A leading planning consultant has just published a follow-up report showing that the housing needs for Birmingham could top 150,000 over the period from 2011-31. Barton Willmore, acting for a consortium of housebuilders and developers will be submitting the evidence to Birmingham City Council as part of their case on the emerging Birmingham Development Plan – but the information is bound to have much wider implications on the sub-region.

The revised figures for Birmingham are well above the 100,000 figure (2011-31) anticipated in the initial Barton Willmore work undertaken in January 2013 and nearly 3 times the 51,100 figure planned within the emerging Birmingham Plan and it will send shock waves around both the Metropolitan and shire district authorities, most of which have either recently adopted their Local Plans – or are nearing adoption.

The new study distributes the projected 84,000 – 102,000 ‘overspill’ between the surrounding metropolitan and shire district Councils in order to demonstrate the implications on the wider housing market. This has been done on the basis of migration flows, commuting patterns, market signals and job growth forecasts and could result in some Districts, such as Solihull having to more than double their housing requirement in the future.

These figures are likely to be controversial for the West Midlands’ authorities and raise serious issues for on-going discussions under the ‘Duty to Co-operate’. The study acknowledges that the exercise does not take into account deliverability factors, but Barton Willmore take the view that the study represents a ‘robust starting point’ to help inform the wider strategic decisions about how to accommodate unmet housing needs from Birmingham City.

The new Barton Willmore study comes in advance of a sub-regional Housing Needs Study currently underway by Peter Brett Associates which was commissioned by the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP in late 2013 to inform the emerging LEP Spatial Framework and also future Local Plan reviews. The initial report from the PBA study is likely to be issued in April, with the final report due out in May.

One way or another, it looks like being a busy year for everyone in reaching an agreed set of housing figures which can provide the grounding for emerging and future Local Plans.
Chair’s report - Waking up with Evan

It’s been an interesting first couple of months for me as Chair. In early January, I had the privilege, with Sandra Ford, of helping to mark and celebrate John Acres’ ‘Outstanding Service Award’ in the region, at Turley’s Birmingham office, before he went off to London with Hector Pearson to receive official recognition at the General Assembly. On the evening, John (a self-confessed hoarder) had on display his extensive array of Tripwire magazines and, to those interested, with a gap in their collection, was offering back copies — much to the relief of his partner, Jenny, it seemed!

We also took the opportunity, at John’s bash, to outline the events we have lined up for our Centenary year in 2014 — the extensive CPD programme, the Summer Ball, the Autumn Reception and the ‘centenary-specific’ items, too. After the presentation, I found myself having to explain to a rather bemused but amused group of Young Planners what I meant by ‘swinging yer pants’, in the context of the Ball — this year to be held at Warwickshire CCC’s Edgbaston Ground. The YP Chair, Claire Lucey, seemed particularly taken with this expression. Could be quite a do…

Then there was the Big Debate, hosted this year by the RTPI, and held at Birmingham City University’s new Parkside building. When I learned that HS2 was the topic of choice, I must admit I felt a slight, inward groan, but it was popular amongst the other participating institutions, and the promise of one of my Radio 4 heroes, Evan Davis, chairing the event, rekindled my enthusiasm. I’m not sure whether the discussion actually changed many people’s minds — I think three declared they had shifted their position on the night — but it turned out to be a good airing of views and a master class in how to cajole and control a packed room of people. (I wonder whether he’s available for Local Plan Inquiries?)

In front of such a large audience, my introductory contribution was mercifully small. Yet, within only a couple of minutes’ worth of babble, I’d managed to re-title my own professional institution, accuse the BCU fire alarm of being sexist, and mildly insinuate a more familiar relationship with the esteemed Chair of the debate than could ever be the case. Thank goodness the RTPI’s Chief Executive, Trudi Elliott, was back on home turf to wrap up proceedings.

As I left the venue, one of the ICE organisers (yes, they have several, highly professional administrators, but can only attempt to match the efficiency of our very own Sue Griffith-Jones) asked how long I’d been Chair. ‘Oh dear’, I thought, ‘was it really that obvious?!’ Nervously, I admitted that it was my first month. He joked that, with this event, I may well have had my high-point in office already… I’d like to think not. It’s been a good start, but I feel there is still plenty to look forward to this coming year.

And some good may have come of all this. The Young Planners have asked whether I’d be question master at their Centenary Quiz. Apparently, Evan Davis is busy. So, be warned! And I’ll let you know of my decision well before you have to confirm attendance and buy tickets…

Dan Roberts
RTPI West Midlands Chair

Centenary News

It’s the RTPI Centenary year and there are bags of initiatives going on in the region.

The Centenary Ball
On 13th June, the RTPI West Midlands Centenary Ball will be held at Edgbaston Cricket Ground. Tables are selling out fast but we are still looking for more entrants for the two key awards (See facing page).

Centenary cycle ride
On 22nd June, the West Midlands RTPI is organising a celebratory cycle ride, focusing in on Centenary Square in Birmingham, with cyclists radiating from all over the region. Further details will be available from Mike Vout in the next issue of Tripwire.

Have a look at the Centenary timeline

New Towns Come of Age
This Centenary project has set out to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of and learning from the UK New Towns programme. Given current levels of interest in the possibilities of further New Towns, this is very timely. By happy coincidence, three of the designated New Towns are also celebrating their 50th anniversaries — Redditch in our Region alongside Runcorn and Washington. Each has had its detractors and controversies. But each has become a confident and, in the current jargon, sustainable place with communities that are keen to celebrate!

During her visit to the Region, Cath Ranson as RTPI President will join the Redditch celebrations and present their special Centenary ‘New Towns Come of Age’ Certificate. Celebrations in Redditch have already started with a concentration of events around the actual designation date in April.

We should not of course forget the other New Town in the region at Dawley/ Telford. The regional activities programme includes a visit in May with a definite ‘new towns’ flavour. The trip will start with a look at Bournville and will include the ‘new Bournville’ at Lightmoor in Telford — so participants will be able to make their own assessment of if and how the new has improved on the old!
The Ambassadors

Not to be confused with the BBC 2 programme of the same name, the RTPI Ambassador initiative (branded under the wider banner of Future Planners) is now up and running.

Although the project has been established as part of the 2014 RTPI Centenary, it is very much intended that the initiative will continue into the future.

Fourteen RTPI members working and/or living in the West Midlands have already registered as ambassadors (thank you). By the end of February each ambassador will have been provided with an ‘ambassador pack’ which includes a PowerPoint presentation forming the structure of a school ‘lesson plan’ and an impressive 3 minute video explaining the wonders and challenges of the world and how and where planners have a role in navigating its complexities.

Planning, it seems, is rather like the Monty Python ‘what did the Romans ever do for us?’ sketch.

‘…well, apart from helping to control the excesses of market self interest, helping to protect valuable landscapes, enabling and promoting balanced economic growth, mediation, helping to create decent places to live, helping us to have better healthier lives, helping us to have access to jobs…what has Planning ever done for us?’

In its own way, the ambassador initiative helps to communicate the message that perhaps Planning might just have a role in making the world a better place and in doing so – inspire young people to become Future Planners.

Although the region is currently not actively seeking more ambassadors – if you are interested in becoming an ambassador then please contact either the RTPI by going to their web site http://www.rtpi.org.uk or by contacting the West Midlands regional ambassador co-ordinator.

Michael Vout
Michael.vout@telford.gov.uk
Vice Chair

Award Season arrives

Did you watch the BAFTAs and marvel at the glamour and glitz of Hollywood’s red carpet, well, now it is your turn! The RTPI West Midlands Centenary Ball at Edgbaston Cricket Ground will be an opportunity to celebrate successful planning projects in the West Midlands.

At the Ball we will be awarding the Regional Award for Planning Excellence and a special Centenary Project Award. We will be looking for those projects that have stood out, inspired and continue to inspire.

The Centenary Award is aimed at projects that have stood or are standing the test of time and are a good example of how planning has played a positive role in the success of development and influencing social, economic and environmental improvement. The project can be an established development, planning document, a new project or one that has been completed and is maturing.

For the Regional Award, we will automatically judge the submissions for the National Award but if you missed the deadline then here is your chance. There is no requirement for entries to be submitted by RTPI members, although the central role played by the planning profession is critical. All types of project are equally eligible, including physical development, strategies and guidance, processes and research documents. The project should have been substantially completed during the past year or so.

Full details of the judging criteria can be found on the enclosed sheet. If you want to be involved in the judging process we would also like to hear from you. Entries and interest in judging should be sent to paul.harris@stratford-dc.gov.uk

There are a limited number of tickets remaining. For further information please contact westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk

We would like to thank our sponsors for their support of this special event: No5 Chambers, Turley Associates, JMP, Alliance Planning and DLA Piper.

Laura Smith

It never rains but it pours

My very first edition of Tripwire (no.1) highlighted the tensions faced by local authorities and developers in the aftermath of the 2000 winter floods, following the wettest autumn on record.

These floods came hard on the heels of the 1998 floods when both Leamington and Stratford upon Avon were badly affected.

There was speculation that development on the flood plains was responsible for the flooding – so the planners and developers were to blame.

Wind forward a decade or so and in 2014, after the wettest January on record, we have again suffered devastating floods, both in the West Midlands and on the Somerset levels and the Thames Basin. This time however the bête noire is the Environment Agency – the very organisation which is helping victims of flooding.

Of course, politicians in their ‘wellies’ need to find a scapegoat when they are under pressure and Lord Smith (Chairman of the EA) as a former Labour Minister was bound to be a ‘sitting duck’.

In reality, with so much rainfall, no amount of flood defences could have prevented the devastation however an interesting fact to ‘come out in the wash’ on Radio 4’s Today programme, was that The Environment Agency plan for the Somerset Levels issued in 2009 proposed increasing the level of flooding on the ‘Levels’ to restore wetland habitats and transfer the impact of flooding from the towns to the countryside.

It would seem then that the debate has shifted from the tensions between development and flood protection (and housing being built on flood plains) to water management issues and whether the EA should dredge the watercourses or preserve the sanctity of wetland habitats.

Meanwhile, in the West Midlands, the River Severn, the longest watercourse in the country has so far managed to avoid wholesale inundation of towns and villages and loss of life, through the use of demountable barriers (the first of their kind in the country installed in 2002 after the last major floods) at places like Upton upon Severn and Bewdley. Perhaps we just have to accept that with more dramatic changes in weather patterns we may have to get used to more frequent flooding events.
Pride in Planning

Pride in planning was the theme of Peter Geraghty’s Valedictory address at last month’s General Assembly, when he stood down at the end of his Presidential year. On 10th January he handed over to Cath Ranson, only the fourth woman to hold the post since the RTPI was born 100 years ago. This is a summary version of his speech.

Peter began by quoting Abercrombie who once said that ‘without satisfactory public relations the best laid plans will fail’ a salutary lesson from someone who produced a Plan for London in 1940. Peter concluded that this year has reinforced his view that Abercrombie was right. ‘Planning practice begins and ends with people’.

In commenting on the many planning achievements he had visited in his Presidential year, he focused specifically on the 2012 Olympics, which had brought pride to the nation, but where the role of planners had perhaps been somewhat overlooked. The development had been given a Joint RTPI Presidents’ award between himself and Colin Haylock, his predecessor. However, in contrast to the Olympics, he also cited Kings Heath Village Square in Birmingham which despite being a very small scheme, had engendered a huge sense of pride and community spirit. Although modest, he said, it was very effective in influencing local peoples’ perception of what planning can do for them.

‘That is why planning is more than just about buildings and infrastructure. Great places and sustainable communities come about as a result of skilled input and expertise from professionals with a passion and commitment to what they do and an ambition to make peoples’ lives better; and I have seen great examples of that commitment’.

‘This year marks 100 years of professional practice. We should take pride in this work which is why in travelling the length and the breath of this country I have sought to showcase our achievements. When I started my Presidential Year there were those who wondered what there was to be proud about the planning system. However, that entirely misses the point, it’s not the system that counts, it’s the people and the professional practice we should be proud of’.

Peter noted that Dame Evelyn Sharp, Deputy Secretary in the Ministry and Town & County Planning in 1969 had once commented; “Sometimes in moments of despair one wonders in the Ministry whether planning is possible at all, or at least whether it is worth the effort – and the abuse. But of course if we didn’t have it we should have to invent it”.

Peter reflected that ‘there seems to be an overwhelming desire to reinvent the planning system. But as practitioners we need a stable planning system, one which can demonstrate the added value which planning brings; a system that induces confidence from our citizens and from the business world alike’. As he had said at his inauguration, ‘We act as society’s conscience. It is a hugely difficult role and one that does attract criticism. Despite this we must never shy away from the important vocation’.

Cath Ranson inaugurated as new President

Taking up the theme of ‘Pride in planning’, Cath Ranson, the new RTPI Present, pledged that we will have an exceptional centenary year in which we can be proud of the Institute, proud of planners and proud of planning.

She paid tribute to Peter Geraghty who she said had been an extremely popular and very effective President. And his ‘proud of planning’ initiative has been so effective in reconnecting thousands of members to a pride in planning and in their achievements. It is an initiative, she said, that has is now gaining international momentum. Let’s have a global ‘pride in planning’ she suggested.

Cath commented that ‘exactly 100 years ago this month the Institute truly flamed into being when the pioneers met for an inaugural dinner beginning with our first president Thomas Adams. Our founders knew there was more to life than just engineering. More to life than just surveying. And more to life than just architecture’. So town planning was born.

As planners we must grasp the opportunity that the Centenary provides:

• to improve public, interdisciplinary and Government understanding of the power of planning for good;
• to empower the Institute by more active member engagement;
• to reinforce the Institute’s role in leading thinking and brokering dialogue
• to set the context for the long term vision of the profession for our second century
• to be proud of Planners and proud of Planning

Cath Ranson is currently employed as Head of Development Plans and Conservation in Pembrokeshire County Council.
Neighbourhood Plan News

Tripwire has been following the path of two key Neighbourhood plans over the past 3 years since the Localism Act was passed – an urban NP at Balsall Heath in Birmingham and a rural NP in Much Wenlock in Shropshire. In April 2011, both Balsall Heath and Much Wenlock were chosen by the Government as two of the 200 ‘vanguard’ areas to pilot Neighbourhood Planning and the work done so far has helped guide the Government’s thinking.

Balsall Heath, Birmingham: Balsall Heath Neighbourhood Planning Forum formally applied to Birmingham City Council in 2012 to be recognised as a Neighbourhood Forum and in February 2013, Balsall Heath Neighbourhood Planning Forum was formally designated by BCC with a slightly amended Neighbourhood Plan boundary than originally envisaged.

The draft NDP has now been prepared and was consulted upon for a period of 8 weeks from September to November 2013. This provided stakeholders with an opportunity to comment on the proposals in the plan. The Forum encouraged everyone to contribute to the preparation of the NDP, particularly those who live and work in the area.

Joe Holyoak, who has led the project from the outset commented ‘At last after 3 years we are nearly there. Much credit should go to our planning aid volunteer Richard Hammersley, who has taken the brunt of the tedious and extensive revision of the draft plan. We completed our pre-submission consultation in November and since then (mainly Richard) has been revising it making additions and putting all the pieces together’.

The Forum has successfully applied to Locality for additional Planning Aid assistance to do a rehearsal independent examination on the Plan before it is submitted to BCC. This will take place next month and is intended to identify any issue that might appear at the actual examination. Joe concluded ‘If we can keep to our timetable, it is hoped that the referendum could be in June’.

The Draft NDP can be viewed on the Forum’s website. www.planning balsallheath.info.

Much Wenlock: The Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan project was launched in November 2011. Following extensive public involvement, Much Wenlock’s Neighbourhood Development Plan was submitted to Shropshire Council, after its approval by the Town Council on 25th April 2013.

The preparation of the Plan was finished last autumn and, after a public hearing in the autumn, it has now passed the milestone of an independent assessment. The examiner has given a ringing endorsement to the Plan’s approach to managing future development pressures, including its innovative proposals for meeting local needs for affordable housing.

Following the Hearing the Examiner asked for further matters to be clarified. Having responded to these matters the Examiner has concluded that, subject to the modifications proposed in his Report, the Neighbourhood Plan for Much Wenlock should proceed to referendum. The referendum will be held by the Town Council in May/June.

Rolleston upon Dove: However in East Staffordshire which has the 5th largest number of Neighbourhood Plans ‘on the books’ in the country, tension has arisen in the village of Rolleston upon Dove where the Neighbourhood Plan has rejected one of the emerging East Staffordshire Local Plan sites. This has resulted in an application on the site being refused by Members against officers’ advice and the developer taking the matter to appeal.

The application for 100 homes was rejected on the basis of ‘prematurity’ over fears that, if approved, the local community would abandon the area’s neighbourhood plan, which is due to go to a referendum shortly. The appeal Inquiry is due to be heard on 4th March 2014 in Burton Town Hall and is expected to last for 4 days. This could set an interesting precedent about whether emerging Local Plans take precedence over emerging Neighbourhood Plans – bearing in mind that the latter are supposed to conform to the former. However, once approved, Neighbourhood Plans can take precedence over Local Plans on local issues, provided they are in general conformity. So where does this leave Localism – we shall have to wait and see!

Planning Aid Regional Volunteers Meeting

The West Midlands Planning Aid Sub-group is keen to establish a dialogue with people who have said that they are, or might like to become, a planning aid volunteer within the region.

They are therefore organising an initial meeting with the aim of:

- providing an update on current planning aid practice and thinking;
- celebrating regional activity over the last 40 years;
- understanding the skills, expectations and training needs of volunteers;
- getting views on what we might be able to do within the region outside the neighbourhood planning work which currently forms the focus of national activity.

They are holding the meeting in central Birmingham on the morning of Saturday 29th March. If you would like to attend please email robert.keith@planningaid. rtpi.org.uk by Friday 28th February.

Similarly please let the group know if either the venue or timing are unmanageable for you, as they could hold additional meetings if demand suggests.

Dave Marr
Chair of West Midlands Planning Aid Sub-group
RTPI Policy review programme

The RTPI has recently published two major policy documents, the first on ‘Delivering Large Scale housing’ issued in September 2013 and a second on ‘Transport Infrastructure’ issued in January 2014.

A further document on ‘Strategic Planning’ is currently in preparation and a Round Table seminar on 5th March at Birmingham City University, chaired by Alister Scott, will explore this topic, including the ‘Duty to co-operate’. (Already fully booked).

A future publication on Economic Development will follow shortly.

If you are keen to learn more about the policy work of the Institute you may tune into a 10 minute podcast on the RTPI website in which Richard Blythe explains the RTPI’s policy work. You are welcome to comment on the RTPI policy documents once they are issued. Tripwire received the following feedback from Chris Green on the ‘Delivering Large Scale housing’ report which you may find interesting:

‘Practice demonstrates that developers often have a clear housing unit product design in mind which alters from time to time to add variety to the design book (for example the introduction of mews dwellings to add to the family house or range of flats). The design offer is mostly offered from a standard product book however, which sells to the public. This might appear a successful, proven and popular approach because it sells – often off-plan. In a market that is restricted by both available land supply and choice of product however, how real a position is this?

Are developers and planners able to entertain more flexible development types with moveable internal walls for example to make buildings more adaptable? Will modern building technologies advance new forms and appearances of dwelling? How would these advances play out against land values and as more tailored solutions to develop difficult brownfield sites? Are buyers able to detach themselves from the known ‘general family housing product’? Are decision takers open to new design? Or are more inventive solutions still the preserve of self builders, energy efficient collectives or the voluntary sector?’

HS2: 2B or not 2B? – The Great Debate

Railways, let alone high speed trains, may not have been around in Shakespeare’s era, but the West Midlands Great Debate could well have been a classic drama, on Shakespearian lines.

Superbly and amusingly chaired by Evan Davis, voice of Radio 4’s Today Programme and Dragon’s Den, the Great Debate was hosted this year by the RTPI, albeit staged jointly with RIBA, RICS, ICE and Landscape Institute.

Played out in front of a packed audience in the brand new auditorium within the Parkhouse Building at Millennium Point – overlooking the new Curzon Street terminus of HS2 – the Great Debate well and truly lived up to its name.

HS2 has always been viewed as a project which people either love or hate. So Evan Davis opened the proceedings with a vote from the audience. It showed, perhaps predictably in view of the delegates and the location of the event, that the vast majority were in favour of the project.

He reminded us that the official cost benefit analysis showed a £1.70 gained for every £1 invested on Phase 1 and £2.30 for every £1 invested on Phase 2 - but he felt these figures were questionable and so we focused on the wider issues.

The six high profile panellists – three in favour of the motion (so to speak) and three against - included Sir Albert Bore, Leader of Birmingham City Council, who felt it was all about seizing opportunities for Birmingham. He rejected the suggestions that the money should just be re-distributed around rail projects in the cities. Davinder Bansall, architect with Glenn Howells who saw HS2 as an opportunity to bridge the north south divide and Pete Waterman OBE, record producer and founder of Waterman Railway Heritage Trust who reckoned that in the future the network would be completely different. Some said we didn’t need the M25 50 years ago, now we couldn’t do without it!

Shaun Spiers, Chief Executive, CPRE; was clearly in two minds. He welcomed the shift to railways from roads –but was clearly nervous about the impact on the countryside –wanting to turn the debate into a challenge to the Government’s road investment programme - Evan Davis managed to keep him on the rails!

Chris Stokes, independent consultant representing 51M, local authorities opposed to HS2, felt it was just a ‘vanity’ project. Capacity was not a problem on longer distance routes. £50bn could be better spent on railways in the regions, and Jerry Marshall founding member of AGAHST (Action Groups Against High Speed Two) who said he had seen plenty of ‘sexed up’ schemes in his time, but this one was positively pornographic! His idea was to wait a couple of decades for newer technology (the ‘magalev’ idea). He pointed out that HS2 was high risk, since it was ‘all or nothing’.

There were some teasing questions from the audience such as; Why don’t we start the project from the north downwards to maximise benefits to the regions? Will it result in greater focus on the ‘hubs’ or more lead to ‘trickle out’ to the hinterland? and How will it save time when Curzon Street is 15 minutes walk from New Street?

The final vote by Evan Davis showed that only 3 members of the audience had actually changed their positions, so the overwhelming support for the project was sustained. However one wondered whether the result might have been different if the event had been held in Shakespeare’s Warwickshire countryside with a different and less committed audience. I suspect the outcome might have been less ‘As you like it’ and more like ‘The Tempest’.

John Acres
YP update

2014 is set to be another great year for the Young Planners. We started the year with an APC workshop held at Birmingham City University, and are grateful for BCU providing the venue and for Philip Woodward for taking the time to visit the West Midlands and pass on some of his invaluable advice to the Region’s Licentiate and student members. Any young planners working towards their APC or mentors looking for advice on the process can find information through the RTPI website, or the membership services team.

Coming up we have a speed networking event with RICS, RIBA, Civic Society and ICE, and are working on details of this year’s centenary-themed quiz, which will likely take place in April. Details will follow!

Taking inspiration from the RTPI Ambassadors project we are hoping to use this year to develop strong links with the other professions, and continue to share the positive message about planning in the Region.

Clare Lucey – Chair of YpWest Mids Senior Consultant, DTZ

RTPI Learn

You may be interested in RTPI Learn, which offers four free learning modules of around 15 hours worth of learning per module. Each module is a mixture of text, web links, video clips, diagrams etc as well as interactive quizzes with instant feedback. The modules can be added your list of CPD activity and used for CPD monitoring purposes.

The following four modules are available:
- Viability: Understanding Development Economics
- Planning for Climate Change
- Public Engagement in Planning
- Infrastructure Delivery Planning

Please carefully read the terms and conditions before using RTPI Learn.

To register for RTPI Learn and ask any questions, please email: rtpilearn@rtpi.org.uk

Colin Bendall Governance Officer RTPI, 41 Botolph Lane, London, EC3R 8DL, Tel: 020 7929 8172

New Director of Professional Standards

Rosslyn Stuart has been appointed as the new Director of Professional Standards and Development at the RTPI.

Rosslyn brings a wealth of experience in senior management to the RTPI, having held positions with English Heritage as a Planning and Development Director and with local authorities specialising in regeneration, development and heritage, and most recently with the Greenwich Foundation.

Rosslyn said: “I’m delighted to join the RTPI during its centenary year. It’s an exciting time for the Institute and for the profession.”

Trudi Elliott, RTPI Chief Executive, said: “We are extremely pleased that Rosslyn is joining the Institute’s senior management team. She brings strong management experience to the position, and will make an important contribution to the RTPI’s strategies for membership, education, lifelong learning and research.”

Rosslyn will replace Professor Gavin Parker, who returns to Reading University after his secondment to the RTPI.

Charles Veal, RTPI

West Midlands 5 a side Football tournament

Following the success of the first RTPI West Midlands 5-a-side Football Tournament in 2013, we are repeating the event this year, again with the kind support of Kings Chambers. The date has provisionally been booked for the evening of Thursday 17th July 2014 at Futsal, Birmingham.

Cerda Planning are the reigning champions and undoubtedly will be looking to defend their title.

Expressions of interest in entering a team should be emailed to Gary Smith at Kings Chambers GSmith@kingschambers.com

GBSLEP wins Place making award

The Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP Spatial Group has been highly commended in the Planning and Regeneration & Renewal Place Making awards. David Carter from Birmingham City Council who submitted the entry for the award on behalf of the Spatial Planning Group said he was delighted to receive recognition for all the hard work undertaken on a voluntary basis by the cross sector group of planners in promoting strategic planning in the LEP area.
REGIONAL PROGRAMME
Non-members of RTPI welcome to attend.
FRIDAY 14 MARCH
Sustainability Appraisals: From Tick Box to Effective Plan Making
The purpose of planning is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The National Planning Policy Framework states that sustainable development is the ‘golden thread that runs through plan making and decision making’. How can this be demonstrated? Sustainability Appraisal (SA) provides the transparent, systematic and iterative means to ensure that Plans are socially, environmentally and economically sustainable. This seminar draws on the latest innovative thinking on SAs to help Local Authorities and built environment professionals use the SA process more effectively to inform plan making, avoid legal challenge and make better planning policy. A wide range of experts will share experience, outline case studies, highlight legal issues and illustrate how SAs can deliver sound, sustainable and effective plans.
Presentations:
• Jane Everton, Deputy Director, CLG
develop sound, sustainable and effective plans.
• James Corbet Burcher, Barrister, No.5 Chambers
• Celeste Giusti, Senior Strategic Planner, Greater London Authority
• Clive Harridge, Director, AMEC and RTPI Past President

Venue: Royal Town Planning Institute
41 Botolph Lane
London EC3R 8DL
Time: 9.45am to 2pm (Registration from 9.15am, followed by lunch finishing at 2pm)
Cost: £25 + VAT

FRIDAY 11 APRIL
Delivering Sustainable Economic Growth and the Evolving Role of LEPs
Has the business of Westminster and the Government focused too much on housing? As green shoots of economic recovery begin to appear, are we in place to deliver the buildings and land for economic growth? There are an increasing number of Growth Plans emerging and LEPs are taking an ever more active role. The seminar will examine the evolving changes and roles that consultants, local authorities and LEPs play, as well as the legal points and cases emerging. With local elections just over a month after this seminar it will also be interesting to hear the messages and initiatives emerging.
Venue: Town Hall, Walsall
Time: Afternoon starting with lunch
Cost: £50 + VAT (£60) for RTPI members, £60 + VAT (£72) for non-members.
£20 + VAT (£24) for full-time students and the unwaged
A limited number of places available at £10 incl VAT for full-time students.

FRIDAY 16 MAY
Sustainable Communities - Bourneville and Lightmoor
An opportunity to compare the mature planned community of Bourneville with its new counterpart in Telford, Lightmoor, being developed by Bourneville Village Trust. The full day trip will include guided walking tours at both locations, linked by a coach ride and lunch in Telford, one of the New Towns whose achievements will be celebrated in the RTPI Centenary Year.
Venue: Bourneville and Telford
Time: All day
Cost: £50 + VAT (£60) for RTPI members, £60 + VAT (£72) for non-members.
£20 + VAT (£24) for full-time students and the unwaged
A limited number of places available at £10 incl VAT for full-time students.

Parkwood Consultancy Services
Parkwood Consultancy Services Limited is a dedicated project management company within Parkwood Holdings plc. The Company provides a range of services in the areas of project management, management consultancy, landscape and environmental consultancy. Parkwood Consultancy Services is advertising the following role:

Assistant Planning Consultant
Salary: £20,000-£24,000, dependent on skills and competencies. 40 hours per week.

This is an exciting role where you will directly contribute to the growth and success of the business. The successful candidate will preferably have some commercial experience in the planning sector. The position will support the Senior Planner and the project management team on planning and related projects. The role will offer support and management to colleagues, provide knowledge and expertise in the assessment and management of planning issues and help in the company objective of expanding planning services in the UK.

The team provides planning and environmental consultancy advice, and project management services for a wide spectrum of projects in the UK. They range from large-scale leisure schemes, high profile infrastructure, urban development, to a range of environmental projects. The role, whilst based at our office at Stoneleigh Park, will require travel throughout the UK to project locations.

The ideal candidate will have strong business acumen and an interest in the environment. Strong organisational, time management, analytical and communication skills are essential for this role together with report writing and presentation skills. Membership of the RTPI is desirable.

If you feel you have the necessary skills and experience for this position, please send your CV and letter of application to recruit@parkwood-holdings.co.uk • Closing Date: 14th March 2014

www.parkwoodconsultancyservices.co.uk
Parkwood Consultancy Services is an equal opportunities employer