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CONTENTS

6 What planners do

Planning has only been considered a profession for the past 100 years or so. Former RTPI Young Planner of the Year Zoe Green looks at what planners actually do

8 Where planners work

Planners can find roles in an extraordinary range of sectors and organisations, from councils to international charities and property developers

30



14 A day in the life

Lucy Seymour-Bowdery, a senior planner at West Sussex County Council, is also the national Young Planners' representative on the Royal Town Planning Institute's board of trustees. Here's a typical day for her

15 What do planners get paid?

What can you expect to earn as a professional planner? A salary survey conducted by the RTPI suggests that rewards in planning compare with those in other professions

17 "What, planning?"

We ask Viral Desai – a senior planner for consultancy Amec Foster Wheeler and former RTPI Young Planner of the Year – why people should become planners

10 The perfect planner

Visionary, communicator, negotiator – all roles played by great planners. *The Planner's* consultant editor Huw Morris looks at what it takes to be the best

12 Competence, career-building, credibility

The Royal Town Planning Institute is the membership body for the planning profession. But why join?



18 Six of the best

Six examples of how innovative planning has changed the world

20 Step change

You don't have to start your career as a planner to become a planner. Here are three accounts of how others have made the career move

22 How to spot good planning

How can you know good planning when you see it?

24 Networking essentials

Networking can help planners bridge the gap to other built environment disciplines

19

26 Planning the journey

Established planners at the peak of the profession and young planners climbing the ladder tell us about their career journeys

30 Where to study

Where can you study for the qualifications you need to become a professional planner?

33 Recruitment consultancies

34 Directories

20



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PASSIONATE ABOUT PLANNING?

Our National Park Authority offers you the opportunity to develop your career with the freedom to formulate policies and negotiate planning applications that conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park. You will gain an enviable breadth of planning experience in a small team which deals with development management, minerals and waste, local plans, neighbourhood plans and the Community Infrastructure Levy. We are dedicated to facilitating high quality development within a stunning landscape. The Authority is passionate about meeting the needs of those who live, work and enjoy leisure time within the Park and is certainly geared up to approve development that meets the required standard (90% of submitted schemes). In seeking to secure the best development we do not shrink away from difficult decisions and naturally the National Park has become somewhat of a hot spot for test cases, legal challenges and interesting appeal decisions on subjects ranging from oil and gas exploration to what constitutes 'major development.'

Passionate about our National Park?

The South Downs is the youngest of Britain's national parks. It contains over 1,600km² of England's most iconic lowland landscapes stretching from Winchester in the west to Eastbourne in the east. The South Downs' stunning landscape is only half the story though with over 100,000 people living within the National Park and 2 million people living within 5km of its boundaries. It is a living, breathing landscape with a vibrant economy, lively market towns and exciting challenges ahead with a number of large strategic development sites. Significant commercial and residential schemes continue to come forward such as North Street Quarter in Lewes and the King Edward VII Hospital near Midhurst.

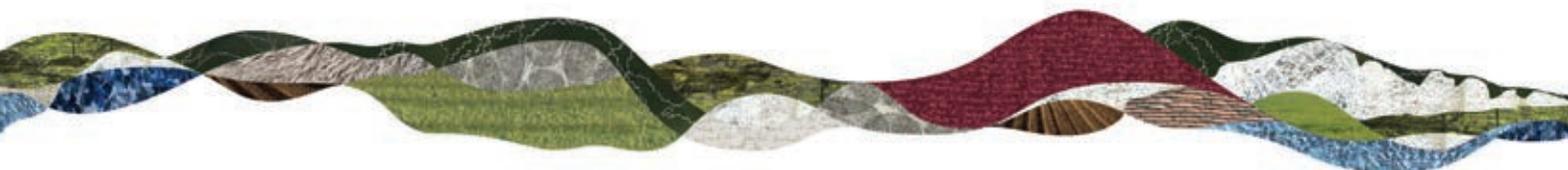
Passionate for a change?

Do you want to work for an authority where you can make a tangible and credible difference, rising to the challenge of working with 12 districts and cities, 3 counties, 176 parishes, 3 local enterprise partnerships and a wide range of interested parties? Are you interested in finding new ways to plan with a landscape led local plan that takes an ecosystem services approach to development? Are you interested in working with local communities to help write 50 neighbourhood plans set within a protected landscape?

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SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK





Phil Williams

RTPI Past President

Having worked in planning for over 30 years, I believe planning makes a difference. The interface between planners in local government, the private and voluntary sectors, and academia is critical to solving key challenges that face society. Planners think differently from all other professions, more holistically, more laterally – balancing the options of choice in a measured and objective way.

Do you have an interest in geography, building,

law, politics, history, the environment, landscape, design, sociology or the sciences? It is all relevant to being a planner.

Graduates from Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)-accredited courses are highly employable; planning is one of the top disciplines for student employment according to the UK Higher Education Statistics Agency. This guide provides a comprehensive overview on how to become a planner, where you can study, where you can work and how you

can have an impact.

From protecting our coastlines to creating better homes and cities, planners help make better places – designing buildings, and supporting the implementation of big rail or energy infrastructure, as well as tackling big issues like climate change.

Planners advise and support both people and their communities, and the politicians who are

democratically elected by those communities. We are central to maintaining a relationship between people and politicians for the good of local environments.

But planning is also a global profession and RTPI members are involved in life-changing projects all over the world – from eco-friendly cities in China to the reconstruction of areas affected by natural disaster.

The institute has a role to promote the profession, and support all our members in their professional lives. Chartered Town Planner status confers a hallmark of professional expertise and integrity, which is important to a long and successful career in shaping our cities, environments, economies and societies.

“PLANNERS THINK DIFFERENTLY FROM ALL OTHER PROFESSIONS, MORE HOLISTICALLY, MORE LATERALLY”



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The Bartlett School of Planning is a world centre for learning and research about the form, planning, design and management of cities. Our location, history and expertise have made our programmes and research among the most stimulating and sought-after in the field of planning. We are part of The Bartlett: UCL's global faculty of the built environment.

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We offer 3 undergraduate and 10 postgraduate programmes accredited by the RTPI and RICS, available in both full-time and part-time study, including the following:

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A general introduction to planning theories, systems and cultures with an international perspective; ideal for those likely to work outside the UK after their studies.

MSc Housing and City Planning

A ground-breaking interdisciplinary perspective on the developed world's 'housing question', drawing together the planning, design and project management dimensions of development.

WHAT DO PLANNERS DO?

Planning has been around since the first cities were built thousands of years ago, but has only been considered a profession for the past hundred years or so. Former RTPI Young Planner of the Year **Zoe Green** takes a look at what planners actually do

Planning is more than just home extensions

Planning is about helping to physically shape the places where we live, work and play. A key strength of planners is that they can take a step back and consider the bigger picture – they'll consider economic, social, physical and environmental issues to arrive at a solution that offers the best outcome for all.

Everyone has an interest in their local environment and part of a planner's job is helping to balance competing interests. Local authorities, developers and community groups are all involved in the planning process. Then there are the technical specialists, such as urban designers and architects.

Not all planners do the same job

Planning is a very broad profession and provides opportunities to work in a variety of areas. Planners are often generalists and can move from role to role, but some decide to become specialists in fields such as transport, energy, conservation or economics. Planning really does touch on every aspect of the world around us, from the location and appearance of the houses we live in to the size of the schools we attend to the supply of the electricity we use to power our lives.

Planning professionals work in the public and the private sector. The public sector includes national and local government bodies such as government departments and local

“Everyone has an interest in their local environment and part of a planner's job is mediating between competing interests”

authorities. The private sector includes planning consultancies that might advise developers on building projects.

In the public sector, planners assess planning applications and provide advice to elected representatives who make decisions. Planners also prepare policies to manage development.

In the private sector, planners coordinate planning applications from private bodies such as house builders, and they prepare the evidence base assessments necessary to inform development plan policies.

Planners also work in the 'third sector' and in academia. The third sector includes charities such as Water Aid, RSPB and the National Trust, which lobby to promote their charitable objectives. Academics typically undertake research that may influence development of planning policy and law.

Planners influence but don't always make the final decision

Do planners work to their own ideas, to rules set down in legislation, to government policy or to the ideas of clients or elected councillors?

It could be any of these things and really depends upon the job they do. Many planners, however, are answerable to the planning authority (for example, a borough council) or client they represent. They may offer expert guidance, but they're not normally making major planning decisions unless working as chief planners or government inspectors.

Planners also need to have a keen eye on case law, statute and guidance. In assessing applications for new development, planners have to consider

“Planners are often generalists and can move from role to role, but some decide to become specialists”

national guidance alongside regional planning policy (for example, the London Plan) and local policy (for example, local council planning policy).

Planning is not the same everywhere

Planning is an international profession, and systems vary across the world. This means that countries around the world adopt different approaches to planning for land use and the built environment.

For example, the USA has a land use zoning process with a greater focus on design codes. In comparison, the UK has a subjective rules-based system.

The UK has four different national planning systems. Though similar, England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales all do planning in slightly different ways. Professional planners can work all over the world, but UK planners find the transition to working in Canada, Australia, the USA, New Zealand and the Middle East is more straight forward.

You can work with all sorts of people

As you might expect from the number of different organisations that planners can work for, there's scope to work with pretty much everybody! Planners work with architects and builders, with politicians and conservationists, with engineers, designers, business leaders, health workers, civic representatives of all kinds and even schoolchildren.

Everyone's life is affected by the work we do, so we have to be prepared to work with anyone.

What's really satisfying is...

As planners we help to physically shape a place for the better, for all, and it's incredibly satisfying to see schemes that you've worked on being delivered.

Our work helps to improve communities, giving people access to homes, transport, schools, shops, leisure, open spaces, and so on. It's endlessly fascinating and very rewarding. 



 **Zoe Green** is a former RITPI Young Planner of the Year and urban planning and development manager for PwC, a professional services firm. Her work has taken her to Sweden, Bahrain and Pakistan. Zoe is fascinated by the challenges facing cities worldwide.

PLANNERS CAN FIND ROLES IN AN EXTRAORDINARY RANGE OF SECTORS AND ORGANISATIONS, FROM COUNCILS TO INTERNATIONAL CHARITIES AND PROPERTY DEVELOPERS, AS **NIKOLA MILLER** EXPLAINS

WHERE PLANNERS WORK



I'm happy to say that I'm a planner. I'm proud of what I do – planning is one of the most varied careers I've come across. And we're everywhere.

Interested in the historic environment? The natural environment? What about health and wellbeing, or cities and urban design? Then a career in planning could be for you. The opportunities open to those with an accredited planning degree are vast.

Working in the public sector

Many people assume that when you say you're a planner that you work as a Development Management Officer for a planning department at a local authority. They think your job is deciding on planning applications, saying 'Yes' or 'No' to requests for house extensions and conservatories.

That is what some planners in the public sector do. But it's by no means the only option. As a planner for a local authority you could be involved in:

● Development management:

Determining planning applications from the smallest scale (a house extension) right up to large city centre developments that involve complex

plans, negotiations and consultation with communities, businesses and landowners.

● **Development planning:** This is more about policy and vision – helping to shape the long-term strategy for an area. Your job might involve looking to the future of your town and thinking about what will be needed in terms of housing, roads, shops, schools and workplaces in five, 10 or 15 years' time.

The work of local authority planners cuts across many aspects of what a local authority does. For example, planners need to have a say in housing, health, education, leisure, business, regeneration and economic development.

Many planners work in central government helping national politicians decide on the large schemes that provide essential services, such as energy, transport and infrastructure.

Planning roles within different public sector organisations can also give you an opportunity to develop a specialism in that organisation's field. In Scotland, public sector agencies that employ planners include Historic Environment Scotland, Scottish Water, Scottish Natural Heritage, Transport Scotland, Sport Scotland and Scottish Enterprise. If you're in England, Wales or Northern Ireland, you'll have equivalent bodies.

Working in the private sector

There are opportunities to work for different types of consultancies as a planning consultant. Some will focus purely on planning, others might have an emphasis on architecture or urban design; yet others will be surveying or engineering practices with planners working alongside practitioners from other professions.

As a planning consultant you will work for clients to achieve their aspirations, whether that is persuading the council to allocate their land as a development site, working on a masterplan for the development on the site, or negotiating planning consent for that development. Planners are often project managers, working in a team with other professionals, such as



"SOME WILL FOCUS PURELY ON PLANNING, OTHERS MIGHT HAVE AN EMPHASIS ON ARCHITECTURE"



often conduct the original research that influences planning policy and practice.

Volunteering

There are many opportunities to volunteer in the sector, and it's an excellent way to meet other planners, and to gain experience that is different from that of your day job. This volunteering could be through Planning Aid England or PAS in Scotland, or you could volunteer for the Royal Town Planning Institute through our committees.

Shaping the future

Whatever route you take, you can be sure that you'll be working alongside a diverse range of professionals. I don't think that anyone gets into the planning profession just to 'get a job'; people join the profession because they want to make a difference to the world.

Planning, planners and the planning system are at the heart of finding solutions to big challenges facing our society. I'd encourage anyone with an interest in shaping the places we live and work in to join me as a planner. 

 Nikola Miller is Principal Planning Adviser at Homes for Scotland



Working in the third sector

The 'third' sector describes organisations that are working, in general, for the social good. They include charities with a humanitarian, heritage or environmental edge, such as:

- **RSPB**, which is concerned with protection of wildlife rich environments
- **Friends of the Earth**, concerned about environmental impacts of development
- **Shelter**, which campaigns for better housing for the vulnerable.

All require planning expertise to help them develop policies, respond to planning consultations and work with developers and public sector planners on development that fulfils their charity's aims.

The third sector also includes public and privately funded organisations that exist to conduct research into social issues and influence politicians to formulate what they consider to be better social policies. These built environment 'think tanks' will often require planning expertise to help them negotiate the concepts around planning.

Think tanks with an interest in the built environment include the Centre for Cities, the Institute for Public Policy Research, Planning Futures, Create Streets, and Future of London. If you are interested in politics as well as planning, think tanks are an interesting area.

Working in academia

A good number of planners work in academia, or balance academic work with work in the public and private sectors. As teachers and researchers they have influence over students, practitioners and policymakers, and will

surveyors, architects and engineers.

Developers such as house builders also employ planners. Here, your role might be to help them find appropriate sites, and to work with planning consultancies and local authorities to create plans and secure planning permission.

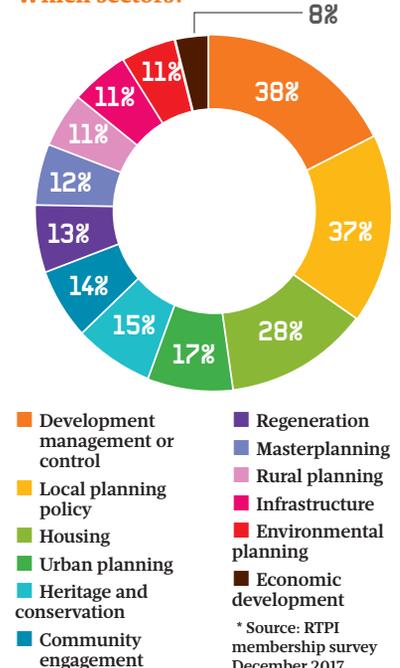
An international focus

Some property developers and planning consultancies are international. Working for one of these opens the door to working overseas and, because UK planning is so highly thought of, British planners are in demand all over the world.

Members of the RTPPI have consulted on garden cities in China, protected the built heritage in Ontario, Canada, and planned new towns in Iraq. UK planners are also working closely with the United Nations and governments worldwide to deliver better housing and infrastructure to the world's poorest regions.

WHERE PLANNERS WORK - IN NUMBERS*

Which sectors?



What does it take to be a great planner? The profession has many giants past and present – but what characteristics set the greats apart?

Put simply, planning is all about creating great places for people – and that takes vision. “A great planner is a visionary,” says Chris Shepley,

principal of Chris Shepley Planning. “Someone who can see into the future and make connections between things, who can anticipate and deal with problems that arise, and who can do something new.”

The ability to communicate and compromise is crucial. RTPI president Phil Williams describes it as being “compassionate” with the communities that planners are seeking to improve. But this must be accompanied by “an understanding of the political dimension to decision-making, having negotiation skills, and through these skills trying to affect the right decisions in the right place at the right time”.

Planners must listen to fellow

professionals and the community, says the RTPI’s Wales and Northern Ireland director Roisin Willmott. “They need to be politically astute and able to work across disciplines, understanding others’ needs and able to see opportunities within the short and longer-term context. An appreciation of the longer term is important – their customer is society, which comprises innumerable interests.”

RTPI Scotland and Ireland director Craig McLaren cites confidence and persuasiveness as key skills to provide predictability for communities, developers and investors. “They need to be outward looking within the organisation they work and outside so that they can demonstrate the added value that they, and planning, bring to a place or project,” he says.

Then there’s perseverance. Shepley argues: “A great planner also needs to be determined, because planners work on complex projects in both the public and private sectors and things can take a long time to come to fruition, so you have to persevere.

“A sense of humour always helps,” he adds. 

A Magnificent Seven

great planners of yesterday and today



PINPOINTING THE PERFECT PLANNER

Visionary, communicator, negotiator – all roles played by great planners. *The Planner’s* consultant editor Huw Morris looks at what it takes to be the best



Patrick Geddes

An all-time planning great, this polymath of the Victorian era was highly influential in the 20th century. He pioneered the concept of “region” in planning, as well as architecture, and even introduced the term “conurbation” into the English language. Geddes put the human first in planning and was groundbreaking in his work on the interactions between people, place and work.



Ebenezer Howard

The founder of the garden city movement, Letchworth Garden City and Welwyn Garden City are enduring examples of his legacy. Many of the principles first elaborated by Howard in the 19th century inform town planning today. More recently, all political parties are looking to a new generation of garden cities as part of the answer to the UK’s housing crisis.



Alison Nimmo

The chief executive of The Crown Estate is the country’s top female regeneration professional and her career highlights include the rebuilding of Manchester and Sheffield, as well as the transformation of derelict land into the Olympic Park. Nimmo is widely admired for her unusual mix of leadership with technical skills, strategic intelligence and political savvy.



Sylvia Law

Elected in 1974 as the RTPPI’s first ever woman to become president, Law’s work at Kent County Council highlighted the destructive expansion of suburbia into the countryside and led to major controls on speculative development in the Garden of England. She also pioneered initiatives on open spaces and outdoor recreation.



Sir Terry Farrell

With more than 40 years as a planner and architect, Farrell’s projects range from London’s Charing Cross Station and Edinburgh’s International Conference Centre to Birmingham’s Brindleyplace, the Greenwich Peninsula and Paddington Basin. He is a considerable force in Asia, where his projects have included Beijing South Railway Station, Guangzhou Station and Incheon International Airport.



Sir Peter Hall

The grand master of planning academia and an inspiration to generations of professionals, Hall was the probably the most influential planner in the post-war years. He wrote and edited around 50 books and influenced politicians of all political colours. Hall was also the father of the enterprise zone, which has been adopted across the world.



Michèle Dix

As managing director of Crossrail 2, Dix is implementing London’s massive new rail scheme. Widely recognised as one of the best transport planners in the country, she was previously head of planning at Transport for London, where she set the strategic direction for the capital’s future transport needs.

COMPETENCE, CAREER-BUILDING, CREDIBILITY

- OR WHY IT'S WORTH
JOINING THE RTPI

The Royal Town Planning
Institute is the membership
body for the planning
profession. But why join?

MARTINE KOCH, HEAD OF
MEMBERSHIP FOR THE RTPI



A

As an RTPI member, you'll get access to knowledge and networks that can help you build a successful career. You'll also gain

the professional credibility that comes from being a part of an internationally respected organisation.

Even if you're a student starting out on your professional journey you can

benefit from RTPI membership. As you build your career, we can support you every step of the way, with career guidance, skills training, events, networking, professional advice and legal support.

We'll also keep you up to date with new research and news about what's happening in the planning world. What's more, we'll represent your interests in discussions and debates with policymakers about changes to planning law and practice.

Finally, we'll guide your journey towards the pinnacle of membership. We encourage members to keep on learning throughout their careers, and once you reach a certain level of experience and competence, we can award you Chartered status. This is in recognition of your professional ability and could boost your reputation and employability.

RTPI membership is the best way to really become part of a vibrant, challenging and interesting profession. There are different classes of RTPI



REAPING THE BENEFITS

- Our award-winning monthly publication *The Planner* and its twice-weekly online news digest
- The RTPI's monthly e-bulletin and regional bulletins
- Expert help in working towards gaining your MRTPI designation
- RTPI Jobs Board
- Access to our specialist interest networks
- The opportunity to participate in RTPI activities to promote the role of planners to key stakeholders
- The opportunity to use and grow your skills as a volunteer
- The latest planning policy and research reports
- Discounts to excellent continuing professional development briefings, workshops, training and a wide range of networking events
- Offers and discounts to a range of services
- Discounted rates for the major planning event of the year – the RTPI Planning Convention
- Access to career advice and guidance

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

membership, each aimed at planners at different stages of their career, or at people transferring from related fields. Lawyers specialising in planning and development can also be professionally recognised.

Starting point: Student Membership

Student Membership gives students aiming to become planners the opportunity to access RTPI services and up-to-date information at an early stage of their career. Student membership is free if you're on an accredited course (see pages 30-31 for courses) and you

"A PLANNING ROLE IS NO LONGER MERELY ABOUT MAKING PLACES, BUT MORE ABOUT MAKING COMMUNITIES. THE BEST WAY TO ENSURE THIS IS BY KNOWING THE LOCAL AREA. WORKING FOR A LOCAL AUTHORITY IS KEY TO UNDERSTANDING HOW THE PLANNING SYSTEM REALLY WORKS AND IS A GREAT PLACE TO WORK TOWARDS YOUR MRTPI ACCREDITATION."

JAY SAGGERSON, GRADUATE PLANNER IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR WITH ASHFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL

will get access to low-cost training and networking events to help you get on the job ladder. Once you've completed an RTPI-accredited degree you can apply for the next stage of membership and begin your journey to becoming a Chartered Town Planner.

End goal: Chartered Membership

Chartered Membership is the pinnacle of RTPI membership and is earned through a combination of education and experience. Chartered Town Planner status acts as a guarantee of your professional competence with potential employers and clients, enabling you to move on up the job ladder and opening up new and challenging experiences. This could include working abroad for multi-disciplinary firms.

The path towards becoming a Chartered Town Planner will help you develop your skills and knowledge, and it'll open doors to these new opportunities. www.rtpi.org.uk/membership/

How do you become a Chartered Town Planner?

You can be recognised as a Chartered Town Planner by having a qualification in planning or a number of years'

"BEFORE GRADUATING, I MANAGED TO ATTAIN THE ROLE OF GRADUATE PLANNER AT HOW PLANNING LLP, A LEADING PLANNING CONSULTANCY IN THE NORTH-WEST. NEXT UP ON MY LIST IS GETTING STUCK INTO A WIDE RANGE OF INTERESTING PROJECTS AND GAINING THE EXPERIENCES TO PASS MY RTPI APC IN ORDER TO BECOME A CHARTERED TOWN PLANNER."

LOUISA FIELDEN, GRADUATE PLANNER IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR WITH HOW PLANNING IN MANCHESTER

experience in planning practice – or more likely both. The routes to achieve Chartered status involve an assessment of your professional experience and competence, known as an Assessment of Professional Competence.

As you work your way towards Chartered status, the RTPI can provide guidance, support and mentoring through its network of Young Planners who have already been through the process themselves. You can find out more about our Young Planners networks on page 29.



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A PLANNER

Lucy Seymour-Bowdery is a senior planner in the strategic planning department at West Sussex County Council. She ensures that the council's interests and infrastructure requirements are considered in planning policies in Chichester, Arun, and the South Downs National Park. Lucy's also the national Young Planners' representative on the Royal Town Planning Institute's board of trustees. Here's a typical day for her.



7:50am: I arrive at the office after a short train journey and pit stop at Costa to pick up an Earl Grey tea. My first task is to read emails and reply to any needing an urgent response. These could be from local planning officers requesting further information on a query about infrastructure, councillors needing clarification on a planning issue, or council colleagues requesting help with the planning process.



8:00am: My to-do list tells me my first priority is a response to a consultation on the draft of the local plan being drawn up by one of the planning authorities I work with. I've already sent the consultation out to over 50 officers and councillors for comment. Now I'm working through the whole draft plan to identify policies that I think West Sussex County Council should comment on.



8:30am: My colleague Caroline arrives and we discuss the latest news in the planning world. "Did you see the changes the government is proposing to make to the National Planning Policy Framework?" "How is that going to affect us?" Planning is both nationally and locally important, and it affects everyone's lives in some way. Changes in government planning policy can have a significant effect on our jobs.



9:00am: I meet with the county council's school place planning officers to discuss the primary school place requirements for several new housing sites in one of my areas. My role often requires me to jump across many local boundaries in the course of a single day.



2:15pm: Just time for an Earl Grey and a biscuit from the office canteen before reading papers for my next meeting. My team manager Darryl asks me to attend a meeting in Worthing next week with planning policy managers from the Coastal West Sussex and Greater Brighton area to discuss the local joint planning strategy. I enjoy this work as it allows me to become involved in 'larger than local' planning.



1:00pm: I review the transport study brief as requested and highlight the planning implications. It's important that these studies are not too technical as they are often prepared by technical experts who are very involved in the detail. Part of my job is to make sure non-specialists can understand the planning process and the planning decisions that their elected representatives make on their behalf. I discuss my comments with Guy and he adds them to our response.



12:00pm: I pop out to grab a salmon salad. It's a power walk through Chichester which gives me a chance to stretch my legs. I spend the rest of my lunch break corresponding with the RTPI's South Coast Young Planners' Network. We hosted the national Young Planners' Conference in 2015 and this has inspired many new members to join the group.



10:00am: My colleague Guy, a transport planner, sends me an urgent request to review the latest updates to a transport study brief that will form part of the evidence base for a local plan in another of my areas. "Can you review it by the end of the day?" he asks. Any delays will hold up the process of finding consultants to carry out the study, so I re-assess my priorities for the day. Then I get back to the local plan policies I started reviewing at the start of the day.



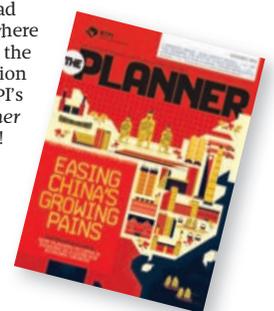
3:00pm: In our monthly planning and transport policy team meeting, we're updated on the 'Three Southern Counties' devolution bid. This is a bid by East Sussex, West Sussex and Surrey County Councils to jointly take over some powers from central government, such as speeding up housing development and taking greater control over roads and rail. Planning could be an important element of this proposal, so we need to keep on top of what's happening.



4:00pm: I have an informal catch-up with a county councillor ahead of a formal meeting later in the week. Elected councillors may have expectations that are not consistent with planning policy and guidance – my role is to set out the legislation and technical evidence, and to explain the scope of what we can achieve through the planning system. Planning is a legal process and all planning decisions have to comply with requirements set out in laws such as the Localism Act 2011 and guidance such as the National Planning Policy Framework. Then it's back to the local plan consultation response – nearly done!



5:25pm: All finished, so I update my to-do list to focus on my priorities for tomorrow. Then I head home – where I can read the latest edition of the RTPI's *The Planner* magazine!





WHAT DO PLANNERS GET PAID?

What can you expect to earn as a professional planner? A salary survey conducted by the Royal Town Planning Institute suggests that rewards in planning compare with those in other professions

The government's National Careers Service website suggests a starting salary of around £18,000 for town planners, comparable to £25,000 for a solicitor, £15,000 for a newspaper journalist and £17,000 for a local government officer. This rises to £34,000 for a senior planner and £55,000 to £80,000 for a chief planner.

The Royal Town Planning Institute's own survey of more than 4,000 members – conducted in mid 2017 – confirms this. What it shows is that planners have a wide range of incomes: 13 per cent of qualified planners earn up to £25,000, 23 per cent from £25 to 35,000, and 25 per cent take home £35 to 45,000 a year. Roughly one in five planners earns more than £55,000.

The survey showed that salary increased with experience, and also with Chartered Membership of the RTPI (recognition of a high level of ability by the membership body - see pages 12-13).

However, there is regional variation in earnings and if you work in the south-east of England you're likely to earn more than elsewhere in the UK. England and Scotland have a greater proportion of planners in upper salary bands than Wales and Northern Ireland – although an even higher ratio of planners working in the Republic of Ireland and overseas are earning top-level salaries.

In terms of pay satisfaction, 70 per cent of planners said they were broadly satisfied with their income, with 27 per cent broadly dissatisfied. Satisfaction levels increase slightly with experience, and planners in the private sector express higher levels of pay satisfaction than those in the public sector.

How do a planner's earnings compare?

According to the Office for National Statistics Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, the median salary for full-time employees up to April 2015 was £28,600 a year. Most planners earn more than this; the RTPI survey suggests that more than half of planners earn £35,000 plus.

How does that compare with other skilled professions? An experienced solicitor earns £40 to 90,000, a newspaper journalist £20 to 30,000 and local government officers typically earn from £22-28,000. At senior level, a marketing director can earn up to £75,000 plus - similar to a chief planner or consultancy partner.

It's not all about salary

Salary is not the only factor to consider when looking for jobs in planning. Around 40 per cent of RTPI members work in the private sector, 55 per cent in the public sector and 4 per cent in the 'third' sector (for example, charities).

Public and third-sector employment often includes greater holiday entitlement and a more generous pension scheme than the private sector. Other benefits may include more flexible working hours and home-based working.

On the other hand, the private sector has greater flexibility to offer performance-related pay and profit-sharing. Your choice of where you work as a planner may depend on the kind of rewards that motivate you personally. But with time and experience, you can expect to make a decent living as a professional planner in the UK or overseas (see page 9). 

PLANNING SALARIES IN FIGURES

£28,600

MEDIAN SALARY IN THE UK



£35,000

MORE THAN HALF OF PLANNERS (58%) EARN £35,000 A YEAR OR MORE



£55,000

ONE IN FOUR CHARTERED PLANNERS (25%) EARN £55,000 A YEAR OR MORE. AMONG ALL PLANNERS, THAT FIGURE IS 21%



Sources: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ONS); RTPI salary survey 2017



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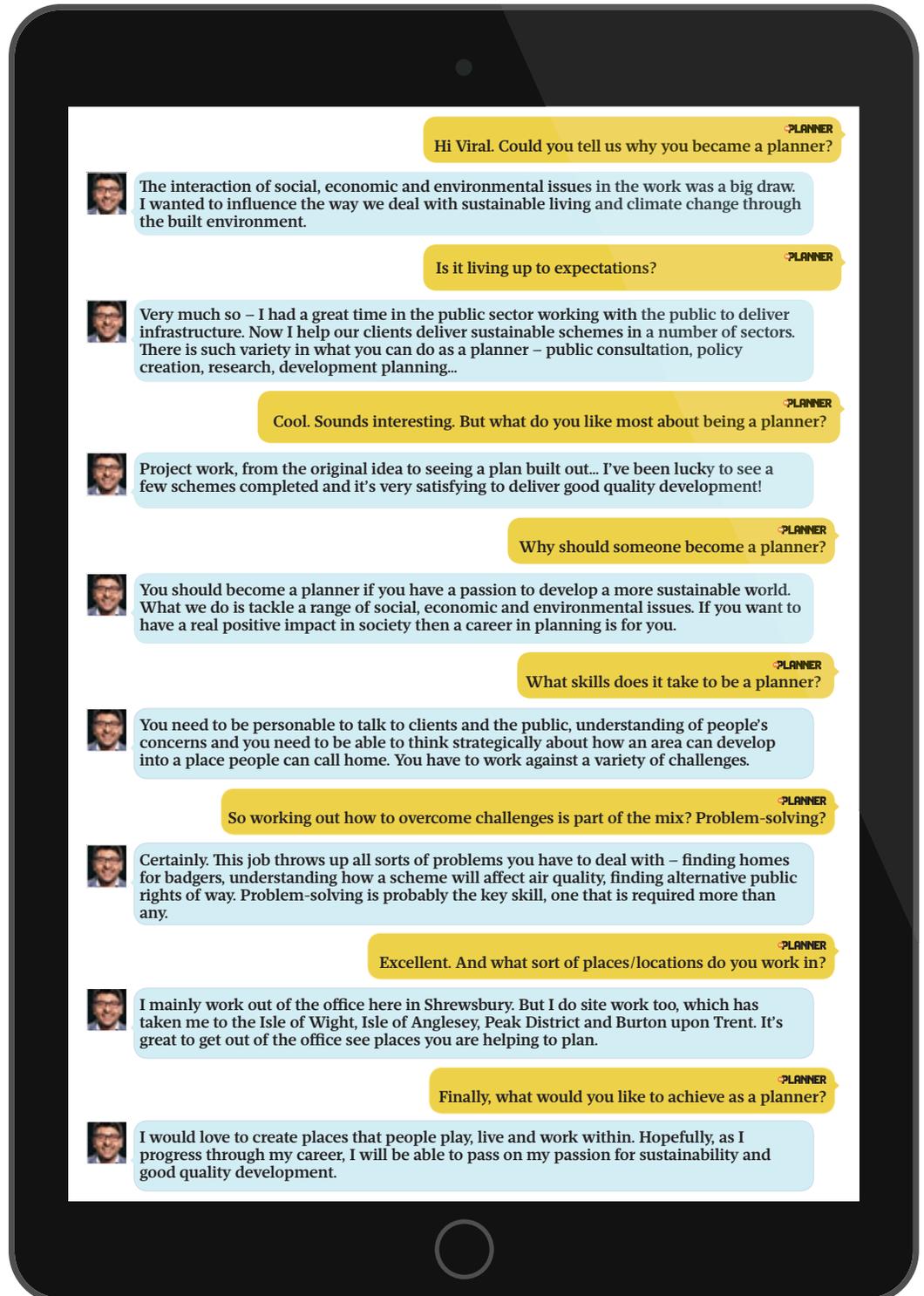
“WHAT, *PLANNING*?”



VIRAL DESAI IS A SENIOR PLANNER FOR CONSULTANCY AMEC FOSTER WHEELER.

HE SPECIALISES IN PLANNING FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY, WASTE DISPOSAL AND ECOLOGICALLY VALUABLE SITES AND WAS THE RTPI'S YOUNG PLANNER OF THE YEAR FOR 2015-16.

WE ASKED VIRAL BY TEXT FOR HIS THOUGHTS ON WHY PEOPLE SHOULD BECOME PLANNERS.



SIX OF THE BEST

Whatever critics claim, planning has been a force for good, says [Huw Morris](#). Here are six examples of how innovative planning has changed the world



1

Machu Picchu

Planning conquers the toughest terrain

Centuries ago the Incas showed they knew a thing or two about designing a place. Their “lost city”, Machu Picchu, 2,430 metres above sea level in Peru, was developed in the 15th century. The settlement was divided into distinct urban and agricultural sectors, its architecture adapted for the mountainous terrain and seismic activity. The region is bedevilled by heavy rainfall and Machu Picchu features terraced buildings layered by stone, sand and soil to soak up water and prevent flooding. Rediscovered in 1911, the city is now a World Heritage Site.



2

The green belt

A lesson in containing urban sprawl

Although accused of pushing up house prices, the green belt remains a central pillar of UK planning for preventing urban sprawl – and the policy is as much a part of the UK’s emotional as well as territorial landscape. To its supporters, the green belt is an almost sacred guardian of the countryside. The first green belt around London was ordered by Elizabeth I in 1580. But the modern green belt dates to the 1930s. Green belts now cover 13 per cent of England, 16 per cent of Northern Ireland and 2 per cent of Scotland. Wales has just one green belt, between Newport and Cardiff.





5

Frankfurt Guide to sustainable living

With climate change one of the biggest global threats of the 21st century, ‘sustainability’ is giving planning renewed impetus. In 2015, Frankfurt in Germany was named the most sustainable city on the planet, because it “works well for citizens in the present, without causing problems for them and the rest of the world in the future”.

The Sustainable Cities Index ranks cities using 20 different indicators, from green space to income inequality and ease of doing business. Roughly half of Frankfurt’s surface area is “green”, consisting of allotments and gardens, cemeteries, farmland, grassland, orchard meadows, parks, woodland and more. Frankfurt is also a founding member of the Climate Alliance of European Cities, which pledges to reduce carbon emissions by 10 per cent every five years.

Singapore An exemplary modern city

Planning has been evident in Singapore from the city’s founding in 1819. This was a planning event in itself, involving a search for a deep harbour for a major naval base to advance British interests in the Far East. Land constraints and high density mean long-term planning has been the cornerstone of Singapore’s impressive economic growth and social cohesion for 200 years. Today, planning is globally recognised as putting the city at the leading edge of sustainability. Singapore is the epitome of the Smart City and an exemplar for urban settlements large and small in the struggle against climate change.

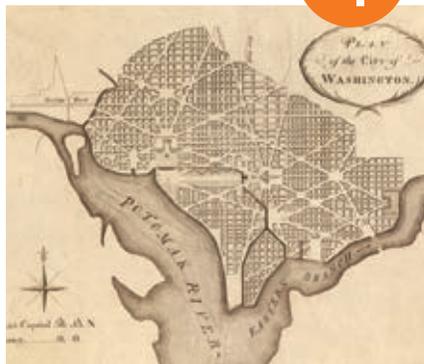
3



Washington DC Blueprint for a modern capital

A masterplan was commissioned by the first president of the United States and developed in 1791 for a new “Federal City”. It’s better known today as Washington, DC. The plan, by Pierre L’Enfant, comprised the design of buildings, avenues and canals, and envisaged later landmarks such as the White House and the Capitol. Washington is often named as one of the top 20 best-planned cities in the world.

4



6

Yellowstone Pioneering national park

Another American invention: Yellowstone National Park was the world’s first national park, created in 1872, followed by Australia’s Royal National Park seven years later. Canada launched its first in 1885 and today protects more land in its national park system than any other country. There are now more than 6,000 in nearly 100 countries across the globe, with the Danish government’s Northeast Greenland national park the world’s largest. Tanzania’s Serengeti, also a World Heritage Site, was recently proclaimed a 7th worldwide wonder. It is primarily famous for its annual migration of wildebeest, gazelle, and zebra to fresh plains and the ensuing feeding frenzy by predators. The UK has 15 national parks.

STEP CHANGE

You don't have to start your career as a planner to become a planner.

Here are three accounts of how others have made the career move

What was your previous job?

I'd spent the past 10 years working in publishing roles, most recently as editor for the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors member journals. I worked with an editorial board to commission and then edit content from various property professionals.

for the **London Borough of Croydon**. I assess and make recommendations for decisions on planning applications, also providing advice to applicants and agents as part of our formal pre-applications service. I keep councillors up to date with any applications they're particularly interested in, and present cases that have been referred to the planning committee for members to determine.

What does your current job entail?

I am a planning officer in the development management team



What attracted you to planning?

My work with property journals had drawn my attention to planning, as had the publicity surrounding the National Planning Policy Framework in 2012. I was fascinated by how important and wide-ranging planning was – and by the fact that it provided the occasional opportunity to get out from behind a desk! Planning has tangible outcomes, and I found that idea, and the potential impact you can have



Laura Hutson

Planning officer, London Borough of Croydon



I spent 10 years working in publishing

as a planner, very attractive.

How did you find your route into planning?

I considered asking my employer if I could switch to compressed hours to release a day to attend university, and was saving to fund a part-time planning MA. But I then saw that the **London Borough of Tower Hamlets (LBTH)** was advertising for planning officers at all levels, so I applied. I was eventually offered a job as a graduate planning officer, and attended university one day a week to gain my MA.

What advice would



you give to people hoping to get into planning?

Don't forget your transferable skills. For example, I know that the **communication, negotiation and project management skills** I used as an editor have served me well in planning. Choose the jobs you apply for carefully; in hindsight, my first job at LBTH was a wise move as it allowed me to gain experience in a wide range of interesting schemes.

"DON'T FORGET YOUR TRANSFERABLE SKILLS. I KNOW THAT THE COMMUNICATION, NEGOTIATION AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT SKILLS I USED AS AN EDITOR HAVE SERVED ME WELL IN PLANNING"

I graduated with a degree in art and design



Jenna Langford

Planning/regeneration officer, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

What did you study previously?

I graduated with a degree in art and design in 2005, when there were very limited job opportunities in the design sector. Changing tack, I took evening classes in business administration, eventually finding a job as the secretary to the housing strategy manager at Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC).

I then trained as a project management officer and helped to manage a major regeneration scheme in West Bromwich. SMBC later offered to fund my studies to allow me to work towards becoming a planning officer.

What is your current job?

I am now a planning officer in the SMBC Planning Regeneration team. I'm currently working on bringing several brownfield sites forward for residential development. I facilitate development by identifying suitable sites and providing planning support to land owners and developers. In practice, I found the creative vision that I had developed through my art studies went hand in hand with the crux of a planner's duties.

What attracted you to planning?

Entering the planning arena through an administration role, I realised that I wanted more scope to influence decision-making. Planners have the ability to mould better places, to raise the aspirations and improve the quality of life of those who live there.

How did you find your route into planning?

Luck! I wasn't even aware that planning as a career existed until I began working in local government. I received poor advice from careers advisers early on in my education, which is partly why I now volunteer for the RTPI Future Planners Initiative as an ambassador and I am the regional co-ordinator for the West Midlands. I am passionate about promoting career opportunities to young people as well as the excellent work planners do in shaping our world.

What advice would you give to people that are hoping to get into planning?

Start by attending local council planning committee meetings, which are open to the public and will give you an insight into planning and its political dimensions. P



I did a BA in architecture

Jennifer Winyard

Strategic land and planning manager, Linden Homes

What did you study and where did you work previously?

I did a BA in architecture at Newcastle University, and then worked for an architecture firm in Northumberland. It was here that I became familiar with the planning system and the application process, and came into contact with planners working in local government. I quickly realised that while I enjoyed the design element of architecture, it was how buildings fit into the wider built environment that most interested me, so I decided to go back and do my MSc in town and country planning.

What is your current job, and what does it entail?

As a land buyer, my job involves looking for strategic sites that we can develop in between three and 10 years. We then promote these sites through the planning system, submit planning applications, and eventually hand over to our regional business units to deliver. We usually deal with developments over 100 units on land larger than 10 acres.

What attracted you to planning?

Having the opportunity to look at the built environment more

holistically and from a political angle rather than getting bogged down in the details of buildings.

Initially, urban design also seemed an obvious way to combine my design experience with my ambitions as a town planner.

How did you find your route into planning?

I somewhat fell into planning through my BA studies. At school I don't think I could have told you what a town planner was, but I began to gain an understanding of the profession through modules on my architecture course. It was only when I began working with

planners in practice that I decided town planning was the route I wanted to take.

What advice would you give to people who are hoping to get into planning?

Don't be afraid to approach planning from a different discipline. I think I am much more valuable as a town planner because I have that architectural design experience coupled with the planning perspective, which also allows me to develop better relationships with the architects that I work with on a daily basis.



"I THINK I AM MUCH MORE VALUABLE AS A PLANNER BECAUSE I HAVE ARCHITECTURAL EXPERIENCE"



HOW TO SPOT GOOD PLANNING

WE'VE TALKED A LOT ABOUT WHAT PLANNERS DO, WHAT INSPIRES THEM AND WHERE THEY WORK - BUT ULTIMATELY IT'S ABOUT RESULTS. SO, HOW CAN YOU KNOW GOOD PLANNING WHEN YOU SEE IT?

P

Planning underpins the built environment, from homes and schools to shops, roads and water supplies. The role that planners play in the world

around us is to piece together all the elements of our towns, cities, villages and communities into – ideally – a harmonious whole.

Increasingly, planners work closely with communities through neighbourhood planning to ensure that their local needs are met, while balancing that with the wider needs of society. Planning has to tackle 'big picture' challenges, such as population growth and climate change, as well as supporting the economic health of local communities, and protecting the environment.

Each year the RTPI recognises where planners have struck a good balance by helping to create places that effectively meet the social, environmental and economic needs of communities. An RTPI Award for Planning Excellence is highly prized.

Here are a few outstanding examples of award winners that illustrate the transformational work that planners do and the range of partnerships required to produce great places.



REGENERATION AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

Award: RTPI Award for Excellence in Leading the Way in Planning for the Community

Project name: Central Govan Action Plan
Key players: Glasgow City Council, Glasgow South West Regeneration Agency, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Trust, Govan Housing Association, Elderpark Housing Association, Clydeview Local Housing Partnership, Govan Workspace, Strathclyde Partnership Transport

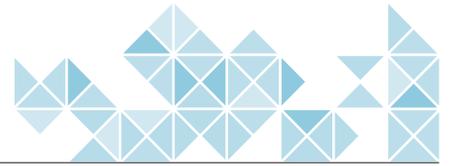
Govan's once thriving shipyards had contracted and its town centre had fallen into decay. A steering group formed to press local businesses, councils, politicians and other community leaders to work together to turn Govan into a more desirable place to live, work and visit.

The resulting Central Govan Action Plan, launched in 2006, has grown into a partnership and investment structure that manages £4 million of public money and has overseen £88 million of investment.



The steering group heads an intricate network of partnerships and organisations. The plan has directed housing to derelict land, road and transport improvements, shopfront refurbishments, restoration and reuse of historic buildings, revitalisation of public space and the creation of employment opportunities. The project provides a fine example of 'bottom-up' planning.

The RTPI judges said: "Overcoming tough urban issues typical of our post-industrial cities, the action plan has genuinely brought together a community to create, realise and sustain many physical, social and economic projects."



consultation with more than 200 community groups in 14 London boroughs. Each year, it will take 39 million tonnes of untreated sewage away from the capital to a treatment works in East London.

The judges said: “The Thames Tideway Tunnel is an outstanding example of world-class infrastructure being brilliantly delivered with a huge contribution from the planners involved. This project also impressed with a very positive approach to public engagement, and will result in the vital upgrading of London’s sewers that will have an impact for many years to come.”

URBAN REALM AND ECONOMIC REGENERATION

Award: RTPI Award for Excellence in Planning and Design for the Public Realm
 Project name: Merthyr Tydfil River Taff Central Link and Penderyn Square
 Key players: Merthyr Tydfil Borough Council, Merthyr Tydfil Housing Association, Merthyr Tydfil College, Capita Symonds, Mott McDonald, Baker Associates

Since World War II and its loss of industry, Merthyr Tydfil had been in decline.

Following community consultation in 2011, a broad programme of regeneration was planned, with a focus on creating a more accessible and attractive townscape. Subsequent work has included remodelling roads and public transport links, installing a new bridge and linking the town centre with the riverside, improving the main public space at Penderyn Square and restoring buildings.

The aim has been to encourage more businesses and shoppers, and thus stimulate job creation and economic regeneration. Immediate results have included reduced traffic congestion, better pedestrian and cycle access and greater road safety. The riverside has also become an attractive destination for development.

The RTPI judges said: “This project showed the economic importance of place-making and asset management as part of regeneration, and was marked by an interesting approach to community engagement, which focused on different audiences and the spaces with which they were concerned.” 



"WORLD-CLASS INFRASTRUCTURE WITH A HUGE CONTRIBUTION FROM THE PLANNERS INVOLVED"

with allotments, hedges, ponds, walking and cycling routes, and buildings are made from high-quality materials designed to minimise energy use. It’s a template for sustainable, energy-efficient living.

The judges said: “The promotion of community initiatives within the scheme, including car-sharing clubs and gardening groups, will contribute to conserving the natural environment and the sustainable designs of the buildings.”

INFRASTRUCTURE AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Award: RTPI Award for Excellence in Planning to Create Economically Successful Places
 Project name: Thames Tideway Tunnel
 Key player: Thames Tideway Tunnel Ltd

Creating great places isn’t just about having appropriate buildings to live, learn and work in, or making attractive public space to shop. It’s also about ensuring these places are supplied with the services they need to function – such as waste disposal.

In London, Sir Joseph Bazalgette’s 1860s sewage system discharged overflow from sewers to the River Thames to prevent flooding and take waste away from the city. But the system can no longer cope with the larger populous; overflows occur more than 50 times a year, creating pollution.

The 25 km Thames Tideway Tunnel is a huge £4.5 billion project that has involved

HOUSING AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Award: RTPI Award for Excellence in Planning for the Natural Environment
 Project name: Hanham Hall
 Key players: South Gloucestershire Council, Barratt Homes, HTA Design, Sovereign Housing, Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)

Hanham Hall, a former NHS psychiatric hospital, had fallen into disuse. Though sited just 7km from the centre of Bristol, the hall and its 9 ha grounds lacked any obvious alternative purpose.

But plans were drawn up by council planners and a private developer to turn the area into England’s first large housing scheme to achieve the 2016 zero-carbon standard. The development, completed in 2015, now has 187 homes for sale and rent, ranging from one-bedroomed flats to five-bedroomed houses, alongside offices, retail space, a community hall and a crèche. There is even a local energy centre. Everything is set around green spaces,

P

Planning consultant Charlotte Morphet (CM) explains how networking can help you become a better planner

Q: How important is networking for planners?

CM: “Incredibly important. Planners work across different disciplines within the built environment, so networking is a good way of understanding the different types of people you might work with, but in an informal setting. It’s also crucial for sharing knowledge and information, building your contact base, and is an essential part of business development.”

Q: What can be gained from networking?

CM: “In terms of the job seeking process, networking is a benefit. As graduates, you need to be out interacting with key players because a number of job opportunities are not going to be advertised, and hiring decisions will be partly based on a personality fit.

“This will only become apparent through one-to-one contact, where

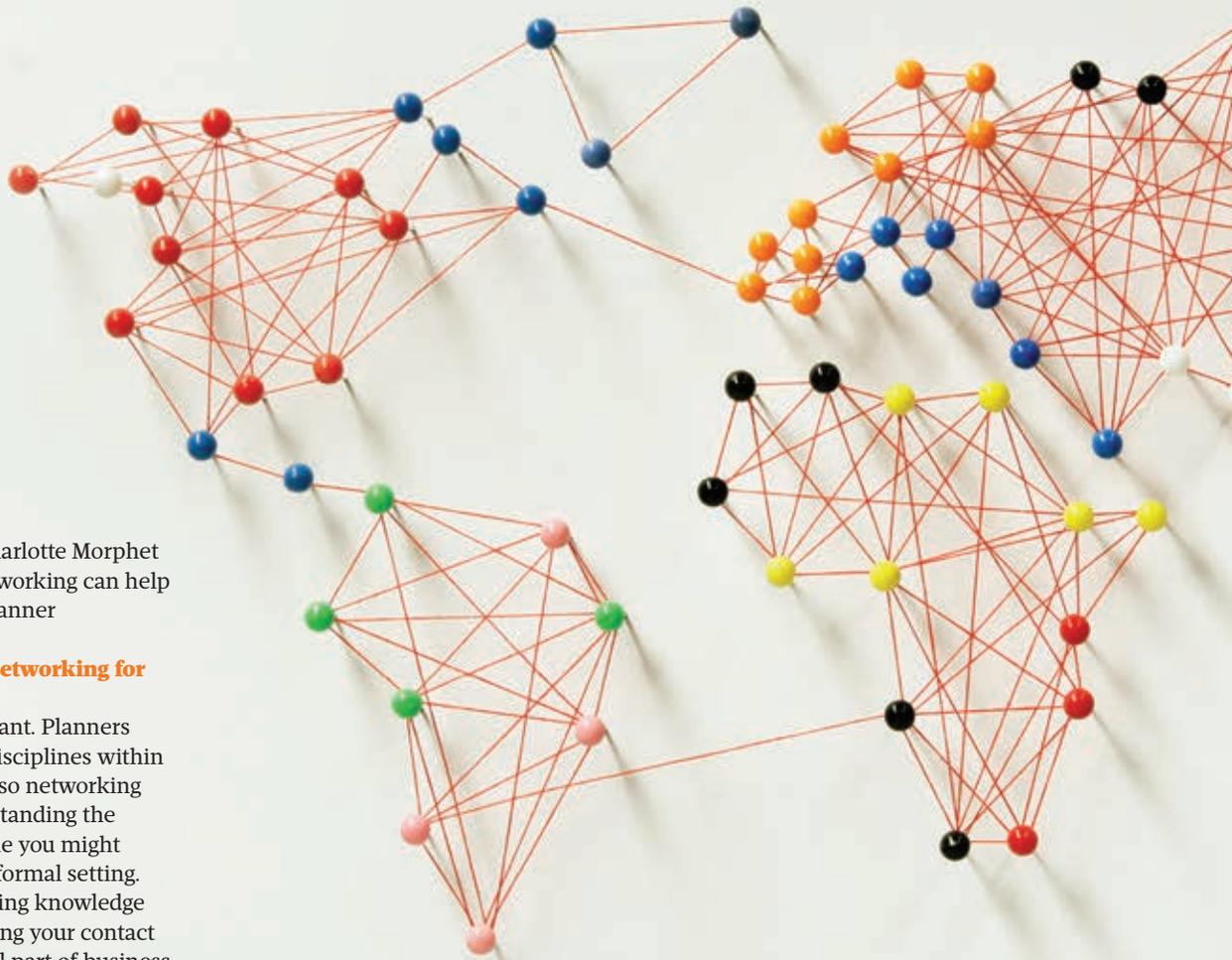
people are able to see your enthusiasm and knowledge for your area first hand, factors which aren’t always easily apparent on a CV. Networking will also allow you to be at the forefront for emerging vacancies and graduate schemes.”

Q: Where is the best place to start looking for these networking events?

CM: “The RTPI runs networking groups catering to different career levels and

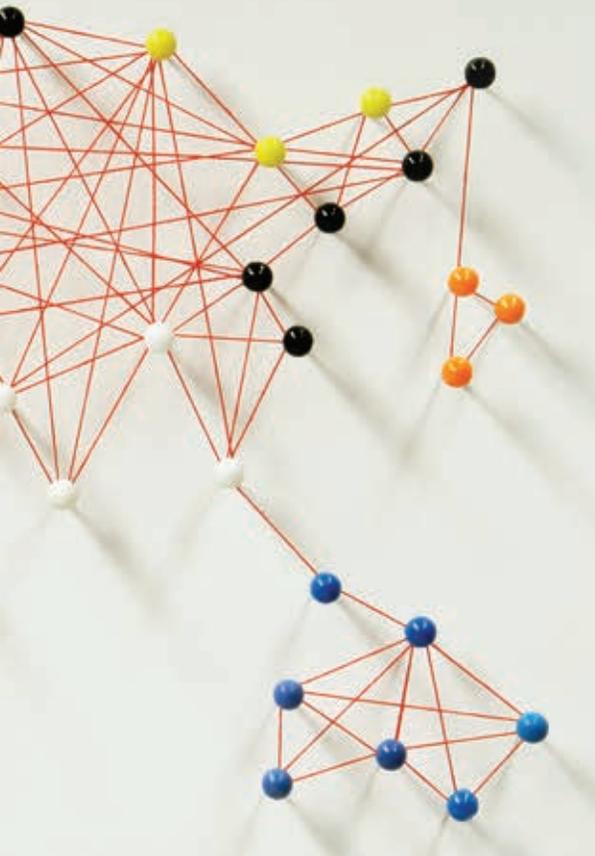
specialisms. The RTPI’s Young Planners’ Network (see box) is very active in organising social and professional development events.

“Beyond the RTPI, think tanks and related institutes such as RICS (Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors) and RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects) also have useful newsletters, groups and events; these are really worth attending to learn about the fundamentals of what happens in different areas of planning, such as



NETWORKING ESSENTIALS

Networking can help planners bridge the gap to other built environment disciplines, improve relationships with communities and career progression



There are plenty of groups and networks that cater to planners. Some are specialist, some less so – but all will introduce you to fellow planners. Here's a small selection

GENERAL BUILT ENVIRONMENT NETWORKS

- **Urban Design Group STREET:** For students, early-career designers and other young built environment professionals, open to all with an interest in urbanism and related disciplines. www.udg.org.uk/STREET
- **Young Urbanists:** The Academy of Urbanism's Young Urbanists is for students and early career professionals interested in fields such as planning and design, development and globalisation, community and politics. www.academyofurbanism.org.uk/young-urbanists/

FOR WOMEN IN PLANNING

- **Women in Planning:** An informal professional network for women working in town and spatial

- planning. Regular talks and events with prominent women in the field. www.womeninplanning.wordpress.com
- **Urbanistas:** Network for women working in built environment professions with a focus on developing leadership skills and encouraging collaboration on projects. www.urbanistas.org.uk

FOR LGBT+ PLANNERS

- **Planning Out:** Network for planning professionals that aims to develop professional connections, and support LGBT professionals in the workplace. planningout.eventbrite.co.uk

THINK TANKS

Think tanks promote new thinking that can influence public policy on social issues. There are many, of

varying size and influence, and they often have a political bias. They publish research and hold events.

- **Centre for Cities:** Politically independent research organisation seeking to understand “how and why economic growth and change takes place in Britain's cities”. www.centreforcities.org
- **Institute for Public Policy Research:** Left of centre thinktank researching a range of economic, social and political issues, including housing. Also has North of England and Scotland branches. www.ippr.org

FOR SPECIALISTS

The RTPI supports a number of networks that focus on specific areas of expertise within planning, such as transport or regeneration. Such groups are open to RTPI members, and are a good starting point for meeting others who share a particular interest. www.rtpi.org.uk/

surveying, and how wide-ranging the built environment sector is.”

Q: Could you tell us a bit about your network, Women in Planning?

CM: “Women in Planning is a support network, a place for women at all levels of seniority to discuss issues within the industry. We try to illustrate different types of career, to show women in the industry what can be achieved and make them aware of other women succeeding in the sector.

“We also want to encourage these women to come out and say ‘I've had a fabulous career, and this is how I did it, and plenty of other people should be doing it’. We're just about to open a South East branch and a South West branch.”

Q: What advice would you give to undergraduates and recent graduates hoping to start a career in planning?

CM: “I would urge graduates to build their confidence first and attend inter-professional meet-ups with other young planners. RTPI young planners are an incredibly friendly bunch – and the Young Planners Conference is possibly the best conference available to planners across the UK. It's the most beneficial in terms of networking, and for meeting your peers for what is essentially the whole of your working life.

“If I was beginning in planning again, as an undergraduate, I would attend young planners events from the beginning – not least as by my third or fourth year, I would have had all the people I needed to interview for my dissertation!” ☺



● **Charlotte Morphet** is a principal policy planner with the London Borough of Waltham Forest. She is co-founder of the network Women in Planning, and a member of the the RTPI's General Assembly.

+ THE RTPI YOUNG PLANNERS

Young planners are among the most active of RTPI members and organise talks, debates, training and social events throughout the year. The Young Planners network also holds its own annual planning conference.

Each UK region has its own Young Planners group and they form a vital network for those who are new to the profession or in the early stages of their career. Planning is a close-knit profession, and friendships and relationships formed via

the Young Planners groups can open many doors and sustain you throughout your career.

In the past year, young planners have organised cycle tours overseas, conducted city walking tours looking at street art and public spaces, held pub quizzes, and invited eminent urbanists to discuss the issues shaping the life of our cities.

The RTPI's main board always has a Young Planner representative, so young planners can have a direct influence on the way their

membership organisation operates. Each year, a young planner is also appointed Young Planner of the Year and serves as an ambassador for the profession for a year.

You don't have to be ‘young’ to become a Young Planner. If you have less than 10 years' post-qualification experience you can apply to join the network.

Find out more about where Young Planners groups are and what they do: <http://www.rtpi.org.uk/youngplanners>

PLANNING THE JOURNEY

FORGING A CAREER IN PLANNING CAN INVOLVE WORKING ACROSS A WIDE VARIETY OF DISCIPLINES. HERE, ESTABLISHED PLANNERS AT THE PEAK OF THE PROFESSION AND YOUNG PLANNERS CLIMBING THE LADDER TELL US ABOUT THEIR CAREER JOURNEYS SO FAR

PHIL WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AT BELFAST CITY COUNCIL & RTPI PAST PRESIDENT

What does your job entail?

In Belfast, my work concerns creating a fit-for-purpose planning service following the transfer of powers back to local government. As RTPI president, I will concentrate on elevating the planning profession into the centre of the placemaking debate, and raising recognition for the fact that a successful place is the result of interplay between people, politicians and planners.

How has your career



path led to this role?

I began working in Surrey County Council and the London Borough of Sutton, principally around policy. I moved back to Wales and

became an enforcement officer, then worked with valley communities on environmental and social integration projects following the demise of the coal industry. I then worked in Cardiff following the closure of the Cardiff Bay Development Corporation, where there was a growing awareness of how the decisions taken in policy terms and in individual big schemes helped to create the city as the economic driver for the region.

What has been your most memorable achievement as a planner?

Becoming RTPI president – being in a position of

maximum influence, being able to listen at the highest level and seek to influence policy-making.

If you were starting your career again, what advice would you give to your younger self?

Degrees don't necessarily provide the experience that you need when you hit the ground. I would advocate to students that they not only concentrate on the theory behind planning but also try and gain practical experience during their studies, whether in the public or private sector. As soon as you can, become a practitioner in some aspect of planning.

CHRIS SHEPLEY, PRINCIPAL, CHRIS SHEPLEY PLANNING

What does your job entail?

I do a variety of work – enquiries, examinations into strategic and local plans, and providing planning advice to various public bodies and private developers. I chair the National Retail Planning Forum, and I write columns for *The Planner*, which currently takes up the most of my time. The best thing about my job is the variety.

How has your

career path led to this role?

I had a long career in local government, beginning at Manchester City Council, progressing to my becoming the city planning officer of Plymouth and eventually leading to my becoming chief planning inspector at the Planning Inspectorate. I took the decision when I was in my fifties to leave the Planning Inspectorate after eight years and establish my own practice.

I had the choice of joining a big planning consultancy, and I did work with Terence O'Rourke on a number of projects at the beginning of this career change. Ultimately, I decided I wanted the flexibility to pick and choose the projects that I wanted to be involved in.

What has been the highlight of your planning career so far?

Being chief planning inspector. I think the

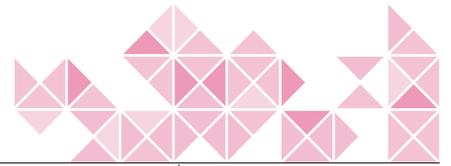


Planning Inspectorate is the thing that holds the planning system together; it is a hugely professional organisation with fantastic people working for it, and while the job was challenging,

I was grateful for the opportunity to do it.

If you were starting your career again, what advice would you give to your younger self?

Range as widely as you can – try to get experience in a lot of different areas. Also, you need to maintain a positive attitude; it has become too easy to view planning as a negative thing, where really the practice should be viewed as something creative and visionary.



TOM VENABLES, A DIRECTOR OF DESIGN, PLANNING & ECONOMICS AT AECOM

Why have you chosen planning as a career?

To make the world a better place – and because of my interests in geography, architecture, politics and design.

What was your first role in planning?

A year out placement with WS Atkins in Cardiff in their planning and transport team. I did a lot of consultation and survey work, inputted

into some masterplans and counted a lot of cars.

What does your current role involve?

I manage a variety of strategic planning projects in the UK and overseas. I also contribute to AECOM business development and thought leadership about how cities develop and become more integrated through strategic planning.



What projects are you working on now?

I am working with the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation to develop a planning framework

for the garden city that has been identified around the international station. I have been involved in writing growth and infrastructure frameworks for three county councils that tie together housing and economic growth with infrastructure development. I have also recently been involved in preparing citywide plans for Dubai and Jeddah in Saudi Arabia.

How do you see your career developing?

To carry on doing

interesting city-scale projects in the UK and overseas. In the next decade I imagine that we planners will have an important role to play in addressing how towns and cities become more resilient to a changing climate, how we house a growing and shifting population, and how we respond to technological advances. We have a fundamental role to play in tying together the relationship between transport and urban growth, and managing infrastructure expansion with less public funding.

SUSAN KIDD, SENIOR MARINE PLANNING MANAGER, THE CROWN ESTATE

What does your job entail?

The Crown Estate manages the UK seabed, including awarding leases for offshore renewable energy generation. I work with the UK's marine planning industry to give advice about our role, and ensure that we have regard to statutory marine plans in our decision-making.

How has your career path led to this role?

I started as a town and environmental planner on the Gold Coast in Australia, and worked with the government's transport department. I then moved to the UK, which was a gamble in terms of my career. I joined The Crown Estate just when marine planning was emerging as a discipline.

What is your most memorable achievement?

In 2014, I was on a panel



giving evidence to the House of Lords on EU regional marine coordination through planning. It was nerve-racking, but I feel honoured to have contributed to one of the most established political processes in the world.

What career advice would you give to your younger self?

Do what you're interested in and don't over-think what 'type' of planner you want to be. Different opportunities give you the chance to become involved in other disciplines.

MARLON DEAM, SENIOR PLANNER AT DP9

Why have you chosen planning?

I was attracted to planning through an interest in the built environment and the variety of avenues planning can take you down. There is a good mix between using the written word, number-crunching, and good old-fashioned negotiation.

What was your first role in planning?

Working for a local authority in Adelaide, South Australia, undertaking assessment of planning applications that spanned residential, industrial, port and harbour, and ocean-front locations.

What does your current role involve?

I advise a large range of private clients on planning matters relating to development proposals, primarily in central London.

What projects are you



working on now?

I am involved in a wide range of projects at DP9, from a substantial single house in Chelsea to large-scale regeneration projects including Battersea Power Station. There is also a lot of policy engagement at local, regional and national levels.

How do you see your career developing?

My aim is to continue to build a robust understanding of planning matters alongside large and complex development proposals, while working in a more managerial capacity.

JOSIE TURNER, SENIOR DEVELOPMENT PLANNING OFFICER, BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

Why have you chosen planning as a career?

To work with communities to improve the places we live.

What was your first role in planning?

Graduate planner, GVA Grimley. Working on development projects for various clients gave me an insight into the planning system from a private sector perspective.

What does your current role involve?

Working to bring about

transformation in the centre of Birmingham by delivering a range of local planning services and area initiative work. This is a varied role that involves development and regeneration schemes, and working with stakeholders that include residents, other professionals and partner organisations.

What projects are you working on now?

A key project is Birmingham Smithfield – the redevelopment of 14 hectares of city centre land which is a once-in-a-generation



opportunity to create a new destination that includes retail markets, a family leisure quarter and residential neighbourhoods. Birmingham Smithfield will deliver over 100,000 square metres of floor space, 1,000 new

homes and 3,000 new jobs.

How do you see your career developing?

It's an exciting time for Birmingham. We're experiencing unprecedented levels of investment in infrastructure and major new development schemes are coming to fruition. There are opportunities to get involved in HS2's arrival in the city, the continuing success of the City Centre Enterprise Zone and the delivery of 51,000 new homes, 100,000 jobs and supporting infrastructure by 2031. Being part of this exciting future is a fantastic opportunity, professionally *and* personally.

DEBORAH BAKER, PLANNING CONSULTANT, INDIGO PLANNING

Why have you chosen planning as a career?

At university, the idea of a career spent shaping the urban landscape for the better was my inspiration.

What was your first role in planning?

I was an assistant planner at Salford City Council, helping to shape policy direction and reviewing applications. I volunteered with a Building Preservation Trust, which gave an insight into heritage significance, scheme viability and funding mechanisms.

What does your current role involve?

I work for a national planning consultancy advising clients with land and property interests. I design strategies to help secure planning permission, manage meetings with council officers, statutory consultees and the project team, and submit planning appeals and



applications.

What projects are you working on now?

I'm seeking redevelopment of a derelict listed building, a retail megastore on land that has been unsuccessfully allocated for employment uses for two decades, and I'm working on several solar farm applications.

How do you see your career developing?

I enjoy the variety of my role. A new area of interest is the use of social listening to inform community engagement strategies.

MICHAEL BAKER, PLANNER AT ARUP

Why planning?

I have always been interested in architecture and history, and a geography teacher pointed out planning to me. For me, it brings together some of the most important questions society asks about itself, its past, its future; all in one undervalued profession!

What was your first role in planning?

I was an assistant case officer at the Infrastructure Planning Commission. I supported the team in managing Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs), giving advice to the public and developers.

What does your current role involve?

Having only been here for a month, so far my role has entailed managing planning applications for clients, big and small. I have put my experience of NSIPs to good use, while learning about



development management at local authority level.

What projects are you working on now?

Everything from a warehouse extension in the South-West to a nationally significant overhead electricity line project in the East.

How do you see your career developing?

I am late in becoming a chartered member of the RTPI, which is the immediate next step for me. I also want to explore strategic planning and policy in a few years' time.



GEORGE WEEKS, URBAN DESIGNER, TRANSPORT FOR LONDON (TFL)

Why have you chosen planning as a career?

I studied combined social sciences at Durham, specialising in urban geography and economics of social policy. I then did an MSc at Glasgow in city planning and real estate development, followed by an MA in sustainable urbanism at the Prince's Foundation for Building Community. Planning

struck me as a way to put theory into practice and create successful urban environments.

What was your first role in planning?

I worked as a research assistant at the Glasgow Urban Studies Department, investigating international examples of best-practice placemaking. The study was commissioned by

the Scottish Government. It was interesting work; I travelled to Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany, Ireland and in the UK to carry out site visits and interviews.

What does your current role involve?

I am one of 12 urban designers in TfL. We provide specialist advice across the organisation and work with the London boroughs, the Greater London Authority and independent consultants. This can range from one-off enquiries to long-term involvement with strategic projects, such as



the regeneration of Nine Elms and Battersea.

What projects are you working on?

Many! One example is HS2, where we are working to ensure that the urban realm benefits of a new terminus at Euston are maximised. Railway stations generate enormous footfall and

this provides a real opportunity to animate an area.

How do you see your career developing?

I'd like to take more responsibility for larger projects at TfL. I want to develop the interdisciplinary side of my career; I'm a member of the Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation, and the Academy of Urbanism, which complement my RTPI membership and reflect the interdisciplinary nature of urban design. This is what makes it such an interesting profession.

"RAILWAY STATIONS GENERATE ENORMOUS FOOTFALL AND THIS PROVIDES A REAL OPPORTUNITY TO ANIMATE AN AREA"

Support for Future Planners

The RTPI Future Planners Bursary for Postgraduates

The Future Planners Bursary is the Royal Town Planning Institute's (RTPI) bursary for places on accredited university planning Master's courses. It is open to students from any discipline, including law, politics, geography or architecture, who decide to choose planning as a career.

RTPI Trust Bursary

The RTPI Trust Bursary is for students on accredited undergraduate courses who either have:

- a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010; or
- a declared disability or specific learning difficulty.

These schemes open up access to the profession and ensure there are no barriers to starting a career in town planning.

Interested?

To Find out more about RTPI financial support for your future career in town planning and how you can help shape the places we live and work in, visit www.rtpi.org.uk/bursary



RTPI

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WHERE TO STUDY PLANNING

SO YOU'RE INTERESTED IN PLANNING, BUT WHERE CAN YOU STUDY FOR THE QUALIFICATIONS YOU NEED TO BECOME A PROFESSIONAL PLANNER?

To some extent that depends on the type of planning you're interested in. Most secondary school subjects relate to planning including history, geography, art and design and science. A wide range of degree courses are available that may lead into different specialisms within a planning career; they include Development Policy, Transport Planning, Urban Design, Regeneration, Environmental Assessment, Rural Planning, Heritage and Conservation, and International Planning.

The other thing to look out for is RTPI accreditation of the course you'd like to do. The RTPI works in partnership with universities to develop and accredit planning qualifications. An RTPI accreditation acts as a guarantee of the quality of the course, and allows graduating students fast-track progress towards Chartered Membership of the RTPI.

The institutions below offer qualifications beginning at either undergraduate or postgraduate level. For further course information visit:

www.rtpi.org.uk/findacourse 

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| 1 University of Dundee | 13 Dublin Institute of Technology | 25 Joint Distance Learning Consortium |
| 2 Heriot-Watt University | 14 University College Dublin | 26 University College Cork |
| 3 University of Glasgow | 15 Birmingham City University | 27 University of Brighton |
| 4 University of Strathclyde | 16 University of Birmingham | 28 Plymouth University |
| 5 Ulster University | 17 Anglia Ruskin University | Other countries |
| 6 Newcastle University | 18 Oxford Brookes University | University of Botswana |
| 7 Queens University Belfast | 19 University College London | University of Cape Town |
| 8 Leeds Beckett University | 20 London South Bank University | University of Hong Kong |
| 9 University of Manchester | 21 University of Westminster | Chinese University of Hong Kong |
| 10 University of Liverpool | 22 University of Reading | |
| 11 Sheffield Hallam University | 23 Cardiff University | |
| 12 University of Sheffield | 24 University of the West of England | |



Routes into Planning

Undergraduate route

Want to fast track into learning about planning new places? Consider studying Town, City or Regional Planning straight away. Take a three-year BA/BSc planning course and a specialist Diploma.

Postgraduate route

Are you studying geography, architecture, environmental science or law? Consider taking a one-year Masters in Spatial Planning, after your first degree. Some employers advertise for graduate roles and sponsor this route part-time.

Work based route

Want to jump straight into work after leaving school? Some companies or councils have entry-level technical roles. Learn on the job for 2-5 years and the experience can get you onto a diploma or degree course. The RTPI Apprenticeships scheme is also up and running with a number of UK colleges: www.rtpi.org.uk/apprenticeships



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MY STORY



“Having joined Carter Jonas as a graduate planner just three months ago, I feel I have already been given much more responsibility and many more opportunities to take part in different projects and events than most of my peers. I've attended several RTPI conferences and CPD events in the past three months, and worked with the retail planning team; it has been great to be able to develop a specialism.”

JENNA MURRAY, CHAPEL PLACE, LONDON

MY STORY



“Carter Jonas offers a structure where you have a great team around you for support who are always willing to help, but also allowing you the freedom to progress and show your individual skill set.

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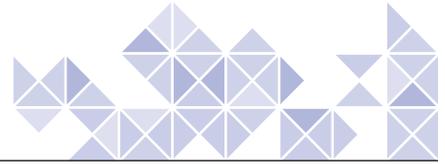
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