only 15 had fully implemented CCMAs (mapped and included in an adopted LP). A further 14 CPAs has planned CCMAs (but not yet adopted), with a further seven mentioning CCMAs but not including them in the LP. The total percentage of coastline designated as CCMA was found to be ~5.7%. Some CPA have included stretches of coastline that are 'hold the line' under SMP policy while some had not. These designations highlighted inconsistency in CCMA implementation due to ambiguity within the guidance. Varying methods had been used to delineate the extent of future coastal change, but predominantly the erosion extents stated in the SMPs had been adopted. These extents do not include acceleration in sea level rise and current climate change predictions. In at least one CPA, CCMA implementation has been restricted because the designations had not been included in the LP, but instead having to defer them to Neighbourhood Plans.

## What implications do your results have for planning practice and policy?

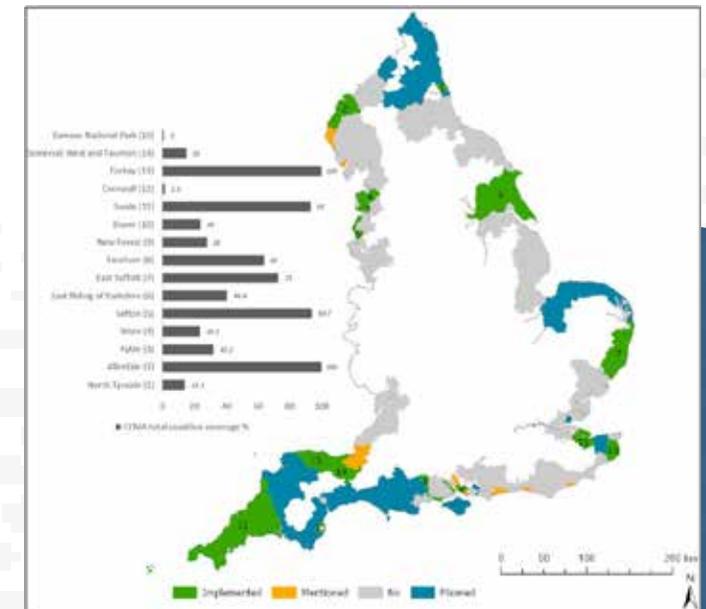
The adoption of CCMAs is highly fragmented within England. The policy should aid coastal communities to adapt to coastal change and sea level rise. However, ambiguity in guidance, lack of internal expertise with CPA, under-funding and inaccurate or outdated datasets has meant that the uptake of the policy has been limited. There is a need for clearer guidance and collaboration between

planners and coastal scientists. A standard classification of coastal types and how they are expected to respond to sea level rise would also help CPA to understand where coastal change may be likely to occur. An additional vehicle by which a CCMA can be designated, aside from LPs, may also be beneficial for those CPA who have not currently included CCMAs into their LP (which can take several years to update).

## The full paper is available at:

KIRBY, J.A., MASSELINK, G., ESSEX, S., POATE, T. & SCOTT, T. (2021) Coastal adaptation to climate change through zonation: A review of coastal change management areas (CCMAs) in England, *Ocean and Coastal Management*, 215, 105950.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ocecoaman.2021.105950>



**Contact email for further information:**  
Josie-alice.kirby@plymouth.ac.uk

# Transport Modelling - Mad Eye Moody or Severus Snape?

**I can't help referencing that famous school of wizardry, thinking of the defence against the dark arts classes - quite a few planners may feel they would benefit from a few lessons at Hogwarts to protect themselves when confronted by yet another transport model.**

As one of those practising these dark arts I admit: we just don't seem to communicate very well. And that's a shame as models are here to stay – perhaps even more so now politicians are faced with the difficult decisions that need to be made on how to achieve net zero and evidence is needed on what may and may not work.

Despite what many planners perceive, transport models are not black boxes. Their theoretical foundations are generally well known, and derived from economic theory, geography, sometimes physics (perhaps too rarely from psychology or sociology). You can find reference material in the academic literature. Models are estimated on real-life data, by and large using rigorous statistical techniques.

Their implementation in commercial software packages is covered by extensive quality control; and the operators must adhere to the ethical standards set by their employers, by DfT and professional organisations such as the RTPI. Most importantly, the assumptions embedded in the model applications, and used to predict the future, should be made explicit in an Assumptions Log, as explained in TAG Unit M4 on Forecasting and Uncertainty.

I don't expect you to be very interested in the theory. You should be able to trust that a transport modeller has applied their tools of the trade properly and correctly, and that the software they use does what it says on the tin. Engaging with models and modellers is best focused on the assumptions made, both within the models themselves, and in the inputs. Some of these are so fundamental to current practice that they cannot be easily changed. But that doesn't mean you shouldn't be aware

of them or can't question or even test what the impact of these assumptions are. There is no Chamber of Secrets. **Here are a ten pointers to interact better with us.**

**1. Travel is a derived demand.** Models assume that people move because the activities they carry out are spatially segregated. The need for travel is determined by the locations where activities can occur - mainly home locations and locations where people work, go to school, can shop etc. Spatial information (now and in the future) is an essential input, but the future is uncertain. Different development assumptions are generally not unreasonable and if you have a good reason to offer an alternative, do so.

**2. When choosing whether to travel,** where, when and how, modellers assume that people make rational decisions, that can be explained by minimising the (generalised) cost of travelling. By segmenting by, for example income and car ownership, we allow for differences in the way in which people perceive the costs of travelling and hence how their behaviour varies. But we ignore non-rational choices.

**3. Model segmentation is generally limited** to segregating groups with very different travel behaviour that can be estimated from data. These groupings do not always align well with the requirements of reporting on the distributional impacts of policies and projects.

**4. A software platform is not a model.** Platforms such as SATURN, VISSIM, CUBE, AIMSUN, the Propensity to Cycle Tool – they don't guarantee a good model, the same way that MS-WORD does not guarantee a good novel. They are building blocks for a modelling wizard to develop an appropriate, and a proportional representation of reality that can be used to assess alternative futures.

**5. Responsiveness differs in implementation.** For example, assignment software such as SATURN tends to only allow for route choice but keeps other travel choices fixed. Microsimulation software such as VISSIM or AIMSUN may even keep route choice fixed, if the model only covers a single or small number of junctions. The size of the modelled area may be unreasonably restrictive or exclude particular access points.

**6. Many of these road traffic focused models** depend on higher tier, strategic 4- or 5-stage transport models such as PRISM in the West Midlands, or MOTION in London, to enable travellers to change mode, destination and departure time and hence reflect components of induced demand, generated traffic. LUTI models (land use transport interaction models) also model location choice by residents and employers in response to changes in accessibility. It is not unreasonable to question if a model application incorporates all these responses, and if not, why that is appropriate or what the implications are.



**Tom van Vuren** is the Regional Director for the UK and Europe at Veitch Lister Consulting. He is a Visiting Professor at the University of Leeds and the Director for Policy at the Transport Planning Society

# Transport Modelling - Mad Eye Moody or Severus Snape? cont...

**7. We assume that the system** is in equilibrium, and any change in the system (this could be a junction improvement, a new housing estate, a clean air zone) leads to a new equilibrium, and immediately. A main reason for this assumption is that for comparisons between options in a Business Case the answer needs to be calculated very precisely, and there are efficient equilibrium solution methods available to do so.

**8. Once behavioural model parameters** (such as generalised costs definitions) have been estimated in a base year, these are kept fixed in forecasting. This doesn't mean that people will make the same choices in the future (after all, the transport system changes due to new developments, changes in fuel prices, infrastructure investments), but their valuation of the characteristics of alternatives stays the same - ie. their preference for cars, expressed in a so-called mode-specific constant.

**9. Reflecting active modes better is another challenge**, particularly in large scale, strategic models. The spatial resolution of these models is often too coarse to reflect the full network available. Their use as access and egress modes is simplified and not necessarily explicit. But there is no need to exclude pedestrians and cyclists from, for example, microsimulation models. Good open access and commercial software tools have been developed specifically for active modes, such as the Propensity to Cycle Tool, and pedestrian modelling software such as STEPS, LEGION, or VISWALK. Assumptions remain critical.

**10. TAG gets a bad rap.** A lot of the need for strict guidance and adherence stems for the need to provide a strong investment case to Treasury, based on Green Book principles, so that transport projects can be compared with other ways to spend taxpayers' money. But not every model application has to meet TAG standards, for example when developing policy (although I suggest they are useful guidelines for quality standards).

Irrespective of the size and complexity of the model, its results can be contested. All the modellers that I know genuinely try to create in their models a true representation of reality, now and in the future. But if model outputs feel wrong, they either are wrong, or they depend on assumptions that you probably disagree with and that could be altered and tested. Testing what-if scenarios is a great way of releasing further value from the investment in a modelling asset. In odd circumstances we all may learn something new.

Rather than with the better-known George Box quote, I want to finish off with a Dumbledore quote

“The consequences of our actions are always so complicated, so diverse, that predicting the future is a very difficult business indeed”.

Transport modelling is a difficult business indeed. And models don't predict the future. We use models to quantify what (based on numerous assumptions) the future may look like. That's why the new focus on uncertainty and scenario analysis is refreshing.

I have said in the past that transport modelling is neither a science nor an art; it's actually a craft.

**Just not witchcraft!**

*Predicting the travel demand from London Kings Cross to Hogwarts: How difficult can it be?  
(photo by Ester Marie Doysabas on Unsplash)*

*Reflecting active modes better is challenge, particularly in large scale, strategic models  
(photo by Ümit Yıldırım on Unsplash)*



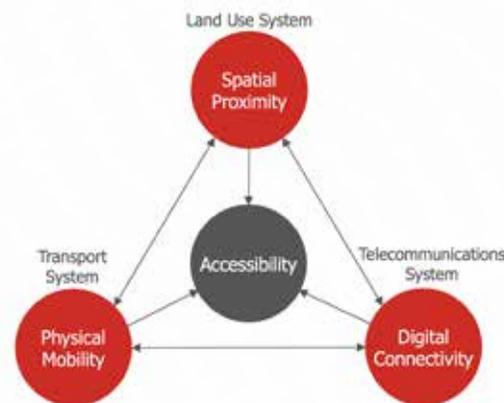
# Triple Access Planning

**Planners and transport planners alike live in perpetual hope of more joined-up thinking and the prospect of being able to more strongly shape better futures that enrich sense of place and diminish dependence upon car-based mobility.**

The hope remains “that transport and planning work together to support more sustainable travel choices and reduce the need to travel”. Yet this quote is 24 years old - from the UK’s 1998 Integrated Transport White paper ‘A New deal for Transport: Better for everyone’. The examined reality seems rather more sobering as set out in the latest Transport for New Homes [report](#) which is rather aptly titled ‘Building Car Dependence - The tarmac suburbs of the Future’. Yet this report found a marked distinction between brownfield sites in urban areas and greenfield sites, the latter determining the report’s title.

Urban areas tend to have proximity on their side – what we need to access to fulfil economic and social undertakings are more likely to be within reach, without necessary recourse to car travel. Importantly, since the 1998 White Paper above, the digital age has collided and merged with the motor age. Thanks to the rapidly matured telecommunications system and concurrent maturity and availability of digital services, digital connectivity has emerged to become a significant ‘third leg’ of the accessibility stool, alongside spatial proximity and physical mobility.

In 2014 I was seconded to the New Zealand Ministry of Transport and tasked with leading a team to explore uncertainty in the future demand for car travel. This was prompted by a 10-year prior period of zero growth in road traffic and yet with a government set to invest \$10 billion over 10 years in (mainly road) transport infrastructure. The result of that [work](#) was what might rather grandly be referred to as the foundations for a new transport planning paradigm we called ‘decide and provide’ (contrasted with ‘predict and provide’). This centred upon three important features: (i) being vision-led instead of forecast-led in looking to the future; (ii) being access rather than transport-focused; and (iii) developing a means of providing a way to move towards the decided-upon preferred future in a way that could accommodate uncertainty. In the [publication](#) of this work we set out a conceptually simple model of access within the decide and provide paradigm that we called the Triple Access System:



It represents a depiction of the world we live in – one in which our fulfilment of the need or desire for access to people, goods, jobs, services and opportunities may be achieved by a combination of using the transport system (physical, motorised mobility), the land use system (spatial proximity, and in turn active travel) and the telecommunications system (digital connectivity).

It seemed quite a natural next step to then coin the term Triple Access Planning - the need for a way of thinking about, and putting into practice, a planning approach that sought to understand and in turn shape the Triple Access System and not merely the transport system or the land use system, or even them both.



**Glenn Lyons**

Mott MacDonald and Professor of Future Mobility at UWE Bristol

# Triple Access Planning cont...

Given what might be considered often failed aspirations of joined-up planning in the past, why should the proposition of Triple Access Planning now be taken seriously?

## Important points in answering this include:

- A decide and provide mentality and imperative - The UK has made a legally binding decision about a vision-led future, namely that the economy needs to have net zero carbon emissions by 2050. There is now a need to provide a way of achieving this which must look at cleaner but also less motorised mobility.
- A high degree of digital connectivity that continues to develop - collectively we now have at our disposal a much richer set of means to gain access to what we need or desire in our lives - our direct (inevitable) dependence upon motorised mobility is lessened.
- First-hand experience of adapting behaviours in the triple access system – the COVID-19 pandemic has provided widespread experience (amongst planning professionals, politicians and the public) around the globe of how we are capable of flexing our use of the triple access system in response to changed circumstances. In particular it has shown how we are able to place greater reliance on digital connectivity and spatial proximity (living local, acting global).
- Uncertainty about the future is considerable - amplified by the global shock of the pandemic, it is apparent that predicting the future may, more than ever, have become a fool's errand. Such uncertainty is, however, turned into opportunity through the decide and provide paradigm in which a preferred future can be aimed for, with greater confidence in a triple-access approach being able to offer the resilience seen during COVID-19 in order to help realise such a future.

Much as it may be conceptually appealing to imagine a future in which planning and transport planning are superseded by a combined practice of Triple Access Planning, the likelihood of this happening in reality seems remote. However, this is not the intention behind the core proposition of Triple Access Planning (at least in the foreseeable future). Rather, Triple Access Planning - whether as a planner or transport planner - is a way of thinking about the planning task. It is about recognising more clearly the shortcomings of having only a partial view of the 'system of systems' that is ultimately the subject of the planning endeavour. Thinking differently then opens up a different expanse of possibilities for how to shape, and to make the case for shaping, the future, drawing upon the points above.

At a national level, Scotland decided in December 2020 "to reduce car kilometres by 20% by 2030" (against 2019 levels)" as part of its [Climate Change Plan](#). In January 2022 it produced a [route map](#) to achieving this. Here one can see the hallmarks of Triple Access Planning: Investment in providing superfast broadband access to all premises and in-fill 4G coverage for rural areas (digital connectivity); place-based investment to support town centres and deliver 20-minute neighbourhoods, alongside a new National Planning Framework (spatial proximity and active travel); and workplace parking regulations, prohibition on pavement parking, 20 mph speed limits in built up areas, free bus travel for those aged under 22, and investments in bus and rail (physical, motorised mobility). Wales is similarly recognising both the opportunity afforded by digital connectivity and the imperative to curb levels of motorised mobility. The Welsh Government aims to see 30% of the Welsh workforce working remotely on a regular basis and has set a target for a 10% reduction in the distance travelled by car per person by 2030.

Decide and provide and its focus upon vision-led access instead of forecast-led motorised mobility is receiving growing attention, from new guidance in the wake of the Planning White Paper to support vision-led planning and related transport assessments for new developments ('[Guidance Note](#) on the Practical Implementation of the Decide and Provide Approach') to the International Transport Forum's recent report '[Travel Transitions](#): How Transport Planners and Policy Makers Can Respond to Shifting Mobility Trends'. Planning differently is an evolution and one in which a learning by doing culture is key. I am currently co-ordinating a pan-European project called '[Triple Access](#) Planning for Uncertain Futures' which aims to foster this culture through the development of new practice-oriented guidance for sustainable urban mobility planning.

**So come on planners - get your Triple Access Planning thinking caps on and let's work together to get the best out of the different forms of access available to supporting the triple bottom line of people, planet and prosperity.**



# Plymouth High Street Heritage Action Zone

**Plymouth has some of England's finest examples of postwar architecture. While other cities rebuilt to their original street patterns following the devastation of World War II, Plymouth completely replanned its city centre. Bold but beautiful beaux arts buildings were erected around impressive landscaped areas, but seventy years on, the city centre is tired.**

Our recently designated city centre conservation area (2019) will soon be benefiting from care and restoration later this year through the High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) project. Work is due to start on Geoffrey Jellicoe's landscaped municipal garden square, his great square in Plymouth which according to Jellicoe, called for 'dignity and frivolity' and 'a civic amenity to be enjoyed by townspeople at all times'. As a Registered Park and Garden with unique heritage properties, the squares civic amenity is being sensitively restored and repaired with distinctive features being reinstated such as the tessellating 'bow tie' granite sett paving and the triangular macadam and concrete surfacing. Along with a range of enhancements, it will also include the 610m<sup>2</sup> pond being cleaned out, fitted with new pumps, painted and aquatic planting added. The space is already well used and with three million pounds of funding from Historic England, Better Places and Transforming Cities Fund, the revitalised square will continue to be used and enjoyed for years to come.

Other HSHAZ projects include the Royal Parade public realm improvements which has already had one key landmark repaired. Gdynia fountain forms the gateway to the city centre and hasn't worked for years. With some HSHAZ investment the fountain had seven new inverter driven pumps, new electrics, LED lights, wind sensors, level sensors, a new control panel and a chloride dosing

pump which will keep the pond free from algae. The newly restored fountain is managed remotely with a smart system that will allow light and water movements to synchronise together, creating impressive water displays - here you can see the fountain at night.

Regular community engagement takes place through lunchtime Zoom chats where local historians and stakeholders talk about the city centre and their experiences. It's a place for open discourse where participants can ask questions about what's happening next. A six minute video animation was created to tell the story of why the city centre looks how it does architecturally, the significance of this design, and legacy of redevelopment following World War Two. It's well worth a watch on the Plymouth HSHAZ vimeo page: <https://vimeo.com/user135296871>.

Our city centre is widely recognised as one of the UK's most important examples of post-war planning and the High Street Sparks funding is providing small grants of up to £2,500 to community projects designed to breathe life back into the city centre. Seven projects have been awarded funding; including live performances, selfie walls, storytelling, map illustrations, art club supplies and the display of painter Solomon Hart's 'The Execution of Lady Jane Grey' - Hart was a third-generation migrant son of Plymouth who became the first Jewish member of the Royal Academy of Arts. We are looking forward to these projects coming to fruition.



**Josephine Maddick**  
Project Delivery Officer,  
Plymouth City Council

# Plymouth High Street Heritage Action Zone cont...

The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan is reaching its final stages of adoption by the council. The document takes an honest look at the city centre; identifying where improvement and repair is needed. It provides a guidance and advice on how to manage change within the conservation area sympathetically to the mid-century design. We received a good response from the public during the consultation and several additions have been added to the document. We look forward to it being used by council officers to inform future applications and decisions in the city centre.

We are talking to landowners about façade grant funding and are due to have our first grant recipient in spring 2022 with repairs to original tiling, cladding and door frames on their listed building. Whilst now making progress, we have found it challenging in promoting the scheme and will be procuring a conservation design specialist to help us guide and approach landowners with concept and direction.

Finally, we were thrilled and delighted that funding from the HSHAZ is being made available to have been awarded an extra 130k from Historic England for quality improvements in New George Street and Old Town Street. The scheme is already underway and the extra help, funding will mean an uplift in quality of materials to create a space sympathetic to its conservation area setting.

We are grateful to Historic England for the regular support and reassurance, their direction has helped us get to where we are with the HSHAZ project and what is to come.



*Armada Way, 1961, from the top of the Civic Centre, showing the central lawns before pedestrianisation. (Ref: 3488/19 The Box, Plymouth)*

**For more information** check out our page here:  
[www.plymouth.gov.uk/planningandbuildingcontrol/designconservationandheritage/highstreetheritageactionzone](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/planningandbuildingcontrol/designconservationandheritage/highstreetheritageactionzone)

# Challenges & benefits of planning on Guernsey

**Guernsey is the second largest of the Channel Islands, situated near the French coast. There are ten parishes on the island and other islands including Herm, Sark and Alderney also form the Bailiwick. Guernsey is a self-governing British Crown dependency with elected Deputies and the island is just 26 square miles in size and has a population of approximately 65,000.**

Guernsey's parliament as a whole is called 'The States of Deliberation'. The States of Guernsey is structured into one Senior Committee, six Principal Committees and several other Committees, Boards, Authorities and Commissions. The Development & Planning Authority is responsible for planning applications, building control, protected buildings, protected trees, Island Development Plan, conservation and design and planning policy. Further information can be found at: <https://www.gov.gg/committees>

## **So, what are the challenges and benefits of planning on Guernsey?**

The elected Deputies oversee all aspects of running the States of Guernsey which means that when the Development Plan is under review, or planning Ordinances are to be amended or reviewed the Deputies are in a position to feed into the planning processes and procedures in Guernsey. Unlike the UK, it is not a situation where changes are made at Central Government level and Local Authorities are required to implement such changes, on the ground.

Guernsey also has the benefit of a streamlined Development Plan process from the Strategic Land Use Plan to the Island Development Plan ([www.gov.gg/planningpolicy](http://www.gov.gg/planningpolicy)). For example, there is no umbrella document such as the National Planning Policy Framework here.

The Planning Service is overseen by a Director of Planning who is actively involved across the service and is able to keep abreast of current applications and sites of interest rather than being pigeonholed into dealing purely with managerial matters associated with running the Service. The small size of the Development Control team means that it is possible to work closely as a team but also with other parts of the Planning Service (Building Control, Conservation and Design, Forward Planning and Planning Enforcement). Further information regarding the Planning Service can be found here:

[www.gov.gg/planningandbuilding](http://www.gov.gg/planningandbuilding). There is also readily available access to other States services such as Traffic and Highway Services and Environmental Health.

Despite the size of the Island a variety of applications and application types are submitted for consideration by the Planning Service. The Island incorporates towns, local centres (villages) and coastlines. There are different environments, with both local and international designations to consider through the Island Development Plan (2016), such as Sites of Special Significance and other designations, such as RAMSAR sites, of international importance which bring significant obligations and restrictions to the planning process. Information regarding the Island Development Plan and different land designations can be found here:

[www.gov.gg/planningpolicy](http://www.gov.gg/planningpolicy).

Officers in Guernsey are not restricted to working in one area but are able to explore planning across all areas of the Island, be that in the town of St Peter Port, one of the seven

Local Centres or in the rural areas, Outside of the Centres. Challenges faced in Guernsey are often no different to those experienced elsewhere. Controversial development proposals attract public, political and media interest. Many applications progress to determination without any public comments or concerns being received. Although a significant number of applications submitted relate to householder developments this is not restricted to the average single-storey extension but can relate to large scale and luxurious extensions, domestic garages and ancillary outbuildings and change of use of land, all offering daily variety to planning caseloads.

The Planning Service also receives a variety of other applications including proposals for mixed use developments which incorporate office accommodation, hotel facilities and residential developments. Although the size of the island does not allow for very large-scale developments as found in the UK the larger scale development proposals submitted, do, in Guernsey terms, equate to applications considered as large-scale developments in the UK and bring with them the same sort of considerations and issues. Housing and other developments do still present challenges such as in matters relating to traffic generation, congestion, school and other community provision along with pressures on the Island infrastructure such as drainage and mobile connectivity.



# Challenges & benefits of planning on Guernsey cont...

With fewer political layers in Guernsey, (effectively because Central Government is also the Local Authority), this has enabled the Development Control section of the Planning Service on the Island to be able to feed into changes to exemptions (permitted development rights) which allow greater flexibility for changes to be carried out without the specific grant of planning permission. This opportunity for input also extends to a review of the Development Plan or its replacement with a new Plan as well as other changes to planning legislation. Development Control have also been able to contribute towards publishing SPG relating to various aspects of planning control as well as helpful guidance to assist applicants in establishing whether an application is necessary and what information should accompany particular applications.

As in the UK, there is a planning Committee to oversee and determine complex or large-scale planning applications that have generated significant public interest and concern. The Development & Planning Authority Committee consists of just five members, significantly smaller than Planning Committees in the UK. Given the small size of the island however, this can result in a greater degree of local influence. Unlike the UK, Guernsey does not have large political parties, individual members are often independent but more recently a number of Deputies have grouped together and formed Guernsey political parties.

The planning appeal process in Guernsey is based on that adopted and used in the UK, few schemes currently find their way to a planning appeal. Further details are available online: <https://www.gov.gg/planningpanel>. Those applications that are considered through the appeals process are considered by the Planning Tribunal who have UK planning experience. Appeals are rarely considered by way of written representation however, as the majority of cases are considered at a hearing, which is a cross

between an informal hearing and a Public Inquiry. The benefit of Inspectors with UK experience is welcomed although the planning system does not directly follow the UK planning system therefore the process and decisions must be tailored to the specifics of the Island system.

In many respects, challenges faced in Guernsey planning are the same as those experienced the world over. The arrangement of the Committee does differ from the UK. There are however, great benefits to planning on a small island. The Island offers an intimacy that perhaps is not possible with large Local Authorities in the UK, where it can seem like everyone knows everyone else and where there is a luxury of working in a small team with close working relationships.

In addition, Island living offers a good work life balance for planners in Guernsey. Flexible working arrangements gives staff the opportunity to finish work with plenty of time for a trip to the beach or to grab a bite to eat. Staff have the time to enjoy activities outside of work which, for some, includes sea swimming, paddle boarding, walking the cliffs and island hopping using their own leisure boats! Although getting to the mainland is controlled by the ferry and plane timetables there are many great islands on the doorstep and only a short crossing away which can easily be accommodated into the work life balance offered in Guernsey.



**Ruth Wilkes (BSc, MSc, MRTPI)**  
Planning Officer, States of Guernsey

# Planning for beautiful prosperous places

## Conferences, canapé and charettes are back.

**As we rediscover small talk and how to eat standing up we, at Create Streets, often find ourselves answering the question, what do you guys and girls do? Many people may have come across our twitter account or have read our articles on beauty, planning and placemaking. However, behind this we increasingly find ourselves occupied putting our extensive research on the links between wellbeing and the built environment to good use in designing new towns, existing places and improving streets across the United Kingdom**

Perhaps in a sign that the debate has changed post the 2020 publication of the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission's final report, we are increasingly seeing developers, local authorities and land promoters reaching out for help to rediscover the art of creating new places and real pieces of town rather than drive-to dormitories.

One of the failures of the past half century has been siloed thinking. Responding to that we have created a small team working across disciplines with expertise and passion in street design, master-planning, design codes, movement, architecture, policy and place strategy. This skill-range creates constant feedback loops, allowing us to learn from very different projects across the team. It also means our on-the-ground experience informs our policy work at a national level, with ideas rooted in reality.

Whether it be onerous back-to-back distances, excessive visibility splays or high parking minimums, whenever an issue consistently prevents us from creating popular, sustainable places we often find ourselves sharpening our pencils ready for a research project to follow.

But it's not just us. Across the country planners in local authorities and consultancies are grappling with the question of how to 'ask for beauty' when local developments are brought forward. How do we make beautiful sustainable places the norm? Part of the answer is to set much clearer, more visual standards that new homes and places that are locally popular. This will make it much easier for small firms, neighbourhoods and self-builders to get a look-in.

These standards are commonly known as design codes and should be embraced with both arms. The recently introduced National Model Design Code is a good manual for how to create them. However, too often codes sprawl across 200 pages and sit unloved deep in the bowels of a council's website. **At Create Streets we have five "commandments" for an effective design code.**

### Design codes:

1. Should be specific and use 'Must', 'Should' and 'Could' language when instructing designers what places should look like;
2. Must reflect the evidence collected as part of the community engagement;
3. Must reflect evidence, not opinion, on what makes for happy and sustainable places;
4. Should use local knowledge on materials and supply chains, allowing them to respond to the local context; and finally they
5. Should be short, numerical and visual.

Planners should be bold and demanding, they should be clear on what they are coding for and what they are not. A code does not need to cover every eventuality and should raise the bar on good, ordinary development. There will always be exceptions, architecturally, socially or ecologically and they'll continue to be picked up by our discretionary planning system.



*One of our market town masterplans*

# Planning for beautiful prosperous places cont...

The second of our five design-code-commandments, asking to bring the community into the creation of codes, may strike fear into councillors and planning authorities. This is not necessarily because they don't want to engage, but because it is hard and often expensive. It's clearly easier to draw a plan in isolation. However, this risks creating a place that is lacking in local insight, love and support. This may merely be kicking the hard work down the road. Community engagement is an issue that permeates throughout our work and due to this we have developed five principles for how to do it well.

1. Engage early
2. Engage honestly
3. Set clear parameters
4. Engage wide and deep
5. Co design not consultation  
(full charettes on large sites, mini charettes on smaller ones)

In almost every community co-design workshop we have found that being honest, setting clear boundaries of what could be possible and letting community members 'take the pen' has led to wider buy in and support for a scheme. The first principle, 'Engage Early' is another recommendation likely to raise the developers, land-promoters and elected member's heartbeats. It is, however, the most fundamental of the whole list. Without it genuine engagement is difficult and residents will know that whatever they say, it will often be overlooked in favour of a preferred plan back in the office. So how can early engagement become palatable?

One solution is to embrace the emerging digital tools available to designers and planning officers. By using online questionnaires, interactive maps and 3D models, community engagement is no longer the privilege of the retired, wealthy and time rich. This shouldn't mean the end of Wednesday evening workshop's, rather, as we see our work lives becoming a hybrid of zoom and office, engagement activity should also reflect this. In one of our digital engagement projects the local authority saw 449 online comments on our platform versus 10 responses to the hard copy feedback form.

At our core we are a mission-driven organisation. This means we care a lot about scaling our impact. We love taking on projects where brave clients are challenging the status quo and lacklustre design across the country. Sometimes, frequently with our charity The Create Streets Foundation, we are designing hand in hand with the community to make a point and change systems. This might be making it easier to "green-up" entire neighbourhoods or to challenge the highways standards that prevent us from building the streets that our research show are the most popular, sustainable and prosperous.

looks like, we believe it's time for planners to get back to what they do best, big picture collaborative design. They should be freed from the shackles of dealing with each dormer-extension and allowed to think big, working at an early strategic stage in projects and laying the foundations and frameworks for a thousand small flowers to bloom across our towns and cities.



*Community co-deign charette*



As we return to the new normal, whatever that eventually

*A project in Finland using our community engagement platform Create Communities*

# Planning Aid England - South West update

## Organised by Planning Aid England South West Task Force

At the start of February PAE delivered a virtual training event on how to effectively engage with the planning system for residents of Knowle West and Filwood Park in Bristol. This training came about following discussions with the housing team at Bristol City Council about how PAE could best support communities living in more economically disadvantaged parts of the city engage with planning activities. Given that several regeneration projects are coming forward in quick succession in this area in Bristol, it was agreed that some guidance on 'making your voice heard within the planning process' would be beneficial for local community groups. The event was subsequently organised in liaison with a leading representative from the Knowle West Regeneration Residents Planning Group.

The two-hour online training session was delivered by PAE staff member Louise Francis and volunteer Patricia Coyle and covered three main topic areas: an overview of the planning process; pre-application stage and public engagement; and how to respond to a consultation on a planning application. It was attended by nine representatives from various community groups who also took part in a lively Q&A towards the end of the session.

The feedback received was very positive and it is hoped that this format of training can be rolled out elsewhere to help enable local community groups to engage effectively with their local council's planning and development activities.



# Regional Management Board & Activities Committee Up-date

There are three joint meetings of the Regional Management Board (RMB) and the Regional Activities Committee (RAC) to report: the final meeting of the 2021 joint committee held on 26 November 2021, and the first and second meeting of the 2022 joint committee which were held on 26 November 2021 and 9 February 2022.

## Chair's Report

The 2021 Chair Angharad Williams welcomed members to her final meeting as Chair, thanking everyone including those volunteers that were stepping down and also a further thank you to the Regional Coordinator Charlotte, who had contributed to making the year a success. In her year as Chair Angharad took great pride in being able to highlight the contribution planners can make to securing inclusive environments and looks forward to continuing that message.

The Chair reported, Wei Yang, the 2021 president of the RTPi, enjoyed her visit to Plymouth on 21 October touring regeneration projects including the Market Hall and The Box.

Angharad also highlighted her experience speaking at a 'Planning Question Time' organised by Tetra Tech for their clients. Those in attendance raised concerns about 'nutrient neutrality' and the impact it was having on proposed development. In the case of the Somerset Levels, the concern is focussed on phosphates. There was an overwhelming opinion that the Government needs to help resolve the matter. These concerns were escalated to the RTPi Policy team who have regular higher-level conversations including those in government.

Our Chair also commented upon the difficulties recruiting experienced by both private and public sector, something that the RTPi SW may wish to explore in more detail.

At the first meeting of the 2022 committee, Julie O'Rourke took over as Chair and revealed her priorities for her term:

- Encouraging more discussions and conversations between private and public sectors;
- Supporting Young planners; and
- A practical focus on CPD.

With an overall theme of communication and collaboration.

At the second meeting on 9th February the committee met for a hybrid event where Julie reported attending the first working group meeting for the RTPi One Institute project to explore its objectives and discuss the action plan.

Julie also asked the committee to support the research of available free venues across the South West with the aim to create a repository for committee and young planner groups to use. If you know of any good venues, please tell us.

## Regional operational matters and business

Julie introduced a new way of hosting RMB/RAC meetings in 2022, a trial consisting of hosting meetings on different days at different times with a hybrid and virtual mix. Julie hopes this will ensure the committee is more accessible to members to engage with and increase the diversity of our committee. Nominations for the 2023 committee will open in Summer 2022

The business plan and budget for the region is approved and sets out the priorities of the next 3 years (2022-2024), namely:

- the value of membership and professionalism;
- supporting planning services;
- raising the profile of planning; and
- equality, diversity and inclusivity.

With climate change as golden thread throughout.

In the Treasurer's reports it was noted that 2021 regional accounts closed on a very small modest profit and highlighted how the region was able to maintain a key selection of activities for the regions members against the uncertainties the covid pandemic had placed on us. In managing our finances for 2022 we need to mitigate our risks given the continued uncertainties, especially around the demand for in-person events. Therefore, although we have planned income and expenditure for throughout the year and reduced the number of planned in person seminars, we need to be cautious still in committing to any significant expenditure until we have certainties about the take up of in person events.



The 2022 RMB and RAC Committee

# Regional Management Board & Activities Committee Up-date

## Key projects/activity updates

### Awards for Planning Excellence

The new One Institute format for the RTPI Awards for Planning Excellence were launched in January and closed on 11 March 2022.

We really feel that recognition is such an important part of work and this is a great opportunity to give that accolade in a meaningful way, celebrating the good work we all do in the South West. We look forward to reading and meeting with this year's entrants.

The committee agreed to trial a new format for presenting the South West Award winners for 2022 and host a reception in July. More details will be shared on this soon. Also, this year's award winners together with the regions 2021 winners (due to the transition to the new one institute awards programme) will be automatically shortlisted for the 2022 national awards.

### President's Visit

Timothy Crawshaw, this year's RTPI president is coming to the South West. Between the 6 and 8 July he'll be touring parts of the region and we're hoping to showcase our best attributes! As part of this tour, he will be hosting our Awards ceremony on the 6 July and speaking at our Natural Environment seminar in Exeter on 7 July. We look forward to welcoming him to the region.

### Investing in Volunteers project

Zoe MacGregor, the RTPI's volunteer engagement officer joined the committee on 9 February and told us about an ongoing project which is aiming to maximise the benefits of volunteering with the RTPI. The project is focussing on four main areas: defining the volunteer offer, thinking about volunteering, getting started and progression/ending volunteering.

### Reports from working groups / representatives

The region has several working groups focussing on delivering local activity in areas such as Education, Policy and Research, Mentoring and CPD. They cover a broad range of activities and report back to the RMB/RAC regularly. We also have 4 young planner steering groups and volunteer representatives on national RTPI committees/groups such as EDI, One Institute, Volunteering, Nations and Regions and the General Assembly.

### Highlights so far this year include:

- The South West EDI rep is looking for more members to profile on 'Meet the Planners' on the new Planning your World website to help showcase the diversity of our profession;
- Young Planners need more volunteers for their steering groups;
- A bid for some research funding to look at how local authorities can cut carbon and the start of a collation of topics for future research projects;
- 6 in-person CPD Seminars organised for 2022 and a range of webinar opportunities;
- Work is underway to start a pilot informal mentoring programme for licentiates in the South West;
- A highlighted need to grow the RTPI South West Engagement Network to include more representatives from consultancies in the South West and opportunities to bring the network together for share of intelligence, debate and discussion;
- Alexis Edwards, our Junior Vice Chair for the year is also editor for Branchout has lots of great content planned and open to further suggestions;

- The Careers and Education working group are considering ways to reach out more to promote planning as a career and may be compiling and survey of members to capture what great work is already happening and how this may be shared; and
- The South West GA representative reported the impetus to strengthen the role of the General Assembly.



*Hybrid meeting of the committee making volunteering accessible to all.*

# Getting to know... Tim Burton



## Tell me a bit about yourself

I am a west countryman by birth, having been brought up at Evercreech near Shepton Mallet and schooled in Bruton. I did make an escape all the way to Cheltenham to be a student, but I was soon dragged back closer to home when shortly after graduating I was successful in obtaining a post with Sedgemoor District Council in Bridgwater.

A brief sojourn in a local plans team aside, I spent my time at Sedgemoor in Development Management (or control as it was commonly known during the last century), before taking the long trek south to Taunton in 2000, ultimately taking on the Head of Planning role there. Various reorganisations later and having combined the services at Taunton Deane and West Somerset, I chose to take redundancy in the 2019 reorganisation, choosing to taste a life of planning outside of a local planning authority context for the first time, setting up my own consultancy. I joined the RAC in 2019 and have since chaired the Engagement Network working group as well as being a contributor to the Planning Aid working group.

## Why a career in planning?

As a child I always had an interest in exploring and finding what was around the next corner and this hasn't ever left me. I wholeheartedly agree with Jim Moir (aka Vic Reeves) who claims the art of 'looking at things' as being a much underrated skill! This interest in exploring places led to a desire to understand how such places work, with a geography degree followed by a planning career perhaps being the inevitable outcomes.

My father had a successful career in local government, and he must have drilled a public sector ethos into all his children with my three siblings also embarking upon careers in the public sector.

A life in planning was probably sealed during two years of a summer job with Mendip District Council in the mid-1980s, where I experienced every aspect of a planning service from conservation to enforcement and even land charges.

## What does your current job involve?

By 2019 I was in need of a new challenge, but at the same time I wanted to continue to use the planning knowledge and skills I had developed over the years. To be perfectly honest the decision to set up Tim Burton Planning represented more of an opportunity for me, rather than being part of any long held or premeditated plan. As a result, I decided to start by taking on as wide a variety of commissions as was available to me. This meant that I quickly discovered what does and does not truly interest me and I believe that Tim Burton Planning has now found its own niche.

The consultancy is focussed primarily upon helping people navigate successfully through the intricacies of the planning system, whether that be individuals, developers, architects or a local authority.

I knew that I was never going to be able to shake off that public sector ethos entirely and the largest proportion of my working week is now spent providing direct support to local planning authorities who wish to improve their services. I provide this either directly or more often under the auspices of the Planning Advisory Service (PAS). A recent focus has been around improving the quality of Council decision-making. This has involved a large amount of my time reviewing Council Planning Committees in action and offering advice and training to both officers and Councillors. I also provide mentoring support.

I have recently been appointed to help a number of Councils that have been struggling with their performance and want to improve their development management processes. This means that I am at last working regularly beyond the borders of the west country.

I am also experiencing another side of the DM process, advising private sector clients on how to improve their prospects of a successful outcome when engaging with their local planning authority. The need for both the private and public sectors to understand each other's perspective is a consistent theme in all the work I do.



## Getting to know... Tim Burton cont

I am passionate about the role of Design Review in achieving successful outcomes and now work alongside Jonathan Braddick of Design Review Ltd delivering reviews as a volunteer panel member. Sessions are always interesting, ranging from the assessment of the design quality of major commercial developments and residential master plans to a regular supply of paragraph 80 proposals. I believe it to be very encouraging that the Panel is increasingly being approached by developers, rather than being imposed upon them reluctantly by the local planning authority. As Covid restrictions are eased this has given me the opportunity to experience some amazing sites around the country, further feeding my fascination about places and how they work.

### Why did you become involved in the Regional Activities Committee (RAC)?

Throughout my career in the profession, I have experienced great support from the RTPI and in particular through the activities and conference programme provided by the Region. Unlike other professional institutes, this support is largely a product of its own volunteers. I am committed to ensuring that this continues through providing my own small contribution.

Moving away from an office environment in 2019, I knew that by working alone, I would miss the daily interaction with a wide range of colleagues that results from being part of a large organisation. Membership of the RAC has provided me with a whole new network of like-minded souls.

### What do you do when you're not planning?

I have always enjoyed being active and working from home has given me greater opportunities to explore my local patch, either by bike or on foot. I am in the process of preparing for the Coast to Coast walk across the north of England, as well as joining the Camino de Sligo in the west of Ireland later this year.

I have always had a keen interest in sport, but these days this is more observational than participatory. I am a long-standing member of Somerset County Cricket Club and I am very much looking forward to getting back to the County ground in Taunton soon. In common with one or two other fellow planners (you know who you are!), I have spent much of my adult life following the ups (and increasingly) the downs of Yeovil Town Football Club around the country, currently exploring the likes of Cheddar and Yate, a far cry from previous days out at places such as Villa Park and Wembley.



**Tim Burton** Tim Burton Planning  
Member of the RTPI South West Regional  
Activities Committee

# Getting to know... Dr Rebecca Windemer



## Tell me a bit about yourself

I'm a lecturer in environmental planning at the University of the West of England.

In terms of my background, I grew up in the countryside, near Tavistock in West Devon and ventured out to London for my undergraduate degree in Geography at LSE. During my second year I undertook a summer internship with a planning consultancy and later secured a graduate role with the same company. While on the graduate scheme I undertook a part-time MSc in development planning and research at Reading University. I really enjoyed the MSc, particularly the research, meanwhile I was not really enjoying my graduate role due to the ethos of the company I was working at. This led me to pursue a PhD in environmental planning at Cardiff University (that I discuss a little more later), leading to my current lecturing position.

## What does your job involve?

Working as a lecturer in planning is a really varied job and no two days are the same. A large amount of my time is spent on teaching which involves preparing and delivering lectures. At UWE a lot of our sessions are three hour 'lectorial sessions' involving a mixture of lecture content and activities. These sessions take a while to prepare as it involves designing fun and interactive activities that help students to take a practical approach to learning about planning - developing the skills that will be needed in planning practice. Most of my teaching is in the area of planning for renewable energy, climate change and sustainability. It's great to be able to teach on topics that I am really passionate about and that enable me to bring my own research into the classroom. I also supervise a range of undergraduate and postgraduate student dissertation projects - providing ongoing advice and support on their research.

My job also involves research, which I love. This involves designing research projects, applying for funding, undertaking the research and then sharing the research findings. One of the most rewarding elements of this

is sharing my research findings with policymakers and industry. My previous research has been used to change planning policy in Wales, has been used by policymakers in Scotland, used in the House of Lords and been used by industry. In order to generate this impact I try to share my findings in a range of outputs such as blog posts, videos, infographics, reports and policy briefing notes as well as speaking at public seminars, industry events and conferences. I also share my research findings in academic papers and book chapters. As you can imagine, this keeps me really busy!

## What are your main research areas?

My research interests focus on the role of planning in addressing climate change and the development of renewable energy. My existing research has focused on the future of existing onshore renewable energy infrastructure, in particular the use of 25-year planning consents and decisions regarding repowering, life-extension and decommissioning of onshore wind farms. I won't go into detail on that here as it was covered in the previous issue of branchout. I expect to expand on this research in the future, looking at international challenges. Currently I am working on a project looking at the impact of the 2015 policy change for new onshore wind farms in England. I also plan to undertake research looking at best-practice examples of low carbon placemaking in the SouthWest.

Having industry involvement in my research, from the development of ideas to the dissemination of findings, is really important to me, as I want to ensure that my research provides maximum benefit to the industry. I am always keen to meet with new or existing colleagues in industry to discuss potential research ideas or needs, particularly those surrounding renewable energy or climate change. If you have an idea that you would like to discuss please do drop me an email.

## Why did you become involved with the Regional Activities Committee (RAC)?

I joined UWE last October, shortly after becoming a chartered member of the RTPI and I was really keen to get involved in the brilliant work that the South West RTPI do. I also think that it is really important that the local universities have a close link with the work of the RTPI. I have joined two working groups, the policy and research working group and the education and careers working group.

## What do you do when you're not planning?

Outside of work I love being outdoors, particularly going on long walks and running. I also enjoy trying new restaurants in Bristol and going to rock / metal gigs.



**Dr Rebecca Windemer**

Lecturer in Environmental Planning,  
University of the West of England

<https://people.uwe.ac.uk/Person/RebeccaWindemer>

# RTPI South West forthcoming events

## **Housing and Housing Delivery** 5 April 2022, The Hilton Bournemouth

### **What is the current state of play for housing delivery?**

Speaker - Rachael Williamson, Head of Policy and External Affairs - Chartered Institute of Housing

### **Local Authority Housing Delivery - where are we now and how is the South West performing**

Speaker - Janice Morphet, Visiting Professor at the Bartlett School of Planning and author of Local Authority Housebuilding - where are we now research

### **Calculating housing need and using the standard method including the flaws of the 2014 projections and case studies that look at challenging the standard method**

Speaker - Justin Gardiner, ICENI

### **How is the First Homes initiative working?**

Laura Easton, Three Dragons

### **Delivering homes for older people**

John Sneddon, Managing Director at Tetlow King Planning  
Paul Teverson, McCarthy and Stone

### **Delivering housing in Bristol**

Gary Collins, Head of Development Management at Bristol City Council

### **Achieving net zero in architecture**

Tom Reynolds from LMA Architects

### **MMC and achieving low carbon outcomes**

Raynee De Zoysa, Strategic Growth Manager at Collida (Willmott Dixon) A low carbon Passivhaus housing company

## **Self-build and Custom Housebuilding -**

Arron Beecham, Principal Housing Enabling and Forward Planning Officer at Mid Devon DC and Member of the Right to Build Task Force  
Lin Cousins, Three Dragons

**BOOK NOW**



## **Back to the future for transport planning** 27 April 2022 at 12-1pm Online

This webinar forms part of our RTPI Online series and is brought to you by the South West Region.

With the increasing need to design beautiful communities, and the rapid change in travel behaviour, we will be asking where transport and place-shaping fits into this discussion and how we can be an industry for change into the future. The session will include discussion on the future of mobility, practical steps in creating liveable neighbourhoods, and a self-help session for all those who don't know their transport statements from their transport assessments.

### **Speakers:**

**Future of mobility, travelling less or travelling differently** - James McKechnie, Director | Transportation, Hydrock

**Delivering liveable neighbourhoods** - Jonathan Tricker, Placemaking Director, PJA

**TAs and planning applications, getting the detail right first time** - Adam Padmore, Managing Director, Cotswold Transport

**BOOK NOW**



# RTPI South West forthcoming events



**If not now, when? Planning's role in tackling climate change**  
10 May 2022, Somerset County Cricket Ground, Taunton

## 1. Virtual Key note: The climate emergency and what's needed from planning

An overview of up-to-date knowledge about climate change and its impacts. Learnings and outcomes from COP26. A review of the committees 2021 progress report and the demand for more concerted action on planning and development. The role of planners in delivering places that are suitable for zero-carbon living in a changing climate. What does the CCC want from planning?  
Lord Deben, Climate Change Committee

## 2. We can make a difference

### Breaking from the mould on renewables policies

Hazel Williams from Regen will discuss working with the energy industry on developing renewables policy that pushes the boundaries, reflecting on work with Cornwall Council on their climate emergency DPD.

### Delivering homes. Case study - The Uplands, Nailsea

The scheme is landscape-led and highly sustainable, delivering 100 per cent Passivhaus certified homes and electrical vehicle charging throughout.  
Jenny Ford, Head of Placemaking at North Somerset Council

### Adaptation through flood risk management including use of green infrastructure

Mark Willitts, Environment Agency

## 3. Delivering Practical Responses to Climate Change in Plymouth

Paul Barnard, Service Director for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure at Plymouth City Council

## 4. Planning for a Net Zero future today

An update on recent RTPI research, consultations and practice guides. The RTPI & TCPA Climate Change Tool Kit for LPAs  
Harry Steele, RTPI Infrastructure Specialist

## 5. Workshops

### Onshore Wind

Hazel at Regen South West and Dan Stone, CSE

### Cutting Carbon from Buildings

Chris Grainger, SW Energy Hub Technical Manager  
Lin Cousins, Three Dragons

**BOOK NOW**



**Planning for the Natural Environment**  
7 July 2022, The Rougemont, Exeter

## Hear practical advice on delivering Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

The wider legal framework for BNG and addressing questions such as 'how do covenants for 30 years land management work, and how does that link to S106 / contracts'?

Richard Broadbent, Director at Freeths Join a practical discussion on BNG

## Discuss methods for embedding green infrastructure in to developments

Martin Moss, Natural England

## How trees play a role in BNG

Hear how authorities have dealt with Local Nature Recovery Strategies and their role in nutrient neutrality

Updates on Nutrient Neutrality and strategies for mitigation

Hear how LPAs are dealing with nutrient neutrality

**BOOK NOW**



# RTPI South West forthcoming events

 **Balancing Heritage and Planning**  
13 September 2022, The Guildhall, Bath

**How you access something for substantial harm and what is the difference between listed building consent and a planning application?**

David Morgan at The Planning Inspectorate

**Assessing Harm - Recent appeal cases to illustrate what can and cannot be considered a 'public benefit' in balancing in harm**

Nick Bishop, Avalon Planning and Heritage

**Masterplanning in a World Heritage city**

Cleo Newcombe Jones, Regeneration Manager at Bath & North East Somerset Council and Lucy Barron, Associate at Donald Insall Associates

**Trowbridge Heritage and how it can be a catalyst to redevelopment**

Peppa Barney, Bibo Architects

**Plymouth High Street Heritage Action Zones**

Simon Hickman, Historic Englan

**BOOK NOW**



 **Planning for the Rural Environment**  
12 October 2022, Devon/Cornwall (TBC)

This one day seminar invites you explore the range of competing interests facing rural areas. How do you deliver housing, both market and affordable, rural employment and community facilities and sustainable energy, which is sustainable while maintaining the intrinsic qualities of the countryside? How can we deliver innovative housing whilst protecting the rural environment?

**BOOK NOW**



 **Planning Law Update**  
10 November, Bristol (venue TBC)

This annual update will look at the latest law and case law relevant to development management and planning policy. We hope to offer this event as a hybrid event inviting you to either join in person or virtually.

**BOOK NOW**



Take a look at the vast range of virtual events from webinars, discussions and masterclass opportunities [here](#)

# RTPI South West Dinner 2022

**Our annual dinner will be back in 2022 and will take place at @Wethecurious a venue which celebrates science and innovation and invites you to think about how we can influence the future.**

Taking place on the top floor, the balcony provides impressive views over Millennium Square and Bristol City.

This dinner is a great opportunity to Network, Reward and Celebrate great planning with colleagues and clients



Charity raffle  
in aid of:-  
Fare Share South West  
Mind  
Alzheimer's Society



## Network, Reward & be Inspired by the RTPI SW Annual Dinner

@Wethecurious  
10th June 2022  
6.30pm - Midnight

.....  
Featuring the Food Scientist,  
Judge the Poet and much more!

**Tickets £60 +vat**

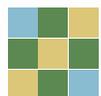
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