



RTPI South West
Royal Town Planning Institute

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BRANCHOUT

NEWS
SPRING 2018

Message from the Chair

Hello to all Branchout readers. I am the 2018 Chair of the RTPI South West and in time-honoured tradition, I would like to set out my vision for the year ahead, help you to get to know me and talk about planning and planners!

As someone who is still technically a young planner (I have 2 more years to claim this and I will at every available opportunity!), I still see myself as at the (end of) the beginning of my career. I am currently a Senior Planning Officer at Tewkesbury Borough Council and am very much a local authority planner, having spent all bar 6 months of my career working at various councils. My planning interest is the historic environment, though my not-so secret favourite era of architecture is brutalism. Clearly, this is a reaction to eight years spent working in the beautiful Georgian city of Bath! I am a passionate champion of the wonderful yet challenging architecture of the 1960s and 70s, which was inspired by the ultimately unsuccessful campaign to save the old Birmingham City Library. Hopefully in future years, we will come to appreciate this era as much as classical architecture.



David Lowin hands over the role of Chair to Suzanne D'Arcy.

I was recently reading the 2017 Chair, David Lowin's welcome from last year and his musings on planning and what 2017 held for us. The result of the Brexit referendum and the US presidential election featured heavily in this article and it would appear that not much has changed on that front in the past 12 months. The uncertainty of what Brexit means for us (other than Brexit, as we are frequently reminded by the politicians) still looms heavily in the media, as planners are not immune from this uncertainty. How can we plan for future growth when we don't know what our short term will be? Given we are over 18 months from the referendum and there are still many unknowns is worrying, regardless of your position on the result. The potential impacts of Brexit will be discussed at the July CPD conference on Planning and Politics and I am looking forward to hearing the different perspectives on this from Janice Morphet and others.

Trump is still in the White House and still tweeting about fake news, perpetuating the mistrust of experts that began in 2016. Looking back over past editions (and this very edition), it appears that not even the South West can escape his notice! (Fake news? Not in Branchout!)

The housing crisis still features strongly across the media. Planners from across the profession have a vital role to play in the delivery of the right development in the right place. Affordable market housing is desperately needed in the South West, which has a diverse range of challenges to affordability, from the urban areas of Bristol to the impact of second homes in Cornwall, and sometimes it gets lost among talk of land supply and viability, that people are looking for a house to make their home. Perhaps the launch the years most eagerly anticipated sequel, NPPF2, will have the answers?

My main aim for this year is to make the RTPI more relevant to the wider membership. An often heard complaint is "What does the RTPI do for me"? and the answer is as "much as you want it to"! Those of you who have seen me at conferences will have heard that I want to get members to organise their own networking events and so far, we have held 3, which have been a great success! So, if you have a project you want to show off, get in touch with us and we can help you make it happen. It is a great way to meet colleagues from across the profession. I am also keen to forge stronger links with our neighbouring regions, and we have held two joint events with our colleagues in the West Midlands, which it is hoped will become a regular event. This is a year of change in our events programme. The annual dinner is moving to an amazing new venue, We the Curious, in Bristol, and the conference programme features some new events alongside old favourites. We are hearing that you want more workshop and discussion style events, so we are looking to include them in more events, including the new Delivering Development multi choice CPD Day in Exeter, which is already looking like a hit!

Finally, the Regional Activities Committee said goodbye to some long standing members this year. Brett Spiller and Greg McGill have stepped away from RAC, and I would like to thank them for all their hard work over the years.

Editor's blog

In this first Branchout of 2018 we hear from Suzanne D'Arcy, our new Chair, who is brimming with ideas on how to reach out to and engage RTPI members across the South West. This is a big challenge given a geography which stretches from Tewkesbury to the Scillies and from Bude to Swindon, not to mention the Channel Islands! We are fortunate in being one of the RTPI's most active Regions and Nations with a well-developed programme of CPD events and social activities which give members the opportunity to network amongst themselves and with other professionals. Branchout carries a report on the recent CPD event on climate change demonstrating the quality of presentations and debate on offer.

Young Planners will soon be active in all parts of the region with a newly formed group in Dorset and plans well advanced for a Somerset group. Suzanne has laid down the challenge for members to organise informal events as she believes that not everyone can find the time or money to participate in all day events. However, I must confess to being rather shocked to discover that less than 25% of the region's members take part in our CPD programme. How are the remaining 75% fulfilling their CPD requirements? You can (and probably will) be asked by the RTPI to demonstrate that you have undertaken CPD training. I was, but fortunately during my year as SW Chair by which time I had attended 8 CPD seminars – Phew!

Research is the focus of a report from Mike Oakley who outlines plans currently under discussion for further research of relevance to planning practitioners in the South West. This needs to be carefully co-ordinated with the RTPI's national research programme which is currently the subject of extensive consultation as the direction is set for the next few years when we face momentous change. In a post-truth world there is a pressing need for robust evidence on which to base key policy decisions.

Speaking of post-truth, I am pleased to say that after extensive research Branchout is able to provide an update on Trump Development plans across the South West...

Enjoy!

This newsletter provides an important channel of communication with RTPI members across the South West. However, from my position in the Editor's chair I feel that the flow of information is too one way. The pages of Branchout are available to you to raise issues of interest and concern so please use them. In this edition Ashfords write about the recent challenge to the written ministerial statement on neighbourhood planning and 5 (or is it 3 year?) housing land supply. I would like to see more thought provoking articles like this.... so contributions please.

We include our regular reports on the agenda of the regional committee and the work of Young Planners and Planning Aid volunteers. This includes the results of research undertaken with Plymouth University planning students to identify new opportunities for Planning Aid to work with local communities, particularly those facing disadvantage.



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 Written Ministerial Statement on Neighbourhood Planning

It was inevitable that the Written Ministerial Statement issued by Gavin Barwell (former Minister of State for Housing and Planning) on 12 December 2016 (the “Statement”) would lead to litigation. The Statement was issued to bolster the Government’s manifesto commitment to give local people more say in local planning by strengthening neighbourhood planning.

The Localism Act 2011 was heralded by the Government as a departure from centralisation and top-down control of the planning system which it saw as a failure. Neighbourhood planning was a central pillar of the planning elements of the Act.

The National Planning Practice Guidance introduces neighbourhood planning as:

“Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. They are able to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided, and grant planning permission for the new buildings they want to see go ahead. Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community where the ambition of the neighbourhood is aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area.”

There has been a relatively high take up by community groups designating areas in England, which is not yet matched by the number of adopted neighbourhood plans. According to the data from Planning Resource at 31 October 2017, in England there are 2,155 designated areas out of a potential or ~7,600 areas and there are 349 approved neighbourhood plans.

Neighbourhood plans should reflect and refine local plan policies but they should not promote less development than the set out in the local plan or undermine its strategic policies. However many neighbourhood plans have progressed ahead of the local plan for the area; estimated to be two thirds of those adopted neighbourhood plans. This has been a cause of much of the difficulty in defining the role and status of neighbourhood plans which can allocate sites, determine housing numbers and define settlement boundaries in the absence of an up-to-date local plan. Prior to the Statement, there were a number of Secretary of State appeal decisions in which the principal issue was the tension between the application of neighbourhood plan policies that militated against the grant of permission, a lack of an up-to-date local plan and an inability to establish a five-year housing land supply.

These decisions were not altogether consistent on the weight to be given to neighbourhood plans. For example, in the recovered appeal at Yapton, West Sussex, in September 2016, Savid Javid, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, overturned his Inspector’s decision and refused to grant permission. The Inspector decided that to give priority to the settlement boundary when the village was one of the more sustainable settlements would cause unnecessary delay in meeting housing and affordable housing needs of the District. Mr Javid disagreed.

Despite a housing land supply figure of three years and a housing allocation policy vacuum, the development was not in accordance with the development plan and the Neighbourhood Plan which should be upheld. He gave substantial weight to the neighbourhood plan but also agreed with the Inspector that there were no site specific objections relating to landscape, biodiversity, agricultural land supply, or impact on listed building and conservation area. However, in two recovered appeals for Holmes Chapel and Sandbach in Cheshire in October 2016, Mr Javid took a different view. In both appeals the housing land supply was 3.29 years and in the exercise of the titled balance pursuant to paragraphs 49 and 14 of the NPPF, Mr Javid allowed the appeals. In both of his decision letters he appreciated the frustration which would be felt by the communities that had gone through the neighbourhood plan process only for the policies to be considered out-of-date because the Local Planning Authority had not delivered what was required by national policy.

It was as a result of such appeals that the Statement was issued in advance of the Housing White Paper and the forthcoming amendments to the NPPF.

The Written Ministerial Statement on Neighbourhood Planning Cont...

The nub of the Statement is that relevant policies for the supply of housing in a neighbourhood plan, that is part of the development plan, should not be deemed to be 'out-of-date' under paragraph 49 of the NPPF where all of the following circumstances arise at the time the decision is made:

- This written ministerial statement is less than 2 years old, or the neighbourhood plan has been part of the development plan for 2 years or less;
- the neighbourhood plan allocates sites for housing; and
- the local planning authority can demonstrate a three-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

Richborough Estates served a pre-action protocol letter on 30 December 2016 asking Mr Javid to: withdraw the Statement; to issue no further written ministerial statements on neighbourhood planning or national planning policy until the Housing White Paper; to agree that the Housing White Paper would be subject to full public consultation; and that there would be conscientious consideration of the resultant consultation responses.

The answer that followed from the Government Legal Department on 20 January 2017 was, essentially, no. Richborough Estates issued judicial review proceedings on 24 January 2017 together with 24 other housebuilders and land promoters as joint claimants.

There were five grounds of challenge:

1. The Statement was inconsistent with paragraphs 14 and 49 of the NPPF and in having the effect of amending paragraph 49 without explicitly doing so represented an approach which was irrational and unlawful;
2. The Government had made errors of fact in the research that was relied upon in formulating the policy. This was the recent analysis that suggested that giving people more control over development in their area is helping to boost housing supply - those plans in force that plan for a housing number on average planned for approximately 10% more homes than the number for that area set by the relevant LPA;
3. The Statement was invalid for uncertainty and confused given a lack of clarity as to how the three-years' supply was to be calculated;
4. Irrationality in the face of the stated intention of the NPPF to "boost significantly the supply of housing"; and
5. Breach of legitimate expectation that there would be public consultation before planning policy for housing was changed by the Statement.

In March 2017, Mr Justice Holgate stayed the proceedings pending the outcome of the Supreme Court's decision in Suffolk Coastal DC-v-Hopkins Homes.

Following the judgment in Suffolk Coastal and as a result of the different interpretation to the NPPF, Mr Javid published a change to the National Planning Policy Guidance on 10 August 2017. So instead of neighbourhood plan policies for the supply of housing not to be considered out of date where the housing land supply calculation was more than three years but less than five years, that same housing land supply calculation required the planning balance to be struck using the tilted balance under paragraph 14 and that significant weight should be given to the neighbourhood plan.



The Written Ministerial Statement on Neighbourhood Planning Cont...

Mr Justice Dove heard Richborough’s claim on 8 and 9 November 2017 and handed down his judgment on 12 January 2018. He dismissed all five grounds and his decision can be summarised as follows:

Ground 1 - following the West Berks decision (in the case on the written ministerial statement in November 2014 regarding support for small scale developers, custom and self-builders) provided that the policy does not frustrate the operation of planning legislation or introduce matters which are not properly planning considerations at all and is not irrational, the matters which the Secretary of State regards as material or immaterial to the determination of the policy being issued as a written ministerial statement is a matter entirely for the Secretary of State.

Ground 2 - the evidence was adequate and the shortcomings of the research were acknowledged in the Statement. The use of the term ‘recent analysis suggests that NDPs are helping to boost housing supply’ was not asserting that this was a hard and fast concluded view.

Ground 3 - the judge had no difficulty concluding that ‘a three-year supply of housing’ in the Statement means a three-year supply in terms of the exercise for assessing a five-year supply required by paras 47-49 of the NPPF.

Ground 4 - the judge held that the Secretary of State had not acted irrationally in issuing the Statement, which it was argued would frustrate the aim to “boost significantly the supply of housing”. The NPPF clearly promotes this as a key priority but it is not an objective that exists on its own isolated from other interests addressed by the NPPF. It isn’t to be pursued at all costs and other objectives of the NPPF. Neighbourhood planning is one such other objective.

Ground 5 - in relation to legitimate expectation regarding consultation, the judge held that there was no statutory requirement for public consultation for planning policy. He said that the ground was pleaded by the claimants narrowly in that only housebuilders had a legitimate expectation that they would be consulted based on past practice. The claim did not mention others with an interest in the formulation of policy such as LPAs, community groups and the public. Dove J also found that the ground was not made out on the facts. There are two previous written ministerial statements relating to housing which were not consulted upon: the removal of gardens from previously developed land in 2010; and “Planning for Growth” in March 2011.

At the start of this article I said that I thought that litigation was inevitable following the publication of the Statement. It was designed to redress the balance in favour of localism where LPAs were failing to get their local plans adopted and thus establish a robust land supply. The impact on developers was significant. With the stroke of a pen and without any prior consultation the Secretary of State changed planning policy in a material way.

The NPPF was introduced to replace over a thousand pages of national policy with around fifty, written simply and clearly. Leaving aside the tricky issue of the inter-relationships between development plans, the NPPF and the NPPG, determining planning applications which involve consideration of emerging and extant local and neighbourhood plans, land supply implications and the relevant weight to be given to differing policies is quite some way from being simple and clear. The decisions in Suffolk Coastal and Richborough have helped to clarify the issues but they are not simple positions to summarise in reports and convey to elected members or to the public.

The Richborough decision has to be seen as a boost to community groups with existing or emerging plans for neighbourhood planning but the Statement and the NPPG guidance is only engaged where those neighbourhood plans allocate housing. There are a considerable number of adopted neighbourhood plans which do not make any provision for housing and so they cannot benefit from the protection offered by the Statement.

The Government has restated its commitment to neighbourhood planning through the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 and the Housing White Paper. It is here to stay for the foreseeable future and will, I have no doubt, continue to be a source of considerable disagreement.

Duncan Moors

Legal Director, Ashfords LLP



South West Young Planners Round Up

West of England Young Planners

What we have been doing

November saw the West of England Young Planners host a Planning Legal Update, presented by Kings Chambers. The event was split into two parts, the first focussing on the new Metro Mayors, and the second on Bristol's Green Belt. The interactive event provided much opportunity to discuss different planning scenarios, and concluded within an opportunity to network with fellow planners.

This event was followed in December by the Young Planners Christmas party. This provided an informal opportunity to get together and celebrate another successful and busy year. We also took the opportunity to support the Bristol Crisis Centre, which helps those with life disrupting problems, and raised £68.52 for the cause.

In January a number of MRTPI Young Planners ran a drop-in session for those preparing their chartership submission. This provided an invaluable opportunity for those both beginning the chartership process, and those preparing to submit in February. The event demonstrated the value of Young Planners working together to share their experiences of the chartership process. Congratulations to those who were elected in February, and good luck to those who submitted their applications.

Attendance at RTPI events

Along with organising events for young planners, we encourage all members to attend other RTPI events. In December Tom Sadler- a committee member for the Young Planners- attended the South West Retail Planning Conference, at the Guildhall in the beautiful city of Bath. He reported that the event was well attended by over a hundred professionals from both the public and private sector and provided a great insight into the current retail trends, opportunities, and constraints at both a national and more local scale. Speaking on behalf of Towncentred, George Grace presented the great success story of Bedminster's thriving innovative and independent shopping and leisure scene, and the advantages of creating a Business Improvement District (BID) for any local town centre in need of rejuvenation and funding. The conference also included a presentation by David James, CEO at Bath Tourism, which set out the history, growth, successes and difficulties of the famous Bath Christmas Market. All of the presentations are available to download on the RTPI website. Finally, the event provided an excellent opportunity for the attendees to meet each other and discuss current affairs and experiences over lunch and refreshments following the presentations.

Future events

- **In early April** we will be hosting a **Wapping Wharf Tour**, including a presentation of how the development came about, and how planning challenges were overcome.
- **On 5 April** we will be bringing back our **Charity Pub Quiz** which always proves to be a great evenings entertainment in Bristol.
- **On 25th April, RTPI South West will be hosting 'Planning in 2048: How digital innovation is changing the way we plan.'** The West of England Young Planners have had significant input into the conference, and we hope it will appeal to those looking for a long-term career in the planning discipline.
- In May we will be working with RICS Matrics to host a **'Tall buildings' event**. This will discuss the challenges and opportunities of tall buildings in urban locations, from both a planning and construction perspective. We hope that working together with other organisations will allow us to host a broader range of events, giving a more rounded perspective to planning and development.
- The **planning policy update** has been pushed back slightly to accommodate the forthcoming NPPF. We are now looking to host this in May, and further details will be available nearer the time.
- **Date for your diary - 14 June** will see our annual popular **Summer Boat Trip around Bristol Harbourside**. More details will be available soon.

As always, feedback on the content of future events is much appreciated. If there are any events you would like to see please let us know, and we will look at how these can be accommodated.

South West Young Planners Round Up

Dorset Young Planners

Dorset Young Planners hosted our first event with the Christmas Social on 12th December 2017. The event started at the Bournemouth Pier, detouring through the Listed Gardens and followed by a festive quiz, food and drink at the Bournemouth Brewhouse and Kitchen. We were lucky enough to have the Head of Planning at Bournemouth Borough Council, Andrew England to talk us through the Council's on-going transformation of Bournemouth's Pier Approach. He spoke about the Phase 1 public realm works that had already been undertaken and the Phase 2 proposals that are being planned by the Council following the receipt of a £2million grant from the Government's Coastal Communities Fund to invest in the Council's Seafront Strategy. The evening was a great success and it was a fantastic opportunity for SWYP members across the county to catch up with old friends and make new ones. The evening was topped off with three of our quiz teams coming first, second and third, respectively, and claiming all of the available prizes!

Future events

Preparations are now well underway for our next event: **Pitfalls of P.D.- Residential conversions and noise considerations** followed by a social event with pizza and refreshments, which will take place on the **15th March at Terence O'Rourke's Bournemouth offices**. We would like to thank Terence O'Rourke for sponsoring the event.

Two speakers, who are experts in their fields will join us to discuss the opportunities and challenges associated with Permitted Development Part 3 Class O, Q & PA and how noise assessments affect the success of these conversions.

The event provides an opportunity to meet up with fellow planners as well as learning more about topics that are typically at the core of a young planner's workload. We look forward to welcoming as many of you as possible. Tickets are now on sale and can be purchased on the RTPI events webpage.

BOOK NOW



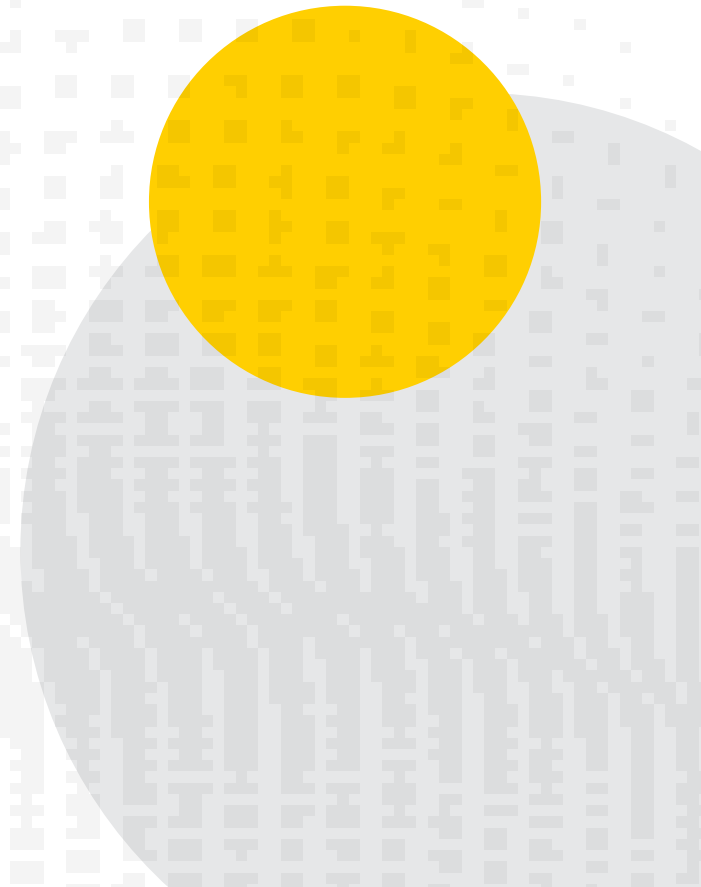
Dorset Young Planners has also recently welcomed Rob McDonald, a planner at West Dorset District Council as a general member of the steering group. The steering group has been meeting regularly to plan new events and we would welcome any suggestions for new events, CPDs and Socials that may be held in the coming year.

We are planning other events for the summer, autumn and winter 2018 so keep an eye on Facebook or www.rtpi.org.uk/swyp for more information or contact southwest@rtpi.org.uk.

Somerset Young Planners - coming soon

We are delighted to announce that a new Young Planners steering group is being formed to deliver events throughout the county and work to help connect students, licentiates and planners early in their career with each other to network and share ideas.

If you are interested in being involved please contact southwest@rtpi.org.uk



South West Young Planners Round Up

Devon & Cornwall Young Planners

Devon and Cornwall Young Planners are pleased to be offering our first event in Cornwall looking at the work on the Cornwall Design Guide. Work is also underway to host an event in North Devon examining the s106 process, its role and how to prepare one for those who have little or no previous experience. We are working with Ashfords to prepare a programme.

Continuing the success of the boat trip with RICS, we have also made contact with the RIBA young architects to explore hosting a joint event. The group see these cross-professional links important to build and develop relationships and understanding of the different disciplines and their role and contribution to the objectives of the planning system

Future events

**Design in Planning Workshop -
The Cornwall Design Guide: An update & review
Monday 26th March, 6.15pm, Bodmin**

S106 masterclass - North Devon (date tbc)

BOOK NOW



Young Planners visit SUEZ's Severnside Energy Recovery Centre (SERC) in Avonmouth

Get in touch...

We'd love to hear from you if you would like to get in touch with us. You can email us via southwest@rtpi.org.uk Alternately, you can contact us through our various social media avenues, which we regularly update with details of up-coming events:

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

📘 Join the 'South West Young Planners' group

🌐 Join the 'RTPI Young Planners Network' group

Profiling Young Planners

Sam Hoida MPlan MSc MRICS - RICS



Tell me a bit about yourself:

I grew up in Portishead, Bristol. Graduated from UWE in 2010 with the MPlan Master of Planning. After traveling Australia and Indonesia in summer I then enrolled on the (RICS accredited) MSc Real Estate Development course at Westminster graduating in 2011. I became a Chartered Surveyor and RICS Registered Valuer in 2015 while employed in the estates department at Bournemouth Borough Council. For the past 3 years, I have been employed in the private sector, currently a Senior Surveyor specialising Planning & Development and Valuation at Primmer Olds BAS in Ringwood, whilst doing the APC as a Licentiate Member of the RTPI.

Why did you decide on a career in planning?

My interest was first sparked when I was young, the computer game 'SimCity 2000' was released on the PC in the early 1990's. My interest in geography at school was a natural progression from there. After gaining both my RTPI and RICS accredited masters degrees, I wanted to carve out a career path that integrates both planning and surveying interests and expertise.

So what does your job involve?

I have a dual role to corporate, private and public-sector clients. One part is best described as planning and development consultancy. This involves undertaking development appraisals (sometimes including a study of the financial viability/profitability of various development options),

making applications for planning permission, prior approvals or CLEUDs. On occasion, it involves making planning appeals to the Inspectorate. The other part of my role is valuation of commercial and residential property, to include valuation of development sites.

Why did you get involved with the Dorset Young Planners steering group?

The DYP steering group was set up just recently in the later part of 2017. I became involved because it was a good opportunity to represent young planners in our region and offer the type of CPD and social events that we think would be of benefit to our professional community. I also think it's a great way of bridging the sometimes polarised public and private sector mindsets, together with collaboration with other built environment professions. Which in my opinion sustains a healthy progression of the industry and its values.

What do you do when you are not planning?

Surveying... (joke). From day to day I like to spend time with friends and family. When I get the opportunity, I love to travel to new places, hire a vehicle and explore it properly. In terms of extreme activities my heart lies with Snowboarding.



Sam Hoida

MPlan MSc MRICS - RICS
Registered Valuer - Senior Surveyor -
Planning & Development
Primmer Olds BAS Limited

Regional Management Board & Activities Committee Up-date

14 December - Joint Meeting of the RMB and RAC

The last joint meeting of the 2017 Regional Management Board (RMB) and Regional Activities Committee (RAC) and the first meeting of the 2018 RMB/RAC held just before Christmas were pleased to welcome as a guest Dave Edmondson who is based in Cornwall and currently an elected member of the RTPI General Assembly. Dave, who was the Chair of RTPI SW in 2012, and Andy England the current representative of RTPI SW on the General Assembly gave an update on issues covered at the Assembly meeting held in late October. A report was also presented by Mike Oakley on the October meeting of the RTPI Nations and Regions Panel. In both reports reference was made to the Membership Survey held in mid-2017. Overall 4,225 RTPI Members responded to the survey, a response rate of 18% considered to be 'a robust sample size for analysis'. Three issues were raised in the survey: the need for the RTPI to be a more campaigning organisation; the urgency for action by the RTPI to convince employers regarding the value of RTPI membership; and for action to tackle the continuing dissatisfaction of the public with the planning system. At both the Assembly and the Panel it was also stressed that the RTPI at national and regional levels must, from May 2018, take on board the implications of the new Data Protection Regulations.

Reports were also received at the December RMB/RAC meetings on:

***Business Plan /Budget 2018** - Approval by the Institute Board of Trustees including an increase in expenditure on research activity.

***Planning Aid** - A report on the on-going research project with Plymouth University which is examining community engagement with planning in deprived areas of the South West.

***South West Young Planners** - The update noted that the recently launched Dorset Young Planners Group had held a 'sold out' first event in early December. It was hoped to initiate a Somerset Group in early 2018.

9 February - Joint Meeting of the RMB & RAC

The second joint meeting of the 2018 RMB/RAC was held in early February. The meeting was pleased to welcome both Ian Tant, (RTPI Senior Vice-President for 2018) and Harry Burchill (RTPI Planning Policy Officer) who spoke to the principal agenda paper seeking views on the Institute's research programme 2019-2021. It was stressed that this research programme must strive to 'to match the professional and intellectual needs of RTPI members with a research agenda that can help address planning challenges both at a policy level and at practitioner level'. The paper noted that the 2017 National RTPI Member Survey had identified the following priorities for future research: 'Brexit', housing land supply and housing affordability. It was also stressed that, in designing the new research programme, it will be critical to reflect upon such critical issues as: how to relate to different audiences such as practitioners, policy makers, academics and the general public; how to best target research outlets and dissemination activities and how to integrate campaigning activities in the research programme. It was noted that the 2019-2021 Research Programme will aim to respond to the need for addressing both new critical areas of research (like Brexit) along with long standing planning issues (i.e. housing affordability). During the meeting it was noted that the RTPI SW 2016 Member Survey had indicated similar research priorities to those indicated in the 2017 National Survey. It was stressed however that, whatever research is undertaken by the RTPI, the aim and purpose of the projects must be clearly established right from the outset, in particular its relevance for practicing planners.



Regional Management Board & Activities Committee Up-date

The February RMB/RAC meeting also included the following agenda items:

***RTPI General Assembly in January** - issues covered included the 2018 Budget and Operational Plan which includes significant investment in IT facilities; the appointment from mid-April of Victoria Hills MRTPI FICE, currently the Chief Executive Officer of the Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation, the UK's largest regeneration project, as RTPI Chief Executive; the RTPI Research Strategy 2019-2021.

***SW Young Planners** - A report on recent and future events including reference to the first meeting of the Somerset Young Planners Group with a view to starting events from May 2018.

***An update on the RTPI SW Budget** with the meeting agreeing in principle to increased funding for Planning Aid, a contribution to the national Student Bursary scheme, increased funding for the activities of the SW Young Planners allowing for support for a new active group in Somerset and a small sum for rebranding of RTPI SW materials incorporating the revised RTPI logo. This increased funding will require agreement by the Institute's Finance Director.

***Planning Aid** - An update was provided on the joint research project with Plymouth University referred to in the above report presented at the December meeting. It was hoped to hold a Planning Aid volunteer training session later in 2018.

***CPD** - A progress report on the 2018 Programme. The highlights indicated in the report included: Bookings 1202 by 31st January (current forecast is a total of over 1400 for the year); sponsorship of three 2018 events by Ashfords, Burges Salmon and Lichfields; support from other institutes/bodies including RIBA, RICS, ICE, CIOB, and the Landscape Institute.

25 April - RTPI South West AGM Meeting - Bristol City Marriott

The Principal role of the AGM is to consider and endorse the Annual Review of the RTPI South West relating to the year 2017 for submission to the National Institute. It is an opportunity for members to question the RTPI South West officers on the year activities and finances. The AGM will take place before lunch during the Future of Planning Conference. RTPI Members are welcome to attend the AGM element for free. Please register attendance to southwest@rtpi.org.uk



2018 Joint Committee of the RMB and RAC



2017 Joint Committee of the RMB and RAC

Profiling RAC Committee members

Julie O'Rourke



Tell me a bit about yourself:

I live in Bristol and graduated from the University of the West of England in June 2010 with a MPlan qualification. I began my planning career working in the policy departments of Swindon Borough and Bath and North East Somerset Councils. Since May 2017, I have been working for Tetlow King Planning in Bristol who specialise in affordable housing and care development.

Why did you decide on a career in planning?

I have always had a passion for geography and it was always the urban geography that I enjoyed the most. Whilst I was completing my A Levels I was reviewing potential university courses when I saw a 'geography and planning course', I was really interested in the planning part as it was so varied. After a year I decided to drop the geography element of the degree and moved onto the MPlan Town Planning course. I love the fact that planning is such a varied role, it includes aspects of geography, law, politics, economics and history and no one day is the same. It is such a broad area of work that you require many different skills. You never stop learning as the political and legal frameworks which we work within changes frequently, which is both challenging and exhilarating.

What does your job involve?

As a planner my role is varied and it covers all disciplines of planning from policy, enforcement and development management. Day to day work varies however it can include writing planning statements and site appraisals, writing objection letters for clients, managing and progressing planning applications, working with clients on enforcement cases, working with neighbourhood planning groups on neighbourhood plans and writing appeal statements.

Why have you got involved with the Regional Activities Committee?

I wanted to promote planning, keep abreast of the latest and emerging issues within planning and the wider sector. I want to share knowledge and good practice, and to increase opportunities to network and to exchange ideas with people in different planning disciplines. Joining the RAC allows me to develop skills complementary to professional planning. It is also a wonderful opportunity to meet planners who are as passionate as me and who have an interest in promoting planning.

What do you do when you are not planning?

I love spending time with my husband and son. My son is involved in Bristol Rugby Academy and North Bristol rugby club so I spend most of my evenings and weekends watching him play rugby. I love travelling, especially in Europe, going to the theatre and trying out new recipes.



Julie O'Rourke

Planner at Tetlow King Planning & member of the RTPi SW Regional Activities Committee

Planning Aid England (PAE) Update

Planning the Future of Planning Aid England in the South West

The Task Group for Planning Aid England (PAE) in the South West, commissioned a research project in Autumn 2017 with the MSc Planning students at the University of Plymouth as part of their Research Methods module (led by Dr Stephen Essex). The aim of the research was to examine the awareness of PAE services in the South West and to identify the types of outreach work that would best support local communities and groups in the region. PAE provides free and independent professional planning advice, which is delivered by around 300 volunteers across the country. The Task Group saw this research project as a real chance to prioritise the work of PAE on projects which were likely to support communities and groups in the South West over the next few years as well as to build a relationship with one of the region's key Planning Schools.

The Task Group worked with the students to compile a set of questionnaires, which were sent to a sample of Local Planning Authorities (LPAs), ward councillors and Coastal Community Teams (CCTs) throughout the South West. The sample of LPAs and ward councillors was based on one-third of the communities falling within the top 20% most deprived Lower Super Output Areas in England, while all CCTs based on the South West coast were invited to participate in the survey.

Jo Widdecombe and Katie Graham from the Task Group attended a presentation of results in January 2018, where the Plymouth MSc Planning students presented and discussed the findings of the research and suggested recommendations about how PAE might work directly with community groups in need over the next few years (see photo).



MSc Planning students at the University of Plymouth during the presentation of their research findings to Planning Aid England on 18 January, 2018.

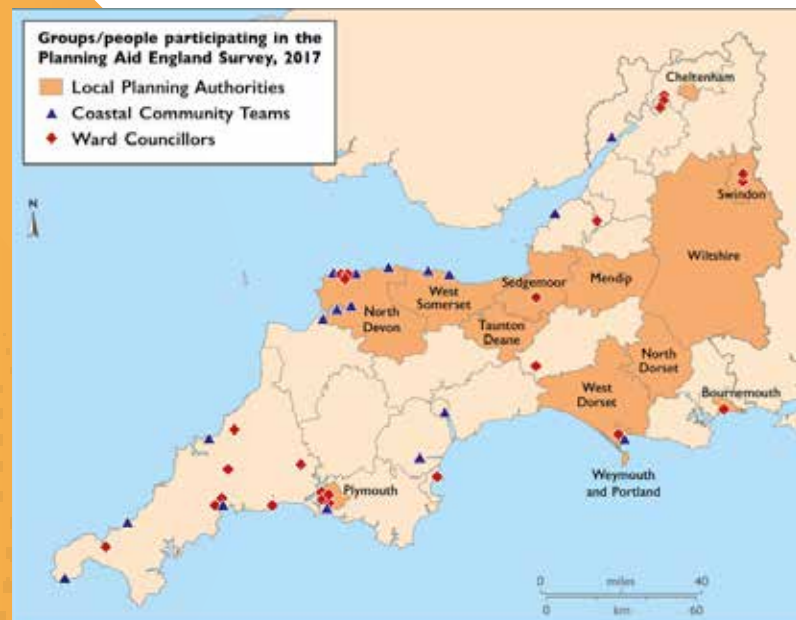
From left to right: Peter Lambert, Ed Crome, Naomi Jackson, Hannah Millar, Joseph Smithyman, Carlotta Molfese, Rupert Warwick, Jo Widdecombe (PAE), Katherine Graham (PAE), Philip Twamley, Oliver Thorogood and Katherine Collins.

Planning Aid England (PAE) Update cont...

The response rate from the respondents in the sample was inevitably self-selecting, but, apart from ten districts, included at least one stakeholder group from each LPA area (see Figure 2). A total of 12 respondents (42%) were obtained from LPAs (although the total included two responses from different planners in two authorities); 23 ward councillors completed the survey (14%); and 14 CCTs replied (29%).

Three main conclusions arise from the analysis of the results. First, awareness of PAE amongst the stakeholder groups appeared to be relatively low, apart from LPAs, where a total of 60% had used PAE services largely to support neighbourhood planning. The end of government funding for this support in 2015 has arguably reduced the profile of PAE over the last few years. Although 96% of ward councillors in the survey had played an active role in planning, 87% had no prior experience of working with PAE and 30% had not heard of the charity. Only about a quarter of CCTs were aware of PAE services (21%) and none had worked with them in the past. These findings suggest that the first priority for PAE in the South West should be to raise the profile of its activities by means of effective publicity and proactive liaison with key stakeholders, which might include respondents to this survey. Indeed, other findings from this research highlight specific potential cases of engagement for PAE.

Second, all three stakeholder groups felt that PAE might most usefully assist deprived communities through direct, face-to-face support rather than remote web-based or printed materials (see Table 1). This finding was reiterated in responses to questions about local plan consultation, neighbourhood plan formulation, engagement with hard-to-reach or seldom-heard groups, and major planning applications. Just over a third of ward councillors (39%) stated that there were communities in their areas that would benefit from the formulation of a neighbourhood plan, which suggests that PAE might still provide further support to meet this demand. Several areas were facing major housing schemes and other infrastructural projects, which might also generate cases requiring the support of PAE for concerned and affected communities. Awareness of hard-to-reach or seldom-heard groups did not appear to be very prominent in the work of ward councillors and CCTs (see Figure 3). LPAs had a better awareness of these groups and felt that they would benefit from additional support with planning applications (50% of LPAs), general planning advice and guidance (50%), consultations (42%) and neighbourhood plan engagement (25%). These issues represent potential areas of support for the PAE in the South West over the next few years. If direct face-to-face support is to be offered, as requested by respondents, then the demand for volunteers will be high and would need to match their location.



Planning Aid England (PAE) Update cont...

Third, there was a level of disagreement between stakeholders over the extent of public engagement in the formulation of Local Plans. Over two-fifths of LPAs considered that their practices were extensive (42%), while only 17% of ward councillors and 14% of CCTs expressed the same view (see Figure 4). Some ward councillors recognised that, while community engagement in planning was a function of available resources, participation could be very selective with too much reliance placed on web sites and emails, which they felt did not provide real in-depth debate and consensus. There might therefore be a role for PAE volunteers in public consultation related to remaining Local Plan preparations and other public consultation in the region. The sizeable number of respondents who either did not know or did not answer questions about engagement of stakeholders in the planning process not only in itself indicates the value of the work of PAE, but also hints at perhaps rather more profound deficiencies in the operation of statutory planning processes.

While it is recognised that these results were based on a small and perhaps slightly skewed sample, the findings suggest that there is considerable scope for further investigation. The Plymouth MSc Planning students benefited from the experience of undertaking an applied survey to practise their research skills of questionnaire design, sampling strategy, data collection, processing, analysis and presentation (as well as ethical approval processes). Lessons have been learnt over the number and wording of questions, which will place the students in good stead for their dissertation preparations over the next few months. Considerable thanks and appreciation must be expressed to all respondents of the three surveys for their co-operation and support in completing the questionnaires, and thereby helping to make a success of this exercise.

What next?

The Task Group is faced with the exciting opportunity of utilising these findings to prioritise future PAE work in South West England. There is a need to 'strike whilst the iron is hot' and contact local community groups who requested or expressed a need for support in their survey responses. In the long-term, there is an aspiration to build on this initial experience of investigative research and to obtain further commissioned research project work for the MSc Planners at the University of Plymouth. Ongoing, the Task Group has recognised the need to raise the profile of PAE in the region and to encourage more volunteers to get involved. Such engagement with the communities across the South West can only be delivered through 'show casing' what PAE does best: providing free independent professional planning advice!

Most importantly, as the Task Group generates the opportunities to support communities/groups with planning - be it with neighbourhood planning, responding to Local Plans and major planning applications - they need the continued support of their volunteers.

**Katherine Graham,
Jo Widdecombe and Stephen Essex**

So, watch this space for opportunities to get involved!

If you would like to have a chat, please contact:

Jo Widdecombe
jo.widdecombe@gmail.com

Katie Graham
kt_graham@hotmail.com

Forthcoming Events

Planning in 2048: How digital innovation is changing the way we plan
Wednesday 25 April 10-4:30
City Marriott, Bristol

Technology is changing how we view the world around us and how we interact with each other. This joint event with West of England Young Planners will look at how the planning process can and is harnessing this to improve stakeholder engagement in both plan making and development. A range of exhibitors will be also available throughout the day.

Session 1: Disruptive technology and its impact on how we work as planners

- **Intro to Disruptive Tech and the Future of Planning Project** - Stefan Webb, Senior Bid and New Business Manager at Future Cities Catapult

Consultations

- **Engagement and Planning** - Andrea Kellegher Senior Consultant, Strategic Communications at Turley
- **VR as a Design and Consultation Tool** Ossian Whiley, Co-founder of Whiley + Blake VR & Interactive Media
- **Analysing responses** - Ben Fowkes, Commercial Director at Citizen space

Automation – ‘Tech-Talks’

- **Automated Policy Analysis** - Daniel Mohammed, Urban Intelligence
- **‘What if we could turn planning code into ... code?’** Helen Laurence, Operations & Partnerships at WikiHouse. Dennis Sangwerne, Borough of Southwark
- **“Will a robot take my planning job, and what should I do about it?”** - Tom Heath, Arup

Session 2: Digital innovation and what cities we could be planning!

Smart cities

- **Planning Smart City Regions**
James Harris, RTPI Policy & Networks Manager
- **Considering the end-to-end journey in planning for autonomous vehicles on the strategic road network**
Dr Joanna White – Intelligent Transport Systems Group, Highways England
- **Topic TBC** Peter Cooper at McKinsey

Session 3: Case Studies

- **Oxford Smart City** - Making the Best Use of IoT Technologies to Extract and Analyse Mobile Data
Llewelyn Morgan, Service Manager Infrastructure, Innovation & Development – Communities, Oxfordshire County Council
- **Bristol Speaker TBC**
- **Birmingham - planning for a Liveable City by measuring what counts**
Nick Grayson, Climate Change and Sustainability Manager, Birmingham City Council

BOOK NOW



Exhibitors:
Urban Intelligence
Wikihouse
Planning Portal
Whiley + Blake VR & Interactive Media
UWE
Citizen Space

Don't miss out on forthcoming events

Forthcoming Events

Delivering Development - A multi-choice CPD Day Tuesday 22 May 10-4:30 Sandy Park Conference Centre, Exeter

This event will be a mix of practical “how to” sessions for both Development Management and Policy Planning from both a public and private perspective.

A programme will be available soon, but there will be 5 rooms running concurrently throughout the day. You will be able to choose 5 workshops sessions to attend from around 10-20 different options. This is a great opportunity to tailor the day to your CPD needs and preferences.

Topics will include:

- **Running the viability gauntlet workshop**
Mark Felgate, Director M.E.D. Planning and Associate at Three Dragon
- **How to kick start urban regeneration**
Chris Shephard, Head of Economic Development at Bournemouth Borough Council
- **Beyond Policy – An Alternative Approach to Good Design.** Simon Gould at Mitchell Eley Gould
- **The interface between mainstream planning and minerals and waste.** Andy Hill, Principal Planning Officer - Minerals & Waste at Devon Country Council
- **The good, the bad, the ugly - Enforcement options and how to succeed at Appeal.**
Jon Drew, Enforcement Officer at Cornwall Council
Bridget Campbell, PINS

- **Writing Appeal Statements & Giving Evidence at Inquiries.** Mike Muston, Muston Planning
- **Understanding and analysing retail impact assessments and applying the sequential test for retail development**
Matthew Morris, Director at GVA
- **How to Screen and Scope a development for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)**
Rufus Howard and Caroline Price at Royal HaskoningDHV
- **Basics of Habitats Regulations Assessment for Plans**
Dr. Riki Therivel, Director at Levett-Therivel
- **Workshop: Habitats Regulations Assessment screening for plans**
Dr. Riki Therivel, Director at Levett-Therivel
- **Avoiding the fudge: taking a consistent approach to applying the flood risk sequential and exception test**
Marcus Salmon, Environment Agency
- **Assessing Significant and Insignificant Harm to Heritage**
Simon Hickman, Historic England
- **Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment: What you need to know**
Melanie Croll CMLI- Landscape Officer at Devon County Council. Chair of the Devon Landscape Policy Group
- **Permitted development change of use.**
Graham Gover, Solicitor
- **Planning Obligations or Conditions**
See how Inspectors have decided the issues involved.
Graham Gover, Solicitor
- **Current and Future Transport Planning Techniques**
Mark Pearce AMCIHT, Consultant (Transportation) at Hydrock
- **Putting all of the theory into practice**
An interactive session with a planner at the sharp end of viability negotiations and one of his advisors. How the viability process works, what you should be asking applicants for, who pays, case examples and how negotiations can work. An overview of what you can expect from initial submission and pre-app all the way through to committee.
Jim Cliffe, Planning Obligations Manager, Bristol City Council and Claire Giles, Principal Surveyor and Sector Leader Viability Wales and SW, District Valuer Services (part of the Valuation Office Agency)

BOOK NOW



Forthcoming Events

Exploring the tensions between development viability and planning Seminar
Thursday, 28 June 10-4:30
Plymouth University, Plymouth

Finding the right balance between maximising land receipts and delivering community benefits is a fundamental challenge for planning. This CPD conference will explore this challenge focusing on public sector land disposals and how these can be managed effectively using a range of planning tools.

BOOK NOW



Political Perspectives on Planning in A Post Brexit World
Tuesday, 17 July 2018 10-4:30
STEAM Museum, Swindon SN2 2EY

Politics and planning are intrinsically linked. This event will hear from politicians on their perspectives on the planning process and how planning officers can work closer with politicians to achieve sustainable development. Speakers will include politicians with planning backgrounds to give a unique insight into contemporary challenges.

Speakers include:

- **Reflections on National Government Attempts to Reform the Planning System**
Lord Matthew Taylor of Goss Moor
- **The Planner and the Politician - A Personal View of Each Side of the Fence**
Gideon Amos OBE, Amos Ellis Consulting Limited
- **Planning and Local Politics**
Cllr Graham Parker, West Devon Borough Council
- **The Impacts of Brexit on Planning**
Janice Morphet, The Bartlett School of Planning, UCL

BOOK NOW



Heritage and Historic Landscapes Seminar
Wednesday, 12 September 2018 10-4:30
The Guildhall, Market Place, Guildhall Square, Salisbury SP1 1JH

The South West is blessed with an abundance of historic buildings, landscapes and archaeological finds. This event sponsored by Lichfields will focus on protecting and enhancing our historic landscapes and archaeology as well as breathing new life into heritage at risk. There will be an opportunity to discuss the topics with colleagues across the region.

Topics in consideration are:

- **Archaeology and Planning** - Martin Brown, WYG
- **Managing Change in Historic Landscapes** - Deborah Evans, DE Landscape & Heritage Ltd
- **What is Curtilage listed?**
Nick Bishop, Senior Heritage Consultant, Lichfields
- **Designations and listed buildings under threat**

BOOK NOW



Sponsored by

LICHFIELDS

Don't miss out on forthcoming events

RTPI South West Annual Dinner 6th July 2018

Join us for the accomplished South West Annual Networking Dinner.

The 2018 dinner will take place on Friday 6th July at We the Curious (previously known as @Bristol)...a venue which celebrates science and innovation and invites you to think about how we can influence the future. We the Curious provides an inspiring backdrop for the dinner.

The dinner sells out each year so reserve your table/places soon to avoid disappointment.

The evening will include:

Drinks reception amongst the exhibits - get hands on and interactive with many of sciences wonders

Sponsored by: Mott MacDonald

3 course meal and table wine

Entertainment including casino tables

Dress code: black tie

Charity raffle in aid of Mind

After Dinner Speaker:

Claire Lomas MBE

BOOK NOW



To continue in the inspirational theme of the event, RTPI South West are delighted to invite Claire Lomas MBE...

A freak accident left Claire Lomas paralysed from the chest down, but she was determined not to give up. She made worldwide headlines in 2012 when completing the London Marathon in a pioneering robotic suit taking 17 days, and lit the Paralympic cauldron for London 2012.

Claire Lomas Circle

Claire speaks about the split second that changed her life, and candidly describes the darkest times. This is combined with humour which has helped Claire get through some embarrassing moments that her injury has caused. Listening to Claire, you will be taken on an extreme roller-coaster of emotions; you'll cry, you'll laugh and you will admire. You will leave the event believing in yourself, inspired and hugely motivated. When faced with challenges in your own lives, Claire's words stick in your mind.



Whether you believe you can or whether you believe you can't - you are right



Drinks sponsor:



Charity Raffle in aid of:



With thanks to our sponsors:



Report on CPD Seminar on Planning for Climate Change in Bristol, Feb 2017

In 2007 central government published the first dedicated planning policy on climate change. One of the main aims of this conference was to take a fresh look at what climate change now means for the built environment and what planning can realistically do to deliver low carbon living in a changing climate. The conference was sold out and was held at 'We the Curious' (previously known as @bristol) and whetted the appetite for our RTPI SW Annual Dinner being held in the same venue in July. The event had been supported by the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB), Landscape Institute, Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE), Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) and the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), so produced a truly multi-disciplinary audience with a range of professional and technical specialists in attendance.

Chaired by Peter Ellis who has extensive experience of leading on a wide range of high profile planning and environmental policy issues including renewable energy, flooding, strategic and environmental impact assessment and local environmental protection, Simon Roberts from the Centre for Sustainable Energy was the first speaker of the day and reflected on why meaningful public engagement and consent matter so much. Simon also presented some thoughts as to what can be done at a national right through to local level on cutting carbon.

Liz Parks from the Environment Agency also started her presentation discussing adapting to the impacts of a changing climate at a national level before focussing on a more regional level and the implications for localities in the South West. Philip Gray from BDP focussed on buildings and what the construction industry is doing and what we can aspire to. Philip provided some thoughts on what he considered Town Planners could do to help deliver sustainable buildings. The morning sessions concluded with Hugh Ellis from the TCPA who was as usual entertaining and thought provoking. Hugh posed the question: Can planning make a difference and are planners stepping up to the plate? Hugh provided an inspiring response living up to his introduction as a "champion of planners" by challenging them not to settle for mediocrity and strive for excellence in development.

In the afternoon, three workshops were held and groups were rotated to ensure that all delegates had an opportunity to attend and discuss issues such as Local Energy Planning, Planning out flooding and EIA and climate change.

Josh Fothergill from Fothergill Training and Consulting Ltd considered what the impact of projects on climate and their vulnerability to climate change means in practice, and in turn the implications for planners. This workshop provided a useful high-level review of screening, scoping, assessment and Environmental Statements for those in the group who were not involved with this element of legislation on a daily or regular basis.

Rachel Coxcoon from the Centre for Sustainable Energy presented her thoughts on understanding the 'social gap' and the disjoint between high levels of support for renewables nationally, but strong resistance locally. Rachel also used some interesting case studies from the region including two based in Moreton in Marsh and Congresbury.

Sam Kipling from the Environment Agency provided an interesting overview of how flood risk can be managed through local plans and development management. His workshop covered the major risks (sea, river and surface water) and the impact of climate change; the role of Strategic Flood Risk Assessments and why planning plays a crucial role. He also provided a useful reminder as to how the Environment Agency can provide support to the planning process.

Find the full report on the event written by Bernice Roberts, Principal Consultant at The Landmark Practice www.rtpi.org.uk/media/2732779/conference_report.pdf



Report on the Worcester RTPI SW & WM Networking event

Following the success of the event held in Tewkesbury last summer, there has been a second joint event between our region and our northern colleagues at the RTPI West Midlands. The event was hosted in the beautiful surroundings of Worcester Guildhall, the home of Worcester City Council.

Bryan Smith from RTPI West Midlands Committee reports on the event:

For RTPI events in the West Midlands there are venues and there are memorable venues. The informative but social get together of RTPI practitioners working in the south of the West Midlands and north of the South West regions this evening networking event on 21 February was certainly in the “memorable” category, being held in the magnificent Assembly Room in Worcester City Guildhall. Hosted by RTPI West Midlands chair, Maria Dunn, the evening reciprocated the South West hospitality at Tewkesbury last autumn.

Designed to provide a networking opportunity for planners in the locality, the joint regional get together was a success. But it was not all chat as some fifty planners from both the public and private sectors were addressed on the issues confronting Worcester City Centre and the wider sub-region.

Nigel Wakefield from Node, an urban design consultancy, who together with CBRE and Systrae are tasked with preparing a Development Plan for the City Centre, gave the first presentation. Having a time-horizon of some 15 – 20 years the study seeks to analyse the centre as a whole, identifying development areas and how delivery might be achieved. However, as Nigel pointed out, the River Severn floodplain, heritage buildings and traffic circulation problems, means the future of Worcester City Centre needs careful assessment. One good example of the required care finds some expression in the quality pedestrianisation of the High Street.

Seeking ideas on how residential, economic and mixed commercial use activities could best be accommodated in a cathedral county town, consideration has been given to some comparable settlements (e.g. York, Gloucester etc.). But there are signs of new development with a hotel, university expansion and a revamped Cathedral Square shopping centre.

But it is the retail component of the city centre that arguably presents the most important challenge. The constantly changing pattern of retailing, influenced by changing life style, including the use of internet purchasing, together with economic uncertainty, need to be understood and catered for if Worcester is to retain much of its traditional attractiveness. The fact that many of the influences are beyond the Local Authority’s control, or even influence, means that the next 15 to 20 years will need careful attention.

The second presentation by Maria Dunn (Planning Policy Team Leader, Worcester City Council) acquainted us with the strategic context of Worcester and the replacement of the development-planning framework. The city, strategically located along the motorway spine of the M5, extending from the West Midlands conurbation to Exeter and embracing such important urban centres as, Birmingham, Cheltenham, Gloucester, Bristol and Taunton is in a competitive corridor. Of the city’s population of 101,300 some 65.3% are of working age and so the economic component of the evolving Plan is critical. Much of the traditional industry has gone or scaled down e.g. porcelain manufacturing although the county administration and commercial sectors remain and have been augmented by an expanding academic sector i.e. Worcester University, and the publicity afforded by a Premier rugby club, Worcester Warriors.

Joint working with the adjoining local authorities, Wychavon and Malvern Hills, has seen the plan to accommodate the growing population of the sub-region in new residential areas of growth; 2,500 units south of the city and 2,150 to the northwest. In addition, 6,800 residential units are allocated within the city boundaries. But the creation of new employment opportunities remains vital and to date a review suggests an adequate supply of land. Recent employment opportunities have arisen, with the recently revamped Cathedral Square Shopping Centre being almost fully occupied.



Report on the Worcester RTPI SW & WM Networking event

Worcester City, together with its neighbours, is aiming to have a replacement Development Plan by 2021, the current version having been adopted in 2016. The new plan will have a horizon-date of 2041. As part of this exercise supplementary plans dealing with the City Centre and an Infrastructure Delivery (draft 2019), are underway together with updated assessments on housing, the Green Belt and flood relief. The completion of these studies and the Development Plan within the programme will ensure compliance with the rather bold notice on one of the Guildhall's side doors advertising "Quick Plan".

Whilst there is much to be recommended in a speedy plan making programme the uncertainty created by economic and political upheavals suggests that any evolving policy framework will need to be "flexible" and "robust" if it is to have any planning value with any meaningful shelf life.

Bryan Smith
RTPI West Midlands Committee



If you have a project you want to show off about, then why not host your own event?

The RTPI SW will advertise it and organise booking, you just need to provide a project, a venue and some nibbles!

Contact southwest@rtpi.org.uk
SW Regional Co-ordinator,
if you would like to know anything further.

We are hoping to hold a number of these informal networking events throughout the year. There is a re-run of the November event held in Bath, looking at the Waterspace project, taking place in June, when hopefully it will be both warmer and lighter to allow delegates a tour of the riverside. Further joint events between the RTPI SW and WM will be held later in the year, so watch this space!!

RTPI SW Research up-date 2017-2018

2017 RTPI SW Research Project: 'The Deliverability and Affordability of Housing in the South West'

The report on this project, undertaken by Heriot Watt University and Three Dragons consultancy, was published in October. The full report is available on the Research section of the national RTPI web site which also includes the national RTPI Research Briefing No.21 'Delivering Large Scale Housing Schemes' which draws upon this research. In a report to the RTPI SW Management Board and Activities Committee, Greg McGill, the 2017 RTPI SW Research Officer stated that it was "an excellent and very useful piece of research" identifying, through an examination of six South West housing schemes, the issues and problems associated with delivering successful large scale schemes. He noted that the research report identifies elements of good practice important in achieving this including: early identification of potential schemes; analysis of key challenges; adoption of appropriate management skills; creation of robust master plans and design guides; good intelligence regarding potential funding and willingness to be flexible and share knowledge.

The research report also stated that the RTPI could play a significant role in providing practical guidance on the delivery of large scale housing developments. In the context of this comment discussions have taken place involving RTPI SW officers and national RTPI officers. It has been agreed that the RTPI will, in cooperation with RTPI SW, prepare and publish a national good practice note on the issue. It has also been agreed that it would be very helpful to hear from RTPI members in the South West examples of what they consider, from their experience, to be key issues in delivering successful large scale housing schemes. Such examples would 'top up' the research findings. (In recent years the RTPI SW Awards for Planning Excellence Panel has assessed a number of schemes incorporating various and varied examples of good practice in delivering good housing schemes).

Thus it would very helpful, in preparing the proposed practice note, if RTPI members in the South West could send to the Regional Coordinator (Charlotte.Daborn@rtpi.org.uk) examples of what they consider to have been good practice (such as exemplified in the above paragraph) in delivering a successful large scale housing scheme. If possible please send by the 31st March so that it can be an input into the practice note.

2018 RTPI SW Research Project "Development of Renewable Energy in the South West"

Following discussions involving RTPI SW and RTPI officers in London, the 2018 RTPI SW research project will relate to planning issues associated with the development of Renewable Energy schemes in the South West. The RTPI SW Research and Policy Working Group is currently preparing material for agreement with the national RTPI for inclusion in a tender document to be issued in the Spring.



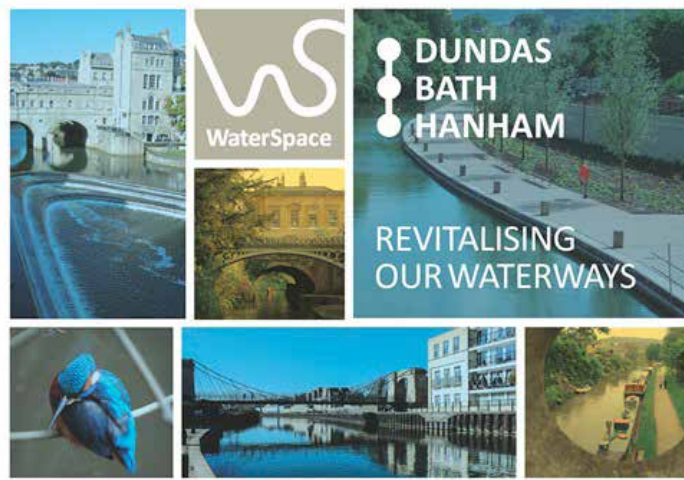
A re-freshed Regional Award programme for 2018

The RTPI Nations and Regions Panel has decided that, as from 2018, the operation of the National and Nation/Region Awards for Planning Excellence will be closely aligned in their operation. The 2018 Nation (eg. Wales) and Region (eg. South West) Awards will be launched following the conclusion of the 2018 National Awards for Planning Excellence at the Award Ceremony on the 24th May. The aim is that all the Nation and Region schemes will have similar categories, entry requirements and judging criteria/methods. A further new feature will be that Nation/Region overall winners will be offered the opportunity to be automatically shortlisted in an appropriate category in the National 2019 Awards whose entries will close in December 2018. This will result in these winners gaining excellent publicity and recognition as both Nation/Region winners and National finalists. In accord with these new arrangements, RTPI SW is aiming to launch its 2018 Awards for Planning Excellence in early June with a closing date for submissions during September. Detailed work is currently under way for this launch; the details will be published in the RTPI SW e-news and the next issue of Branchout.

Start identifying your potential winning submissions now - The September deadline is only 6 months away!

Contact

Southwest@rtpi.org.uk
for more information



Overall Winner of the RTPI South West Awards for Planning Excellence 2017



Trump Developments in the SW - an update

More than 12 months have passed since Branchout revealed proposals for a series of truly wonderful projects from Trump Developments aimed at making the South West great again. In this edition we provide an update based on exhaustive investigations by our editorial team into progress which raises serious doubts about the ability of Trump Developments to deliver on their promises despite vehement denials to the contrary.

Proposals to turn Cornwall into a new Trump golf resort have encountered stiff opposition from proponents of a rival scheme to use the county as the launchpad for the UK space programme. This aims to establish regular services exporting pasties to the universe as part of the Government's post-Brexit Intergalactic Britain initiative. Political support for the space programme, branded by promoters as 'Pie in the Sky,' gives rise to fears that the Government could exercise call-in powers which would stymie Trump's golf scheme.

Meanwhile construction has yet to start on Trump's wall running along the boundary between Devon and Cornwall. Following promises that the cost of the wall would be met by EU taxpayers and would be in place by the end of March 2019, the project has become entangled in a web of bureaucratic red tape. Initially promoted as permitted development, Branchout can reveal that proposals for watchtowers have fallen foul of the 2-metre height limit. Concerns have also been raised by the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England over the impact of the proposal on designated assets which straddle the county boundary. An Environmental Assessment may yet be required.

Commenting via Twitter, Trump Developments accuse the local planning authorities of mounting a politically motivated witch hunt. 'Never in human history has such a gifted developer faced more planning obstacles and legal challenges. Who do these democratic councillors think they represent? Bad dudes flooding across the border. Not good.'

Elsewhere in the South West opinion is becoming increasingly divided between supporters and opponents of Trump plans for a 45-storey tower development in Plymouth City centre and a new casino complex on the site of the Roman Baths in Bath. This has not deterred the publication of proposals by Trump to invest billions of dollars in upgrading the region's decaying infrastructure. This includes proposals for the full electrification of the line between Penzance and London including a high-speed rail route between Exeter and Plymouth, the full dualling of the A30 and A303, and the exploitation of tidal power in the Bristol Channel. However, with Trump schemes in the South West increasingly mired in planning delays and political infighting sceptics are saying 'it will never happen'.

