

Tripwire



Tripwire



Tripwire magazine is published four times a year in digital form by the West Midlands region of the RTPI. The opinions expressed in Tripwire are the view of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the editor, publishers, or the RTPI.

Keep in touch...

-  westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk
-  [@RTPIWestMids](https://twitter.com/RTPIWestMids)
-  www.instagram.com/rtpiplanners/
-  www.flickr.com/photos/rtpi/

Design & layout: Alistair Brewin

RTPI West Midlands Chair's opening remarks: Tripwire // Autumn 2017	03
Tripwire Editorial // Autumn 2017	05
Neighbourhood Planning – here to stay?	07
Lest thou forget not thy roots...	10
Planners: Enemies of Enterprise	14
Young Planners West Midlands	15
Autumn Reception	16
RTPI Awards for Planning Excellence	17
Sister Act // Update from our sister organisations	18
Fun Kids // Agent Plan-it and Anna the Planner	19
Policy, Research and Practice // Recently published and current work	20
New and improved training courses // Available from January 2018	22
RTPI West Midlands events	23



Registered Charity Number: 262865 • Registered Office Address: RTPI, 41 Botolph Lane, London, EC3R 8DL.

RTPI West Midlands Chair's opening remarks

So, when did you first think you wanted to be a planner? Did you grow up with that desire from an early age, did it happen over a period of time? Or was it just the fact that your ambition of being an astronaut was cruelly dashed and you thought you had better have a Plan B!

Whatever your personal story, I have increasingly asked myself in my year as chair what is it that gets people excited about planning and what do we want to do to spread the word so that young (and older) people not currently in the profession want to join?

We know there is a recruitment and retention crisis in the planning field. It's what we are going to do about it that should matter to us all. A healthy profession relies on planners who are interested in their subject, believe in what they are doing, care about their surroundings and want to make a positive difference. How do we capture these people? How do we convince them that planning is for them? What is it that makes planning so fascinating, challenging, stimulating and even annoying at times?

We are living in changing times. A 'career' to many young people is not the same as that envisaged or experienced by many of us. Timescales vary, the nature of a career may be very different to the

traditional routes and people may enter, leave and re-enter the profession.

Notwithstanding this, we all grew up learning about the world, understanding people, our surroundings and marvelling at how our own and other countries and peoples environments looked, felt and



Craig Jordan.

functioned. To take this and influence the thinking of a young person who may then want to explore planning as a career – in whatever shape and form this takes – we need people to lead, be inspirational, guide and sell the benefits of planning.

So the question to you is what are you doing to promote the profession? Those of you with young children or grandchildren, what stories do you tell, what questions do you ask, what things do you point out when engaging? To those of you in academia, can you spot the interests of your students which would translate into involvement in planning? Do you make those linkages in whatever subjects you teach and related activity in the built and natural environments? For those of you like myself, what opportunities present themselves both in our daily work and private lives for us to explain what we do to people who may want to then enter planning or at the very least make initial enquiries?

More questions than answers you may say, but if in these few short paragraphs I have made you think as to where you started and what you could offer to others, then that's well something to think about – now though we need some action!

On 30th November at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre RTPI West Midlands is hosting its 2017 Planning Summit. Following on from the very successful event held last year the Summit will explore a number of themes around what the future of planning is going to look like. How will technology

“ A healthy profession relies on planners who are interested in their subject, believe in what they are doing, care about their surroundings and want to make a positive difference. ”

shape our surroundings and how we lead our lives. How are changing demographics impacting upon the demand for services and facilities. What key questions will society have to ask itself in terms of meeting needs and protecting those things we value most importantly. Details of the event have just been published. If you haven't already booked I would urge you to do so before it sells out.

They say that in looking forward, we should not lose sight of nor fail to learn from the past. On 27th September the region held its annual Autumn Reception in Lichfield. On what was a very wet and windy evening myself and nearly 30 colleagues braved the elements to learn about the fascinating history of this lovely city as part of a guided tour. Meeting first at Erasmus Darwin House – grandfather of Charles – for drinks, we heard about Erasmus and his esteemed friends who formed the

Lunar Society. Visionary people, wanting to make a positive difference to people's lives – surely planners in the making! We then took in the sights and sounds of Lichfield City and saw how over the centuries religion, wars and the arts & literature had shaped the environment. A challenge for cities like Lichfield is how to respond to the issues facing modern society whilst preserving the past.

And what are these issues – well we know about the need for housing and the difficulties of balancing housing requirements with the ability to accommodate growth in a sustainable manner. We also increasingly are giving consideration to the health and well-being of citizens and the recognition that planning can help address health concerns (and equally if not done properly create concerns). Both these topics have been explored at CPD events held in the region recently, a programme

which continues based on attendance levels to be what you as planning professionals want. As a region we hope to continue to deliver the same up to the end of this year and into next...

Finally, in closing you will recall that in my summer report I mentioned the upcoming retirement of our Regional Coordinator Sue Griffith-Jones. Sue duly retired in mid-September. I would like to thank her on behalf of the region for all her hard work and the support she provided to myself and colleagues. At the same time as wishing Sue a happy retirement I would like to offer a warm welcome to Trish Cookson, our new coordinator, who joins us having moved from the Yorkshire Region. ■

Craig Jordan
RTPI West Midlands Chair
October 2017

In 2002 the BBC decided that Angus Deayton's fondness for cocaine and predilection for prostitutes rendered his position untenable on the programme *Have I Got News For You*. And so began a successful new format involving guest adjudicators.

You will be relieved to know that no such scandal faced the production of *Tripwire* at the end of 2016, as despite similarities with the resulting solution, its editor for many years (John Acres) had to step down from the position to prepare for and move on to the more illustrious and honourable position as

President of the RTPI rather than from questionable personal behaviour.

Despite the differences in cause, there is a parallel between the two. Whilst John had established a successful *Tripwire* format, the new arrangement involving guest editors has helped to reinvigorate the magazine with new ideas and approaches.

Whilst publications such as *The Planner* and *Planning*, *Waterways World* and *Cycling Weekly* (personal favourites) provide excellent commentary on the world of planning and the latest in windlasses and group sets, *Tripwire* provides a complementary opportunity for all RTPI members to report on an event and a platform to voice opinions and express what they feel is important.

In a Trump world of immediate social media reaction the magazine provides a complementary opportunity to present considered opinion.

As in the world of retail, *Tripwire* comes in a variety of sizes. This edition is more of a 'Tesco Express' rather than a 'Tesco Extra'. It contains many of the usual items but if you are looking for the equivalent of Bolivian sun baked tomatoes marinated in a Mexican salsa then you may have to wait until the Winter *Tripwire* edition.

On more serious matters, planning continues to operate in an extremely interesting if not volatile world. The consequences and implications of Brexit



Michael Vout.

remain obscure, consultations on the revisions to the NPPF just round the corner, the standardisation of methods regarding calculations for housing, the wider consequences of Grenfell Tower as well as the significant political (and therefore planning) implications of a socialist opposition in the ascendancy and a Tory government facing many challenges.

In this 'Tesco Express' edition of Tripwire you will find...

- **So, when did you first think you wanted to be a planner?:** The Regional Chair's report
- **Lest thou forget not thy roots...:** A report by **Claudia Carter** on the Planning and Health seminar
- **A busy year so far:** A report by **Rosie Cotterill**, YPWM Chair

- **Planners – Enemies of Enterprise:** A report by **Jenna Langford** on the 'Building New Homes: the challenges of housing supply and delivery' seminar
- **Lunars in Lichfield:** A report on the Autumn Reception by **Craig Jordan**
- **Are they here to stay?:** A report by **Sam Townley** on the 'Neighbourhood Planning – here to stay?' seminar
- **Sister Act:** Update from two of our sister organisations
- **RTPI News:** An update on recent and latest activities and initiatives from the RTPI
- **RTPI West Midlands events**

I would also congratulate Regional Activities Committee member Julie Morgan following her successful election to the RTPI General Assembly. Well done Julie!

And finally...

It is reassuring to know that recent research by the RTPI (to be published) has revealed that the organisation continues to have considerable standing and respect. It bestows an authority upon its members and remains *the* voice of professional planners. We hope you enjoy this edition of Tripwire and continue to not only be passionate about planning but also about the RTPI. ■

Michael Vout

RTPI West Midlands Hon. Secretary

“ Tripwire provides a complementary opportunity for all RTPI members to report on an event and a platform to voice opinions and express what they feel is important. ”

Neighbourhood Planning Seminar, Birmingham, 20 July 2017

Addressing a mixed, fifty-person strong audience, University of Birmingham and event Chair **Mike Beazley** hailed Neighbourhood Planning as a fantastic opportunity for communities to engage and influence the way they live. At the time of their inception, Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) were met with strong scepticism, but how have they performed? And of course – **are they here to stay?**

The first speaker to step up was **Timothy Jones** of No5 Barristers Chambers, who has a wealth of experience in planning law and also sits as an independent examiner for NDPs. Beginning with examples of challenges to NDPs, it is clear **there has been a steep learning curve and lessons learnt through judicial challenges.**

In the case of *R. (Stonegate Homes Ltd) v Horsham DC*, the LPA was found to have “*failed to apply its mind to its own independent duty as to whether the plan complied with EU obligations ‘... to make the plan was thus irrational’*”ⁱⁱ because the assessment of reasonable alternatives within the SEA process based on “what the community felt” was flawed. This clearly demonstrates that the provisions of an

SEA should be complied with fully; not to rely on guess work, but ROBUST evidence. As stated in paragraph 184 of the NPPF (and echoed in Basic Condition E) “*Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan*”. In three of the six cases discussed, the NDP’s General Conformity with the Local Plan was a key issue. This is a planning consideration where accommodation must be given to conflict, to an extent, with strategic policies.

The Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 sets out changes to neighbourhood planning to ensure well-advanced plans are given consideration by decision makers:

- The council must have regard to ‘post-examination’ neighbourhood plans in the determination of planning applications. These NDPs are likely to be given weight
- Following a successful referendum, a NDP forms part of the development plan for the district (unless it is decided the plan should not be formally made)

Previously, where a Local Planning Authority (LPA) could not demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, NDPs were considered out of date under paragraph 49 of the NPPF and were not being given consideration in determining applications. However, following a Written Ministerial Statement from December 2016, any NDP that allocates housing where the LPA can

demonstrate a three-year supply will not be considered out of date for two years. This is another step to further strengthen neighbourhood planning as it becomes more prolific within English planning, and has encouraged groups to continue with plan preparation where they may have been dissuaded before. It is also a strong incentive to consider allocations within NDPs where it may not have been a priority before. The ministerial statement is currently subject to a legal challenge.

Advisor to Locality (the go-to hub for neighbourhood planning resources) **Dave Chetwyn** took the proverbial spotlight to offer his **insights into the current issues in neighbourhood planning.** Firstly observing that the alternatives to NDPs; Neighbourhood Development Orders (NDO) and Community Right to Build Orders (CRBO) are rarely used due to their complexity.

NDPs must deliver growth (sustainable development) and can shape growth with ‘use’ policies, site allocations, environmental protection policies, etc. When reviewing causes of decline, it is clear that NDPs must move away from managing decline and instead promote growth and regeneration.

Common challenges in regeneration include quality of place (housing quality and design being common issues for NDP groups), heritage and transport (though difficult to address in a NDP, as this is the responsibility for the highways authority).

Most striking to me, Dave reported that there has been accounts of LPAs obstructing neighbourhood planning groups from preparing their NDP. Where Neighbourhood planning is actively promoted by the LPA, as it is in the districts I work in, the results are far better.

The participatory approach to Neighbourhood Planning is having a positive impact on the planning process, despite the challenges it also offers.

Neighbourhood planning groups are more diverse in urban areas; drawing in more professionals and youth engagement. Thorough community engagement using diverse, wide-reaching methods (social media, corporate sponsorship and support from local organisations) draws the attention of a more diverse group.

The benefits of the community led planning process are clear:

- Wide range of skills in groups
- Relevant community policies
- Commitment to the plan area
- Strong community buy-in
- Higher levels of growth
- Creates dialogue with LPA and local organisations
- Can lead to further community projects and development

Planners need to be enablers and supporters of the neighbourhood planning process and understand

the ever-changing legislation, considering implications for training and resources.

Share good practice! was the opening message from **Helen Metcalfe** (of Planning with People) who reiterated Dave Chetwyn's observation of a mixed experience of LPA support of neighbourhood planning – and the need for meaningful participation and genuinely collaborative work with neighbourhood plan groups and developers to achieve better planning outcomes.

Good practice for LPAs:

- Clarity and affirmation of advice
- Signpost where there are gaps in required knowledge or ideas
- Set expectations; what the plan can aim to achieve and what you will do to support – then DELIVER
- Content over process
- Identify strengths within NP group
- Strive for operational and political support within the council

Consider how the process feels for local people – complexity, limited resources, contentious issues and passionate subjects. The NDP will shape the community they live in after it is made.

Good practice for NP Groups:

- Establish a steering group with the right set of skills

- Promote active community engagement
- Be aware of issues and what support is available to you
- Project management
- Vision, energy and patience
- Manage community expectations

A common reason for a community to be prompted to form a neighbourhood planning group is a knee jerk reaction to an application to a large housing development within their community. If this is the case, it is important to manage the expectations of the group and the community they represent.

Supporting the creation of neighbourhood plans is not all about big resource, but practical advice and assistance.

Representing Lichfield District Council (LDC), an enthusiastic Principal Spatial Policy and Delivery Officer, **Patrick Jervis** offered **a perspective from the front line** of neighbourhood planning.

The smaller rural communities of Lichfield were quick on the uptake, incentivised by opportunities from CIL funding and encouraged by LDC. Larger villages and towns did not get involved until much later.

Patrick expressed that whilst he is keen to maintain a good working relationship with the parish council through the process, issues can arise. At the time of the seminar, the district had four made plans, all of

which required some modification following the independent examination, with just one of those allocating housing.

The key challenges include:

- Managing expectations of the parish council and community
- Managing the process; resources and prescribed timescales
- Maintaining dialogue with the parish council / NP group
- Ensuring the plan is in general conformity with core strategy

Lessons learnt:

- LDC now clearly define their role in the Neighbourhood Plan process
- Build and work to maintain relationships
- Assign a first point of contact to ensure consistency in approach / responses
- Align committee processes with prescribed timescales

Planning at the Coalface, **Michael Barker** has experience of assisting neighbourhood planning groups through the process of preparing an NDP.

What is required of a consultant?

- Recognise the client
- Work with the community
- Get to know the parish council

- Establish their aims – Key issues
- Terms of engagement
- Scope of the plan
- Existing policy v preferred outcomes (set expectations)
- “Hand-holding” throughout

Summary

Before the conclusion of the seminar, Mike Beazley invited questions to the guest speakers, asking “what would you change?”

Helen Metcalfe expressed that it would be prudent to introduce or simply encourage an independent health check of neighbourhood plans before the Regulation 14 (aka pre-submission) consultation.

Michael Barker reported that in his experience, groups have been sceptical that their LPA will consider NDPs in determination of planning applications. Neighbourhood planning should be strengthened further to give communities more confidence in the planning process.

Neighbourhood planning offers a unique and exciting challenge to communities to shape and influence growth in a positive way. If Local Planning Authorities can meaningfully and genuinely collaborate with neighbourhood planning groups and developers, managing expectations and maintaining relationships in exchange for participation and local insight, we will continue to see effective and positive planning take place.

As political support for neighbourhood planning grows, we will see further changes to legislation which grant more strength to local communities in influencing sustainable development. Neighbourhood planning is here to stay. ■

Sam Townley

Neighbourhood Planning Enquiries Officer for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils.

ⁱ Paragraph 83

ⁱⁱ Paragraph 78

Planning and Health Seminar, Birmingham, 26 September 2017

Most planners will have heard one way or another about the roots of planning as a profession and discipline, be it as a student or reading about it in the comfort of an armchair. Yet the original core of planning, concern over human health and wellbeing, seems to have somehow got lost, buried or sidelined under shouts for more houses, 'one-way' viability assessments, and other economic-focused mantras. In that process we have been creating hospitals, homes and neighbourhoods that are neither resilient to a changing climate nor fit for an ageing population, paying the prize in many early deaths, poorer physical and mental health and less happy children.

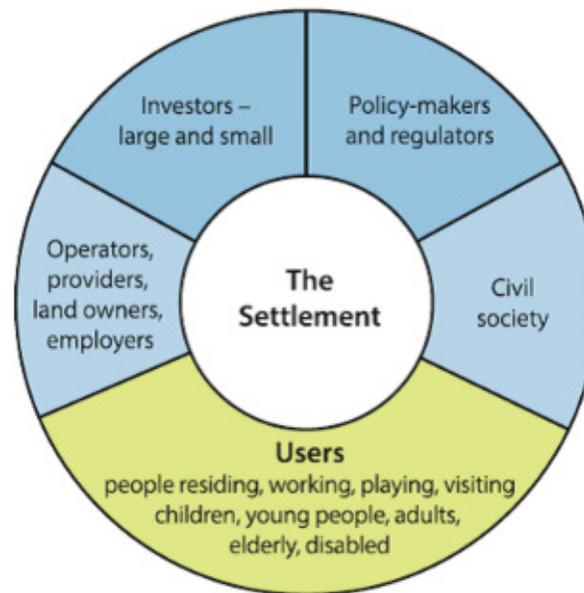
That health matters and is intrinsically linked with planning was brought back onto the agenda by the four eminent speakers at the Planning and Health CPD event. Each presentation came from a different perspective with the four objectives of the event stated as improving understanding of:

- the role of planning in health and well-being;
- key health and well-being issues;
- the way in which planning and design of the

environment can help or hinder health and well-being;

- the role of planning in the delivery of health provision.

In the following paragraphs, some of the main arguments and sobering facts presented are highlighted, along with some inspiring case studies and recent publications.



Stakeholders in planning the urban environment

Figure 1: One of Hugh Barton's figures to illustrate shared responsibility of planning in a pluralistic society.

Emeritus Professor **Hugh Barton** highlighted a range of health crises where planning and development decisions, characterised by 'big development' and car-based design, play a direct role: poor air quality (annual associated deaths in London are now greater than in the Great Smog of 1952); obesity, physical and mental disabilities (significantly higher in socially and economically deprived populations); British children being the least happy in Europe (according to 2007 Unicef report); climate change related extreme, i.e. higher intensity and frequency, weather events (e.g. the 4 recent – said to be 1 in 500 year - hurricane/flooding events: Harvey, Irma, Jose, Katia). Well-being oriented, 'sustainable' development seems the exception rather than the norm. While in the 19th century health was the trigger for planning policies and the birth of the planning profession, by the 1990s most planning chief officers no longer saw health as a key ingredient of planning. This seems an oversight that has come at a huge social, environmental and economic cost; if only we had got the cost-benefit calculations right first time.

The recent change to pairing health and planning in the hands of city regions / local authorities across England offers great potential in helping shape healthy neighbourhoods and sustainable city redevelopment, acknowledging shared responsibility in planning and development (see Figure 1). It is not that good examples, evidence and knowledge aren't available; the crux lies more with powerful interest groups and current political ideology that detract focus on what really matters in the long run. What can be achieved if

clear goals with SMART policies and delivery plans are set, can be seen in cities such as Freiburg, Copenhagen, Kuopio and Portland.

More inspiration and planning guidance can be found in: Barton, Hugh (2017). *City of wellbeing: A radical guide to planning*. London & New York: Routledge.

Dr **Nicholas Falk**, URBED, largely drew on Dutch examples to highlight what healthy communities look like, arguing that the Dutch offer advanced effective solutions when it comes to housing and new successful settlements (pointing to France for transport; Germany for the economy; and Scandinavia for the environment). Five useful principles, URBED's 5 Cs, were used to help explain what made the new settlements healthy and successful places:

- Connectivity (transport)
- Community (neighbourhood management)
- Climate proofing (environmental sustainability)
- Character (design)
- Collaboration (organisation and finance)

Connectivity is probably the most crucial and fundamental principle; excellent access and travel between jobs and homes / recreation were highlighted here. Rapid transit and giving priorities to cyclists are key in providing active, healthy and happy citizens and are crucial in allowing children to be 'free' (rather than hemmed in) and safe in exploring and going places (a key factor why Dutch children count as one of the happiest on earth).

Community was defined as places where people live out of choice rather than necessity. A visually and socially impressive example was offered by the primary school at Houten, Utrecht, where no cars are allowed and footpaths / cycle routes provide access. Furthermore, the school is designed to be highly adaptable and multi-purpose, acting as a community hub and providing flats above the school (see Figure 2).

Recent trends in the UK, on the other hand, conjure up images of box design (prefab) primary schools, caged with high safety fences and a daily choking siege of motorised drop-offs and pick-ups reducing air quality and increasing neighbourly frictions through inconsiderate or dangerous parking and driving.

Climate proofing occurs when places are planned and managed to anticipate climate / environmental change in ways that enhance the development and minimise environmental externalities. Green design should not be optional but standard. Water features, SUDs, CHP, renewable energy, bike access and storage and so on become essential design features, not a potential after-thought. The role of leadership and champions in various environmental 'frontrunner' cities here was pointed out. Driving this kind of thinking and securing investment requires visionaries and good negotiation and persuasion skills to get investors on board - even though it seems to make common sense. Many of the examples featured in the powerpoint slides also illustrated the importance of design and *character* of buildings and whole neighbourhoods.

Another important point raised was land ownership (also highlighted by Hugh Barton) and land prices. In the Netherlands, Housing Associations pay significantly less for land than is normal in the UK; ownership is less of an issue (many rent) and living in attractive flats is a popular option. Not rocket science, but a different concept and/or mindset is noticeable where team playing and thinking and acting for the communal good (*collaboration*) seems more embedded in citizen's thinking and town planning.

In the UK, we are likely to see some kind of revival of the garden city concept, for example in Oxford's 2050 vision and proposed new settlements as developed under the Wolfson Economics Prize 2014 that was won by the URBED-led team involving Nicholas Falk.

Sarah Waller CBE, University of Wolverhampton, presented her work on dementia in relation to place-making, moving attention from the macro-scale to the micro-scale, considering outside and inside design features that enable those suffering from dementia (and many of the symptoms also are common in other illnesses and disabilities) to live more independently and actively, reducing agitation and stress. A series of examples from the insides of hospitals, care homes and ordinary houses along with street scenes and signage illustrated effectively how environmental design matters for people with dementia. Dementia-friendly design principles also seem attractive and meaningful more generally, including decluttering (less but clearer signage; unobstructed paths); greenspace / gardens with



Figure 2: A multiple use school building at the heart of Houten community.

resting points; noise reduction; distinctiveness and familiarity rather than blandness and anonymity. Education about dementia and following design guidance for dementia friendly environments were highlighted as the two critical steps that make the most difference. Good urban design for more inclusive place-making will create places that are:

- familiar (their functions are obvious, any changes are small and incremental);
- legible (easy for orientation with clear hierarchy and signage);
- distinctive (variety in landmarks, styles and materials with practical features);
- accessible (shops and facilities in walkable distance; clear and easy entrances);
- comfortable (contrast-rich, uncluttered, well-lit spaces); and

- safe (flat, non-slip surfaces; avoiding glare and deep shadows).

The work on dementia, linking health, housing and place-making reminded the audience of how the built environment affects people; and how design and planning can disable rather than enable people if we ignore existing evidence and insights. About 80% of those with dementia still live at home, with only 1 in 5 in hospital care. Planning is key to making inclusive and thriving communities possible, implementing effective design solutions rather than adding barriers, benefitting those with and without disabilities.

An interesting conundrum here may be the move to smart buildings, with sensors for doors and lighting etc. becoming the norm; yet this takes away control by the user and can disorientate some community members (not just those with dementia).

For those interested to read more about this topic, the RTPI in association with the Alzheimer's Society published in January 2017 Practice Advice on *Dementia and Town Planning*.

The final contribution was made by Professor **Rod Thompson**, Director of Public Health for Shropshire, who shared some of his diverse experiences across the UK and abroad where health and planning clearly intersect and matters of health and wellbeing, abilities and liabilities play out at the micro and the macro level. The first example was from his work with Liverpool Local Authority addressing the health and

wellbeing of sex workers, their customers and the impact on neighbouring communities. While planning in the UK somewhat hesitates to be quite as proactive as for example the Netherlands, design features applied in Utrecht benefitted everyone involved: a purposefully designed safe prostitution area included special parking bays, bicycle access, sensitive natural screening and offering support plus safe disposal for any substance misuse related items. Ensuring safety without actively supporting or increasing certain habits is a delicate balance, but a worthwhile challenge benefitting a marginalised group in society.

Rural areas, especially idyllic spots, are often seen as trouble-free in terms of wellbeing, but the ageing population and increase of dormitory settlements also bring their challenges. Again issues of connectivity and access came to the fore but also the reality of job creation and the importance of rural chocolate box towns and villages keeping or attracting young people. Healthy and sustainable community planning may include principles such as enabling active transport (through safe and clearly signposted and maintained cycle- and footpaths) and enable travel to and provision of jobs within a fifteen minute travel distance, be it on foot, bike, car or public transport. Also, community energy ventures may need supporting considering pockets of fuel poverty within affluent areas and the cost of filling a domestic oil tank when many elderly residents in such rural honeypots are capital rich but cash poor. Furthermore, adaptability of houses is a concern; how to enable energy-efficient / zero-carbon retrofits and healthy homes as well as the



Figure 3: RTPI's Planning Practice for Dementia.

right variety of houses that people need. Finally, an example was given of rural air pollution with the increasing scale of industrial meat production units (especially chicken) where consumer preferences can leave bad smells and high environmental impacts next

to those who thought they had escaped stink and noise. (However, this reality check and reconnecting with the realities of food production also seems necessary).

Turning attention to the health and wellbeing of younger people, with some forethought the design of walking routes for students between campus, residence and recreation spots can facilitate fast and safe options and reduce crime rates. Going a notch younger, similarly, safe walking and cycling routes to schools can help reduce overweight and obesity and associated health costs such as hip operations and fat removal surgery. Creating child-friendly cities is a challenge to embrace - with plenty of opportunities to learn from a range of countries across Europe and further afield.

The final advice was to understand current behaviour and surroundings better, and learn about good design practices, integrating essential services in the best possible ways.

After the four speakers, there were only about 15 minutes left for questions and answers. Issues raised included (i) the pros and cons of embracing social engineering such as living with like-minded / like-abled people (which may help push innovative planning for health) versus more mixed communities; (ii) the importance of strategic policies (not just in words but reflected in funding and practice) and local development plans in advancing healthy/ier and more sustainable developments; (iii) how to put into practice the newly added health impact assessment as part of



Figure 4: Protesters near Bridgnorth demonstrating against the proposed Tasley chicken farm, recommended for approval by Shropshire County Council. Source: https://twitter.com/TomOakley_Star.

EIA – what public health guides and assessment frameworks exist and are recommended?; (iv) attention to not just physical but also mental health in planning; and (v) focusing less on the narrow issues of illness and paying more attention to the wider issues.

Something that effectively illustrated the difference in mindset of what planning and health could be was expressed by the chair of the event, **Michael Vout**; “Describing and approaching where we live as habitat rather than just housing changes the way in which we think about and therefore plan these things” – think what difference that mindset and change in language could have..... ■

Claudia Carter, Associate Professor / Reader in Environmental Governance, Associate Editor Environmental Values, Birmingham City University.

Building New Homes Seminar, Birmingham, 31 October 2017

Those of course are the words of David Cameron back in March 2011. This was the dawn of the coalition government, and their changes to the planning system, a concerted 'effort' to not lead the UK into a lack of housing supply and deliver us from a housing crisis. It was therefore interesting in October 2017 to be attending the RTPI West Midlands 'Building New Homes: the challenges of housing supply and delivery' seminar.

Across the West Midlands and particularly in the Black Country the challenge is land supply. The industrial heritage of the area means brownfield sites are invariably contaminated leading to development viability gaps. Budget cuts to Local Authorities over the last decade has seen a decline in the public ownership of land, with council's not undertaking strategic land acquisitions and disposing of their current assets. This limits the amount of influence Local Authorities have in terms of bringing brownfield sites forward for redevelopment, as they are now often in private and fragmented ownerships.

These issues are then compounded by low land values, and sometimes low market demand in a particular area. In the same period of budget cuts

Local Authorities have had little choice but to focus bringing forward the 'easier' sites for redevelopment, meaning many now only have the more challenging sites left.

The key question for those attending the seminar was do we have enough land to deliver against future housing need projections? Neil Cox of Pegasus Group presented the proposed new standard methodology to identifying housing need across all authorities. There are equal amounts of pains and gains resulting from this methodology. It was clear that Local Authorities within the West Midlands Combined Authority area will have a greater dependency on each other to meet housing supply targets.

Michele Ross of Wolverhampton City Council presented their approach to overcoming these challenges which can be summed up as being pro-development and pro-active. This approach is mirrored across the West Midlands region, with the Black Country Local Authorities working closely to deliver more housing.

But what of employment land? Many brownfield sites, allocated for residential development, are currently industrial employment sites. In the Black Country many sites may have been allocated for residential use at the time of economic decline and industrial estates were failing. Conversely at this time there were no fiscal interventions available to bring these sites forward for residential development.

The establishment of the West Midlands Combined Authority now provides fiscal support for addressing the aforementioned challenges in bringing brownfield sites forward for redevelopment. However, the once failing industrial estates are now active places once more. This is of course is fantastic for the local economies, but it does mean that the sites Local Authorities thought they had to meet housing supply may no longer be realistic options. The reasons being three-fold; in the case of the Black Country the Joint Core Strategy is being reviewed and site allocations will change; assembling active industrial sites for residential redevelopment will now be more costly; and finally if you can assemble the site, where do we relocate the displaced industries?

The focus on housing supply and the housing crisis having a high profile in the media, are we as planners in danger of neglecting the need for employment land?

The same efforts and collaborative approaches must be taken with ensuring the supply of employment sites. The focus for new homes must not inadvertently make planners the enemies of enterprise. ■

Jenna Langford MRTPI
Planning Officer
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council



Rosie Cotterill.

It has been a busy year so far for the RTPI Young Planners West Midlands (YPWM) and it is by no means over yet. I have recently had the pleasure of taking over as Chair of the YPWM Committee and would like to take this opportunity to thank our former Chair **Chris Moore** (Savills) for leading us

through the earlier part of the year before his move to London. We wish him all the best.

Over the past few months YPWM have hosted a number of events covering a range of topics. We are continuing to diversify and expand our CPD topics,

and our recent 'Social Media in Planning' seminar was a perfect example of how we as planners can look beyond the 'norm' and utilise and respond to changing technologies available to us. The seminar was very well received and sparked a great deal of interesting debate.

As well as our CPD programme, we have also continued to strengthen our ties with the Local Universities having presented at both Birmingham City University and The University of Birmingham's student inductions. In line with the RTPI's goal to ensure that all students at all 28 planning schools in the UK are introduced to the Institute in their first term, we will also be undertaking careers talks with both Universities before Christmas.

With only two months to go before the end of the year, we are still busy organising events for this year and planning for the year ahead. We will be hosting an APC seminar at the University of Birmingham on Tuesday 21 November 2017 ([more information here](#)) and will also be hosting our ever popular Christmas event in early December (watch this space for details very soon). ■

Rosie Cotterill

Turley (YPWM Chair 2017/2018)

Autumn Reception – Lichfield

This year the Autumn Reception took place in Lichfield on 27th September hosted by the RTPI West Midlands Chair Craig Jordan.

Craig was joined by nearly 30 colleagues who braved a wet and windy evening to first enjoy a drinks reception at Erasmus Darwin House – the grandfather of Charles Darwin – a rather grand

Georgian townhouse situated close to the imposing Lichfield Cathedral.

The Reception included an interesting short presentation on Erasmus Darwin, a scientist, innovator and renowned physician and his fellow famous Lunar Society friends who would meet at the house to discuss events of the day. This was followed by a guided tour of the city where the group learned about some of the history of the city (including one or two gruesome facts), its many links to the arts and literature and even a few of its ghost stories.

After the insightful tour there was a meal at a local restaurant, Mackensies, providing the opportunity for people to dry out, enjoy the lovely food and decide whether any or all of the ghost stories were true!

Craig would like to thank those who attended on what, weather-wise, was an awful evening. He would also like to thank Trish Cookson, Aileen Beesley and Rachael Evans for assisting with the preparations. Finally, he would like to thank Ian Clark, the Green Badge Guide, for his informative and entertaining tour.



RTPI Awards for Planning Excellence

RTPI West Midlands // Autumn 2017

RTPI Awards for Planning Excellence

The RTPI Awards for Planning Excellence are the longest running and most high-profile awards in the industry. For 40 years they have rewarded the brightest talent in the profession; the teams,

projects and individuals that transform economies, environments and their communities all over the UK and internationally.

Being shortlisted for one of the prestigious awards is an excellent opportunity to raise your profile as an award winning team, consultancy or individual. **Best of all it is completely free to enter, you have nothing to lose!**



With planners tackling some of the most pressing issues of our time, from population growth and housing shortage to environmental issues and climate change, it has never been more important to reward the contributions of the profession to society.

Entries will close at midnight on 8 December 2017. Finalists will be announced on 12 February 2018, and the winners will be announced at a ceremony on 24 May 2018 at Milton Court Concert Hall in central London.

Further details at:

<http://www.rtpi.org.uk/events/awards/awards-for-planning-excellence/>



RICS celebrates 150 years

RICS is 150 years old in 2018. As part of the celebrations they have launched a Pledge 150 campaign in association with LandAid. Their ambition is to help end youth homelessness by raising £2.25 million to fund 150 beds spaces by December 2018. www.rics.org/pledge150.

They are now calling for regional entries for RICS Awards 2018. The deadline for nominations is 26 January 2018. www.rics.org/awards.



After this year's successful relaunch, the RICS Dinner is returning to the Vox on 2 March 2018.

There will also be a joint RICS/RTPI dinner in Stoke-on-Trent on 19 April 2018.

ICE's 2018 bicentenary awards

ICE's 2018 bicentenary awards will take place on 9 May 2018 at the ICC in Birmingham.

To celebrate the occasion they are introducing (for 2018 only) four special ICE 200 Bicentenary Awards (in addition to the normal 12 award categories) to celebrate civil engineering in the region over the past 200 years and into the future as well as a new Volunteer Award to recognize an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the promotion of civil engineering in the West Midlands.

We welcome entries for these awards which have no entry fee and can be submitted via self/ third-party nomination. The Special Bicentenary Award categories are:

Engineering Achievement Award – Individual

For a civil engineer who has lived, or worked in the West Midlands during the last 200 years and who has made a significant contribution to society and whose work has transformed lives.

Engineering Achievement Award – Project

For a West Midlands project, constructed during the last 200 years, which has made a significant contribution to society and transformed lives.



Shaping the Future Award – Project

For a West Midlands project which will play a significant role in safeguarding society for the future.

Shaping the Future Award – Individual

This will be awarded to an individual who lives or works in the West Midlands, who through innovation or challenging existing practices has contributed to shaping the future of Civil Engineering.

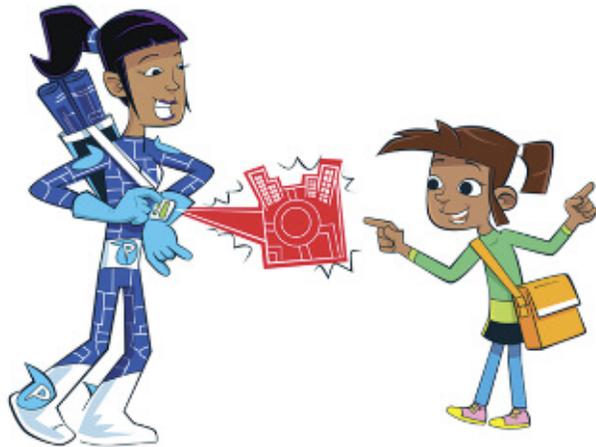
For further information about the awards and the event contact Jane.clinton@ice.org.uk 0121 2373640 or visit www.ice.org.uk/about-ice/near-you/uk/west-midlands/awards. ■



A new radio show for the RTPI about Town Planning aimed at 8-13 year olds has been supported and part funded by the RTPI South East.

What is it?

A bespoke audio series (each feature is 3 minutes in length) for broadcast and as an online resource for the Fun Kids and RTPI's website involving two key characters: *Agent Plan-it and Anna the Planner*.



The show features have the following 10 titles

(rephrased into more 'child friendly' speak)

1. Town Planning Introduction
2. Coping with growing demand
3. Why do we need town planners
4. Building a new development – Geography

5. Building a new development – Environmental Issues
6. Building a new development – Getting around
7. Building a new development – Essential services
8. Changing populations – changing needs
9. Digital world – future spaces
10. Solving problems where you live

Each episode we will hear the conversation between both Agent Plan-it and Anna the Planner about that particular topic.

Who is it for?

- The programme is aimed at the Fun Kids core audience of 8-13 year old children with a focus on Key Stage 2 learning.
- The inclusive nature of Fun Kids means that it is also applicable to a wider audience of younger children and teenagers as well as parents and teachers.

Where will it be release and how will it be heard?

- Fun Kids is available across the UK through DAB digital radio, the UK Radioplayer, as well as online at funkidslive.com and through smart devices.
- The aim is that each feature should be about 3 minutes in length so across the 10 features it will equal approximately 30 minutes in total
- Each feature will be broadcast 10 times, so in terms of total broadcast airtime this is 300 minutes.

- Fun Kids has produced dedicated pages for each programme on the Fun Kids website as each programme launches:
<http://www.funkidslive.com/learn/agent/>.

All 10 episodes will be available on the RTPI website.

When was it released?

- The programme was launched on Monday 30th October 2017 (until November 8th) and was broadcast live at 5pm. After this all the episodes will be repeated on air at different times.
- As each feature will be broadcast 10 times so there will be lots of opportunities to catch up if you miss one.
- Fun Kids ran a competition in the week starting 30th October to help promote the series.

What is its purpose?

The RTPI is creating this audio series with Fun Kids for broadcast to help young primary school audiences:

- Discover what's meant by the built environment
- Explore the what, how and why behind town planning
- Outline what's involved in town planning
- Promote the Royal Town Planning Institute

For more information

<http://www.funkidslive.com/learn/agent/>. ■

October 2017 update

Better Planning

Provide practical advice and intelligence to demonstrate how planning is part of the solution to major social, economic and environmental challenges. The first three topics are:

- **Housing affordability** – how proactive planning can deliver housing affordability. Better Planning for Housing Affordability a position paper setting out how England has adopted the wrong approach to improving housing affordability.
- **Smart city regions** – demonstrates the advantages of strategic planning for economic, social and environmental concern. A position paper (September 2017) examines how data, technology and governance can combine to drive a new wave of strategic planning.
- **Climate change** - role of planning in ensuring resilience to climate change.

Research

Location of development – mapped the location of planning permissions in 12 English city-regions. This work will be repeated, to see how patterns of planning permissions are changing and allow the RTPI to build an evidence base. Publication due 2018.

Local authority direct provision of housing in England - supported by National Planning Forum.

Will identify the practical ways local authorities in England are engaging in the direct provision of housing in their areas. The *interim report* was published in July, with the final report due in December.

The delivery and affordability of housing in the South West of England – RTPI SW has commissioned research examining and comparing recent housing developments. A *four page summary* is also available. Published October.

Planning Permission and Development Finance – will examine implications for housing supply of introducing certainty by allowing LA's to grant permission on land that needs development when drawing up local plans, thus eliminating the need for developers to apply for permission. Publication due January 2018.

Value of Planning in Wales – This research project will develop and test a model or framework for capturing the economic, social and environmental value delivered by local authority planning. Publication TBC.

Map for Wales – RTPI Cymru is supporting Cardiff University. The project is developing a toolkit, which aims to assist in a joined up approach to planning, infrastructure and services.

Manual of integrated demographic forecasting for local planning in Wales provides LPA's with the

skills for investigating housing projection data. It was published following training for most LPA's.

Investing in delivery in the SE and NW

commissioned by RTPI SE and RTPI NW. Building on our previous work in the NW this project will further investigate the resourcing and staffing pressures in local planning authorities. Publication date TBC.

Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence – we are a partner in a new independent research centre set up to provide robust evidence to inform housing policy and practice across the UK.

Planning Horizons book – part of the RTPI Library Series. It will draw on our Planning Horizons papers and focus on the need for longer-term thinking in planning and policy. Publication date TBC.

Practice Advice

- **Planners as expert witnesses** – joint project with PEBA. Publication due early 2018.
- **SEA/SA** – commissioned by RTPI SE. Publication due late 2017.
- **Promoting renewable energy**. Publication due early 2018.
- **Communicating the value of planning** – advice for planners drawing on the RTPI's large body of research. Publication date TBC.

Planning for Climate Change – joint project with TCPA to update the existing guide for planners, incorporating new case studies. It will set out how

local plans can effectively respond to the climate challenge. Launch due Spring 2018.

RTPI Learn

- *Dementia and town planning* – free online learning module.
- Two new publications: *The Role of Smart Cities in Delivering Better Planning and Digital economy and town planning* – publication due November 2017.
- *Ethics and professional standards* – publication due late 2017.

Key consultations

We are working on our responses to:

- *Planning for the right homes in the right places.*
- *Water and Housing Inquiry* email james.harris@rtpi.org.uk by 20/11.
- *Interim National Infrastructure Assessment* email james.harris@rtpi.org.uk by 4/1/18.
- *Scotland's Economic Performance: trends, challenges and future developments* email scotland@rtpi.org.uk by 13/11.
- *Transport Scotland - Building Scotland's Low Emission Zones.*
- *Ireland 2040, Our Plan, National Planning Framework* email claire.williamson@rtpi.org.uk.

Events and lobbying

- *Planning for Brexit* – Read the latest from the RTPI on Brexit including RTPI joins call for Brexit to be “*rural proofed*” in a statement by the Rural Coalition.

- *Party Conferences* – RTPI held fringe events at the Conservative and Labour party conferences.
- *Scottish Alliance for People and Places* – RTPI Scotland is part of a collection of organisations that have come together to influence the forthcoming Planning Bill and broader planning review.
- *Response to Grenfell.*



International

RTPI is championing the United Nation's *17 Sustainable Development Goals* by identifying where our work supports each of them.

RTPI blogs

- *Habitat for all: secure land tenure and property rights matter* Geoffrey Payne
- *A Scottish perspective on community participation in planning* Kate Houghton
- See more blogs at www.rtpi.org.uk/briefing-room/rtpi-blog/

See all our published work:

www.rtpi.org.uk/knowledge/publications/ ■

New and improved training courses // Available from January 2018

RTPI West Midlands // Autumn 2017

Over 40 masterclasses and briefings available across the UK designed to help planners expand their own technical knowledge and skills.

The RTPI has launched a refreshed programme of tailored training courses designed to help you meet your CPD requirements.

RTPI Training courses will provide you with a chance to learn new skills, develop knowledge and gain an in-depth understanding of key planning topics.

An in-house dedicated team have been working with subject experts to design, improve and deliver a high-quality programme of over 40 masterclasses and briefings for 2018. The briefings offer a key combination of the latest updates and case studies brought together to give practical insights into current issues. Masterclasses focus on specific technical and key development topics.

Courses are available in nine locations across the UK: Belfast, Birmingham, Cambridge, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Leeds, London, Manchester and Nottingham. This training will be complementary to the RTPI's current programme of events available through the RTPI Regions and Nations, which will continue as normal.

Led by subject experts, courses have been designed to help you expand your technical knowledge and skills, and gain inspiration and an

understanding of all the latest developments needed to enhance your career prospects.

This programme of courses are available to book now and these will replace RTPI Conferences from January 2018.

To find out more and book online visit www.rtpi.org.uk/training or to register for regular updates sign up by visiting www.rtpi.org.uk/training/register ■

Upcoming courses



Environmental Impact Assessments 30 January, Belfast

This masterclass will support you to identify and assess potentially significant environmental effects of developments.

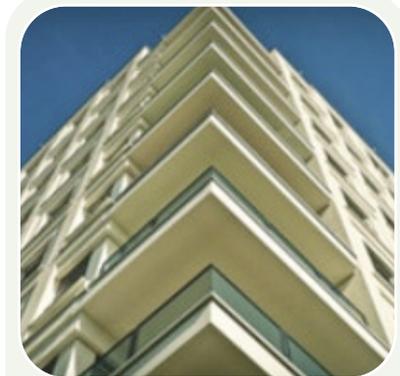
[Read more](#)



Local plans: future direction 6 February, London

Come to this briefing and hear about the latest key updates from the Housing White paper, including the new calculation on housing needs and the delivery test.

[Read more](#)



Housing and employment: needs and targets 7 February, Cardiff

This briefing aims to help you interpret guidance. Learn about sustainable growth, economic development and housing needs.

[Read more](#)

RTPI West Midlands events

RTPI West Midlands // Autumn 2017

Remaining events in 2017:

Licentiate APC event:

21st November at the University of Birmingham

[More details](#)

Flood Protection – the role of planning:

23rd November

[More details](#)

The Planning Summit:

30th November

[More details](#)

And looking to 2018:

The Great Regional Debate:

1st February. (including our very own Trudi Elliott)
Whilst the final details of the **2018 CPD programme** are being arranged as this edition of Tripwire goes to print, we can confirm the following topics and approximate dates:

Topic	Date*
Retail Planning	February
International Planning	March
Air Quality	March

Planning Law Update
Neighbourhood Planning
Infrastructure
Transport Planning
Economic Viability
Preparing for Inquiries and EiP's
Urban Design
Planning Law Update
Housing

*Dates to be confirmed

April
May
May
June
July
September
September
October
November

Sponsored by

