

Contents

Chairs Article

Editors Blog

The NPPF from Burges Salmon

Planning Aid

Young Planners

Uni updates / graduations

Visiting American Planning Students

RMB RAC Update

RTPI South West Annual Dinner 2018

President's Visit

2018 Awards Shortlist

How to determine what is curtilage

Joint Local Plans

Green Belts

Hugh Barton Book review

Forthcoming events

2019 event launch



RTPI South West
Royal Town Planning Institute



www.rtpi.org.uk/southwest

BRANCHOUT NEWS

No 176

AUTUMN 2018

Picture Interpretation Panel at Dawlish Countryside Park, shortlisted in the RTPI South West Awards for Planning Excellence 2018

Message from the Chair

Chair's welcome...

Well here it is – my final welcome in Branchout! Whilst I will be Chair until Christmas, I thought I would take this opportunity to look back over my year so far, as well as looking forward to what is coming up in 2019.

I am proud of what we have achieved as a branch this year. It has been a year of change, with a new look dinner and some exciting new additions on the CPD programme. I am particularly pleased about the CPD day that was held in May in Exeter that had over 200 attendees. This was something completely different for the SW Region, as there were 20 different options running across the day to allow delegates to mix and match sessions to their requirements, as well as the day being more “engaging” than the usual events. I can't speak for others but I was spoilt for choice and trying to narrow it down to attending just four sessions was a tough ask. I also finally conquered my fear of the dreading Flood Sequential Test, which was a massive bonus for the day (and beyond!). I'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone who helped put this day together – with so many sessions, it was a challenge, but well worth it, in my opinion. This event will be running again, so please get in touch with us if you have a burning desire for any specific topics. This year we also had some new skills based sessions within the CPD programme, including networking and dealing with the media. These were an interesting part of the day and gave a helpful reminder that planning is not all about the technical skills.

In July, we had the new look dinner at We the Curious in Bristol, which included playing with all the science exhibits during the drinks reception, although I am not sure I had the right outfit on for some of them (note to self – next year wear flat shoes!).

The after dinner speaker was the amazing Claire Lomas MBE, who began her talk wearing her robotic suit. Claire told us all about her accident and all the things she has achieved since. As if doing the London marathon and beating Mo Farah in the Great North Run (with almost no training) isn't enough, she has now moved on to motorbike racing and is aiming for the Isle of Man TT next year. She is a truly inspirational lady and I feel very privileged to have met her.

Continuing with a very busy July, the RTPI President, John Acres, came to visit. I accompanied John on a whistle-stop tour of the South West, showing off some of our award winners and shining a light on some less well known parts of the region.

Looking forward to the end of my year, there are two very interesting CPD events coming up. The November event, which will double as a celebration of World Town Planning Day, will focus on health and the difference planning can make to our health and wellbeing. The final event of the year in December is exploring how planning can create and foster sustainable communities, including those from the travelling community. We have a representative of the Romany Gypsy community coming to talk about her experiences and traditions, which promises to be really interesting.

I would like to take this opportunity to say a massive thank you to the wonderful RAC committee. Their help and support is invaluable in making the region work and putting on the events, which help make our region one of the most active in the RTPI. A special thank you for all the fantastic work that Charlotte does as the Regional Co-ordinator – she has a tough job in keeping me in line and on message!! I would also like to say thank you for all their efforts over the years to members of the Committee who are stepping down this year. Simon Williams and then also Phil Bissatt and Nick Smith, who are both former Chairs, have made a great contribution over the years and will be very much missed.

And finally, thank you to everyone who has come to events and otherwise supported the RTPI SW and me personally over the year. Next year, you will be in the very capable hands of Chris Balch, and I look forward to seeing what 2019 has in store.



Suzanne D'Arcy
Chair, RTPI South West

Editor's blog

...Another bumper edition of Branchout in which there is a strong focus on celebrating good news stories about planning with news about the graduation ceremonies from our two planning schools featuring the work of prizewinning students: a impressive shortlist of entries for the RTPI SW Awards for Planning Achievement (the winners will be announced in the next edition); a report on the President's visit to hear about the results of successful collaboration in plan making and delivery with planners at the heart of making things happen.

And there is a lot happening with Young Planners taking up the challenge of organising CPD and social activities in most parts of the region. A common theme emerging appears to be boat trips, fish and chips and pubs. I am not sure how many CPD hours that qualifies for but it does demonstrate that planners have fun!

Certainly based on their comments the group of students who visited Plymouth from Arizona were inspired by the opportunity to gain work experience in another country. When I spoke to their lecturer she was amazed by the influence of politics on the UK planning system – but I guess we are pretty astounded by the influence of politics on the appointment of senior judges in the USA! All of which supports my contention that the nature of planning systems is a reflection of the societies they serve.

And in this edition John Baker fires a salvo in the direction of Green belt policy which he argues is treated like a sacred cow and is pushing us away from sustainable patterns of development to fit the 21st century. I would like Branchout to become the vehicle for more professional discussion and debate but that will be the responsibility of Angharad Williams at Teignbridge District Council and our Junior Vice Chair who is taking on the mantle of editorship. My focus is going to switch to delivering another fantastic programme of CPD events in 2019 building on the innovation and success of Suzanne's year as Chair. The programme is previewed here - so book now while stocks last and the early bird discounts are available!



Chris Balch
RTPI South West Editor
Emeritus Professor at University of Plymouth

Do you have news to share
or an article to contribute?
Contact
christopher.balch@plymouth.ac.uk

The new National Planning Policy Framework - impact on rural areas and promotion of affordable housing

New policy and guidance

The new National Planning Policy Framework ("the revised NPPF") was published on 24 July 2018. It introduces a number of key changes from the 2012 original NPPF aimed at delivering and enhancing housing. These include a new method of calculating housing need, a housing delivery test and guidance on viability. In addition to these headline changes, there are other potential impacts which are likely to result from the revised framework. This article focuses on the effect the revised NPPF may have in rural areas and on the promotion of affordable housing.

For those involved in plan-making, it is important to note that policies in the original NPPF will, for the purpose of examining plans, apply to those plans submitted on or before 24 January 2019. For decision-takers, the revised NPPF is a material consideration (and has been since it was published). The revised NPPF was published alongside new planning practice guidance (PPG) on viability and a housing delivery test measurement rule book. In September, PPGs on 'Housing need assessment', 'Housing and economic land availability assessment' and 'Neighbourhood Planning' were revised and a further PPG on 'Build to rent' and 'Plan making' was published.

What impact does the revised NPPF have in rural areas?

Promotion of rural development

Generally, the changes to the NPPF are considered to promote rural development, namely:

- Paragraph 77 provides support to planning policies and decisions which reflect local need in rural areas. As with the original NPPF, paragraph 78 of the revised framework states that housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. It advises that planning policies identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive.
- Paragraph 79 replaces the previous paragraph 55, which allows for development of isolated homes in the countryside under certain circumstances. This has been expanded to include essential need housing for those taking majority control of a farm business as well as instances where development would involve the subdivision of an existing dwelling, for example a large dwelling into multiple units. This represents a move away from the traditional approach to rural housing;
- The section 'Supporting a prosperous rural economy' has expanded and new paragraph 84 states that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements and in locations that are not well served by public transport. This signals a more flexible approach to development in less sustainable locations.

Deliverable sites

The revised NPPF requires local planning authorities to demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable housing land. Whereas the original NPPF stated that sites with planning permission would be considered deliverable unless there was clear evidence that schemes would not be implemented in 5 years, the revised NPPF specifies that sites with outline planning permission, permission in principle, allocated in the development plan or identified in a brownfield register should only be considered deliverable where there is clear evidence that housing completions will begin on site within five years. This would seem to shift the onus onto producing positive evidence that a development will be started, which is likely to prove problematic for local authorities.. This may also pave the way for smaller sites in rural areas being promoted for residential development, where delivery within the 5 year timescale is more achievable than larger sites.



The new National Planning Policy Framework - impact on rural areas and promotion of affordable housing cont...

Small sites

Smaller development sites are also recognised in the revised NPPF by paragraph 68 which states that local authorities are required to identify land through the development plan to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare (these thresholds were proposed by the RTP1 during the consultation on the revised NPPF which contained thresholds of 20% and 0.5 hectares, respectively.) Neighbourhood planning groups are also encouraged to consider opportunities for allocating small to medium sites in their areas for housing (paragraph 69).

Rural exception sites

Respondents to the government's consultation on the NPPF raised concerns that rural exception sites would face competition from the newly-introduced 'entry-level exception sites'. A comparison of these exception sites is found in the table on the following page. Arguably, the restrictions in size and location and the lack of support for market housing on entry-level exception sites mean the competition is a reasonably balanced one.

How is affordable housing affected?

Paragraph 64 of the revised NPPF states that, for major sites planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the homes to be available for affordable home ownership. There are exceptions to this, including where it would exceed the level of affordable housing required in the area; significantly prejudice the ability to meet the identified housing needs of specific groups; where the scheme solely provides build to rent homes, specialist accommodation or self-build; or is exclusively for affordable housing, an entry level exception site or a rural exception site.

The guidance on planning obligations (not yet updated) relating to the original NPPF states that affordable housing should not be sought from schemes comprising 10 or less units or a combined floor space of 1000sqm, with an optional lower threshold of 5 or less in designated rural areas. The revised NPPF (paragraph 63) links the threshold for affordable housing to major developments. The definition of major development for housing is 10 homes or more, which would mean the requirement to provide affordable housing is triggered at 10 homes, rather than 11. Instead of a floor space trigger, the revised NPPF has a site size trigger of 0.5 hectares, although a lower threshold may be used in designated rural areas. The difference between the existing guidance and the revised NPPF may give rise to different approaches by authorities and inconsistencies to existing application sites which comprise 10 dwellings.

The definition of affordable housing has been significantly widened by the revised NPPF to include social rent, affordable rent and starter homes as well as discounted market sale and rent to buy. Paragraph 34 of the new framework requires local authorities to specify in their plans the types of affordable housing provision required as part of developer contributions. This may lead to trends or preferences for particular types of affordable housing emerging across authority boundaries. Developers may find it easier to meet this requirement with additional types of housing being counted towards the target, however the difficulty remains as to whether the proposed tenures are needed or acceptable to a local authority in any given case. It is worth noting that transactional documents often define affordable housing by reference to the NPPF. If that definition includes replacement guidance, the affordable housing provisions in such documents may be interpreted with reference to the wider definition going forward.

Under the revised NPPF, viability assessments, with standardised inputs, are to take place primarily at the plan making stage. As set out in paragraph 57, viability should only be an issue at the decision-making stage where the applicant demonstrates a need for a viability assessment. In that case, the decision maker will decide how much weight to give to the viability assessment. This should allow local authorities to resist developments coming forward with limited affordable housing.



The new National Planning Policy Framework - impact on rural areas and promotion of affordable housing cont...

Comparison of rural exception sites and entry-level exception sites

FEATURE	RURAL EXCEPTION SITE	ENTRY-LEVEL EXCEPTION SITE
Type of housing	'affordable housing' (glossary)	'entry level homes suitable for first time buyers (or equivalent, for those looking to rent)' ... 'that offer one or more types of affordable housing' (glossary and para 71)
How are they supported?	LPAs 'should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs...' (para 77)	LPAs 'should support ...unless the need for such homes is already being met within the authority's area'
Location	'where sites would not normally be used for housing' (glossary) 'rural areas' (para 77) May be permitted in the Green belt (para 145) coastal change. (para 71 and footnote 6)	'land not already allocated for housing' (para 71) 'should not be permitted in National Parks (or within the Broads Authority), Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or land designated as Green Belt.' (footnote 34) 'adjacent to existing settlements' (para 71) 'should not compromise the protection given to...' habitats sites, Local Green Space, Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest); and areas at risk of flooding or
Size	'small sites' (glossary)	Not larger than 'one hectare in size or exceed 5% of the size of the existing settlement' (para 71 and footnote 33)
Amount of market housing	'a proportion of market homes... for example where essential to enable delivery of affordable units without grant funding.' (glossary) LPAs to '...consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this.' (para 77)	On the face of the revised NPPF, none.
Who are they for?	'current residents' or 'have an existing family or employment connection' (glossary)	'first time buyers' (glossary)

Conclusion

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the revised NPPF is not a radical departure from its predecessor. However, it does include some material changes that are applicable in the rural context driven by the Government's recognition of both the pressing need for new housing, and the barriers that can exist to the delivery of that housing. It will take some time for the changes to become established, and in the meantime it will be important for local authorities, developers and their advisors, to get to grips with the changes and the transition arrangements to ensure the appropriate requirements are being applied to development proposals.



Elizabeth Dunn
Partner at Borges Salmon

Planning Aid England – National Update

Email advice service

PAE's volunteer-led email advice service has continued to go from strength to strength since its launch at the beginning of the year. Four new chartered volunteers joined the panel in June bringing the number of volunteers involved in delivering this unique and valuable service, which offers members of the general public 15min of free planning advice via email, up to 13. Currently two of the panel members are volunteers based in South West. In the first half of 2018, the service responded to over 1000 requests from the public for impartial, professional planning advice.

Members of the public wishing to access the service should **email** advice@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk or **visit** www.planningaid.co.uk and click 'Submit a request'.

Planning Aid Direct www.planningaid.co.uk

Planning Aid Direct, PAE's online knowledge base, houses over 100 articles on all aspects of the planning system. The website regularly receives over 6000 visits per month (a figure that has grown month on month since its launch in 2015) with the most popular pages concerning use classes and appeals. We will shortly be undertaking a review and update of these articles drawing upon the specialist knowledge of our panel of 20 expert volunteers, put in place in 2017 to help us regularly refresh website contents. Three members of this panel are based in the South West Region.

Current Chartered PAE volunteers interested in joining either the email advice panel or Planning Aid Direct panel should **email** holly.mclaren@rtpi.org.uk

To volunteer for PAE please **visit** www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid/volunteering/how-to-apply/ and complete the registration form.



Planning Aid
England
Engaging Communities in Planning

South West Young Planners Round Up

West of England Young Planners

What have we been doing

As always, the West of England Young Planners have been busy organising a wide range of events for its members, both social and informative. Here is a quick overview of what we have been up to this summer.

The Annual Boat Trip

Now in its fourth year, the annual summer boat trip took place on 14th June. It was a calm and sunny evening, perfect for a tour around the highlights of Bristol waterfront. Attendees enjoyed socialising and networking over fish and chips and stopped at three pubs along the way. The event was as popular and well-attended as ever, and we look forward to our fifth anniversary!

South West Annual Dinner

On 6th July, members of the Young Planners Steering Committee from across the South West assembled for the RTPI South West Annual Dinner at We the Curious in Bristol. Committee members taking their seats at the Young Planners table included Chairs and Vice-Chairs from the West of England, Somerset, Devon and Cornwall and Dorset Young Planners groups. The new venue was a popular choice, with a drinks reception amongst the We the Curious exhibits and bubbling table decorations. The Young Planners enjoyed engaging talks from the RTPI Vice President Ian Tant and the inspiring after-dinner speaker Claire Lomas. A highlight for the Young Planners table was marking the table quiz they created; there was considerable debate from teams over the Walker's crisps round! The evening was a great success and the Young Planners look forward to next year and another opportunity to bring their members across the south-west together.

Back to school: Planning Law Update

On Thursday 6th September, the Young Planners held a free CPD session on the Revised NPPF, focusing in particular on housing delivery and viability assessment. Hosted by JLL, the session was very well attended, with the room filled to capacity with planners from a wide variety of firms and organisations.

Simon Coop, Director at Lichfields, gave an enlightening overview of the implications of the NPPF for housing delivery, including the introduction of the standard methodology for housing need assessment; joint authority working through statements of common ground; the housing delivery test; the production and review of Local Plans; and the policy implications for the Green Belt.

James Petherick, Director at JLL, followed this with a discussion on the changes to viability assessment in development management and plan making. For those of us not familiar with viability assessments, James provided an excellent summary of how they are carried out, highlighting the challenges faced by both private sector developers and local authorities in the process.

A lively Q&A session with the speakers followed, to finish what had been an engaging and informative evening.

Future events

As always, we are busy planning more events up to Christmas. Here is a summary of what we have lined up so far:

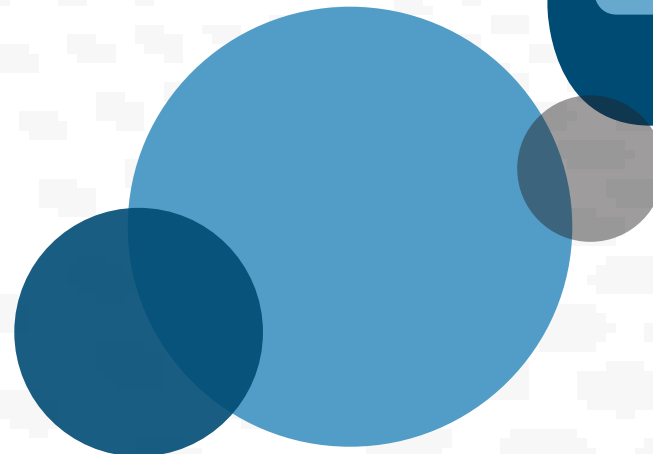
- On the 8th November we will be hosting a **'Top of the Legal Pops'** event. This will provide an update on the top planning issues of the year, as explained by Landmark Chambers www.rtpi.org.uk/events/events-calendar/2018/november/top-of-the-legal-pops!/

BOOK NOW



- On 6 December we will hold our West of England Young Planners **Christmas Party!!** at the Pitcher and Piano in Bristol. The popular annual social is a great way for you to meet young planners within the region in an informal, social setting. You will have the opportunity to discuss the work you are involved in, make new contacts, and share your experiences.

BOOK NOW



South West Young Planners Round Up

Being a Young Planner

Within the Branchout Magazine we like to provide an update from one of our committee members on what they are working on at the moment. This time we hear from Tom Sadler, a Planner at GVA:

I am currently in the process of preparing a full application for the comprehensive redevelopment of a site in Bedminster, South Bristol. Located within the Bedminster District Centre boundary, the centre's Primary Shopping Frontage, and part-located within the Bedminster Conservation Area, the development comprises a comprehensive mixed use scheme including residential, new retail, leisure and commercial space (including a cinema), refurbishment of existing retail facilities together with parking, amenity space and new public realm and landscaping.

Part of the site benefits from an extant planning permission for residential-led development with a small element of commercial space, and is also identified within Bristol's emerging Local Planning Policy as a potential new character area with significant potential for intensification. However, there are a number of constraints (including flood risk, highways, archaeology,) that have required robust analysis and testing to inform the design proposals. This, together with the requirement to consider adjacent forthcoming developments and their impacts, is a classic example of brownfield development planning whereby a million and one factors need to be considered both individually and in combination to ensure an appropriate and acceptable proposal is put forward!

Dorset Young Planners

What have we been doing

Dorset Young Planners hosted their summer event on 26 July which started off with fish and chips on Poole Quay before jumping onto a boat for a cruise around Poole Harbour (the second largest natural harbour in the world) before taking front row seats to watch a spectacular fireworks display over Poole. Luckily it was a balmy summer evening, so we enjoyed an evening of drinks and networking on the front of the boat. Over 20 young planners from across the county attended the event and a fantastic evening was had by all.

Steering group update

For the past year, Opani Mudalige has been Chair of the Dorset Young Planners and has done a fantastic job of helping to establish the Dorset Young Planners steering group, leading the group and organising multiple successful events. The time has come for her to step down (and become Vice Chair) and let someone else take the lead. We would like to thank her for all her hard work and commitment over the past year, and we welcome Chris Miell who will now be stepping up as chair for the foreseeable future (bottom right of photo).



Future events

Vacant Spaces & Meanwhile Uses, CPD Seminar

Wednesday 24th October, from 4pm - Dorchester
Andrew Knutt from the Arts Development Company will give an engaging presentation on how they work with partners from the arts and in other sectors to develop strategies and policies, encourage networks, and deliver collaborative programmes and projects. He will also talk about one of their key projects which facilitates artists to set up pop-ups in vacant spaces. A planner from the Dorset Councils Partnership will also present on the challenges faced by town centres in the region.

The event will be followed by informal networking and food at the Cow and Apple in the centre of Dorchester (all included within the ticket price). This will be a great opportunity to learn about the challenges facing our highstreets and how they are being overcome, whilst meeting like-minded young planners in an informal setting.

BOOK NOW



Christmas Social and Quiz Night

Thursday 6th December

After the success of last year's Christmas pub quiz, we are back again with another Christmas social event. This year it will be hosted at The Cow in Ashley Cross where we will enjoy an evening of informal networking, food and a quiz.

BOOK NOW



South West Young Planners Round Up

Devon and Cornwall Young Planers

What have we been doing

We ventured out over the summer with staff from Teignbridge District Council (pictured right) to look at sites which have been identified as SANGs (Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces) to mitigate the impacts of development. First stop was to the allocation at South West Exeter to look at the site before development has commenced, getting an understanding of the sites location, context and relationship to the wider proposals. We then headed back to Dawlish to look at a completed site's and hear about the challenges and successes. It was a great summer's afternoon with a group of enthusiastic young planners, and plenty of learning and networking too.

In September, we were privileged to be able to visit the Melville building, the centre piece of the iconic Royal William Yard in Plymouth, prior to its conversion. This gave the opportunities to learn about the wider redevelopment, the planning challenges with the conversion and how the applicant and Council have worked to achieve a consent for the site which provides flexibility to respond to the market condition. We look forward to returning once the works are complete!

We are working on our programme of events for next year, but are always open for ideas and suggestions for CPD and networking opportunities.

Steering Group Update

We would welcome any new members to the committee who want to get involved in helping to promote a programme of events for young planners in the region. We have 8 current members from across the area from the public and private sector.

Future events

26th October 2018

Becoming Chartered: Licentiate APC - Plymouth University

Ready to take your career to the next level? Becoming a Chartered Town Planner (MRTPI) demonstrates to employers, clients and the wider public that you meet the highest professional and ethical standards in planning.

The Licentiate Assessment of Professional Competence (L-APC) is the main route to Chartered status for those who completed a fully accredited RTPI degree in or after 2005.

Whatever stage you are at this event will provide you with essential guidance on achieving success in the L-APC. You will be briefed on what is involved in preparing an application, what you need to include and how you present it. It is also a great opportunity to ask questions and hear from others preparing their submissions.

BOOK NOW



Get in touch...

If you would like to get in touch with us.

✉ Southwest@rtpi.org.uk 🐦 [@swyoungplanners](https://twitter.com/swyoungplanners)

📘 Join the 'South West Young Planners' group

🌐 Join the 'RTPI Young Planners Network' group

Plymouth University celebrates planning graduates

In a ceremony on The Hoe, Plymouth, on September 19th, eight graduates from the MSc Planning degree celebrated their graduation, together Stephen Essex and Olivia Wilson (Plymouth University), Paul Barnard and Rebecca Miller (RTPI and Plymouth City Council) and Chris Balch (RTPI and Emeritus Professor, Plymouth University).

The graduates are all now working in various planning roles in both the private and public sectors, and they add to the growing network of Plymouth University planning graduates across the South West and further afield.

Two of the graduating students, Helen Govier and Daniel Young, were awarded prizes for their dissertations. Helen's dissertation investigated the implementation of permitted development rights for the change of use of agricultural buildings to dwellings in mid-Devon. In April 2014, permitted development rights (PDR) enabling the conversion of agricultural buildings to dwellings were introduced by the Coalition government to seek to address the historic shortfall of rural housing. Utilising a case study of Mid Devon, this study examined whether the permitted development legislation has met with the original government objectives to 'free up' the planning system, deliver housing and support rural communities. The findings indicated that the PDR have delivered an insignificant number of new homes, in comparison to the identified housing need for the case study area. Furthermore, the legislation has failed to address the evidenced requirement for affordable rural properties and the prior approval process has proved inconsistent, complex and often frustrating for developers. The PDR represents a reform that is advantageous to rural land owners, but with limited community benefits and demonstrates an apparent conflict between local and national government agendas for planning in countryside locations.

Dan's dissertation research focussed on the formulation and implementation of climate change policy in local planning authorities in coastal urban areas. The dissertation drew on a content analysis of 39 coastal Local Development Frameworks and Local Plans approved since 2012; semi-structured interviews with 21 senior planning policy officers about the formulation of climate change adaptation policies; and a questionnaire survey of 17 development management officers regarding the implementation of climate change adaptation measures in their decisions. The results indicated that the planning system is focused on experienced hazards, especially flooding, and there is a continued lack of attention being paid to wider impacts of climate change, such as rising average temperatures. Furthermore, it was found that the contemporary contribution of planning to climate change adaptation is seriously limited by the government's emphasis on housing and economic growth and by the development industry's emphasis on economic viability.



MSc Planning prize winners from the University of Plymouth: Helen Govier (Paul Barnard Award for best part-time dissertation and RTPI SW Prize for best part-time student) and Daniel Young (Paul Barnard Award for best full-time dissertation) pictured with Rebecca Miller (Chair RTPI Devon and Cornwall Young Planners) and Paul Barnard (Plymouth City Council). The other prize winner (not pictured) was Jennifer Joule (Nathaniel Lichfield, Bristol), who was awarded the RTPI Botolph Lane prize for overall best student, RTPI SW Prize for best full-time student and School Prize for Excellent Performance in Postgraduate Taught Programmes.



The graduating cohort from the MSc Planning programme at the University of Plymouth on 19 September, 2018 on Plymouth Hoe:

(left to right) Rebecca Miller (RTPI Devon and Cornwall Young Planners), Dr Stephen Essex (Programme Leader), Christopher Balch (Emeritus Professor), Hannah Cameron (Mid Devon District Council), Helen Govier (Mid Devon District Council), Kris Evely (Torridge District Council), Faye Stewart (Bailey Partnership, Plymouth), Philip Saunders (Savills, Wimborne), Daniel Young (Portsmouth City Council), Sarah Boyle (Torridge District Council), Jonathan Hill (Arup, Bristol), Dr Olivia Wilson (Lecturer in Spatial Planning) and Paul Barnard (Plymouth City Council).

Also graduating were Chris Cummings (Plymouth City Council), Jennifer Joule (Nathaniel Lichfield, Bristol) and Timothy Whipps (East Devon District Council).

By Stephen Essex and Olivia Wilson
University of Plymouth

Planning students from Northern Arizona University, USA, gain work experience at Plymouth City Council

A group of planning students from the Department of Geography, Planning and Recreation at Northern Arizona University based Flagstaff, together with their lecturer, Margo Wheeler FAICP, visited Plymouth in June and July 2018 to gain experience of the planning system in England. They were hosted by Plymouth City Council for a month, and the students worked alongside planning officers at Plymouth City Council in different teams. Amanda, Rachael and Patrick give their reflections on their experience at Plymouth City Council.

'Flying across the ocean from Arizona to Plymouth was an outstanding experience. In the span of one short month I found myself walking along the historic Barbican. Almost every evening I wound up at the Hoe, which embraced myself, visitors, and locals with an enchanting beauty and the possibility of doing nothing and everything at the same time. I was placed within the Housing Delivery Team. Under their care I was treated with a level of respect that I have not experienced in any other professional setting. I went on Empty Home visits, tagged along to planning meetings, worked on the Affordable Housing Satisfaction Survey, and went on lots of tours to learn all about housing and related topics in Plymouth. Meeting residents and community members face to face was one of the most valuable work experiences for me. All the while, I was soaking up the City's expansive history and growing my sense of the community and its visions for the future'. (Amanda Burns).

'During my time with Plymouth City Council, I worked with the Joint Local Plan Team. They gave me a variety of tasks to complete, including doing a survey of buildings in the City Centre that are currently being renovated or have been recently completed. My experience in Plymouth was amazing. I am very thankful for being given the opportunity to work under such a great planning staff as well as getting to spend my summer in a beautiful ocean city. (Rachael Smith).

'I had the privilege of working for the city of Plymouth and had a great experience. I was able to work with the Enforcement Team and go out on site visits identifying issues with new projects which I found very interesting. I am also a US Army veteran who served in the military for six years. I spent a total of 27 months in Afghanistan and have a passion for supporting veterans. I was able to visit the Nelson Project in Plymouth and learn the ins and outs

of developing a veteran based housing community. This project was very impactful to me and taught me some key elements in the veteran self-build development process. I was able to look over the site plans and then take a tour of the building where I met some of the veterans who helped build the project and who are now full-time residents. My overall experience was awesome and I was able to get on-the-job training to develop skills for my future. I look forward to visiting Plymouth again in 2020 for the 400 year celebration of the departure of the Mayflower. I want to thank the City of Plymouth for the life long memories and a great opportunity. (Patrick Carney).

Olivia Wilson
University of Plymouth



Planning students from Northern Arizona University with Margo Wheeler and Stephen Essex visiting Plymouth City Centre.

Celebrating student success at UWE Bristol

Staff, parents and guests celebrated student success from UWE Bristol's suite of undergraduate and postgraduate planning courses. The ceremonies were hosted at the city's Cathedral, with the weather playing its part to make the day a memorable and rewarding experience. Michael Baker, chair of the South West Young Planners, attended on behalf of Suzy D'Arcy and helped to award several RTPI-sponsored prizes. Victoria Gee was recognised by the RTPI South West for excellence on the Master of Planning award, while the region also recognised the achievements of Emma Gillespie and Thomas Smith on the Planning School's Agency Project (the 6-week placement that all final-year planning students take). Nationally, the RTPI recognised Jake Mace as being the best undergraduate student on a undergraduate RTPI-accredited degree. James Cook received the same accolade for his efforts on MSc Urban and Rural Planning, the online course in planning that the university delivers in collaboration with Dundee, South Bank, Leeds Beckett and the Open University.

Nick Smith

Associate Head of Department and MPlan Programme Leader Department of Geography and Environmental Management University of the West of England (UWE)



Graduating students from UWE's Master of Planning course: Perry Lowson, Tom Simpson, John Grierson, Sam Pugh, Mia McAndrew and Victoria Gee.



Michael Baker
(Joint Chair of the West of England Young Planners Group)

Regional Management Board & Activities Committee Up-date

Since the publication of the Summer edition of Branchout joint meetings of the RTPI SW Regional Management Board (RMB) and Regional Activities Committee (RAC) were held on the 13th July and the 21st September and a meeting of the RMB on the 1st August. The items considered at these meetings included:

Presentation by the new RTPI Chief Executive, Victoria Hills

At the July meeting RMB/RAC members were pleased to welcome Victoria Hills; at the outset she referred to her initial involvement with the RTPI as a student representative and involvement with a Young Planners Network. This experience was important in establishing her belief in the importance of the RTPI Regions and the work undertaken by the regional volunteers. She stated that her priorities fell broadly under four headings: Delivery; Decision making; Diversity/Inclusivity and Disruption. During her presentation and in the following 'Question and Answer' session she emphasised a number of key points:

- The value of RTPI membership must be better articulated by its Members- there is an urgent need to comprehensively assess and react to the views of Members expressed in the recent Members Survey and to now establish an Action Plan on the issues identified.
- The profile of planning must be raised; the press team at Botolph Lane is good but the Institute at National and Regional levels must work together on this vital issue in accord with the 'One Institute' principle.
- A particular problem is the lack Chief Planning Officers at the 'top tables' of Corporate structures in Local Government. Action is urgently required to rectify this situation
- The Institute in its work must deal equally with LPA planners and those in the private sector.

- Planners must be seen as deliverers of projects not just as policy makers or decision makers on proposed development.
- The importance of professional planners having genuine involvement with all sections of the community in all aspects of their work reflecting all the varying views.
- As a professional body, the RTPI cannot take on the role of a 'lobbying body' but when policy is being developed or decisions taken by Government and Local Government the Institute must not be slow in articulating its professional view.
- In many aspects of its work the RTPI must embrace all features of the new 'digital age'

RTPI SW Business Plan/Budget 2019

At the July meeting members of the RMB/RAC were invited to comment on the activities in the current 2018 document and put forward suggestions for new activities to be included in the 2019 version. To assist in the Plan's preparation, a SWOT analysis was undertaken of the current activities of RTPI SW. Detailed work on the 2019 Plan was undertaken at the August RMB meeting and the final version was endorsed at the September RMB/RAC meeting for submission to the Institute's Executive Team and Board of Trustees.



Victoria Hills, RTPI CEO meets the RTPI South West RMB and RAC Committee

Regional Management Board & Activities Committee Up-date

Special Business General Meeting

The principal purpose of the SBGM is to report on the results of the Elections to the 2019 RTPI SW Regional Management Board and Regional Activities Committee and to appoint any new committee members to fill any vacancies at the meeting. The SBGM will take place before lunch during the 8 November Planning & Health conference. RTPI Members are welcome to attend the SBGM element for free. Please register attendance

Charlotte.Daborn@rtpi.org.uk

More information on the board and nominations - please click [here](#).



Mike Oakley
RTPI SW Hon. Secretary 2018

Visit of the RTPI President 26th-27th July

Plans were discussed at the July meeting and in September a report was received on what was subsequently described by John Acres as an excellent visit, a highlight being the example of joint working on plan preparation in north Gloucestershire by Gloucester City Council, Cheltenham Borough Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council on the Gloucester, Cheltenham, Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (This work was commended in the RTPI SW Awards in 2015)

RTPI SW Awards for Planning Excellence 2018

The composition of the Judging Panel for the 2018 Awards was agreed at the July meeting and at the September meeting it was reported that 14 projects had been submitted for assessment of which 8 had been shortlisted for more detailed assessment at site visits/meetings with representatives of the bodies making the submissions. These site visits/meetings are scheduled in late September and October with the final Panel meeting at which decisions are made on the giving of Awards and Commendations on the 13th November.(see separate article)

RTPI SW Research Project 2018 'Renewable Energy in the South West-Smart Energy Systems and the Implications for the Planning System'

At the July meeting it was announced that the contract for this project had been awarded to REGEN in partnership with Pell Freishmann, the Landmark Practice and UWE Bristol. An up-date was given at the September meeting.

RTPI General Assembly 13th June and Nations and Regions Panel 26th June

In July the RMB/RAC received reports on meetings of these two national RTPI bodies attended by representatives of RTPI SW.

RTPI SW Young Planners Groups

At both the July and September meetings the RMB/RAC received reports on the completed and future activities of the now 4 Young Planner Groups: West of England; Devon & Cornwall; Dorset and Somerset. At the September meeting it was agreed to review the operation of these Groups in advance of the preparation of the RTPI SW Business Plan/Budget 2020.

RTPI SW Working Groups

These two meetings also received reports from the following 6 Working Groups: Planning Aid; Education and Future Planners; Research and Policy; Editorial; Social and Networking; CPD.

RTPI South West Annual Dinner 2018

The RTPI SW Annual Dinner broke new ground this year by holding the event at We the Curious Science Centre at Bristol Harbourside. The event attracted some 190 planners and their guests (see the Dinner Brochure for the guest list) and was well supported by sponsorship from Arup, Burges Salmon, Cotswold Transport Planning, Curtins, Hydrock, JBP, Mott MacDonald, No 5 Chambers and Peter Brett Associates. This allowed us to welcome a table of Young Planners who showed their organisational capacity by producing a table quiz for which you needed to know your Walkers Crisps!

Following the drinks reception which was held amongst We the Curious' hands-on exhibits guests received a thoughtful pre-dinner contribution from Ian Tant, Vice President of the RTPI who commended the Region on the range and depth of its activities. The highlight of the evening however was Claire Lomas' after-dinner talk. Claire suffered a catastrophic spinal injury while horse riding leaving her paralysed from the chest down. She shared her incredible story of anguish and achievement overcoming seemingly impossible odds to complete the London Marathon in a specially designed suit, becoming the mother of two daughters and now taking on the challenge of high speed motor bike racing. She has committed herself to charity fund raising for people facing Claire Lomas similar challenges, however her greatest contribution must be the inspiration she provides not just for people with disabilities but for anyone facing tough times.

Fund raising was the purpose of the raffle which benefitted from a many generous prizes donated by supporters and resulted in £1,748 being raised for mental health charity MIND. This was a record perhaps reflecting the power of Claire Lomas' talk or maybe the threat of Suzanne D'Arcy who compered the event and threatened to lock the doors and not let anyone leave unless we set a new record!

Overall the dinner was a great success with very positive feedback on the new venue and the choice of after dinner speaker. However we continue look at ways of broadening its appeal and offering alternative locations so any comments and suggestions would be gratefully received.



Date for your diary
14 June 2019,
We the Curious, Bristol
Speaker: Iain Stewart
- Prof of Geoscience
Communication &
Director of the Sustainable
Earth Institute at
Plymouth University.

Drinks sponsor: 

With thanks to our sponsors:



Presidents Visit

John Acres, RTPI President, had a whistle stop tour of the south west in his visit to the region in late July. The visit started with a trip to the very north of the region, beginning in Tewkesbury with a presentation on the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and the Gloucestershire 2050 vision. This is a collaborative and strategic approach to planning across north Gloucestershire. The president was then taken on a tour, featuring the strategic growth sites and the regeneration work that is being undertaken in Cheltenham and Gloucester city centres.

Tracey Crews, Director of Planning at Cheltenham Borough Council, led a tour through Cheltenham city centre, where pedestrianisation works are underway and a new John Lewis store will shortly open to anchor the high street. There were interesting discussions to be had along the way, including the difficulties in the recruitment and retention of suitably qualified professionals to Local Planning Authorities and the impact this has on development and communities.

Lunch was hosted by Gloucester City Council in their offices, which comprise converted warehouses on the docks. This gave the president an opportunity to meet officers and members from the three JCS authorities as well as representatives from local planning consultancies.

The afternoon began with a walking tour of Gloucester's historic docks, finishing at Gloucester Cathedral. The tour was led by Charlotte Bowes-Lyon, Principal Conservation Officer at Gloucester City Council, who explained the Council's involvement in the regeneration work and these were reinvigorating a forgotten part of the city centre. The tour finished in the public open space surrounding the cathedral, which beautifully demonstrated how careful planning and design can enhance the environment and be used for interpretation of the local area.

John said of his trip to Gloucestershire "Communities across the sub-region are really benefiting from this close working relationship, whether that's in the town centre in Cheltenham or the docks and city core of Gloucester. Both are undergoing careful revitalisation – led by the council's planners – to ensure that these historic town centres remain at the heart of their local communities against a background of major change in the retail market. It's fantastic work which other places could learn from."

In the evening, John hosted a dinner for representatives of the Young Planners from across the South West, in Bristol's historic Welsh Back.

Continuing from the previous day's theme of collaboration and partnership working (not to mention the beautiful weather!), the second day highlighted how cross professional working can deliver successful spaces. Beginning at Turley's offices in Bristol, where John was introduced to members of the team and given a tour of the office, Jadine Havill (Assistant Planner), supported by Philip Jones (Director), Emily Johnson, (Assistant Planner), and Niamh Hession, (Associate Director) gave a presentation on the West of England Joint Spatial Strategy and local policy context, as well as some of Turley's successful and challenging projects across the south west region. Among these successes was the redevelopment of Bristol's

Shopping Quarter, which comprises of both the RTPI SW award-winning Cabot Circus development and the new Callowhill Quarter development. Throughout the various presentations, there was lively debate and discussion around densities and how technology in the future will change the way we plan housing developments. During the discussions it became apparent that the key to successful placemaking is collaborative working between consultants, local planning authorities and communities.



President John Acres meets Rob Weaver and Annette Roberts of Tewkesbury Borough Council



Ken Dale from Cheltenham Borough Council explains the regeneration of Cheltenham town centre

Presidents Visit cont...

After the presentations Jadine led a walking tour around the Bristol Shopping Quarter assisted by Suzanne and Julie. The tour enabled John to see where the proposed redevelopment would be situated at Callowhill Court and how it would address the issues around transport routes which segregate Cabot Circus from Callowhill Court, how pedestrian and cycle movement can be enhanced, and how the older retail units don't meet the current space and configuration requirements required for modern day shopping and leisure. The consented scheme would offer leisure facilities, retail units, hotel spaces and residential units to transform the area and enhance its role as a retail destination for the south west.

Lunch was a relaxed affair at the Severnshed overlooking the river and enabled John to network with the Heads of Planning and with consultancy representatives who support the RTPI. This allowed him to talk to the invited guests and to get a better understanding of the vast array of projects currently in planning or under development across the region.

After lunch, John was taken to Bath and given a presentation on the RTPI SW award-winning Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES) Council WaterSpace Project by Cleo Newcombe-Jones, (Project Coordinator, Public Realm and Waterways). Cleo explained how the WaterSpace Study developed an evidence base and undertook public and stakeholder consultation to identify opportunities for enhancements to waterways and adjoining land along the Avon River and Kennet and Avon Canal.

The presentation highlighted the many projects delivered over the last three years including projects to re-wild the river and improve habitats for species like otters and bats, funding a boat and the development of the River Avon Park. Cleo organised a boat trip up the river to enable John to see the project including the River Avon Park and the redevelopment of the Bath Quays. It also demonstrated how people are now using the river for leisure, including for paddleboarding. John said "Bath used to turn its back on much of the industrial riverside. The Avon waterfront is now being brought to life with new public access. This transformational project is a classic example of planners using engagement and consultation to ensure the community, in particular hard to reach groups like young people, can help to shape their environment."



President meets Turley Planning Team



Dinner with Chairs of the South West Young Planner groups



The President enjoys a trip on the water with The WaterSpace Project

RTPI SW Awards for Planning Excellence 2018

A total of 14 submissions were received for the RTPI SW Awards for Planning Excellence 2018. At its meeting on the 16th August, the Judging Panel shortlisted 8 of these for further assessment (see schedule below).

Site visits and meetings to consider the shortlisted submissions attended by Panel representatives are scheduled during September and October and the final Judging Panel meeting to decide the giving of Awards and Commendations and the overall winner is scheduled for the 13th November. It is anticipated that the Award ceremony, at a location relating to the overall winner, will take place early in 2019.



RTPI SOUTH WEST
AWARDS FOR
PLANNING
EXCELLENCE
2018

RTPI SW Awards for Planning Excellence 2018 Shortlisted submissions

Project	Entered by	Category entered	Description
Dawlish Countryside Park	Teignbridge District Council	Excellence in Planning Delivery Excellence in Spatial Planning	A countryside park on the edge of Dawlish that functions as Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS) and provides a green lung for local communities.
Making Changes - Bath Preservation Trust guidance for the owners of listed buildings	Bath Preservation Trust	Excellence in Planning Delivery	Making Changes guidance assists the owners of listed buildings in navigating the planning system and provides best practice advice in the Bath heritage context.
McArthurs Warehouse Bristol	Nash Partnership Decision Process	Excellence during the Planning	Demolition of existing warehouse, buildings and structures and redevelopment to provide 147 residential units, workspace, café, gallery space and associated works on Bristol's historic harbourside
Regeneration of the former railway lands in Radstock	Norton Radstock Regeneration Company	Excellence in Planning Delivery	Restoration of the town centre through development of the former railway lands with appropriate housing, retail, heritage and community facilities.
Planning to Ensure Nationally Significant Projects realise Tangible Legacies (NSIPs)	Sedgemoor District Council	Excellence in Spatial Planning Excellence during the Planning Decision Process	The innovative planning approach is achieving HPC legacy benefits delivered through the National College for Nuclear, Cannington Court, Somerset Energy Innovation Centre and Bridgwater Gateway.
Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan	Plymouth City Council	Excellence in Spatial Planning	The Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan - A single Joint Local Plan covering the three LPAs of Plymouth, South Hams & West Devon
The Carriage Works Swindon	Swindon Borough Council	Excellence in Planning Delivery	The Carriage Works redevelopment comprises the sympathetic restoration of an under-used Listed Building in Brunel's Great Western Works area into business incubation space.
Waking the Watergate	Sedgemoor District Council	Excellence in Planning Delivery	Mixed use scheme incorporating gym, café, serviced apartments and flats and including the historic Water Gate.

Getting to grips with Curtilage Listing

Curtilage listing continues to cause confusion amongst owners and practitioners alike. It's important because owners can be liable for criminal prosecution if they carry out certain alterations without the Local Authority's approval, including internal works. Perhaps the greatest trap for owners (and their conveyancers) is the scenario where an outbuilding has fallen out of the ownership of a principal dwelling since the time of listing but remains listed. For Local Authorities curtilage listing brings about an important element of control over historic structures which may not be explicitly referenced in the list description, for example, in the case of barns where change of use is otherwise permitted development.

Prompted by a 2015 Private Member's Bill to remove curtilage protection to Grade II listed buildings, Historic England published Advice Note 10 Listed Buildings and Curtilage (final version released in February this year), to provide clarity to the sector on the purpose and definition of curtilage-listing. This contains diagrams to illustrate the basic principles as intended by the Act. These may be summarised as follows:

Section 1 (5) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 defines a listed building as 'any object or structure within the curtilage of the building which, although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before 1st July 1948.'

In *Attorney-General ex rel. Sutcliffe and Others v. Calderdale BC* (1982) Lord Justice Stephenson established three tests which must be taken into consideration when deciding whether a structure 'forms part of the land':

1. **The physical layout of the listed building and the curtilage structure**
2. **Ownership - both historically and at the date of listing**
3. **The use or function of the relevant buildings**

In *Debenhams plc v. Westminster City Council* (1987) it was established that a principal and accessory relationship must be also present.

As the IHBC made clear in their response to the draft version of HE's guidance, the Advice Note must be approached with caution in that it can only provide a 'common sense' approach to defining curtilage - each case is a matter of fact and degree. That said, in my view it is a very helpful entry point to the topic, and useful in defining the extent of curtilage protection in cases where the answer is clear-cut.

But where the answer isn't straightforward it is well worth re-reading the original caselaw to understand the thinking behind the key precedents. The most important of these is *Calderdale*, which also provides a view on the original purpose of the statute; it was to 'bring within control works to objects and structures which might not intrinsically be of interest, but which were so closely related to the listed building that their removal might adversely affect it.'

Other key cases are *Alan Dyer v. Dorset County Council* (1988) - which confirmed that distance and physical separation at the time of listing could rule out curtilage-listed status; and *Skerrits of Nottingham Ltd. V. Secretary of State for Environment, Transport and the Regions* (1999) in which George Bartlett QC found that domestic curtilage could be a large area - in the case of a country house with parkland.

Egerton v. Taunton Deane (2008), known as *Jews Farm* is the most recent High Court case relating to farmsteads and raises questions for the sector. Mr Justice Sullivan found that Mill Barn, an outbuilding at Jews Farm in Somerset, was not curtilage listed to Jews Farmhouse. Although still in the same ownership, at the time of listing the farm house was physically separated from the agricultural land which included the barn and functionally distinct from the operations ran within it. Justice Sullivan found that: "I readily accept that the farm was being run from the farmhouse in 1984, but the whole of the farm, and all the agricultural buildings upon it, cannot be sensibly regarded as being within the curtilage of the farmhouse on that account... the farm, as a whole, was not listed, the farm house was listed...."

Although the application of the *Calderdale* tests appears correct, the outcome would seem to be at odds with the intention of the Act, as stated in *Calderdale*, ie to bring under control structures 'so closely related to the listed building that their removal might adversely affect it', notably, for example, in the case of agricultural buildings associated with a farmhouse.

For those seeking to reaffirm protection the practical solution in most cases is likely to be an application to Historic England, who (through DCMS) can separately list structures where there is clear group value with the principal listed building. Since 2013 they can also determine that the Section 1 (5) use of curtilage to define the extent of listing protection can be set aside for particular buildings.

A fast track listing usually takes 12 weeks from receipt of an application to submission of a recommendation to DCMS:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/our-planning-services/enhanced-advisory-services/>

Nick Bishop

Associate Director Lichfields

Joint Local Plans – a sensible way forward ?

Marking a significant South West development plans landmark, the 'Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031', the last in the region to be submitted for Examination (in July 2017), was finally adopted in August this year. Furthermore, when the 'North Devon & Torridge Joint Local Plan 2011-2031' is adopted, hopefully very shortly, ending a drawn-out, two-year long Examination process, Local Plan coverage of the region on the 2004 Planning Act LDF model will be complete.

Despite the very promising start with plan making under the Planning Act 2004, with South Hams, Mid Devon and Plymouth, very much in the van nationally, with the latter's pioneering LDF work being recognised by the award of the 2005 RTPI Silver Jubilee Cup, the early pace was not maintained. For a combination of reasons, many of which will be familiar to readers, the process of getting the 'new' plans in place in each of the 39 relevant LPAs has proved to be slow and, in many cases, tortuous. In fact, it has taken 14 years!

North Devon and Torridge are not the only South West LPAs to have been involved in such joint policy work as part of their 2004 Act obligations. Christchurch and East Dorset adopted the region's first Joint Local Plan in April 2014, to be followed, in October 2015, by that for West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland. At the other end of the region, a long and complicated journey, which began with an 'Issues & Key Questions' consultation in October 2008, has seen the emergence of the 'Gloucester/Cheltenham/Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy 2011-2030', adopted in December 2017. Here, close joint working by three of the six Gloucestershire LPAs accounting for more than half of the County's population and its main economic hub, where growth pressures have been at their greatest, has received

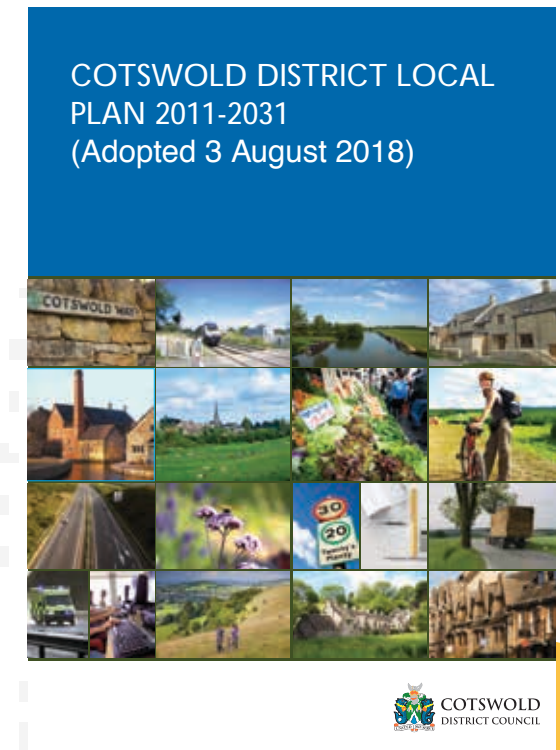
professional praise which reflects the considerable benefit of such an approach. Following his visit to the South West in July this year, RTPI President John Acres commended the work on this Plan, with the three authorities 'working together in the interests of sensible cross-boundary policy planning' [RTPI National News Release 14 August 2018]

The 'Local Plan Review' process in the region has seen the emergence of larger and increasingly ambitious joint plans. The four West of England Unitary Authorities now have a new 'Joint Spatial Plan', looking ahead to 2036, under examination ; Exeter, East Devon, Mid Devon, Teignbridge & Devon County, are preparing a ' Greater Exeter Strategic Plan' ; whilst another pioneering example of joint working is coming forward in the form of the 'Plymouth & South West Devon Joint Local Plan' (Plymouth, South Hams & West Devon) . What these initiatives have in common is that they are policy making for sub-regions which are functional economic areas, particularly in relation to housing markets and journeys to work, rather than just individual local authority areas. As recent work carried out by the TCPA has concluded, in taking local 'strategic' policy making forward, there is a need to define and shape sustainable development 'in areas that make sense in their economic, social and environmental geography and above all, to work co-operatively and collaboratively with neighbouring authorities' [Report on the TCPA Local & Neighbourhood Planning Task Team, Town & Country Planning, August 2018 pp.2-8]. In the Government's 'Duty to co-operate', we have seen a 'watered down' and belated entreaty for English LPAs to do this, but what a pity this approach was not embraced in those early years of the 2004 Act system. With very few exceptions, Councils simply set about defining their own individual spatial futures, though there was, at least up until 2010, a strategic framework provided by the Regional Spatial Strategies. In the South West, as elsewhere, Joint

Local Plans would now seem to be a sensible way forward for many areas.

Geoff Walker

Member of the RTPI SW Regional Activities Committee



A point of view on Greenbelts

The government won't touch it, politicians are terrified of any change to it, and the media doesn't understand it. The tabloids and the anti-development lobby groups perpetuate misleading views on it. The RTPI, though a professional organisation, doesn't say anything about it because it is 'popular'. Yet green belt policy - where it exists - is a curse on planning and is leading to some of the greatest planning failures, damning parts of the country to strategies that are taking us backwards in terms of the relationship between development and movement. Strategies that are contributing to climate change when spatial planning should be seeking to slow climate change or at least adapt to its implications. Strategies that are creating environmental harm and promoting inequality and inter-generational division. The emerging JSP for the West of England is a good/bad example. The Green belt is the woe in the West of England.

Conceived in the 1930's and implemented in the 1950s, the presence of green belt continues to be the force shaping the form of many of the country's towns and cities today. Quite a lot else has changed in 80 years – population size and structure, technology, transport and communication, the economy and work, culture and leisure, shopping, food production, energy generation, resource management, the nature and role of the countryside, and peoples' living standards (for most at least). How can 80 year old policies and arbitrarily-drawn boundaries between yes and no be the basis for critical decisions about development locations with implications for decades ahead?

Planning has actually changed very significantly in other respects, with some form of development plan to be prepared and implemented everywhere, in marked contrast to the time green belt policy was a knee-jerk reaction to opportunist house building responding in turn to a market created by commuter trains and rising car ownership. Green belt policy is the exact antithesis to a modern, positive, evidence-based, participatory, plan-led system

where choices are made about development patterns for the long-term having regard to many objectives, with all proper alternatives explored and challenged. We have finally evolved some reasonably intelligent means of determining how much development should go where, unless there is green belt.

The statutory objective of all plan-making is the promotion of more sustainable development and sustainable development is to be the 'golden thread' running through all aspects of planning policy. Except where there is green belt when we have to revert to anachronism, cant and myth to determine the future of peoples' lives. If sustainable development means 'meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (Framework 2018), how can the freezing of settlements at an arbitrary point in history be consistent with promoting sustainable development?

It is misleading that green belt policy is ever described as an environmental policy, including in countless documents produced by planners who should know better. Where green belt is the determining issue as in so many plans and applications, other environmental issues such as wildlife habitat, flood management, accessible open space, and resource use, are all demoted.

Green belt policy was created to prevent development. Green belt was designated around towns and cities with boundaries that take no account of place. When development is proposed it is automatically 'harmful' and refused because it is in the green belt. No information is to be considered and no intelligence is to be applied. You couldn't make it up (well, Trump could).

Is that really what we want from our spatial planning system?

Green Belt policy should be removed from the planning system to end this skewed and improper approach to the periphery of our urban areas. If there is something about an area that clearly contributes to the distinctive identity of a settlement or adjoining settlements then perhaps this should be given a precise and specifically designed designation in recognition of the service performed, subject still to the overriding concern for more sustainable development patterns.

Green belt policy waits quietly to present history with the greatest indictment of the 20 and 21st century planning profession and its blinkered acceptance of this ridiculous policy that is contrary to the values of professionalism, decency and integrity that drew so many to the role in the first place. It's about time planners said so.

John Baker
Director
Point Consultancy Ltd

This article is made available for educational purposes only. The views expressed in it are those of the author and not the RTPI

A point of view on Greenbelts cont...

The RTPI Position on Green Belts....

The RTPI's position on Green belts expressed in its 2016 policy statement 'where should we build new homes' says:


“

A managed approach to urban expansion, whilst avoiding urban sprawl around our major cities, has been successfully achieved through planning policies such as green belts. The planning profession has championed this policy for over 60 years. But it is important to revisit the purposes that green belts need to fulfil over the coming generation. The value of green belts is not simply about what is ugly and what is attractive, as some argue. We need to talk about who green belts are for, and about their social impact, along with their continued role in shaping and managing urban growth. Green belt boundaries may well need to change, but only through careful reviews over wider areas than single local authorities, and where safeguards are put in place to ensure that development is sustainable, affordable and delivered in a timely manner, and without prejudice to the renewal of brownfield land.


Further work on greenbelts is being considered as part of the 2019-21 policy and research work programme.


Links to further reading:

Our major Location of Development research mapped permissions in green belts

 www.rtpi.org.uk/knowledge/research/projects/location-of-development/

Where should we build new homes?

 www.rtpi.org.uk/media/2016831/Where%20should%20we%20build%20more%20homes%20%20RTPI%20Policy%20Statement%20November%202016.pdf

 www.rtpi.org.uk/briefing-room/news-releases/2016/november/rtpi%E2%80%99s-16-ways-to-address-the-housing-crisis-rtpi16ways/

 www.rtpi.org.uk/knowledge/research/projects/building-in-the-green-belt/

www.rtpi.org.uk/briefing-room/rtpi-blog/debating-the-green-belt/

www.rtpi.org.uk/briefing-room/rtpi-blog/transforming-the-green-belt/



City of Well-being: A radical guide to planning

Book review

Hugh Barton, Emeritus Professor of planning, health & sustainability at the University of the West of England, Bristol.

Routledge 2017 PB 978-0-415-63933-0

It is some years since the close relationship between planning and health and well-being was effectively 're-discovered', the areas having drifted apart in terms of policy and legislation since the early 20th century. UWE academic Hugh Barton was prominent among those articulating this re-discovery and his co-edited 'Routledge Handbook of Planning for Health & Well-being', published in June 2015, was reviewed in Branchout that October. This was widely seen as a timely and comprehensive source of reference for anyone concerned about making planning a positive force for change with improved health and well-being at the heart of things.

In his latest book 'City of Well-being: A radical guide to planning', also published by Routledge in summer 2017, Hugh, who is now Emeritus Professor of planning, health and sustainability at UWE, has skilfully moved the debate onwards with a well-argued and comprehensive blueprint for creating liveable and sustainable urban areas where people are put at the heart of the place-making process. In this respect alone this is a 'radical' guide and is written in Hugh's readable and engaging style, well-illustrated with photos and clear diagrams, many of the latter devised and drawn by the author himself and by former colleagues at UWE including Richard Guise and Marcus Grant.

Hear Hugh Speak on

"Is spatial planning bad for our health?"
on 8 November in Taunton

Find out more: www.rtpi.org.uk/swplanningandhealth

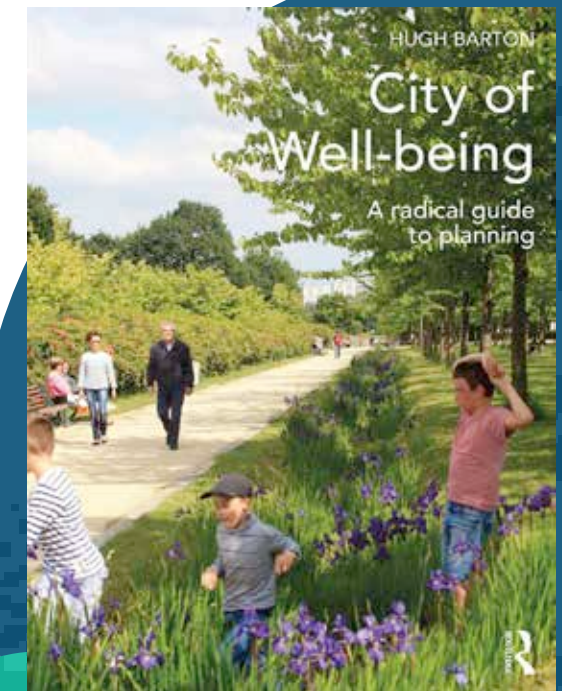
As a passionate advocate of a different kind of planning embracing health, well-being and well-designed homes and urban areas, Hugh deftly chronicles the process whereby planning seems to have abandoned its roots of improving social conditions. Instead it has become much more about economics and commercial imperatives within an increasingly bureaucratic system, which is, in turn, subject to short-term political decision-making. A major strength of this book is the way in which diverse 'threads' have been drawn together in a comprehensive overview of history, theory and evidence, including some interesting case studies, such as that of the Stroud town centre Neighbourhood Plan (in Chapter 17), and lots of chapter-ending notes and guidance to further reading.

Within the book's 290 pages is a clearly articulated guide on to how to plan settlements as if people really mattered, involving a return to the roots of modern planning. This is not about a specific planning system. The 17 chapters are organised in five parts : Orientation gets straight down to the book's central argument and the suggested framework for integrated healthy policy-making ; Inspiration gives a 'trajectory' from historic cities, via the planning pioneers of the 20th century, to current cities that demonstrate what can be achieved; Cognition deals with the relationship between urban environments, physical and mental well-being, social justice, climate change and 'sustainable urban ecologies'; Navigation provides insights into the market and planning processes of change ; and finally (and appropriately) Perspiration examines the knotty political issues surrounding land and property, various heroic and more humdrum visions of the planning process and the role of planners. Among the many telling phrases is one about the 'almost gospel-like mantra of sustainable development', the definition of which is subject to many different versions and which has failed as a concept to fire the imagination of the public at large!

In the 'Epilogue' which follows Chapter 17, there are seven thought provoking 'conclusions if we are serious about planning cities for well-being'. These include the need to take note of the overwhelming scientific evidence that the form and function of human settlements has profound implications for the health of people and of the planet. The key to addressing this is for coherent, co-operative action by official bodies and major investors, working collaboratively with communities. Many would sadly reflect that, at the moment, the way that our planning process operates falls short of this kind of action. So, all the more need for Hugh's timely rallying call.

Geoff Walker

Member of the RTPi SW Regional Activities Committee



Forthcoming Events

Planning & Health Conference

Thursday 8 November 10-16:30 at Somerset County Cricket Ground, Taunton

WPHE logoe are an increasingly ageing and more sedentary population. In conjunction with Public Health England, this event will explore how planning can shape our environments to accommodate these changes and improve the experience of the world around us.

Speaker and topic include:

The Public Health Challenge

Kevin Elliston Deputy Director, South West PHE

Case Study - Public Health and the West of England Spatial Plan

Fionna Vosper, Public Health Principal - Built Environment at South Gloucestershire Council

Experiences from Torbay - public health and planning collaboration

Andy Gunther, Senior Planning and Public Health Officer at Torbay County Council

Planning from another perspective – planning for those with disabilities

John Gillett, Wheely Independent

How design has an impact on various disabilities and give a current perspective on a DM case.

Angharad Williams, Teignbridge District Councillan Perry, Teignbridge District Council

Dementia friendly planning

Claire Puckey, Dementia Friendly City Coordinator, Plymouth City Councils

Spatial planning bad for our health?

*Hugh Barton Public open space and planning
Andy Netherton, PHE SW Centre, Healthy Places Lead*

BOOK NOW



Sustainable Communities & Social Inclusion Seminar

**Wednesday 5 December 10-16:30
Jurys Inn, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire**

How can we plan for new communities? This conference will focus on the integration of new residents into existing communities as well as exploring the relationship between the gypsy and traveller community and the settled community.

Speakers and topics include:

Urban extensions and community integration

Nicola Smith, Senior Planner at, Swindon Borough Council

Masterplanning a new village for all (Case Study)

Amy Burbidge, Design Action Manager at North Northamptonshire Joint Planning & Delivery Unit

Gypsies and Travellers - an insight into our history and culture

Lizzie Isaacs

Negotiating solutions - An alternative to enforcement for Traveller sites

Helen Jones, Chief Executive Officer of Leeds Gypsy and Traveller Exchange

Planning with the Travelling Community - A case for engagement

*Tristan Peat/Hannah Cameron at Mid Devon
DCCelia Hadow at Teignbridge DC*

The Revised NPPF and equality in the planning process

Hugh Ellis, Head of Policy at TCPA

Social sustainability: the value of communities in planning

*Dr. Laura B. Alvarez, Urban Design Group East Midlands
Convenor Swindon Borough Council*

BOOK NOW



Don't miss out on forthcoming events

RTPI South West Events 2019 - now open for bookings!

As your incoming Chair, it forms part of my role to instigate the next years CPD programme blending in some of my interests and responding to your CPD requirements as well as the evolving national planning agenda.

Along with the CPD Working Group we have come up with a new programme for 2019, with some of your favourites, plus new themes.

In 2019 you will see a mix of...

Conferences

multiple speaker events which focus on the latest updates, current issues and relevant case studies such as Planning Law updates. May include breakout workshops

Seminars

less speakers with a focus on practical and technical subjects. The day will allow for more discussion, feedback and may include a variety of workshops.

CPD Days

The return of the popular multiple choice day. You will be able to choose what sessions you would like to attend and tailor the day directly to your professional CPD needs

Study Tours/Networking events

Informal CPD that may take place on a site with a presentation and tour. Details of these events will be released during 2019 and most likely to take place in the warmer months.

Chris Balch

RTPI South West Chair 2019

Joint Local Plans: strategic planning reborn or a necessary response to austerity?

Thurs 14 Feb Bristol Marriott Royal

Across the South West, Joint Local Plans are being prepared as means of addressing the challenge of positive plan making to meet the requirements of the NPPF. This event seeks to learn from experience to date addressing key issues such as governance, management and resourcing of joint plan making; combining strategic and local levels of policy making; assembling an objective evidence base matched to market realities and geographies; engaging stakeholder and community interests; and navigating the SEA and examination process. The speakers will reflect on their practical experience at different stages in the Joint Local Plan making process, including a private sector planning perspective.

BOOK NOW



Design - It's easier to ask forgiveness than it is to get permission - how do we get design right first time

Tues 5 March

Somerset County Cricket Ground, Taunton

This event, held in conjunction with Creating Excellence/ The Design Network, will explore both policies and processes aimed at promoting excellence in design quality and place making. The NPPF now places greater emphasis on delivering design quality through the planning system. Drawing on the understanding gained through a programme of inquiry with local authority members and officers working towards improving design outcomes, the seminar will examine the opportunities for and obstacles to achieving positive planning. Specifically, the event will explore best practice in embedding good design in planning policy and decision making. Afternoon workshops will examine: approaches to ensuring that design is addressed throughout the planning process; the use of design tools and techniques; methods for engaging communities and elected members in design issues; and the knowledge and skills needed to negotiate over elements of design.

BOOK NOW



Really enjoy the ROOM format and I get a lot out of the table discussions and debate, plus networking

**15% discount
on all bookings
before
31 January
2019***

RTPI South West Events 2019 - now open for bookings!

ROOM@RTPI Interactive Workshop 1: "Living By Numbers - The Unintended Consequences of Housing Delivery"

Weds 20 March STEAM, Swindon

This event will explore the obstacles to delivering housing and some of the unintended consequences of recent policy approaches including the housing delivery test. Using the findings of the Letwin Review and the new SWRTPI research into delivery on large scale housing sites as a framework for discussion, the event will showcase good practice examples from across the country and examine how more diversity of provision can be achieved.

BOOK NOW



CPD DAY

Tues 21 May Sandy Park Conference Centre, Exeter

Following the success of last year's CPD day we will again be offering a wide range of workshops on topics which have been specifically requested by RTPI members in the South West. Attendees will be able to choose up to four interactive sessions covering: specialist and technical planning knowledge; key skills for practicing planners; and issues in professional practice. This provides an opportunity for participants to create a programme which is tailored to their specific interests and needs.

BOOK NOW



Development Management / Law Update

Thurs 25 April Duke of Cornwall, Plymouth

This seminar will focus on the legal aspects of development management in the light of recent planning case law and revisions to the NPPF. Presentations will provide a legal update covering topical issues in development management. This will be followed by workshops allowing in-depth discussion and debate on key challenges for planners working in both local planning authorities and consultancies. Potential topics include: interpreting and weighing policy in planning decisions; the use of permitted development rights, and the use of planning conditions/ obligations to overcome objections.

BOOK NOW



ashfords

Marine and Coastal Planning Retreat! Planning the future of our coastal areas

Weds 12 June RNLI, Poole

With the longest coast in England, planners in the South West are having to confront sea level rise and more extreme events alongside the need to support the restructuring of seaside and port economies and the well-being of traditional communities. This seminar will examine how the developing areas of marine and coastal planning are working, highlighting best practice and the continuing challenges facing planners working 'on the edge'.

BOOK NOW



I liked the structure of the day working from national down to local level and it was good to have a number of case studies discussed

**15% discount
on all bookings
before
31 January
2019***



RTPI South West Events 2019 cont...

Planning for the revolution: infrastructure, energy and waste in a low carbon world

Thurs 18 July Plymouth University

The generation and use of renewable energy are rapidly developing areas which hold significant implications for how we plan our future infrastructure. This seminar will explore the operation of the major infrastructure planning regime introduced by the Planning Act 2008 and present the results of research undertaken for the RTPI SW on the planning implications of the transformation to a low carbon energy future

BOOK NOW



Development Management/Planning Law Update

Tues 1 October Marriott Royal, Bristol

This seminar will focus on the legal aspects of development management in the light of recent planning case law and revisions to the NPPF. Presentations will provide a legal update covering topical issues in development management. This will be followed by workshops allowing in-depth discussion and debate on key challenges for planners working in both local planning authorities and consultancies. Potential topics include: EIA and planning; appeals and inquiry procedures and practice.

BOOK NOW



**Burges
Salmon**

Planning for healthy lifestyles

Weds 16 October Eden Project, Cornwall

With a renewed emphasis on the role of planning in delivering health and well-being this seminar will examine how we plan for and deliver opportunities for sport and recreation and promote active lifestyles. The session will look at the opportunities for and challenges of joint provision for tourists and residents drawing on best practice from across the South West

BOOK NOW



Rural Planning, Putting the country back into planning: planning for change in rural areas

Weds 18 Sept Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester

The context for planning in the rural South West is shifting. Agricultural support mechanisms are changing and the role of protected areas such as National Parks and AONB's is under review. This seminar will consider how planning needs to adapt to ensure a sustainable future for rural communities. This seminar will explore how the planning of our rural areas needs to adapt in a world where the focus is increasingly upon the urban. Plenary presentations will be followed by workshops examining economic, environmental and social issues in rural planning

BOOK NOW



*Excellent day.
The chance to move
around, deal with a variety
of topics and meet other
people in different
sessions is fantastic*



**15% discount
on all bookings
before
31 January
2019***

RTPI South West Events 2019 cont...

ROOM@RTPI Interactive Workshop 2: “Living By Numbers – The Unintended Consequences of Housing Policy”

Thurs 14 Nov Somerset County Cricket Ground, Taunton

Do we really understand what the long-term consequences of recent housing policy changes will be on the quality of place-making left behind for future generations arising from the Housing White Paper, the revised NPPF, and its associated legislation? Is planning policy too blunt an instrument to be responsive to rapidly changing national and local housing markets? This event seeks to explore some of these possible consequences which is likely to cover a range of policy issues including second homes in Neighbourhood Plans, affordable housing thresholds, national space standards, age-related housing, design and much more!

BOOK NOW



Planning for Future Prosperity

Tues 3 Dec Bath Guildhall

Enhanced competitiveness and productivity are key to future prosperity in a post Brexit world. This seminar will examine the contribution of planning to meeting the needs of a rapidly changing economy both directly through the provision of appropriate employment space and indirectly through ensuring access to markets and labour. The relationship of planning with LEPs and local businesses will be explored as will the question of how planning can encourage innovation and sustainable growth in the face of the ‘fourth industrial revolution’.

BOOK NOW



A refreshing change to the format for an RTPI conference event, that has facilitated a more active learning environment and provided an opportunity to deliver a programme that can meet a broad range of needs and interests”



Visit
[www.rtpi.org.uk/
southwest](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/southwest) to book or
download a group
booking form