



Young Planners' Conference 2022

Utopia or Dystopia?

21-22 October 2022

Hotel La Tour, Milton Keynes

Friday 21st October 2022

8.45 am Registration

9.30 am Welcome Address from the Headline Sponsors



Adam Padmore - Managing Director, Rappor

Nick Stafford - Head of Planning GB, Tetra Tech

Kimberley Ziya - Junior Counsel, Landmark Chambers

9.45 am Opening Address

Tim Crawshaw MRTPI - President, RTPI

10.00 am Utopia or Dystopia?

This plenary talk investigates the conference theme in greater detail, setting the challenge for delegates to critique their own position and influence as Young Planners on the urban and natural environment. Is the 'Utopia' we plan for succeeding in practice, or do planners create unfortunate 'Dystopian' effects?

For example, people that live and grow up in Milton Keynes are often big proponents of the Milton Keynes model - linear parks, grid roads, a thriving economy and redways. The utopian ideals which underpinned the design are admired and valued. However, for many planners, and indeed the general public, Milton Keynes is seen as lacking a soul; a place famed for concrete cows and buildings, hundreds of roundabouts and having stolen a football team. Contrary to the creator's motivations, Milton Keynes is seen as a suburban dystopia and lauded by some as an example of a planning failure.

Dr Christopher Maidment - Director of Planning Programmes,
Henley Business School - University of Reading

Liam Ronan-Chlond - Head of Engagement, Socius

Olafiyin Taiwo on behalf of **Helen Fadipe** – First Plus Planning



RTPI Young Planners

Royal Town Planning Institute

Ian Wale - Associate, Urban Designer, David Lock Associates

Chair: Annabel Le Lohé – Development and Planning Manager, Brookbanks and Chair of RTPI Thames Valley Young Planners

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11.00 am

Break

11.15 am

Clean Growth - A tautology or realistic expectation?

At the heart of the UK's Clean Growth Strategy are proposals to improve emissions from our homes, accelerate the shift to low carbon transport, deliver clean and flexible power and enhance the value of our natural resources. Seemingly, the objectives of clean growth are known to many but practiced by few.

This session discusses the utopian notion of 'clean growth' and unpacks what is seemingly an oxymoron. This session seeks to inspire Young Planners to think beyond the bounds of our current planning system to imagine their place and role in a future system which strives for clean, green solutions to some of our most pressing problems.

Chris Elliott - Regional Director, Rappor

Luke Gledhill - Planning Officer (Development Plans), Milton Keynes City Council

Sarah Wixey – Director of Strategy and Sustainability, Virtus Energy

Chair: Daniel Gender-Sherry - Founder of Axiom Planning

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12.00 pm

Break

12.15 pm

Breakout Sessions

Delegates can choose one of the following sessions.

BREAKOUT 1

Upwards or Outwards?

As development pressures increase, which way 'should' we be building, upwards or outwards? In this session speakers will discuss the benefits and drawbacks of intensification and urban extensions. Can vertical extensions help the construction industry be more sustainable? Do urban extensions deliver greater social and physical infrastructure?



RTPI Young Planners

Royal Town Planning Institute

Charles Gillott - PhD student at The University of Sheffield's Department of Civil and Structural Engineering
Sara Parkinson - Planning and Communications Director & Board Director, Vistry Partnerships London
Nick Stafford - Head of Planning GB, Tetra Tech
Chair: Molly Stanley - Senior Planner, Carney Sweeney

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Vistry Group

BREAKOUT 2

Regeneration – Pragmatic or Problematic Progress?

In this session, we ask Young Planners to consider what actually makes regeneration successful or not beyond the basic understanding of the risks of gentrification. Speakers will use case studies from Bracknell and Portsmouth to explore the topic, encouraging delegates to share their experiences of regeneration both personally and professionally.

[Supporting notes for this session](#)

Laura Archer - Senior Planner Gillings Planning
Victor Nicholls - Lecturer in Development and Planning, Henley Business School, University of Reading
Chair: Emily Rickard - Planner, Turley

BREAKOUT 3

Developing Healthy Towns and Cities

In recent years, the plan making process has tried to deliver the majority of housing need within new towns/garden towns through the creation of entirely new, standalone, 'sustainable' settlements. The aim of this session is to discuss and debate how this can be both good and bad and if this has been successfully achieved anywhere. Speakers will share their plan-making, public sector and consultancy experience focussing on sustainability and delivery.

Dr Andrew Buroni - Director, Environmental Planning & Infrastructure, Savills
Eleanor Gingell - Planning Policy Team Leader, Cherwell District Council
Sarah Greenwood - Assistant Director, Sustainability & Design, Homes England
Chair: Izzie Diment - Transport Planner, Paul Basham Associates



BREAKOUT 4

Career Pathways (including APC Surgeries)

Sponsored and chaired by Carrington West, this session will provide an insight into what skills employers are seeking, the value of Chartership, and how to make the right choices for you. Reflecting on their routes into planning, two Chartered Planners share their experiences and advice on mapping your career to suit your skills and aspirations. Information will be shared about the RTPI's Chartered Town Planning Apprenticeship, and essential 'top-tips' for preparing your APC submission will be provided, irrelevant of your current stage in the process.

Becky Bonnett - Planning Manager, Barratt Developments

Alice Higgitt - Senior Planner, Savills

Chair: Krishan Adams - Senior Consultant, Carrington West

Sponsored by Carrington West



BREAKOUT 5

Thinking Globally

This session delivered by Young Planners seeks to draw on their experiences across the globe of planning in action, from Canada to Hong Kong, what can we learn and apply to our planning approach in the UK.

Reece Lemon - Senior Planner, Lee Evans Partnership LLP

NG Tsz Lok (Jeffrey) - Principal Planning Officer, Royal Borough of Windsor, and Maidenhead

Chair: Antonia McClean - Area Planner, Transport for London

BREAKOUT 6

New Town Heritage – expanding the scope of conservation

The words 'new' and 'heritage' don't frequently come to mind together, but with the oldest New Town in the UK now almost 80 years old, distinctive features of these towns need to be preserved to ensure they are not unduly lost to redevelopment. Speakers at this session will seek to challenge stereotypical ideals of heritage and conservation and discuss the endurance of the utopian visions of New Towns.

Abbie Arestis - Heritage and Conservation Placement Student, Bidwells

Su Fitzpatrick - Lecturer, Human Geography, York St John University

Katy Lock - Director of Communities and FJ Osborn Fellow

Chair: Zac Denton - Planner, Henry Adams LLP



1.00 pm

Networking Lunch

2.00 pm

Study Tours

Delegates will have a choice of 5 tours on the following topics.

1. Green Infrastructure and Development - Campbell Park Walking Tour

Milton Keynes has an extensive network of green and blue infrastructure which provide a wealth of social, economic and environmental benefits to the city. Within the city, green infrastructure was embedded from the outset and has created an almost unique modern urban landscape character.

Join this walking tour of Campbell Park, a Grade II listed linear park in the centre of the city, to see how today these spaces now provide an extensive recreational resource, fundamental to communities' health and wellbeing, as well as providing space for biodiversity and public art. You will also see how the park provides an attractive setting for development, including the RTPI South East award-winning Campbell Wharf scheme.

Sponsored by Bidwells



BIDWELLS

2. Development Central Milton Keynes

Already the commercial and cultural heart of Milton Keynes, Renaissance: CMK is a council-backed project to create an even stronger city centre, fit for the challenges of the future. Join this walking tour to see how through investment in new employment, residential, retail and leisure opportunities, the city is planning to create a prosperous city centre and capitalise on its strategic location in the Cambridge-MK-Oxford corridor.

Sponsored by Milton Keynes City Council



Milton Keynes
City Council

3. Urban Explorations - a Cycling Tour of MK

Using the Milton Keynes 'Redways', a network of segregated cycling and pedestrian routes, the bike tour will guide you through some of the most iconic features of the city. The route rolls through some of the original estates, key landmarks and strategic infrastructure designs, showing how the fabric of the new city is well placed to adapt to the future. Giving you a view of the Milton Keynes from a new angle, the tour will challenge some of the preconceptions around elements of its design and



give an insight on how and why it is the fastest growing city in the country.

Sponsored by David Lock Associates



4. Neighbourhood Planning

This study tour, led by O'Neill Homer, a specialist consultancy in neighbourhood plan making, includes coach travel across the city. Join this tour to explore local successes of neighbourhood planning around the area, including Newport Pagnell, a historic town on the outskirts of Milton Keynes. A full insight of neighbourhood planning will be provided, from looking at effective community engagement to learning how to preserve local character whilst also delivering large scale housing allocations.

Sponsored by O'Neill Homer



5. Planning for a New Settlement

Marston Valley, a project years in the making, is now an allocated site in the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan and benefits from a Development Brief that aims for exemplar development standards. Marston Valley will deliver a series of distinctive, interconnected villages that integrate wider connecting infrastructure such as the Bedford-Milton Keynes Waterway and East West Rail, delivering up to 5,000 homes, 30ha of employment and extensive community infrastructure between existing villages in the Forest of Marston Vale.

This study tour (by coach with some walking to viewpoints) will consider the design evolution and the stakeholder engagement undertaken to date. It will also focus on the land ownership arrangements and the role of the master developer in the stewardship and governance of the new place. An outline planning application is currently being considered by Central Bedfordshire Council (ref: 18/01969/OUT).

Sponsored by David Lock Associates, O& H Land and Varsity Town Planning



6.30 pm

Gala Dinner

Sponsored by Savills and Quod





Saturday 22nd October 2022

9.30 am Refreshments

10.00 am Conference Welcome Address

10.10 am Planning Law Update

A key part of any Planner's Continued Professional Development (CPD) is remaining up to date with Planning Law, this session will cover the most recent and impactful legal decisions and Examinations in Public.

Sasha White KC - King's Counsel, Landmark Chambers

Kimberley Ziya - Junior Counsel, Landmark Chambers

Sponsored by Landmark Chambers



11.00 am Brunch Speed Networking

12.15 pm Breakout Sessions

Delegates can choose one of the following sessions.

BREAKOUT 1

Emerging Technologies – Connected and Autonomous

By 2035, the global market for connected and autonomous vehicle technologies is predicted to be worth £63 billion. The session will focus on Young Planners learning how this emerging technology is being tested within the real-world urban environment including at the Conference location here in Milton Keynes. They will learn how this technology could change the way we need to plan for future infrastructure and how existing infrastructure could be repurposed as our towns and cities are redeveloped in the coming decades.

Ed Lovelock - Global Product Marketing Manager, Starship Technologies

Brian Matthews - Head of Transport Innovation, Milton Keynes Council

Nissa Shahid - Digital First Lead, Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service

Chair: Lydia Prince - Senior Planner, Tetra Tech

Sponsored by Tetra Tech





BREAKOUT 2

The Environment Act - Building for Biodiversity

After gaining Royal Assent in November 2021, the Environment Act 2021 is the framework for environmental legislation now that the UK has left the EU. The Environment Act 2021 amended the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act to strengthen developer obligations to exceed pre-development biodiversity net gains of at least 10%. This session will help Young Planners to understand the ramifications of the Act to ensure that they can plan to meet the requirements, whilst challenging the status quo to plan and inspire better outcomes for the environment in the long term.

Simon Kennedy - Strategic Environmental Planning Officer, Partnership for South Hampshire

Alex Pelton - Group Biodiversity Manager, Barratt Developments

Sofie Swindlehurst - Associate Ecologist, LUC

Chair: Stefania Petrosino - Senior Planner, Savills, and Vice-Chair of RTPI Thames Valley Young Planners

Sponsored by LUC



BREAKOUT 3

Planning for All

Whose utopia are we planning for? This session explores how we should be planning for all. Neurodiversity and how the built environment impacts the day to day lives of those with dementia, ADHD, Autism, Dyslexia etc. The session would explore how planners and designers can begin to understand how barriers can be broken down in existing and new developments, and the lessons we can take away from the built environment to create inclusive environments.

Matthew Harmsworth - Senior Planner, Barton Willmore

Keeley Mitchell - Trainee Planning Officer, Dacorum Borough Council

Chair: Suzi Green - Senior Planner, Bidwells



BREAKOUT 4

Clashing Agendas? – Regionalism and Localism

Much of planning education on regional planning focuses on the era of Regional Spatial Strategies, yet 'modern regionalism' is born through the Duty to Cooperate and ad hoc Local Planning Authority collaboration. Whilst cooperation is key, conflicts evidently arise. This session looks at how political motivations and the empowerment of neighbourhood groups through the Localism agenda exacerbated or improved cross-boundary collaboration.

David Bainbridge - Planning Director, Savills

David Murray-Cox – Director (Planning), Turley

Chair: Laura Robinson - Planner, Barratt Development

Sponsored by Turley

Turley

BREAKOUT 5

The Voice of Young Planners

As peer learning and connectivity are key to a Young Planner's development and progression with the industry, it is important to share experiences and build relationships with others. Sponsored by Penguin Recruitment, this session provides an opportunity for delegates to connect with award winning Young Planners and hear about their passion for planning and experiences to date.

Melissa Balk - Senior Planning Manager, Davidsons Homes South Midlands

Ryan Walker - Senior Planner, Icen Projects

Chair: Matt Fraser - Team Manager (Planning, Heritage & Urban Design), Penguin Recruitment

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BREAKOUT 6

Public Art – Bringing Art to Communities

For many public art might be considered ancillary to development and can easily become an afterthought given the pressures on planners to deliver critical infrastructure, meet housing targets and support economic growth. This session aims to inspire Young Planners to consider Public Art as integral to development and as a key opportunity to support and positively engage with communities.

Ananya Banerjee - Director & Head of Design, Boyer

Tim Skelton - Chair, Milton Keynes Forum

Chair: Emily Benstead - Assistant Planner, David Lock Associates



1.00 pm

Break

1.15 pm

When does a town become a city?

For many who live and work in Milton Keynes, it has been a city for a long time, yet it only achieved city status in 2022 following multiple bids across the past decades. This talk is opened by the leader of the Council sharing why city status was important for Milton Keynes. Speakers will then share their views on what characteristics an urban environment has to 'become' a city and whether city status is critical.

Nicholas Kamols - Researcher at QUT Design Lab and Planning Consultant at Arup

Councillor Peter Marland - Leader of Milton Keynes City Council

Wei Yang - Chair, Wei Yang & Partners, RTPI Immediate Past President

Chair: Adam Sciberras - Special Projects Director, Milton Keynes Development Partnership

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2.15 pm

Closing remarks & Young Planners' Conference 2023 handover

2:30 pm

Event close