

## Annex 1

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### Board of Trustees

## RTPI Delivery Updates

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### FOR INFORMATION

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This document aims to provide a summary of Institute updates to inform Board and Committee members of recent and upcoming work around the RTPI. Members can also stay up to date by following the RTPI's social media accounts on [LinkedIn](#).

### Spotlight on: Response to the publication of the Planning and Infrastructure Bill

Following the publication of [the Planning and Infrastructure Bill](#) on Tuesday 11 March, the RTPI issued a [parliamentary briefing](#) ahead of the second reading scheduled for Monday 24 March. The briefing welcomes a number of provisions set out in the Bill including the reintroduction of strategic planning through Strategic Development Strategies and provisions to ensure that planning fee income is reinvested in planning services. The RTPI has again called for its four legislative asks including the statutory role of Chief Planning Officers, a National Spatial Framework, a purpose of planning and the mandating of online planning committees. All updates, briefings and related materials can be found at the RTPI's [Planning Reform 2025 Hub](#).

### Spotlight on: Brand implementation programme

**Brand familiarisation training** – Training is taking place in three sections:

- Introduction to the brand (an engagement piece on why it matters and what is happening to ensure consistency, clarity and confidence in working to the brand).
- A Brand Centre walkthrough (how to access it, where to find brand guidelines, assets and templates, and how to be on brand).
- Tone of voice workshops (what is tone of voice, what is RTPI's tone of voice, and practical writing).

**The Brand Centre** – Our Brand Centre has been populated with brand guidelines, templates, images, and design assets. Security testing by IT is complete. The new PowerPoint template has been created with user instructions for brand consistency. The Brand Centre content will evolve to enhance our campaigns and ways of working.

**Brand films** – The films will be key assets for the brand launch campaign. Filming for the new brand films is taking place in March; editing will be done in April. Film previews will be available for volunteers in the summer, prior to launch.

**Brand audit** – Analysis and work have started on updating items from the brand audit. For example, the new website branding has been signed off for the CMS upgrade project. All colleagues will be working to ensure new branding is in place ready for go live on external channels in September 2025.

## Promoting the value of membership and professionalism

*The RTPI will deliver a compelling member value proposition.*

### 1.1. New mentoring programme launched, with call for mentors to register

The new online mentoring platform launched on 4 February and approximately 110 mentors registered in the first month. The first mentoring programme focuses on general career development for all members, anywhere in the world, regardless of their career stage. The next stage of the programme will commence on 2 April, welcoming members to register as mentees and select a mentor. A webinar introducing the mentoring process to mentors was delivered 26 March as the first in a series of new webinars to promote mentoring and support those who have registered.

Board and committee members are encouraged to consider serving as a mentor and sharing the opportunity with their networks.

### 1.2. Assessment of Professional Competence (APC) developments

**Assessment round 1** – We have seen a 34.7% increase in APC submissions for the first assessment round in 2025, compared to the same assessment round in 2024. This follows strong growth from previous years including a 42.6% increase in entries from 2022 to 2023. The large increase in entries was predominantly from Licentiates applying via the L-APC route. This is the first assessment round that changes to the requirement to submit a [Reflective Journal](#) for the L-APC route were introduced. The changes to the Reflective Journal requirements were introduced after extensive consultation with member and stakeholders.

**Plagiarism and AI checks** – Software has been in place for several years to review all APC submissions for any potential plagiarism or use of AI within their submission. So far in 2025, 5 candidates have had their results withheld due to alleged plagiarism and have been referred to the Conduct & Discipline Panel. Communication has increased on this to alert all stakeholders with the aim to deter candidates from plagiarising or using AI for their APC.

### 1.3. CPD monitoring commences

This year's CPD monitoring commenced at the end of January, with three further rounds to be undertaken in April, July and October. At its November 2024 meeting, the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee resolved that the number of Members being monitored should increase in 2025 to approximately 2% of the eligible membership (around 300 Members).

The Education team is also driving forward the project exploring the potential for RTPI endorsement of CPD delivered by others, to complement the Institute's own offer. Discussions are taking place, in the first instance, with the RTPI-accredited Planning Schools, and will continue during this year's Partnership Board meeting round and beyond.

### 1.4. Membership renewals underway

The 2025 membership renewal cycle came to an end at the end of March. Following the successful campaign in April/May 2024 to outsource the outbound calling before the final membership cancellation, we engaged with the same external agency to work on another campaign for the 2025

membership renewals. The outbound calling to those members who have not yet renewed commenced on Monday 3 March and is due to be completed by Friday 4 April.

### 1.5. Celebrating membership milestones

On 13 March, the RTPI recognised the long service of 45 members, all achieving 50 years of membership.

### 1.6. Digital transformation projects

Three significant digital transformation projects are currently in progress:

**The online membership applications project** continues to make good progress. The CRM build is continuing and an early design of the online forms is being reviewed by the project team. The project team continues to work on all the internal tasks (which do not involve the supplier) while the supplier is building. These include drafting communications, reworking webpages (structure and content), updating guidance and data cleaning.

**The Umbraco content management system (CMS) upgrade** is also progressing well. The upgrade of the Planning Your World microsite's CMS is due to complete at the end of March. Work on the main site has focused on the integrations and the member profile. At the same time, the supplier is working with RTPI colleagues on implementing the new brand guidelines so that we are joining up the two projects.

The previous report stated that a tender process would be needed to find a supplier for the **new learning management system**. This is now under way; four potential suppliers participated in introductory meetings, submitted their tender documents and will shortly be attending further interviews.

The RTPI is focused on the benefits that these projects will bring, such as new services for members, removing manual processes (enabling colleagues to deliver other services for members) and improved security.

## 2. Supporting planning services

*The RTPI will be the leading advocate for campaigning for well-resourced, effective planning functions.*

### 2.1. Policy consultations

On 14 February, the RTPI responded to the [Compulsory Purchase Process and Compensation Reforms Consultation](#) by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

On 28 February, the RTPI responded to the [Brownfield Passports Working Paper](#) by MHCLG.

The RTPI also responded to the Housing Communities and Local Government Committee Call for Evidence on "Delivering 1.5 million new homes: Land Value Capture."

### 2.2. Advocating for apprenticeships

The RTPI still awaits news from the Government about the future funding of level 7 apprenticeships in England, of which the Chartered Town Planner Apprenticeship is one. Further details of the actions the Institute has taken since the proposals to change level 7 funding were first mooted can be found [here](#).

There are currently around 850 apprentices on programme, and over 160 former apprentices have become Chartered Town Planners via this route.

### **2.3. Support for planning and infrastructure in Northern Ireland**

On 26 March, Director of Wales, Northern Ireland and Planning Aid England Mark Hand attended the Northern Ireland Executive's Infrastructure Committee to support members of the Interim Regional Planning Commission. The Commission was established in the light of the March 2022 Northern Ireland Audit Office report into the planning system in Northern Ireland. The RTPI provides secretariat support. The Commission is aiming to conclude its recommendations in May 2025.

Also in March, Chief Executive Dr Victoria Hills visited Northern Ireland to attend the Annual Dinner, Northern Ireland Executive Committee, Policy Committee and Planning Consultants' Forum. Victoria and Mark met with Permanent Secretary Denis McMahon and lead officers from the Department of Infrastructure.

### **2.4. Revised Policy Statement on Initial Planning Education**

Preparations continue for this year's Partnership Board meeting cycle - part of the annual process of quality assurance and support to accredited Planning Schools - with meetings taking place between April and July.

Training for Partnership Board members will take place in March. This will include updates regarding the revised Policy Statement on Initial Planning Education, which was approved by the RTPI Board of Trustees at its February 2025 meeting. Further guidance for Planning Schools and Partnership Boards will also be developed over the coming months.

### **2.5. An introduction to planning and AI**

On 6 March, we published an open access practice advice note entitled '[An introduction to Planning and AI](#).' The note introduces planners to key concepts and tools related to AI, as well as some of their risks and opportunities. Head of Practice and Research Dr Daniel Slade published a [blog post](#) alongside the note, which used Aristotle's philosophy to argue that "AI powered tools may empower planners, but they are also tools to be used with caution."

### **2.6. Updates to practice advice notes**

March saw the refresh and republication of three practice advice notes, concerning planning for older people, children and mental health.

## **3. Raising the profile of planning**

*The RTPI will invest in an ambitious communications and public affairs strategy and capability to better campaign and articulate the purpose and value of planning.*

### **3.1. Attendance at MIPIM**

Chief Executive Dr Victoria Hills and Director of Wales, Northern Ireland and Planning Aid England Mark Hand represented RTPI members at this year's MIPIM convening, during which time they met with UN-Habitat (UN Human Settlements Programme) Executive Director Anacláudia Rossbach to discuss shared priority. The meeting was an opportunity to re-affirm the two organisations' long-standing partnership and the Institute's commitment to supporting sustainable development and climate action globally.

### 3.2. Entries open for 2025 RTPI Awards for Research Excellence

This year's [Awards for Research Excellence](#) opened on 18 March with the news that [two categories have been renamed](#) to honour the memories of two influential planning academics who passed away in 2024. The renamed categories include the Tony Crook Award for Early Career Research and the Patsy Healey Award for Academic Excellence, both of which celebrate the legacies of these distinguished individuals within the planning research community. Entries close 18 May.

### 3.3. Tickets launch for National Planning Conference 2025

## 4. Promoting equality, diversity and inclusivity

*The RTPI will champion a diverse and representative profession.*

### 4.1. Engagement with schools

New materials for volunteers to use in their engagement with schools and young people have been produced and are now available on the [RTPI website](#). These take a 'toolkit' format for different age groups. Further materials – particularly for older age groups – are also currently in preparation, and will be added to the toolkits when ready. A pilot of training for volunteers in the use of the new materials and in how to engage with schools took place in Birmingham in mid-February. This session was very positively received by the volunteers and the school children who took part. Further consideration is being given to the feedback gathered after the session, and to how to scale the training to other RTPI Regions and Nations in due course.

### 4.2. Celebrating International Women's Day

This Women's History Month, the RTPI hosted a discussion at Westminster City Council on the question of how gender-inclusive approaches can be embedded into planning projects. RTPI President Helen Fadipe opened the event, and two panels of experts examined the importance of considering diverse perspectives when planning spaces, as well as how a gendered approach to planning can create more equitable spaces for all.