

<i>Reference</i>	BOT25.APR.16
<i>Date</i>	2 April 2025

Board of Trustees 2 April 2025

Report from the Presidential Team

FOR INFORMATION

1. Background

1.1 This report is to inform the Board of the Presidential Team's activities since the last Board meeting which was held on Wednesday 26 February 2025. This report covers all activities undertaken across the whole team in order to give the Board a full overview of activities and events. This report also provides a short look forward of key forthcoming events.

2. President's Report

2.1 Since the last Board meeting on 26 February 2025, I have attended the following meetings and events at the time of reporting:

- **The RSA Architecture & Urban Planning Forum Launch, RSA, London, 28 February 2025.**

As the keynote speaker at the Launch event, in keeping with my Presidential theme, I used the opportunity to promote the value of planning and the need to recognise the contributions that planners make to the development process. Moreso, the need to work collaboratively i.e in alignment rather than competition.

- **Global Planners Network. 27 February 2025.** The meeting provided an opportunity for the group to revisit GPN governance, reaffirm its purpose, particularly its advocacy role and to discuss the secretariat arrangements for 2026 and beyond. A LinkedIn page is currently in development to enhance the group's visibility and engagement.

Key activities for the year were discussed, including planning for World Town Planning Day 2025.

The group's unanimous approval was given to the Japan Society of Urban and Regional Planners' expression of interest to join.

An update from the UN Habitat Professional Forum highlighted the importance of equitable access to professional resources. Additionally, Vincent Goodstadt is contributing to a paper on capacity building as part of these efforts.

- **Introduction and Virtual Meet-and-Greet between Presidents Sue Schwartz (APA President) and Helen Fadipe.**
- **Visit to Yorkshire Region. 5 & 6 March 2025**

Dinner in Leeds – 5 March

I had the pleasure of attending a dinner event in Leeds, bringing together members of the City of Bradford Metropolitan Borough Council (CBMDC), RTPi Yorkshire, the Landscape Institute, and the West & North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce. The discussions focused on collaboration with the Landscape Institute and the activities of the Chamber, particularly the Leeds Property & Economic Forum. Additionally, it was an opportunity to gain insight into the work of CBMDC's Planning, Transportation, and Highways department, as well as ongoing regeneration projects.

Bradford, City of Culture 2025 – 6 March

The following day, I attended a meeting at the Council Offices to learn more about CBMDC's Planning, Transportation & Highways department. The session included a meet and greet with the planning teams, followed by presentations and a tour of Bradford. This provided an excellent opportunity to explore the city's ambitions and achievements in greater depth.

The presentations from the Executive Director of Bradford 2025 UK City of Culture and Assistant Director, Planning, Transportation & Highways focused on

- The UK City of Culture bid process and its impact
- Bradford's placemaking vision
- The social, economic, and cultural evolution of the city

The walking tour of Bradford's city centre attended by approximately 65 persons, offered an in-depth look at regeneration efforts. Key sites visited included:

- Heritage Action Zone
- Little Germany
- City centre landmarks and buildings
- Darley Street Market
- City Village
- Townscape Heritage Scheme
- City Park

The second part of the tour took place in the afternoon and included a visit to Saltaire, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Reflections on Bradford's Regeneration Approach

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Bradford City Council's proactive and collaborative approach to regeneration and heritage preservation is exemplary.

Their strategy includes:

- Visionary leadership driving urban renewal
- Use of Compulsory Purchase Orders to unlock development opportunities
- Their strong collaboration with working between built environment disciplines and external agencies
- Maximising grant funding and inward investment to accelerate regeneration projects
- Landscape-led regeneration to enhance residents' experience and well-being
- Adaptive reuse and, where necessary, demolition of vacant buildings to increase footfall and attract visitors
- Commitment to high-quality design standards in new and refurbished developments

Despite these successes, some challenges remain:

- Retention of planners after they gain experience
- Lack of investment in rail infrastructure, which has the potential to unlock greater economic opportunities for Bradford
- Ongoing efforts to secure government funding to enhance connectivity and support future growth

Pipeline of Planners: The Council supports learning and professional growth. I was particularly impressed with the Council's emphasis on 'grow your own' talent to maintain a pipeline of planner. In addition, it was evident that it fosters inclusion and diversity within planning teams.

My speech which included promoting mentoring, RTPI membership and planning awards was well received, with the Assistant Director making a public commitment to mentoring of junior officers.

Final Thoughts

This was a fantastic start to my Presidential visits, and to top it all off, the sun was shining, setting the perfect scene for an inspiring and productive visit!

2.2 The following meetings and events are scheduled to take place prior to the Board meeting on 2 April 2025

- International Women's Day,. 11 March 2025

- General Assembly – Birmingham 19 March 2025
- Creative Estuary symposium ‘Creating Place Shaping Together’, British Council, London 20 March 2025
- Major Consultancies Meeting (Virtual) - March 2025
- America Planning Association Conference, Denver, Colorado, 22 March – 2 April 2025.

2.3 The meetings and events that I will be attending and engaging with prior to next RTPI Board meeting scheduled for 4 June 2025 are:

- Housing Launch Breakfast – London, 3 April 2025
- National Association of Planning Enforcement NAPE Conference,. 24 April 2025
- Scottish Young Planner’s Conference – Edinburgh 1 May 2025
- Independent Consultation Network (ICN), Birmingham, 8 May 2025
- CIC Members Conference, Hertfordshire, 15 – 16 May 2025
- UKREiiF , Leeds, 20 – 22 May 2025

3. Vice President

3.1 Since the last Board meeting on Wednesday 26 February 2025, I have attended the following meetings and events at the time of reporting:

- Bi-weekly Presidential Engagements Team Calls.
- **RTPI Finance Committee**, 5 March 2025 as observer.
- **RTPI Women in Planning North East**'s first in person event of the year held on Thursday 6 March 2025 to celebrate International Women's Day - a celebration of women in the NE planning profession. The event included networking and refreshments, and a conversation with Louise Sloan from Newcastle City Council, Chris Pipe from Planning House, and RTPI Vice President Jan Bessell from Pinsent Masons, all reflecting on our career journeys - kindly hosted by Ward Hadaway.
- **RTPI English Policy Committee**, London Botolph Lane, Monday 10 March 2025 focusing on strategic planning, policy development, biodiversity net gain, Planning Aid and land use consultation.

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- **RTPI General Assembly**, Birmingham, Wednesday 19 March 2025.

3.2 The meetings and events that I will be attending and engaging with prior to next RTPI Board meeting scheduled for 21 May 2025 are:

- **RTPI NE - RMB & RAC**, Monday 28 April 2025.
- **RTPI Nations and Regions Panel**, Wednesday 30 April 2025.
- **CIOB Awards 2025** Drinks Reception and Dinner, Thursday 15 May 2025.
- **UKREiIF 2025, RTPI Leeds Reception** sponsored by Pinsent Masons - Monday 19 May 2025.
- **UKREiIF 2025**, Leeds – May 20-22, 2025.
- **British Construction Infrastructure Awards 2025 judging**.

4. Immediate Past President

4.1 I have taken a slight breather since stepping down from the Presidential role and have used this to start to think about the Ambassadorial role and how I can effectively continue to build on my presidential theme by supporting the promotion of planning as a career choice and building the pipeline of young professionals. Some initial discussions are scheduled and will be reported in future reports.

Since the last Board meeting on Wednesday 26 February 2025, I have engaged in the following:

- Bi-weekly Presidential Engagements Team Calls.
- Panel member for Chartered Association for Building Engineers (CABE) for Women to celebrate International Women's Day event with Lindsay Richards, Chair CABE for Women, Caroline Hamilton MBE CEng MIMechE- Chief Executive, Safety Assessment Federation Ltd and Zoe Cox, Vice President CABE.
- Acknowledged as one of The Planners Women of Influence 2025. Reception to be held 13th May 2025.

4.2 No meetings and events scheduled prior to next RTPI Board meeting scheduled for 21 May 2025

5. Other Matters

5.1 The Presidential theme for 2025 is:

‘Championing Collaboration, Investment, and Inclusivity for a Resilient Planning Profession’.

This theme reflects my deep commitment to fostering a planning profession that is well prepared to address the challenges of our times, while embracing the values of partnership, resourcefulness, and representation.

The National and Regional visits are currently being undertaken and arranged and in addition to meeting members and visiting projects that resonate with the three core themes, I will continue with visits to accredited planning schools focusing on the Institutions that have signed up to the RTPI / British Chamber of Commerce Planning Scholarship.

**Helen Fadipe MBE MRTPI
President**

**Jan Bessell FRTPI
Vice President**

**Lindsey Richards FRTPI
Immediate Past President**