



RTPI

mediation of space · making of place

RTPI 2020

Corporate Strategy
2015-2020

The voice of professional planning

The RTPI's mission

The RTPI is a charity, a learned society and an international membership organisation. Its object, incorporated in its Charter, is to advance the science and art of planning (including town and country and spatial planning) for the benefit of the public.

The RTPI champions the role of spatial planning - planning which gives people a real say in shaping the places where they live and work – and ensures that creating inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable places is at the heart of everything we do.

Who we are and what we do:

- The RTPI is the professional institute for the planning profession and supports the work of chartered planners engaged in **creating** the kinds of places where people want to live, work, relax and invest, and in **improving** places by helping them to function better economically, socially and environmentally.
- The RTPI is the largest of the European and Commonwealth Institutes for the planning profession with 23,000 members in 80 countries across the globe, and more than 100 years' experience in leading and developing planning professionals. Our members are drawn from a wide range of roles in the public, private, and not-for-profit sectors where the value of planning expertise is recognised and increasingly reflect the diversity of the communities with which they work. The RTPI works collaboratively with sister Institutes across the world to promote planning.

Advancing the science
and art of planning

Setting professional and ethical standards

- The RTPI supports the development of a learned and reflective membership through accreditation of planning education, setting professional and ethical standards, and providing a programme of support for professional development. It publishes the international journal, Planning Theory and Practice, The Planner magazine and the RTPI Book Series. Its chartered planner qualification is recognised worldwide as a benchmark for knowledge and probity. The RTPI is a member of the Academy of Social Sciences.
- The RTPI is a key influencer with national governments and external stakeholders, publishing respected policy papers, championing the profession and campaigning for better planning. The RTPI funds a range of research projects, including its SPIRE programme, to increase the evidence base of spatial planning and linking spatial planning theory with planning practice. As part of this work, it has developed a comprehensive research programme on the value of planning. The RTPI works with a wide range of partners to promote and celebrate excellence in planning.
- The RTPI has provided support for disadvantaged and hard to reach communities through its support for Planning Aid services for more than 40 years.
- The RTPI has a well respected governance structure and is recognised for best practice in promoting opportunities for members to play an active role in the Institute's affairs, and working effectively in partnership with other organisations both in the UK and internationally.

The Purpose of the 2015-2020 Corporate Strategy

This corporate strategy sets clear and focussed objectives for the period 2015-2020 for the whole of the RTPI, regardless of geographical sphere of influence, and addresses current issues relating to the external and internal operating environments of the RTPI. It establishes sound guidelines within which decisions on priorities, resource allocation, work streams and other initiatives will be taken and sets a strong framework for business planning including for RTPI Scotland, RTPI Cymru, RTPI Ireland, RTPI Northern Ireland and Planning Aid England. This strategy will be supported by two-year business plans and budgets with thematic cross-cutting strategies for membership, education, policy and research and international programmes together with an analysis of risk and performance indicators. Underpinning all of this is our commitment to growth – in influence, membership, profile, partnerships, international reach, and as a key contributor to planning education and professional standards, research and knowledge, and constructive debate about the importance of spatial planning.

This corporate strategy has been prepared in the year when the RTPI has celebrated 100 years of professional planning with an important programme of centenary events and initiatives. Some of these will continue as legacy programmes as we look forward to the big issues of the next 100 years.

Looking forward
to the next 100 years

Representing
23,000
members in
80 countries

Contexts for the Corporate Strategy

The environment in which this Corporate Strategy has been prepared and in which the RTPI operates is changing in a number of ways:

- **Society**

The RTPI was established 100 years ago and in one sense our societies face many of the same challenges now as they did a century ago – the need for affordable housing and better public health and how to balance economic development with the protection of the environment. In other respects planners are confronted by a wholly new set of challenges and will need to engage with the big issues of managing rapid urbanisation, the rise of ‘lifestyle’ diseases and facilitating improvements in health and social cohesion, demographic and migration changes, and increased competition in a globalised world.

Planners have a critical role to play in response to all these issues. In recent years, against the background of a challenging economy, fragile government and untested planning legislative frameworks, the RTPI has reshaped its policy, practice and research work and has become a more effective influencer, working across an international agenda and forming strong partnerships. In informing policy, practice and research the RTPI is seeking ways to share its insights with planners around the world while acknowledging the widely differing contexts for governance, land administration and resource allocation.

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ways across

Society

Economy

Government, Regulation and Policy

Environment

Education

Governance

Contexts for the Corporate Strategy continued

- **Economy**

This strategy has been prepared against a background of continuing global economic uncertainty and connectedness. The continued recovery of the UK economy is heavily dependent upon sustained improvement in the Eurozone, which is currently highly uncertain based on weak underlying economic indicators throughout much of the area.

Additionally, whilst the overall employment rate in the UK has returned to pre-crisis levels, youth unemployment remains high and a lack of skills and training in some sections of the economy risks consolidating economic inequalities which arose during the recession.

Securing long term economic success will be dependent on adopting policies to target smart and sustainable growth in order to mitigate future risks, including: increased investment in infrastructure provision, a focus on green growth, helping demand and supply equate in the housing market, and rebalancing the national economy through more regional economic autonomy. Strategic planning will have an important role in helping to inform and deliver these priorities.

The Bank of England is, however, assuming that the UK and world economies will expand steadily with a gradual increase in productivity and incomes which will underpin a sustained expansion in private sector spending.

Adopting
policies
to target
smart and
sustainable
growth

Strategies for sustainable development will be critical

- **Environment**

This century is also likely to witness rising tensions over environmental issues such as climate change, energy security and water resources, as population growth and rapid urbanisation in particular make increasing demands on natural ecosystems.

A lack of planning often exacerbates these challenges; for example, spatially unbalanced and inequitable growth means that some cities and regions suffer from over-population and overwhelmed infrastructure and services, creating pressures for sprawl and degrading the environment as rural and agricultural areas are lost. Such conditions foster inequality, poor health and greater vulnerability to environmental hazards including climate change and pollution.

The way that we respond to these challenges will be critical to the sustainability and even survival of many communities and ecosystems. This will require much greater attention to how we organise and use land, how we transport ourselves, how we live and work in communities, how we generate and distribute energy, and how we use water – all in a coherent and coordinated way. It also suggests the need for more integrated thinking to appreciate the relationships between social, economic and environmental systems – for example; how sudden food price rises might be related to uncontrolled urban development, which in turn may also increase the vulnerability of communities to climate change and so on. Urban and rural planning – both in the sense of regulating development but also creating and implementing strategies for sustainable development – will be critical.

Contexts for the Corporate Strategy continued

- **Government, Regulation and Policy**

In the UK the implications of the Scottish referendum outcome, not only for Scotland but for other UK nations and regions, is likely to form a key debate for the immediate future. It is not clear at present what may happen to the distribution of power and responsibilities nationally or the impact on delivery and governance at a sub national level.

Commitments have been made to review the UK's relationship with Europe and there is much uncertainty about the outcome of any future referendum on EU membership. European legislation remains an important context for planning. There is increasing pressure to find a political solution to population growth and international migration with no consensus about the extent to which the latter offers a threat or opportunity for the UK – an increasing challenge globally. The RTPI will publish briefings for the elections taking place in each of the UK nations in 2015 and 2016.

- **Education**

RTPI
accredited
qualifications
ensure academic
rigour

In the UK the Higher Education sector is still in a restructuring phase as institutions absorb the impact of reduced government funding, new expectations from students and the consequences of student fee changes. Planning education has been affected by a significant drop in student numbers since 2008 with worrying implications for future need for sufficient well educated and trained professional planners. The RTPI's support for accredited university courses worldwide, and the promotion of planning as a career choice, will also be important in achieving growth in chartered membership. The RTPI accredited qualifications ensure academic rigour and are open and accessible to all parts of our society.

Internationally there is both strong demand for planning education and support for the challenges of equipping the profession in countries with few or no planning schools. The demand from non-UK nationals for places at RTPI accredited schools remains high.

• Governance

Recent changes to the RTPI's Charter and Byelaws have ensured that our governance structures are now well defined, regarded as a model of good practice and facilitating increased opportunities for members to play an active role in the Institute's affairs. The importance of the contribution of RTPI members and volunteers is clearly visible. In line with expectations of charities generally, the RTPI's performance is likely to be monitored more closely with continuing and growing emphasis on demonstrable public benefit.

The RTPI responded to the impact of the financial crisis in recent years by implementing a comprehensive recalibration of its cost base, implementing efficiencies and new ways of working. This has helped protect members against a continual increase in fees and its robust financial model will enable the continuing development of business practices and systems which support sound decision making and link established priorities to resources and the further development of member services.

The RTPI has implemented efficiencies and new ways of working

Planning

In 2014 its centenary year the RTPI explored the global context for planning through its Planning Horizons series and other publications and published the following papers:

Planning Horizons: Thinking Spatially

Planning Horizons: Future-Proofing Society

Planning Horizons: Promoting Healthy Cities

Planning Horizons: Creating Economically Successful Places

Planning Horizons: Making Better Decisions for Places

Worldwide Value of Planning

The Centenary edition of Planning Theory and Practice

These reflect the longer term issues for our society, the importance of ensuring a spatial dimension in planning for development and the context for a wider debate about the contribution of planning to the 21st century challenges of urbanisation, sustainable development, growth in housing and planned infrastructure, health and wellbeing, and effective governance.

Planning for new horizons

RTPI Strategic Objectives

The RTPI's strategic objectives to 2020 are:

- **Shaping and informing policy and practice;**
- **Developing knowledge, education and raising standards;**
- **Championing the planning profession while supporting and growing membership;**
- **Empowering communities;**
- **Delivering strong financial and business management in a member focused organisation.**

Underpinning these objectives is the Institute's overarching commitment to growing:

- **The profile of the RTPI as the foremost contributor to education, research, knowledge and constructive debate about planning;**
- **The RTPI's influence and engagement in the UK and internationally with political stakeholders, partnerships with professional bodies and its media reach;**
- **Recruitment and retention of members, increasing the member value proposition, and diversifying its income streams.**

Measuring success: The RTPI in 2020

All actions, proposals, programmes and initiatives in pursuit of the five core strategic objectives will be evaluated against our ambitions/vision for the Institute in 2020:

1. Shaping and informing Policy and Practice

National policy agendas, resource allocation and research commissioning will have been positively and measurably influenced by the RTPI's world class research, promotion of effective practice, and celebration of planning achievements.

The global profile of spatial planning, and the Institute, will have been raised through the RTPI's partnership work with a wide range of organisations and forums internationally, demonstrating the value of planning in established and emerging national economies and societies.

Planning will be acknowledged by the public, industry and government and media as a visionary, positive and practical activity necessary to improve quality of life.

**Shaping and
informing with
world class
research**

2. Developing knowledge, education and raising standards

The image of planners and the planning profession will have been enhanced and participants including the public will hold legitimately high expectations of the knowledge, expertise and probity of professional planners.

The RTPI will be recognised internationally as a leader in the field of education and lifelong learning for built environment professionals. An increase in accredited planning schools worldwide, strengthening the profession by benchmarking standards internationally, will encourage a steady stream of national and international graduates. Initiatives with partners, stakeholders and members will have had considerable success in promoting planning as a career to schools and individuals.

The RTPI's productive relationships with other built environment professional institutes, employers and academic institutions will have ensured the development and delivery of high quality, accessible, cost effective learning opportunities for its members.

Measuring success: The RTPI in 2020 continued

3. Championing the planning profession while supporting and growing membership

RTPI membership will be highly valued by qualified planners, and students, and by individuals from a wide range of professional backgrounds with entry and progression routes clearly promoted and supported. The profile of the RTPI membership will be more representative of our society as the RTPI, working with partners, continues to promote routes to membership which meet the needs and expectations of the widest range of candidates.

A growing percentage of members globally will be actively engaged in the life of the Institute through its networks, volunteering and governance arrangements. The distinctive voice and role of the regions and nations will be clearly articulated, supported and celebrated as a key strength of the RTPI.

The RTPI's new feedback systems will enable us to understand and respond to members' stated needs and expectations, generating measurable year-on-year improvement in member satisfaction.

4. Empowering Communities

The RTPI will have established mechanisms for sustainable dialogue with the public about the value of planning. More people will be involved in decision making about their local area thanks to a broader understanding of the potential and purpose of planning as essential to improving quality of life.

The Planning Aid England brand will be recognised as an exemplar of best practice for its pioneering approaches to helping individuals and communities in need engage with the statutory planning system.

The RTPI will have promoted the concept of planning aid internationally and will be collaborating with equivalent national services on shared learning and enhanced service delivery. The RTPI's comprehensive, independent and authoritative guidance for communities will have been widely endorsed by key stakeholders, including government.

Planning is essential to improving quality of life

Measuring success: The RTPI in 2020 continued

5. Deliver strong financial and business management in a member focussed organisation

The RTPI will have further ensured its financial sustainability by diversifying its revenue streams through successfully generating income from marketable RTPI Services Ltd (RSL) and RTPI services and assets.

The RTPI will be known for its ambition and capacity for continual review and improvement with a rolling staff development programme enhancing confidence, competence and commitment. The RTPI will be recognised by its peers as an exemplar of cost-effective, customer-focussed delivery with staff empowered to take decisions at the lowest possible level.

We will have achieved greater efficiency in the way we work, benefiting from opportunities to improve our operating systems thus releasing time for reinvestment.

The RTPI is reaching out very firmly to a challenging future - while mindful of the values of its past and the enthusiasm, open minds and willingness to experiment which characterised the RTPI founders in 1914.

The RTPI would like to thank all members who have contributed to the widespread consultation which has informed preparation of this corporate strategy during 2014.



Diversifying
our business
for financial
sustainability



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