



# IN PERSPECTIVE

SPRING 2021

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or events featured:**

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## The Chair's Word

It is an honour and a pleasure to be welcoming you to this Spring edition of InPerspective in the role of Chair, as I pick up the reins from Ellie Gingell who has led the regional committee through challenging and unprecedented times over the last two years.



**Simon Taylor,  
MRTPI**

RTPI South East,  
Chair

To provide a bit of background, I have been volunteering with the RTPI since 2017 where I was first involved with the Kent Young Planners Network helping to organise a number of events. In 2018, I was asked to join the South East Regional Activities Committee before serving at the Vice-Chair on the Regional Management Board in 2020, leading to the position of Chair in 2021.

Planning has steadily climbed up the national agenda with the conversation focusing on the importance of place ...

It does not go without saying that 2020 was a very difficult year for everyone. Offices were closed, everyone scrambling to get to grips with homeworking and the virtual world. The world slowed down as the brakes were applied to, amongst other things, our workplaces, town centres and leisure facilities. Despite this, planning has steadily climbed up the national agenda with the conversation focusing on the importance of place, rather than just the number of houses that need to be built. We are appreciating the need for space in our homes and the green spaces that provide important benefits to local communities.

I am amazed how we have all adapted over the last year to the “new normal”, planning remotely and engaging with your local communities.

I am confident that we will continue to adapt as the national circumstances change, following the Prime Minister’s caution optimism with the announcement of the 2021 “road map” out of lockdown in February.

Notwithstanding the challenges we continue to face, I am proud of how committed the Regional Activities Committee, Regional Management Board and our all [Young Planner Networks](#) (Kent, Thames Valley, South Coast and Surrey) are to ensuring that there is a wide offer of relevant and engaging CPD events to our members as well as providing virtual networking opportunities.

However, whilst we can plan for the future, I am keen to ensure that we are providing the right support and events for our members. I am particularly keen to hear views from the regional membership on how we engage with you and how we can do things differently. The RTPI is member-led professional body and I want to ensure that we are doing all that we can to support you as a region.

Likewise, we are always on the lookout for new members with fresh ideas to join the Regional Activities Committee. More information can be found [here](#).

The committee has arranged a number of virtual CPD events covering a wide range of relevant topics. The latest webinar we held was our “Future of Town Centres” session on Thursday 04 March, which was well received. We publish new events regularly, including events run by our Young Planners groups. To stay up to date, visit our events page [here](#).

I know that 2021 will be an exceptionally busy year for us all. I hope to meet you when we are able to in the future, but for now please keep in touch with us by visiting the [website](#), on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

# Our new committee members

RTPI South East committee members are all volunteers with expertise in many aspects of planning and represent both the private and public sector. Activities are provided by members for members and include CPD events, social events, policy consultation, roundtables, APC briefings and debates. There are lots of great opportunities to get involved with these activities even if you are not a committee member.

All activities are co-ordinated through our [Regional Management Board \(RMB\)](#) and [Regional Activities Committee \(RAC\)](#). Together we support members and champion planning in the South East. Members are welcome from all areas of planning and we are always ready to welcome new recruits. Get in touch ([southeast@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:southeast@rtpi.org.uk)) for more information.

*Please welcome our new members -*



**Edward Cheng**  
MRTPI,

*Highways England*

Edward is a chartered town planner currently employed at Highways England as DCO and Statutory Processes Manager. In this role he advises on the development of a portfolio of highways schemes including NSIPs primarily in the South East region.

Edward has worked in local authorities in the South East and East of England most recently in Planning Policy at Guildford Borough Council. He is a member of the National Infrastructure Planning Association (NIPA) and as well as transport has interests across climate change, energy and environmental planning.



**Jayanand Kumaraguru**  
AssocRTPI,

*LG Planning Ltd*

Jayanand is an Associate member of RTPI and an elected General Assembly member. He also represents the International committee of the RTPI. He has a Master's degree in Built Environment and a Prince 2 qualification. Jayanand volunteered with Planning Aid England dealing with neighbourhood planning.

In addition, he worked with a European funded organisation offering voluntary service for the construction sector. He has worked on numerous residential projects, both large and small in commercial and various other sectors. His skills have been considerably enhanced by working on a large number of diverse projects in the U.K.

## Our new committee members *(continued)*

*Please welcome our new members -*



**Paula Onyia**

Paula is an Architect with a Masters in Spatial Planning, Policy and Practice from London South Bank University. She also studied Environmental Science.

Paula worked for both private and public sector organisations in the UK in a number of different roles and in Land Registry in Toronto, Canada. Whilst in Canada, she attended a number of courses at the University of Toronto in Business Analysis and Project Management. She currently works freelance in a variety of roles.

Coming from such an eclectic background, she is passionate about diversity and inclusion especially within the realms of planning.



**Reece Lemon**  
AssocRTPI,

*Hume Planning Consultancy*

Reece Lemon is a Senior Development Planner at Hume Planning Consultancy, working across Central London and the South East. Reece's work focuses mainly on commercial and residential development.

Reece previously chaired the Thames Valley Young Planners' Network and was named RTPI South East Young Planner of the Year in 2017, as well as a named finalist for National Young Planner of the Year in 2018. Reece is a qualified Associate Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute.

Outside of planning Reece is a keen writer and linguist, with his first bilingual poetry anthology due for publication in early 2021.



**Andrew Smith**  
MRTPI,

*Redrow Southern Counties*

Andrew Smith is a Strategic Land Director for Redrow Southern Counties, actively securing and promoting land within Surrey, Hampshire, Berkshire, Wiltshire and Dorset. His experience includes working for residential and commercial development companies and running an independent planning consultancy / site agency business.

Andrew has a keen focus on ensuring that planning policies are formed and decisions take place in a way where schemes are both viable and deliverable, so that answers can be found which address the significant housing shortages across the UK.

## Our new committee members *(continued)*

*Please welcome our new members -*



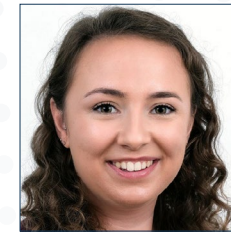
**Lucy Wilford**  
MRTPI,

*Barton Willmore*



**Roger Smith**  
MRTPI,

*Savills*



**Aline Hyde**  
MRTPI,

*Elmbridge Borough Council*

Lucy Wilford is an Associate Planner at Barton Willmore, working principally across the South East. She has 16 years' experience as a Town Planner working in private practice. Lucy's work mainly focuses on residential and specialist accommodation for the elderly.

Lucy has been involved in the promotion of and preparing planning applications for a broad range of sites from brownfield redevelopment to mixed use strategic developments, working with a variety of clients including National Housebuilders, land promoters and Councils.

Through the work she has been engaged with, she has a keen interest in urban design and shaping planning policies which support the delivery of specialist accommodation.

Roger Smith is a Planning Director at Savills in Oxford. He has worked as a town planner since 1984 with experience in local government, house building and in consultancy.

He specialises in the planning promotion of strategic and mixed use sites for a variety of clients including landowners, housing developers and land promoters. Roger has been involved in the organisation of the RTPi South East Oxford Dinners.

Aline is a Senior Planning Officer at Elmbridge Borough Council. She is a Chartered Town Planner and most of her experience has been gained in development management, but she is currently seconded to work on the production of the Borough's new local plan.

Her key interests are improving representation: not only within planning, but also the representation of planners at the 'top table', influenced by her participation in a development scheme for future leaders in local government.

Aline is also a keen promoter of continuing professional development, and enjoys thinking up interesting questions for speakers at events to grapple with!

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# 'Gender mainstreaming'

## key to planning places that work for all, says RTPI

**A gender dimension should be incorporated into all stages of the planning process to ensure benefits for all, a new research paper from the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) has concluded.**

**Women and Planning: creating gender-sensitive urban environments post-Covid-19** argues for the implementation of urban planning policies sensitive to gender-specific needs - known as 'gender mainstreaming' - into all policy, legislative and decision-making practices.

This approach, the report says, would help to ensure that future built environment solutions have equal regard to the experiences of all people irrespective of gender, particularly as the world moves into a post-pandemic recovery period.

However, the study found that the integration of gender mainstreaming into spatial policy-making has been held back by a range of different factors including inadequacies of both the

education and planning systems, which has resulted in gender inequalities going largely undiscussed and hidden from view.

The report, published on International Women's Day 2021, was co-authored by RTPI Policy and Networks Adviser Jenny Divine and Deputy Head of Policy and Research Prof Aude Biquelet-Lock. **Jenny Divine said:**

*"The implementation of gender mainstreaming into every stage of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of urban planning policies, programmes, and projects will ensure that gender equality is enhanced and that all people benefit equally."*

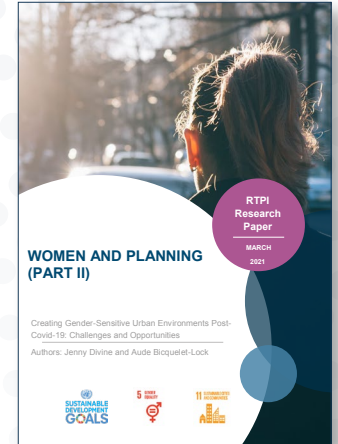
*"There is much work still to be done. Systemic inadequacies in the planning and education systems which were uncovered by our research continue to hinder women's ability to shape policies and progress decisions that have positive implications for gender equality attainment."*

**RTPI President Dr Wei Yang FRTPI said:**

*"As we begin the recovery from the pandemic, there is huge potential to integrate a gender dimension into the place-based initiatives that UK governments are increasingly exploring to facilitate a joined-up and collaborative approach to planning. Incorporating a gender dimension will create opportunities to expose hidden inequalities, break down the gender biases that have been present for too long in the built environment, and create solutions that have regard to the experiences of all people."*

Qualitative data was collected for the research via questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with 50 female and 2 male planners. The majority of respondents were based in the UK but the study also includes the views of respondents based in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the US.

The new report is the second in a series from the RTPI. *Women and Planning: An analysis of gender-related barriers to professional advancement* was published in February 2020.



**Many congratulations to all those nominated as planning's Women of Influence 2021 by The Planner magazine**

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## Get to know me

Kate Green

Senior Planner, Avison Young

Member of the Regional Management Board  
Regional General Assembly representative



### A bit about you

I'm a Chartered Town Planner with 5 years' experience and currently an Associate Planner in Avison Young's London team. I graduated from UWE Bristol, before moving to the West Midlands. I have, more recently, moved to Hampshire and operate within London and the South East.

### Why you chose planning

I originally intended to go to uni and do an undergraduate degree in pure geography but I wasn't particularly sure where that would lead me so I felt like I needed to have some sort of plan.

After a bit of research I stumbled across planning related degrees and the accredited list of university tied up with some I already wanted to go and visit.

I made a point of going to see both the pure geography related degree talks as well as the more planning specific ones. I really liked the idea of being able to shape places and acting as the mediator between different disciplines! That, coupled with a keen interest in Grand Designs and George Clarke's Small Spaces nudged me very much down the planning route.

### What you do in your current job

My current role includes managing a variety of projects for a number of different public and private sector clients within the residential, regeneration, and commercial sectors. This includes the preparation of major planning applications and the promotion of large strategic sites through the emerging Local Plans and Neighbourhood Development Plans.

I also have experience in delivering estate regeneration advice to public sector clients in relation to their existing estate and future operational aspirations.

### What you do when you are not planning

When I'm not working, I'm running. And if I'm not running, I'm probably helping out at my running club where I'm the social and fundraising trustee. It's safe to say it's a very big part of my life, which explains why there's normally at least two pairs of trainers underneath my desk and why my commuting rucksack is so big!



### Why you joined the Committee

My history with the Committee floats back to my West Midlands days. After finishing uni in Bristol I moved to Birmingham where I didn't know many people in the industry or my peer group. I joined the West Midlands YP Committee which led to me getting involved in the RAC and RMB committees. When I moved to Hampshire, I was in a similar position in terms of my network and was very keen to maintain my involvement with the Institute. This has since led me to becoming the General Assembly Representative for the region. My original reasons for volunteering were not only to broaden my network, but because I saw an opportunity to influence and shape the CPD calendar which I think is really important for our members. Not only this and as my role has developed, there's been an increasing opportunity to shape the way the institute is run and to also elevate planning outside of our industry. Victoria Hills has done a fantastic job in getting planning at the forefront of the Government and public's mind and I hope that I can play a part in influencing the national school curriculum and making planning more accessible to those as a career choice at an earlier age so we can help tackle people "falling into" the profession!



# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

A diverse and inclusive profession is central to the future of planning. To be an effective and sustainable profession, we must be genuinely representative of the society in which we work. This includes recognising and addressing the need for broader visibility of diversity at all levels of the profession, from entry to the most senior.

To realise this vision in February 2020 we launched a 10-year action plan - **CHANGE** - which set out key themes and actions that will help make that vision a reality. You can follow progress on the work we are doing here. **CHANGE** was developed by specialist diversity and inclusion consultancy Brook Graham, who found

that while the RTPI performs 'above average' in terms of equality, diversity and inclusivity when compared to others in the built environment sector, there is still much to do. This bespoke **action plan** will help guide both members and employers to work to achieve a more balanced profession.

As part of the **RTPI Corporate Strategy** we have set out a vision:

**To be, and promote the planning profession to be, as diverse as the communities it represents, to act inclusively, treating everyone fairly and seeking to provide a culture which delivers the best outcomes for the diverse society in which and for whom we work.**

Read the **CHANGE** action Plan -



The RTPI Awards for Research Excellence recognise and promote high quality and impactful spatial planning research from RTPI accredited planning schools and planning practitioners in the UK, the Republic of Ireland and internationally. The Awards are intended to:

- Recognise the best spatial planning research from RTPI accredited planning schools and Members;
- Highlight the implications of academic research for policy and practice;
- Recognise the valuable contribution of planning practitioners (in the public and private sectors) to planning research; and
- Promote planning research generally.

All shortlisted and winning entrants will be provided with an RTPI Awards for Research Excellence logo, which can be used on your website, email, social media and promotional materials. This year's ceremony will take place during the virtual opening ceremony of the UK-Ireland Planning Research Conference on 8 September 2021 hosted by the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape at Newcastle University.

**The deadline for submissions is 5pm on Monday 17 May 2021**

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# Net Zero Transport: the role of spatial planning and place-based solutions

This research was carried out by LDA Design, with City Science and Vectos. It explores how different places can achieve an 80% reduction in surface transport emissions by 2030, as part of a pathway to net zero by 2050.

It combines advanced carbon modelling with stakeholder workshops in order to test the impact of forty carbon reduction interventions in four place typologies: a unicentric city, a polycentric conurbation, a regeneration town and a growing county. By setting out an emissions reduction pathway and spatial vision for each typology, it demonstrates the contribution of spatial planning and place-based solutions to transport decarbonisation.

You can [download a PDF version of the report](#) (recommended) or read it below.

The report is accompanied by a [discussion paper](#) on ways to overcome the barriers to net zero transport, and a [methodological appendix](#) which explains the approach to carbon modelling.

**Report authors:** Spencer Powell (LDA Design), Laurence Oakes-Ash (City Science), Paul Curtis (Vectos) and James Harris (Royal Town Planning Institute)

**Report contributors:** Catherine Ham and Frazer Osment (LDA Design), Simon Lusby, Alex Dawn and Dr Stephen Welbourne (City Science), Jonathan Lloyd (Vectos)

**Acknowledgements:** This project was part-sponsored by the RTPi North East region, and supported by the [Transport Planning Society \(TPS\)](#) and [Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation \(CIHT\)](#). The team would like to thank the 40 stakeholders who generously contributed their time and expertise to the eight workshops held during the course of this research. Their names are listed in the PDF report.

The research also benefitted from the oversight of an expert steering group, composed of Lynn Basford MRTPI FCIHT (Basford Powers Ltd and Chartered Town Planner, representing CIHT), Richard Walker (Transport Planning & Strategy Adviser at the Department for Transport, currently on secondment to Leeds University) and Kate Morris (a Chartered Transport Planning Professional and Chartered Engineer, representing the Transport Planning Society).



## Planning for post COVID cities: A text-mining analysis of public views on the future of High Streets and Town Centres.

RTPi champions the power of planning in creating prosperous places and vibrant communities. We have over 25,000 members in the private, public, academic and voluntary sectors.

Using our expertise and research we bring evidence and thought leadership to shape planning policies and thinking, putting the profession at the heart of society's big debates. We set the standards of planning education and professional behaviour that give our members, wherever they work in the world, a unique ability to meet complex economic, social and environmental challenges. We are the only body in the United Kingdom that confers Chartered status to planners, the highest professional qualification sought after by employers in both private and public sectors.

### About this paper

This study explores people's views on post-pandemic cities with a particular focus on the future of high streets and town centres.

### Report authors

*Professor Aude Biquelet-Lock, Deputy Head of Policy and Research, RTPi.* The author is very grateful to *Dr. Anthony Lock* for his help with the technical aspects of this research and to *Jenny Divine* for her diligent proofreading of this report.

[You can download the report here](#)

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## Planning in lockdown



**Luke Smith** is a Chartered Associate Planner at Troy Planning + Design and a member of the RTPI Regional Activities Committee.

### Planning Sans Frontiers? Envisioning the Planning Profession, Post-Pandemic

### Almost exactly one year into the pandemic, Associate Planner, Luke Smith asks how technology and innovation have changed the planning profession, and are these changes here to stay?

Almost exactly a year ago, the planning profession was facing an unprecedented situation. Within a matter of weeks, the Covid-19 pandemic had resulted in offices closing, meetings being cancelled, and decisions put on hold.

Suddenly the big issues, like tackling climate action, building more homes, stimulating growth and confronting social inequality, were dwarfed by basic day-to-day tasks, which became huge challenges. We struggled with the basic legalities of decision making and how to meet legislative procedure.

In May of last year, the RPTI published the ‘[Pragmatic and Prepared for the Recovery](#)’ Research Paper, which looked at the key issues arising due to the pandemic, taken from the responses of more than 1000 RTPI Members, outlining how the profession should respond. The Report highlighted the pressure on LPAs to process new applications during a sustained period of remote working, and concerns from the private sector over missed project deadlines.

As a result, we saw the government implementing measures to adapt, including the automatic extension of planning permissions, virtual platforms for meetings, and publicising planning applications through social media. Nevertheless, concerns over remote working, protocol and statutory procedures remained, with some nervousness as to how long the system could sustain these pressures.

### “Why are all of these Zoom meetings so tiring”?

It’s important to acknowledge that this hasn’t been ‘business as usual’ and the challenges faced across both the public and private sectors have been enormous. However, it has also shown us that planners, by their nature are resilient and adaptable; With the right technology in place, it’s possible to adapt to dramatic changes in working practices in a short time.

I have participated in several successful virtual planning committee meetings, held design workshops with clients and attended online CPD events. It is encouraging to see digital community engagement methods opening a platform to a much wider proportion of the community, particularly those who work full time and have previously struggled to attend meetings, hearings and public inquiries.

We must also not forget those without access to technology who easily become marginalised. The digital tools we use should not inhibit inclusivity and participation across our society. Changes to working practices over the last year have given the profession the opportunity to reassess and share new expectations about flexibility, work-life balance and working conditions. A common response to the benefit of working in a pandemic is the liberation from the long commute and more flexibility in working practices. For all the benefits of less travel, a lack of in-person meetings has certainly opened my eyes to the value of meeting ‘in the flesh’, especially when it’s not possible to read body language or facial expressions over a screen.

Some planners have embraced home working, whilst others will feel completely fatigued by it. I tend to swing from one sentiment to the other! On many occasions, I have ended my day, wondering: “Why are all of these Zoom meetings so tiring”? If it’s not the fixed gaze towards the glare of my laptop screen, then it must be my rigid posture as I try to freeze-frame my head and torso against the background of my home office (with plenty of intellectual reading on the shelf behind me, of course!).

Can the planning profession foster a healthy and inclusive working environment through a digital future? Yes, but technology cannot replace face-to-face interaction. What does “work culture” mean if you spend little to no time with your clients and colleagues? At least for the immediate future, a return to the office will likely be gradual, and the workplace will look very different from before. Masks may still be worn; fewer people will be in the office at any one time, and open plan arrangements may become compulsory. When we do have the opportunity to see each other in person again, I hope we embrace the experience, and not take the occasion for granted.

*(The views expressed by authors are their own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the RTPI)*

## Climate action plan

Climate action underpins the RTPI 2020–2030 corporate strategy. We are determined to assess our climate impact and take action to address it. This is essential to accomplishing our mission “to advance the science and art of planning, working for the long-term common good and wellbeing of current and future generations”.

To realise this ambition, we aim to reach a net-zero position by 2025. This will require us to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions significantly and to offset all residual emissions that we cannot reduce. To achieve this, we have developed a climate action plan to minimise the climate impacts of our own operations and to accelerate collective climate action. Our climate action plan sets four key objectives:

1. To reduce scope 1 and 2 emissions by 80% by 2025
2. To reduce Scope 3 emissions by 45% (per full time employee) by 2030
3. To improve the quantity and quality of emissions data by 2025
4. To promote and inspire climate action among members of the wider planning community



Using the findings of our first greenhouse gas emissions assessment, we have identified the following emission reduction opportunities, which target our four largest sources of emissions.



### Event travel emissions

Decreasing the number of face-to-face events and replacing them with online events to reduce the amount of travel required by RTPI staff, volunteers and event attendees. Where physical events are necessary, continuing to prioritise locations with easy access to public transport hubs.



### Business travel (flights)

Implementing a ban on flights within Great Britain to reduce the emissions resulting from business travel. For example, using train travel instead of flights for a 600km round trip would result in a 70% reduction in emissions.



### Office electricity consumption

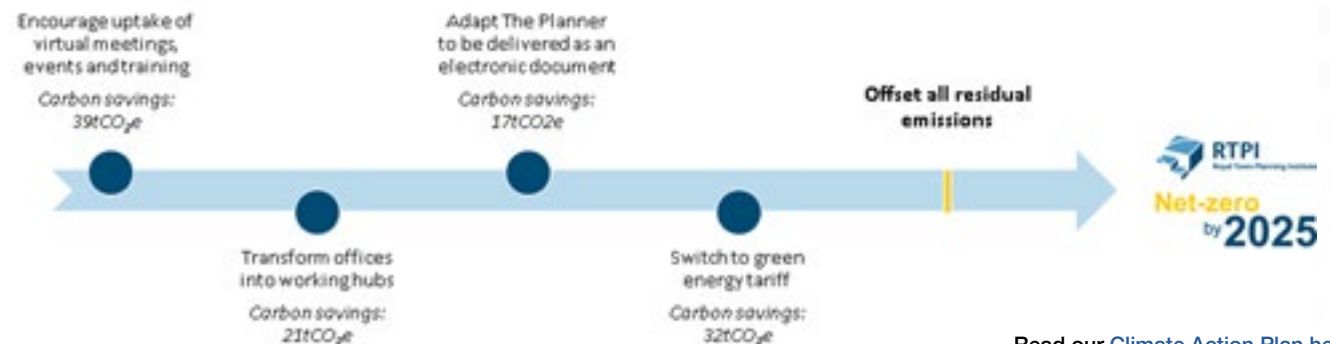
Switching our offices to renewable energy electricity tariffs and improving the energy efficiency of our premises. A renewable energy electricity tariff at our Botolph Lane office would remove 29tCO<sub>2</sub>e from our carbon footprint.



### Bulk mailing

Reducing the emissions associated with the delivery of the Planner magazine by digitising its publication. This would avoid the emission of an estimated 15tCO<sub>2</sub>e based on 2019 figures.

## Our journey to net-zero



Read our Climate Action Plan here:

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# A lockdown apprenticeship

Cara Collier

Planning Policy Technician,  
London Borough of Havering



*Cara studied Geography (BSc) at the University of Southampton for her undergraduate degree. Cara is currently working as a planning policy technician at the London Borough of Havering, while also completing an RTPI apprenticeship to become a chartered town planner.*

**Lockdown has brought with it many lessons. For some, bread making. For me, planning. I started my first professional role, after graduating with a geography degree, in January 2020 at the London Borough of Havering as a planning policy technician.**

I knew very little about planning or local government, but was excited to learn more and find out whether this could be my future career. My line manager Lauren Miller, development planning team leader, was engaging and involved from the start, knowing I was new to planning and was keen to support my progression. Her support has been vital while I was getting to grips with the world of planning, alongside the transition to working from home which came early on in my career.

The chartered town planner apprenticeship route was offered to me at entry point 2 soon after I started at Havering. I thought this was a great opportunity to accelerate my learning and put me on track to become a Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) accredited town planner. I knew this would support my career in the long term, and be a beneficial qualification to allow me to progress into a planner or senior planner role.

Lauren was very supportive of this, and the responsibilities she would undertake alongside it. Guidance offered by the London South Bank University's (LSBU) apprenticeship team helped both Lauren and I to understand fully what was involved and to feel more confident about what to expect, especially due to the university's plans to teach online for the foreseeable future.

I was, at first, apprehensive about the way online learning would work alongside my current role but I settled into it quickly, being so used to attending webinars and training online through Havering, and the new ways of communicating that is now second nature to us all.

The support I have received from Havering has been exceptional, with equipment being supplied to enhance my work-from-home station, IT services helping with any issues or new software needed, and encouragement from many colleagues who have gone through similar journeys of a part-time qualification.

The team at LSBU has also provided extra support, setting up and placing more importance on seminar and working groups to make connections with other students, allowing for more flexible learning arrangements with pre-recorded content and extensive online resources, as well as enthusiastic staff doing what they can to engage with students in these difficult times. This has made my first semester run smoothly, with no doubts that the rest of the apprenticeship will follow suit.

Being able to learn alongside practical working has been a new but important experience. I am able to apply what I learn straight away in my role, while also having some base knowledge and a practical angle to contextualise the topics we are discussing in lectures. I have already learnt so much since my start last January and I am excited about the new modules I have just started on Planning Law and Housing Regeneration.

**An apprenticeship is a real job with training and can be a first step to a career in town planning and Membership of the RTPI.**

[Read more here](#)

# Plant trees in existing streets, not just new developments, says RTPI

- *#ReTreeFit campaign launched to ensure everyone can benefit from 'aesthetic joys, and environmental and wellbeing bonus' of trees*
- *New survey says 96% of planners think trees are very important in their work*
- *Government called on to fund planning authorities to ensure all communities have access to trees and nature, not just those living in new developments*

The Government's focus on the vital role of trees in new housing developments should be expanded to include existing properties, says the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI).

While welcoming plans to ensure residents in new developments have access to 'tree-lined streets', the RTPI points out that all communities should benefit from the many positives of living within close proximity to trees and nature.

To ensure all people, no matter where they live, benefit from the aesthetic joys, positive environmental impact, air quality improvement and wellbeing bonus of trees, the RTPI has today launched a [#ReTreeFit campaign](#), calling on Government to provide the necessary resources to Local Planning Authorities for the retro-fitting of trees in existing spaces and communities.

RTPI President Wei Yang FRTPI said:

*"We were delighted to hear the Housing Secretary saying last year that tree-lined streets should become the norm in new developments, but it is essential that we don't forget about the majority of the population. Trees and nature should be accessible for everyone - not just those who buy a house in a new development.*

*"The contribution of planners will be crucial if trees are to be placed successfully into existing schemes. With many local authorities not having sufficient resources to deal with non-fee earning activities like tree planting, we're asking the UK government to provide funds to allow planners to retro-fit trees in the right places. It's not just for us - it's for our future generations.*

*"I invite everyone to get involved on social media with our [#ReTreeFit](#) campaign today."*

A [recent RTPI survey](#) found that planners overwhelmingly support a nationwide push for tree planting in both new developments and existing communities. 96% of respondents said that trees are important to their work in creating healthy, attractive, environmentally and climatically sustainable places.

There was also agreement among respondents that trees cannot simply be placed into existing developments without thought. The contribution of planners and local authority tree experts will be vital to identify the optimal solution for each space to ensure residents have greenery of some form, as well as trees located within easy reach.



## Meet the Kent Young Planners Steering group



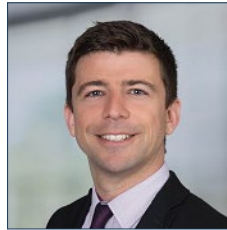
**Molly How**  
Planner, Barton Willmore

*Co-chair*

Molly is a Planner for Barton Willmore, based in West Malling. Previously she has worked for a Local Authority, primarily as consultee on National Park planning applications.

She holds a Master of Science (MSc) in Spatial Planning from University College London and has a particular interest in urban regeneration projects.

Outside of work Molly enjoys horse riding, travelling and music.



**Graham Wilson**  
Senior Planner, Savills

*Co-chair*

Graham has been actively participating in the Kent Young Planners since 2016. He is now a Senior Planner at Savills in Sevenoaks having progressed through the graduate scheme, but has also previously worked as an intern for CgMs Retail Planning Team in London.

Prior to a career in planning he worked professionally in winter sports in Canada and New Zealand, at one point doing 17 winters in a row. He has a particular interest in stadia and infrastructure planning, and holds a Master in Planning and Development from the University of Reading.

Outside of work Graham will never be found far from a ski slope, but also enjoys football, cycling, swimming, and travelling the globe.

## The RTPI South East Young Planners' Networks organise free social, CPD & APC training events throughout the year.

### There are four local groups in the region

- Kent Young Planners Network - covers Kent area
- South Coast Young Planners Network (SCYPN) - covers West Sussex, East Sussex, Hampshire, Isle of Wight
- Surrey Young Planners Network – covers Surrey area
- Thames Valley Young Planners Network (TVYPN) – covers Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire

### Do I count as a 'young planner'?

A young planner is any student, licentiate or corporate member of the RTPI with up to 10 years' experience post-qualification.

### What do young planners do?

Young Planners have a very important role to play in promoting planning to people during all stages of their careers. There are lots of different things Young Planners do including:

- Making presentations to universities on the role of planning
- Social events including drinks nights, BBQs, pub quizzes in a range of locations across the region
- Seminars on topics of interest in planning

### Why should you get involved?

RTPI South East Young Planners' Networks have an opportunity to:

- Foster professional relationships
- Network with other professions
- Develop soft skills in project management and leadership
- Contributes to career progression
- Promote Planning
- Inspire the next generation
- Share experiences
- Support L-APC Candidates
- Have fun and socialise with like-minded people

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**Harriet Richardson**  
Associate Planner,  
Batcheller Monkhouse

*Kent Young Planners  
Network representative*



**Tom Gilbert**  
Principal Planner,  
Maidstone Borough  
Council



**Nicholas Webb**  
Apprentice Planner,  
Batcheller Monkhouse

Harriet Richardson is an Associate Planner at Batcheller Monkhouse and has a BA(Hons) and MSc in Town Planning from Oxford Brookes University, becoming a Chartered Town Planner in 2016. Harriet launched the RTPI Kent Young Planners' Network and has co-chaired it with Tom for 4 years.

She is also a member of the RTPI South East Regional Activities Committee. Harriet has extensive private sector planning experience, having worked both for a housebuilder and as a planning consultant within a multidisciplinary property firm.

Outside of work she enjoys spending time with her husband and toddler, walking, cycling, and playing netball.

Tom is a founder member of the Kent Young Planners Network alongside Harriet. He is a Principal Planner for Maidstone Borough Council in the Strategic Planning Team. Previously he has worked in unitary and county level authorities as well as private consultancy.

His experience includes: Local Plan development, planning applications, development appraisals and stakeholder engagement. He has a particular interest in health and infrastructure planning. He holds a Master of Civic Design (MCD) in Town Planning from the University of Liverpool.

Outside of work Tom enjoys running, cycling, skiing and exploring new places.

Nick is an Apprentice Planner for Batcheller Monkhouse, based in Tunbridge Wells and is a new member of the Kent Young Planners Network. He holds a Bachelors Degree (MA(hons)) in History from the University of Warwick, where in his final year he studied the history of planning which spurred his interest in the field.

He is currently undertaking his Masters at London South Bank University, through the RTPI Chartered Town Planner Apprenticeship and is set to graduate in autumn 2021.

Outside of work Nick continues to enjoy a keen interest in history and is avid swimmer and rugby fan.

## Upcoming South East Young Planners' events:

### Ask the expert - LEPS and Bounds

*Thursday, 06 May 2021 (12:00pm - 1:00pm)*

This event is brought to you by the Thames Valley Young Planners' Network. Local Economic Partnerships (LEPs) play an important role in shaping the growth of our cities and towns. This session will explore how OXLEP and SEMLEP retain and attract businesses in the Thames Valley region, and how their work interconnects with planning. This event would give Young Planners a chance to learn from leaders of LEPs and get involved in the conversation at a regional level.

**Confirmed speakers:** Hilary Chipping, Chief Executive, SEMLEP  
Sebastian Johnson, Head of Innovation, OxLEP

### Ask an expert: Transforming the Thames Estuary

*Tuesday, 11 May 2021 (4:00pm - 5:00pm)*

This event is brought to you by the Kent Young Planners' Network. The Thames Estuary is South East England's biggest growth opportunity. However, the scale and diversity of the area presents a complex challenge for planners and developers. Barton Willmore will provide an overview of existing and proposed projects within the Thames Estuary, before answering questions based on their experience. The long-term nature of these projects will influence the future professional and personal lives of young planners in the South East of England. It is therefore important for young planners to understand the challenges of strategic development in this location and how positive planning and place-making can help to overcome these challenges.

Interested in joining  
the Regional Young  
Planners' steering  
group?

**Please contact:**  
[Southeast@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:Southeast@rtpi.org.uk)





# RTPI Awards for Planning Excellence 2021 finalists announced

Congratulations to all of our finalists for the RTPI Awards for Planning Excellence 2021

**This year's national ceremony will be taking place on our new virtual platform, The Awards Room by Evessio.**

It's a fantastic virtual experience that not only allows you to watch the ceremony but also still network with other professionals within the room; all are welcome to attend, even if you're not nominated.

The Awards Room allows you to 'sit' at a table and chat with your colleagues, private messaging with other guests attending the ceremony, as well as video chats.

The [Awards Room](#) will open at 4pm and the ceremony will begin at 4.30pm so be sure to get dressed up and grab a drink of choice to celebrate the very best of the best in the planning profession.

We will be recognising the most outstanding projects, teams and people across 15 categories and the Silver Jubilee Cup will be awarded to the entry judged to be the most outstanding from the nine project category winners.

To see more about how it all works, watch a show around of the virtual [platform here](#). Please contact [awards@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:awards@rtpi.org.uk) if you have any queries.

Find out more about the projects, teams and individuals including '[Planning Heroes in a Pandemic](#)' who made the esteemed list in our finalists' [brochure here](#).

Thank you once again to everyone who entered and big thanks to headline sponsor **AECOM**.

For the latest news, check #RTPIAwards on social media and follow us [@RTPIPlanners](#).

To relive the excitement of the 2020 ceremony, [click here](#).

Projects and individuals from the South East region who made the final list:

**New Headquarters for CABI** submitted by *Ridge and Partners LLP*

**Circle Health Rehabilitation Hospital** submitted by *David Lock Associates Ltd and Bryden Wood*

**Bicester Heritage** submitted by *Bicester Motion Limited*

**Campbell Wharf, Milton Keynes** submitted by *Bidwells*

**Hyas Associates** submitted by *Hyas Associates*

**Great Kneighton** submitted by *Countryside*

**Daniel Young**, *Portsmouth City Council*

**Jeffrey Ng**, *West Berkshire Council*

Headline sponsor:

**AECOM**

Tickets for the virtual ceremony on **29 April** are now available to book.

# RTPI International Strategy 2021 - 2030

The RTPI International Strategy 2021 - 2030 promotes the value of planning internationally as a lever for advancing a prosperous, fair, sustainable and peaceful world, in alignment with the mission of the United Nations and the main international agreements on climate change and sustainable development.

It supports the RTPI in leading globally as a professional body shaping a positive future for the common good by coordinating the Institute's engagement with global challenges.

Independence from external influence, transparency, openness and strong professional standards are the foundations of the Institute's good reputation. These principles will underpin our efforts to establish planning as a key part of the solutions to global challenges, in pursuit of long-term, sustainable, inclusive and fair outcomes for all.

The RTPI International Strategy is centred on:

- a **VISION** for planning as a positive force for global sustainable development;
- a **MISSION** to empower members to lead our action internationally.

Based on the Corporate Strategy's four pillars, the International Strategy identifies four key aims:

1. Promote the value of RTPI membership internationally.
2. Support planning knowledge globally.
3. Raise the profile of planning for global challenges.
4. Diversity and inclusivity through internationalisation.

One high level objective specifies the expected outcomes in each of these areas, guiding the Institute's action across the delivery of our services so that RTPI members are empowered to support global sustainable development and climate action wherever they are. Establishing internationally focussed groups which are part of global planning communities across different countries will underpin the Institute's internationalisation and offer a key opportunity for involving members based outside of the UK and Ireland.

The International Strategy has the ambition to support members and society at large in using planning as an instrument to make the bold and necessary moves needed to put the world on a path of sustainable, equitable and inclusive development. It will be delivered through the projects detailed in the RTPI Corporate Strategy Implementation Plan and in alignment with other relevant RTPI strategies.

Vision

*“By 2030, RTPI members will have formed, convened and supported inclusive internationally focussed groups giving decisive contributions to fair and inclusive global sustainable development, and promoting planning as a key component in the solutions to rapid urbanisation and climate change”*

Read  
more  
here >

Get in touch to join  
or get more  
information on the  
South East & London  
International group

Please contact:  
[Southeast@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:Southeast@rtpi.org.uk)



# Are planning enforcement teams under threat?

By Neill Whittaker MRTPI, chairman of NAPE

Planning enforcement services are under more pressure than ever. Local residents are more demanding, with the recent lockdowns amplifying strength of feeling between neighbours. More construction, encouraged by central government, results in more unauthorised development.

**The ongoing housing crisis adds a further layer to the issue and incentivises rogue landlords to convert properties into substandard flats, very often provided to people on housing benefit who feel they have no alternative but to accept substandard accommodation.**

Furthermore, the frequently changing rules over Permitted Development Rights and changes to the Use Classes Order mean that there is an increase in enforcement complaints from local residents who want officers to check development complies with numerous limitations and conditions. But, worryingly the National Association of Planning Enforcement (NAPE) has recently received feedback from its members that pressures on local government budgets could be having a severe impact on planning enforcement teams.

It appears that some local authorities might be considering removing their planning enforcement services budgets altogether or reducing the service to 'essential service only'. It is not clear what 'essential service only' means, but the suggestion is that this will encompass either electing to only enforce certain breach types or only take enforcement action on a select number of cases.

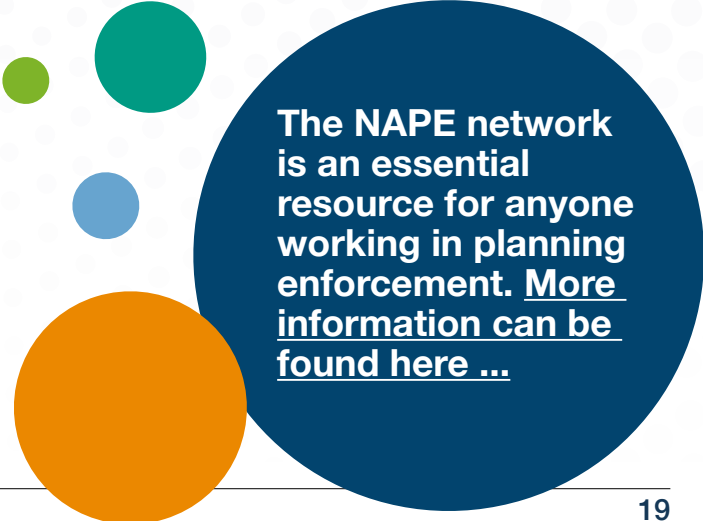
This problem seems to be particularly acute where planning enforcement teams are separate from planning services teams and planning services budgets are therefore not supplementing planning enforcement services. Even where planning enforcement teams are within the same team as development management, the financial pressures on enforcement teams are serious.

## Discretionary service

At the heart of it is the fact that local authorities can no longer carry out discretionary services due to pressures on budgets. Planning enforcement has long been classified as a 'discretionary service' and not a statutory duty and so will be one of the first services to be culled. However, it is of course the case that councils have a duty to investigate planning breaches and it is only the taking of further action that is discretionary. Labelling it a 'discretionary service' is therefore a misnomer. In my view legislators never saw the need to expressly list planning enforcement as a statutory function because it was so obvious that planning services (a statutory function) cannot function without planning enforcement.

Most importantly, the purpose of planning enforcement is to uphold the integrity of the planning system. With no or ineffective planning enforcement, there would be no reason to secure planning permission from the council's planning services team thereby removing the need for the planning system as a whole.

Planning enforcement is increasing in complexity and enforcement officers need to have their wits about them more than ever before with appeals being made on at least half of all notices issued. Properly trained enforcement officers are increasingly in short supply. For all these reasons and more, it is essential to ensure that planning enforcement budgets can support the provision of the service.



**The NAPE network is an essential resource for anyone working in planning enforcement. [More information can be found here ...](#)**

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In response to the budgetary pressures it appears that some local authorities are prepared to risk the challenge of potential judicial reviews and ombudsman complaints for failure to take enforcement action rather than spend precious resource on staffing planning enforcement teams. This is a dire situation.

Reducing or removing planning enforcement budgets altogether may seem like a short term win in these difficult times but we cannot believe that any such reduction or removal will be acceptable to anybody in the longer term. However, by that time the damage will have been done and unauthorised development might have become immune, changing the built and natural environment irreparably.

The planning white paper seems to support the strengthening of planning enforcement services and perhaps even elevating planning enforcement to a statutory duty. Reducing or removing budgets at this stage seem to be setting Councils up for failure as those Councils will be unable to provide the service apparently envisaged in the White Paper.

NAPE will be requesting the RTPI to write to the Local Government Association, MHCLG and Chief Planners to stress the importance of the planning enforcement service in the context of a robust planning system and to strongly dissuade LPAs from reducing or removing planning enforcement budgets.

Neill Whittaker joined Ivy Legal in June 2014 as a planning associate and is the chairman of the National Association of Planning Enforcement (NAPE). Neill is a full member of the Royal Town Planning Institute (MRTPI) and holds a masters degree in Planning Policy and Practice.



## RTPI Trust

The RTPI Trust is a registered charity, independent from the RTPI. It exists to provide support to members of RTPI and their families who are in genuine financial hardship. This can include:

- “In kind” assistance, such as through advice, to help a member and their family through a crisis.
- Financial support in the form of grants for specific items of expenditure, which are regarded as needed to support the welfare of the member and their family.
- Grant aid to support research that provides a public benefit in the field of Town and Country Planning.

The Trust may also support individual students who are seeking a career in town planning but have barriers to undertaking the studies they need because of genuine financial problems. Please note, however, that the Trust only considers cases of extreme financial hardship; student debt generally is unfortunately part of the current experience for most students.

### Can you help us?

A donation to the RTPI Trust would be greatly appreciated. If you wish to make a donation please consider doing so through Gift Aid by [completing this form](#). You will then be automatically redirected to our donations page with our bank account details.

Gift Aid allows the Trust to claim tax relief on your donation meaning that for a basic rate taxpayer every £1 donated will attract another 25p from HM Revenue and Customs. If you wish to make a donation [without Gift Aid please click here](#).

Please note that we currently only accept donations by bank transfer. [Read here on how the Trust has helped members and their families](#).

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# We are delighted to announce the launch of our 2021 RTPI Online Events programme

This is where you can access the most cutting edge events on planning. Brought to you by our Regions and Nations, this new 6-month calendar of webinars replaces our face to face Regional and National event programmes, and brings all our events under one roof, keeping you connected and up to date digitally, wherever you are based.

The RTPI Online Events series is **FREE** to members. Non-member tickets cost **£25**.

The RTPI South East 2021 online programme provides free CPD for members. Undertaking CPD is an important part of maintaining your competence as a professional. The CPD programme could count towards your minimum 50 hours of CPD activity in each two year period. Read more about CPD requirements and assessment as an RTPI member.

## Plan Making in the South East

*Tuesday, 23 March 2021 (12:30pm – 1:30pm)*

This seminar is aimed at those interested in the preparation of Local Plans in the context of change and uncertainty. Whether a plan is 'almost there' or at the early stages this seminar will examine key issues relating to the development of Plans and policies. Speakers will also provide an insight into the role of Neighbourhood Planning as part of the Planning Framework.

Through a combination of expert speakers and discussion, you will:

- Learn about the process and lessons from Neighbourhood Planning, including how it can help to deliver locally-specific place visions.
- Hear about the challenges of preparing a Local Plan under a strict timetable
- Understand ways in which Local Plans can deliver a vision for a place's future
- Appreciate different methods of engagement for plan making; and
- Receive an update on relevant preparation of local plans

**Confirmed speakers:**

- **Chair: Ellie Gingell**, Cherwell District Council
- **Michael Moore**, Milton Keynes Council and **David Carlisle**, AECOM
- **Richard Kimblin QC**, No5
- **Karen Britton**, Canterbury City Council

**Meeting the South East housing needs - a focus on the greenbelt**

*Monday, 24 May 2021 (12:30pm – 1:30pm)*

As pressure for housing continues to build nationally, the provision of well located, affordable homes to meet demand remains a key issue. This event will consider the role of planning in seeking to meet the housing challenges in the green belt areas.

**Speakers will discuss the**

- Demand and supply, barriers to delivery, and potential solutions in the green belt
- The environmental impact on the green belt
- Access to the countryside and impact of travel

**Through a combination of expert speakers and discussion, you will:**

- Housing challenges in the green belt areas
- Update on relevant Case law
- Understand the environmental impact on the green belt

**Biodiversity and ecological conservation**

*Thursday, 25 June 2021 (12:30pm – 1:30pm)*

The South East has a cherished and diverse range of habitats and species, from internationally designated forests and wetland to back-gardens and pocket parks. The development process has a critical role in biodiversity planning from surveying, mitigation and enhancement.

**Our speakers will consider:**

- How policy and development management can help protect wildlife and deliver biodiversity net gains, including interim policies ahead of the Environment Bill
- Recent projects demonstrating best practice in the region, together with their thoughts on the benefits of strategic planning.
- Case law

**Through a combination of expert speakers and discussion, you will learn:**

- Best practice examples in the south east
- Understanding of how best to interpret ecological and biodiversity related strategic and development management planning policies
- Update on relevant Case law
- The objectives of Biodiversity Net Gain and interim policies