



RTPI South West

Royal Town Planning Institute

www.rtpi.org.uk/southwest

NEWS

BRANCHOUT

SUMMER
2022 ed.187





Cover Image

The RTPI Awards for Planning Excellence in the South West Winners and Finalists celebrated at the Summer Reception on the 6 July 2022

Branchout is a members e-magazine issued three times of year. Its purpose is to not only report on local RTPI activity such as events, Presidents Visits, Awards etc but also a forum for RTPI member updates, local interest articles and practical guidance on a variety of planning issues.

Branchout is put together by Editor Alexis Edwards, RTPI South West Junior Vice Chair and Charlotte Daborn, RTPI South West Regional Coordinator plus the support of many RTPI volunteers in reporting on their activities.

If you would like to propose an article or feedback on what you would like to see in future editions, please contact southwest@rtpi.org.uk

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01 Message from the Chair

“I can not believe that I am already halfway through my year as Chair, it has gone so fast!

Back in April, we were delighted to host the return of our in-person seminar series for the region. The first seminar of the year discussed housing delivery and what levels of housing we are currently delivering and looking at innovative housing delivery models, as a way of increasing the build out rate. This was followed rather swiftly in May by a 'If not now, when? Planning's role in tackling climate change seminar in Taunton where we were delighted to host a virtual speech from Lord Deben, Chairman of the Climate Change Committee. Both were excellent events and it was good to meet so many of you. From a personal growth point of view, it was a great opportunity to practice my public speaking and chairing events. Also, I learned a really good tip just before the Bournemouth event, apparently a minute before you are due to speak, scan the room and smile and it releases endorphins which help to relax you. It really did help!

On 10 June, we held the 63rd RTPI Annual Dinner at the Wills Memorial Building in Bristol. The evening was a celebration of the last three years and was hosted by myself, as the 2022 chair, Anghard Williams, the 2021 Chair and Dawn de Vries the 2020 chair.

Thank you to our sponsors Arup, Barton Willmore now Stantec, Burges Salmon LLP, Landmark Chambers, Peter Evans Partnership, Rappor, Tetra Tech Planning and Womble Bond Dickinson, without your support, we would lose one of the main networking events in the RTPI South West calendar.

The evening started with a welcome drinks reception before heading into the Great Hall for the dinner. Judge the Poet, a spontaneous poet opened the event by providing spontaneous poetry about oranges, onomatopoeia and being boring! Following the dinner, we were treated to a rather comical tale involving looking for buried spitfires in Burma and a 100 year old python, delivered by Martin Brown (Tetra Tech Archaeologist). Throughout the evening guests were left impressed by silhouette Artist Michael Herbert who presented many guests with a hand cut (within minutes) silhouette portrait of themselves.

We closed the evening with the popular charity raffle for the Chair's choice of charity my charity of 2022, Fareshare SW, Angharads charity of 2021, the Alzemiers Charity and Dawns charity of 2020, Somerset Mind. The raffle raised an impressive £1685. Thank you to everyone who donated a prize or made a donation.

Overall, the dinner and entertainment was a success with great feedback which was all down to the hard work and organisational skills of Charlotte Daborn our Regional Coordinator. Charlotte had to re-organise the dinner after the original venue of We the Curious had a fire with less than six weeks to go. Thank you ever so much Charlotte for all your hard work, without you we would have no event.

The celebrations continued, on 6 July at the Somerset County Cricket Ground in Taunton we held our first Summer Reception. This inaugural event was a celebration of our volunteers across the region, everyone who has recently passed their APC since January 2021 and to celebrate the winners of the

South-West RTPI Awards for Planning Excellence 2022. Congratulations to all the projects, plans and people who won or who were commended on the day. It was wonderful to see so many people who are passionate about their professions. Again thank you to our sponsors, Stride Treglown, Stantec and Ashfords for an enjoyable afternoon.

If you are reading this and you would like to find out more about volunteering for the SW RTPI, please feel free to get in contact for an informal chat about the different roles and how you can get involved or please contact Charlotte, who would be happy to tell you more. Nominations for the Regional Activities Committees opens in September and all these events are as a result of our hard working volunteers suggesting ideas and pulling together the events.

I wish you all health and happiness and please feel free to say 'hello' at one of our upcoming events over the next half of the year.“

Julie O'Rourke
Planner at Stantec
Chair of RTPI South West 2022



Photos from the RTPI South West Dinner



Selection of photos taken at the RTPI South West Dinner on the 10 June at Wills Memorial Building in Bristol

02 Editors Blog

“ Oh, what a difference a few months make. Summer is here, the grockles are stampeding to the beaches like the Christmas Island red crab, attempts at planning reform bumble along, there is yet another new housing minister, and most importantly we have another bursting at the seam’s edition of Branchout. As always there is something for everyone but do let us know what you think.

Julie O’Rouke’s round up of the year to date covering the two big events is worth a read. A particular highlight for me was the inaugural Summer Reception. It was a fantastic day with so many passionate planners, topped off by a visit from RTPI President Tim Crawshaw and Chief Executive Victoria Hill. A big well done to Julie for chairing the event so smoothly, and a massive thanks to Charlotte for all the behind-the-scenes organisation. The region’s young planners have had an action-packed period. Its is heartening to see such engaged and active young members offering such a broad range of social and CPD events. The hard hat tour of Clifton Suspension Bridge sounded awesome if a little scary given my fear of heights. So, if you have less than 10 years’ post qualification experience in planning, please do get involved in your local young planners branch by joining a committee or just taking part in the events. More information at www.rtpi.org.uk/swyp

Frances Summers our Honorary Secretary writes about the RTPI EXPLORE work experience pilot project which seeks to broaden the diversity of planners, particularly targeting those in underrepresented groups. It certainly is a project to watch.

We hear from one of our international planners, Fabiola, about the challenges and differences of the Brazilian planning system compared with our own. Sometimes I feel we often lose sight of how flexible and interesting our discretionary planning system is in supporting the innovation and the quirky unlike more codified equivalents. In a second international article we hear all about the Commonwealth Heritage Forum conference. The double challenge of preserving heritage features from development pressures coupled with the impact of climate change is a similar theme to many of us here in the South West.

Ever wondered what a day in the life of planning consultant is like? Fear not, Brett Spiller spills the beans on what a typical day is like. If this matches your experiences or not please let us know. We are particularly keen to hear from LPA and third sector planners on what your typical day is like.

As Julie highlights, do read more about the results of the RTPI SW Awards, their original entries are online so make useful reading. Well done to all the entries and especially the winners. Good luck in the nationals! The region is blessed with some many wonderful projects and super star planners. If you ever considered entering in the awards or even if you haven’t, please do so. It’s a great way to show your team how proud you are of what they are helping to deliver.

Continuing last issue’s heritage theme, we have another excellent piece this time on Bath’s Heritage Action Zones specifically the work going on in Keynsham High Street and Midsomer Norton High Street. It is great to hear how these projects are supporting wider investment in the towns and growing civic pride.

Continuing the three-part series celebrating the diversity of our region, we have an article examining planning flexibly in Jersey. The work that Kevin and the team pulled off with their Bridging Island Plan is a testament to the good that planning can do in setting a vision for a place, especially given the context of the island’s uncertain future.

Design codes are hardly a new subject according to the Urban Design Group. Whether we develop new design codes or not the devil is in the detail. Another article of note is the in-depth look at the reopening of the Okehampton Line from one of the team involved in its development.

The South West Planning Aid Task Group review their recent webinar on member engagement in the local plan process with a range of experience from across the region. Get in touch if you want to learn more about the webinar or are keen to give something back to your local community using your planning skills.

As we approach the end of the issue, we have updates on the work of the Regional Management Board and the Regional Activities Committee. Our most recent meeting was a hybrid event held in Taunton right before the Inaugural RTPI South West New Member reception and Award ceremony so the pressure was on to finish on time!

To conclude this edition, we have interviews with one of our new committee members, Carla Fulgoni and her journey in to planning.

Happy reading!



Alexis Edwards
RTPI South West
Junior Vice Chair

03 South West Young Planners Round Up

Dorset Young Planners

Steering Group Members

Frances Summers, Dorset Council - Joint Chair
Amelia Rose, Dorset Council - Joint Chair
Jess Glover, Pure Town Planning - Past Chair
Chris Miell, Pure Town Planning - Treasurer
Simon Ible, Terence O'Rourke Ltd - Secretary
Carla Fulgoni, The Planning Bureau Ltd
Richard Mears, Savills
Philip Saunders, Savills
Toneisha Williams, Dorset Council
Caitlin Turley, Principal Transport Planner at Paul Basham Associates
Phillippa Gatehouse, Chapman Lily Planning Ltd
Jack Higson, Terence O'Rourke Ltd

Steering Group update

The Dorset Young Planners members are going from strength to strength so far this year. We want to use this opportunity to celebrate the diversity of our group, our most recent achievements and to welcome 3 new members to the team.

Our past chair Jess Glover has left to go travelling and is currently in Guatemala. Whilst on her travels she is keeping up the planning work with freelance opportunities. Jess is still very much part of the group even from a different part of the globe, she's had amazing experiences so far travelling through Colombia, Peru and Ecuador; she got engaged (congratulations!), went scuba diving with stingrays on the Caribbean

coast, climbed Machu Picchu, dipped into the sulphur lagoon at Agua Blancas commune in the Machalilla National Park, and walked under the Devil's Cauldron, Ecuador's highest waterfall.

See more pictures on @backpack.to.basics on Instagram.



Jess and her fiancé at Machu Picchu, Peru

Past Steering Group member Hayley Richardson has been travelling the world in her campervan for over a year now, again, still working and learning while travelling and still very much an active member of the group. She sent us all a WhatsApp message from the Sahara Desert while she was sat on a camel! Excellent multitasking Hayley.

You can follow Hayley on Instagram @thyme.and.tide. So far, Hayley has travelled through Italy, Portugal, Spain, Morocco, Croatia, Turkey, Greece and France and it's safe to say the highlight of the trip so far was Cappadocia in Turkey where she woke up to balloons on Christmas morning.

Hayley working from the Sahara Desert.



In more exciting steering group news:

- **Millie Rose & Frances Summers** became Co-Chairs of the group and have enjoyed attending chairs meetings and a few socials since.
- **Caitlin Turley**, was awarded Best Newcomer at Paul Basham Associates
- **Carla Fulgoni** was named as one of The Planners Women of Influence 2022
- **Toneisha Williams** attended the first UK's Real Estate Investment & Infrastructure Forum event in Leeds



Toneisha attends UKREiif

On 17th to 19th May 2022, Built Environment Networking held its first annual UKREiif event in Leeds. I was welcomed from the first day by Helen Fadipe MRTPI and Olafiyin Taiwo MRTPI, founders of the BAME Planners Network. It was great having direct access to senior role models who I could identify with and be encouraged from.

The 3 day event schedule was brimming with delegates, exhibitions and speakers. I was able to network with some of the biggest UK property and infrastructure professionals, particularly at the RTPI's table at the Awards Dinner. Thank you Timothy Crawshaw (President, RTPI), Victoria Hills (Chief Executive, RTPI) and Rt Hon Stewart Andrew (MP, DLUCH) for your allyship and commitment to promote inclusivity within the planning profession.

I feel motivated and empowered in my personal development in terms of preparation for the future and heightened career aspirations.

Carla Fulgoni celebrating being selected as one of The Planners Women of Influence 2022

A hello from all our new steering group members

Caitlin Turley

I'm a Principal Transport Planner, working for Paul Basham Associates in Fareham but I'm based in the Bournemouth area. Before the Covid-19 pandemic I worked in London for over 7 years, but after spending time during the lockdown on the South Coast, I decided to take the plunge and move down. As a transport planner, I especially enjoy working on urban redevelopment schemes in town centre locations. My specialties lie in design development, master planning advice and AutoCAD which is all part of the problem-solving process that is Transport Planning. I've been at Paul Basham Associates for just over a year and was grateful to have won our "Bashy Award" for Best New Starter which I am really proud of. In my spare time, I love to do calligraphy, a skill I honed during lock down. We have a new puppy so I'm usually out on the beach going for dog walks, or out on my paddle board (in fair weather). I'm excited to get involved in all the Dorset Young Planner events and hopefully bring a different perspective as a Transport Planner.



Jack Higson

I currently work as a Graduate Planner for a Planning Consultancy called Terence O'Rourke (TOR) in sunny Bournemouth! Originally from Preston I studied in both Manchester and Newcastle before making the move down south for work last September! As a planner I've always been interested in new and exciting places, and I've found the move from north to south to be both interesting and a challenge. I find the pace of life down here totally different to how it was back home - although the amount traffic here in Bournemouth never ceases to frustrate me!

Being new to the area I originally joined the Dorset Young Planners to meet likeminded people and make new friends as it can be quite daunting moving so far from home. A colleague from work recommended the DYP's and I've definitely managed to meet a great many lovely people and have been made to feel very welcome. Looking forward to the future I can't wait to take part in more events, whilst career wise, I'm excited to continue with my professional L-APC and become a chartered member of the RTPI.



Phillippa Gatehouse

I graduated last year from Reading University where I studied MSc Spatial Planning and Development. Since then, I have been working full time for Chapman Lily Planning, an exciting planning consultancy based in the South of England. I am currently working towards my APC and am incredibly lucky to be in a position where I get to work on such a variety of different projects. I absolutely love anything and everything to do with nature and the outdoors and plan to make the most of living in the South West and it's incredible natural Landscape. This translates really well into planning, and I have specific interests in Biodiversity Net Gain, Green Infrastructure and Natural Capital. Being involved with the Dorset Young Planners has been a really unique opportunity to meet new people with similar interests, share different perspectives on contemporary planning topics and have fun!



Forthcoming Events

SUMMER BOAT SOCIAL IN POOLE QUAY 25 August

The trip will take you on a cruise past Brownsea Island; a wildlife sanctuary for a variety of animals, including the famous red squirrels. We will cruise past Studland Bay & its beaches with a stunning sunset backdrop that leads the way to the Jurassic Coast & Old Harry Rocks.

End your evening admiring the magnificent firework display in Poole harbour with the glowing night lights of Poole Quay in the background. Book your place at www.rtpi.org.uk/dorsetboatsocial2022

BEACH CLEAN 31 August

Dorset Young Planners have organised a free of charge beach clean event to help do their bit to protect the beautiful Bournemouth coast this summer. This will run on Wednesday 31 August, from 6.30pm - 8.00pm. Open to all members (not just Young Planners) this event could be a great opportunity to bring your office team together and out in the fresh air. Find out more at: www.rtpi.org.uk/beachcleanaug2022

EVENTS IN THE PIPELINE INCLUDE:

Hearings and Appeals webinar 1st week of October
Transport planning webinar November
Christmas Social and Quiz w/c 10th December

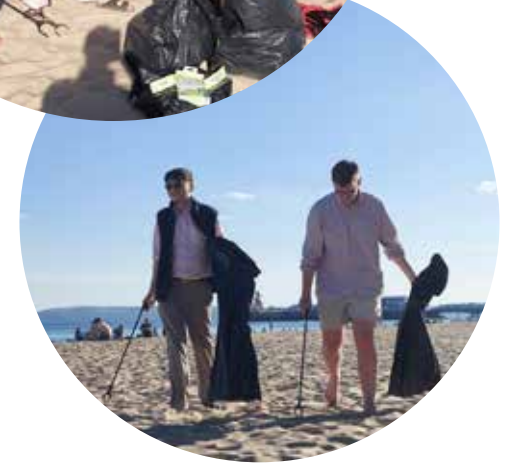


Photo taken from the Beach clean up event in July 2022



Photos taken from the 2019 Boat Social



03 South West Young Planners Round Up

Devon, Cornwall & Somerset Young Planners (DCSYP)

Steering Group Members

Jozie Bannister (Chair) - Tetra Tech Planning
Elliot Dommatt - Stantec
Liam Fisher - Bristol CC
Faye Stewart - Bailey Partnership
Keegan Ferreday - Avalon Planning and Heritage
Mary-Ellen Whalley - Torridge DC

Steering Group update

Firstly, we're sad to see Toby Clayton leave the group but we'd like to say a huge thank you to Toby for his contributions to the group during his time with us and we wish him the best of luck going forward. We're also delighted to welcome Liam Fisher to the group who is already bringing some great ideas and enthusiasm, more about Liam below:



Steering Group members meet RTPi President Tim Crawshaw as part of his 3 day visit to the region



Meet Liam

Where do you work?

I currently work at Bristol City Council as a Senior Planning Officer but live in Exeter!



Where did you study to become a planner?

I went to Cardiff University for both my undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. I also worked at DPP Planning Ltd alongside my masters!

What is the best thing about your job?

I love the challenges the role brings and the creative control I can have on a development. I always want to ensure that existing and future residents get the most out of a development and I like being able to secure positive improvements such as green infrastructure, renewable energy and higher quality materials!

What do you do outside of work?

Aside from work, I like to travel and to eat! My family race Stock Cars across the UK most weekends so I am often travelling across the country to a new track and location.



Forthcoming Events

The group are excited for our upcoming **TOUR OF ST SIDWELL'S POINT** which will include a talk from Exeter City Living on the new Passivhaus leisure centre in Exeter on 26th July 2022. We will meet at the Civic Centre, home of Exeter City Council, and the tour will run between 17:00 and 18:30 after which we will head somewhere for a bite to eat. It'll be great to catch up in person once again and we look forward to seeing you there.

Tickets have now sold out but please do register for the waiting list by messaging Southwest@rtpi.org.uk

PLANNING FOR HOUSING DELIVERY

Planning for Delivery event has been rearranged for 28th September so head over to the website for more details and to book your place at www.rtpi.org.uk/swhousingdelivery2022



St Sidwell's Point

03 South West Young Planners Round Up

West of England Young Planners

Steering Group Members

Michael Downes, Bristol City Council - Chair
Emily Johnson, AECOM
Laura Eimermann, Turley
Ellen Fortt, Pegasus
Raphaella Vieira Da Silva, UWE
Natalie Atkinson, YTL Developments
Laura Laius, AECOM
Isabelle Leekam, Cushman & Wakefield
Rebecca Windemer, UWE
Harrison Moore, Arup
Luke Atherton, Mott MacDonald
Callam Pearce, WSP
James Tarpy, Alder King Property Consultants

Steering Group update

The West of England Young Planners Steering Group has welcomed three new members to the Steering Group: Callam Pearce (WSP), James Tarpy (Alder King Property Consultants) and Luke Atherton (Mott MacDonald).

The West of England Young Planners have hosted several in-person and virtual events in recent months. Members of the steering group have really enjoyed organising the diverse range of events, which have been positively received and well attended, and look forward to organising more events later this year.

New Chair

After 3.5 years, Emily Johnson (AECOM) stood down as Chair of the West of England Young Planners in June. Emily has been a fantastic Chair, driving the group forward and helping to organise a range of events and networking opportunities in the south west. During her time as Chair, Emily received the RTPI President's Special Award 2021, was highly commended as the South West Young Planner of the Year 2021, selected as Women of Influence 2022 and was invited to judge the South West Young Planner of the Year 2022. The Steering Group would like to thank Emily for her efforts, and are delighted that she is staying on as part of the committee for the time being.

Michael Downes (Bristol City Council) is the new Chair of the West of England Young Planners. Michael has been part of the steering group since January 2020, and aims to continue the great work Emily has done and organise a range of professional development and networking opportunities in the south west.

'Welcome Back Young Planners' event

The West of England Young Planners hosted our first in-person event since the pandemic on the 23rd March 2022 at Bocabar in Bristol.

The Welcome Back Young Planners event provided an opportunity to hear more about the RTPI West of England Steering Group, meet other Young Planners and attendees could discuss and hear more about our programme of events for this year.



Emily Johnson



Michael Downes

Overall the event was a great success with 25 people in attendance from across the public and private sector. It was a great night and kick-started our planned programme of events for 2022.

Jane Jacob's Walk - Bristol

From Buenos Aires to Toronto to Bristol, the West of England Young Planners were delighted to organise a 'Jane's Walk' as part of a global festival of walking tours that took place on Friday 6th May 2022.

Jane's Walks; inspired by the celebrated urbanist Jane Jacobs, are a global movement of free, community-led walking conversations that took place in cities worldwide in May. Jane's Walks encourage people to share stories about their neighbourhoods, discover unseen aspects of their communities, and use walking as a way to connect with their neighbours. Further details about the Jane's Walks can be found via the following link.

<https://janeswalk.org/>



Jane Jacob's Walk - Bristol

The walk in Bristol was led by Julie Laming; director of Planning Ventures, and explored Bristol's historic centre before venturing onto Millennium Square & Wapping Wharf.

Attendees had the opportunity to discuss the built environment around them, learn about how Bristol has evolved over time and think about what they'd like to see next for the city. Attendees discussed their own personal experiences of using public spaces and why they preferred certain areas of the city to others.

We had 15 people in attendance, with all attendees participating in thought provoking discussions. The steering group would like to thank Julie Laming for being an excellent group lead and the Jane's Walk City Organisers for allowing the RTPi to organise a walk in Bristol. This is an event we'll look to organise again next year as part of the festival, so please keep an eye on the RTPi website for future details. If anyone is interested in leading a Jane's Walk in the future in Bristol or further afield, please contact Charlotte Daborn or the Chair of the Steering Group, Michael Downes.

'An insight into the Planning Portal'

The interface between agent and local authority, the Planning Portal is the home of planning and building regulations information in England and the national online planning application service. The webinar on the 25th May provided a one-off opportunity to gain an insight into the Planning Portal from the Planning Portal Business Development Manager Ian Foster.

The webinar was a chance to hear more about the service behind your planning application, stat based insights on planning pre vs post covid lockdowns and existing and emerging products of the Planning Portal.

We had people in attendance from all over England, and the Steering Group look forward to organising future events with Ian and the Planning Portal. The Steering Group would like to thank Ian for delivering the excellent webinar, where attendees commented that they learnt a lot about the capacity of the Planning Portal and the other tools they provide as a service as well as being the interface for planning applications.

Hard Hat Tour of Clifton Suspension Bridge

The tour provided an insight into the construction of the iconic Clifton Suspension Bridge spanning the Avon Gorge through a visit into the bridge's vaults on the 16th June. The tour itself took place within the abutment on the Leigh Woods-side of the bridge which was only rediscovered in 2002.

The suspension bridge is an iconic feature of Bristol, and one of the world's oldest suspension bridges still in use with approximately 4 million vehicles travelling over the bridge each year. The tour was led by Gordon and Laura; members of the Clifton Suspension Bridge Trust, and attendees descended into the vaults to learn more about the history & construction of the bridge, and explore the impressive underground structure.

After the tour, attendees had the opportunity to catch-up over drinks at 'The Mall' in Clifton and reflect on the tour. Due to the popularity of this event, we held two tours on the night and aim to arrange more tours in the future as RTPi events.

Forthcoming Events

SUMMER BOAT SOCIAL 27 July

A HARD HAT TOUR OF CLIFTON SUSPENSION BRIDGE TOUR 7 September

With the popularity of our last event, we are delighted to have secured another date.

More info at

www.rtpi.org.uk/cliftonbridgetoursept2022

Currently **SOLD OUT** but register your interest and we will consider adding an additional tour time of 7pm

CAREERS TALK WITH UWE September

PUB QUIZ September/October

WINTER SOCIAL/SCAVENGER HUNT November

BCC REGENERATION SITE VISIT - TBC

LESSONS LEARNT NITRATE/PHOSPHATES - TBC



04 EXPLORE

The RTPI have connected young people aged 16-18 with planning employers all over the UK to give them a taster of the profession. This project is a work experience pilot called EXPLORE, and aims to encourage young people, especially those from underrepresented groups, to become Chartered Town Planners. It is part of the work developed through the CHANGE programme that is seeking to diversify the planning profession.

We have all experienced the challenges facing the planning profession such as impacts on performance statistics, significant workloads, and a lack of diversity in the profession. To tackle those challenges as well as the big issues such as Climate Change and the Housing Crisis, we need more people working in the profession and it is important we are as diverse as the communities we represent.

Clever Egg partnered with the RTPI to develop work experience and encourage our young people to become professional planners by giving them the opportunity to explore the many interesting career roles available.

To try and make work experience easier for employers, Clever Egg developed a work experience template and I, as a keen advocate of work experience and the South West's EDI Champion, got involved. The template is designed to be informative but flexible, it provides work experience that can be done in and around site visits or meetings as organised by employers. It can keep the students occupied, give them a good understanding

of planning, and help them develop the skills a planner needs. The work can be done in an hour, over a few days or over a week depending on the amount of time the student has available. Its great because employers do not need to worry about keeping their students occupied!

The template includes sample interview questions, a work experience diary specifically tailored to planning, safeguarding guidance, suggested activities, how to develop employability skills and how to give constructive feedback. Its focus is around a project focusing on either Housing, Climate Change or Communities, two of the topics or all of them! It requires the students to research and collaborate with others.

We hosted webinars for employers to give hints and tips for making the experience successful. We also hosted webinars for students to introduce them to the project but also to provide opportunities to talk to other planners about their daily jobs and routes they took into the profession.

The project ends soon, and I am looking forward to getting some feedback from the students who attended the placements as well as feedback from the employers. I hope it has been successful and something we can build on for years to come.

Frances Summers
Co-Chair of Dorset Young Planners



05 A personal view of the UK and Brazil Planning System

What should I say about my work experience in the UK? As a Brazilian Architect & Urban Designer with over 20 years of experience in the property development market, I can say that navigating the English planning system has been an incredible experience. But, before I explain my journey to this point and compare my experience working as a Planner here in the UK to my training back in Brazil, I wanted to tell you a little bit about myself.

I was born in Brazil to an Italian family, so I have both nationalities. I studied Architecture at the undergraduate level in Sao Paulo and have worked in this field since 1998, first as a Regeneration Assistant for a Local Authority, and later, after my graduation in 2001 and a year gap in Italy, I opened my own architecture firm. In 2014, I moved to the UK with my family, and in 2016 I began volunteering as a Town Planner for the former Bournemouth Borough Council. After a year, I was offered a position as a Student Planner and then, as a Planning Officer currently working for the BCP Council. In January this year, I completed my Masters in Spatial Planning and Development at Reading University.

In order to compare both work experiences, it is crucial to highlight some of the fundamental differences between planning systems in Brazil and England and how the Planning profession is exercised.

In Brazil, the Town Planning bachelor's degree takes five years to complete and cannot be studied independently from Architecture, meaning that at the end of the course, you have an Architecture and Town Planning graduation. Like the RTPI (with some differences), the profession is regulated by the Brazilian Council of Architecture and Urbanism (CAU – Conselho de Arquitetura e Urbanismo - caubr.gov.br); however, the process to become a chartered membership is much simpler than all the routes available to join RTPI.

The first difference in how the profession is practiced relates to training. Given that Urban Planners are also trained as an Architect, these professionals have design expertise. This is important because Town Planners who work for Local Authorities in Brazil frequently work on architectural and urban design projects. My first job, for example, was with the Diadema Borough Council. I collaborated with the regeneration team to create architectural and community infrastructure proposals for urban infrastructure and adequate housing (informal settlements). This was, in my opinion, more of an urban design job than a town planning job.

On the other hand, DM Planning Officers in Brazil do not have the same level of discretionary decision-making as we do here in England. Because of the zoning regulatory system implemented in Brazil with its sets of predefined rules, Planners do not use their professional judgement or make recommendations on aspects of the built form, for example. DM in Brazil is a more 'box-ticking' exercise and the role of the decision-maker is to ensure that development proposals comply with the zoning requirements – function and use, shape, bulk, and density, as well as with the building regulations.

Another distinction between systems is the structure of planning policy on both countries. Like the NPPF, the federal law 'Estatuto da Cidade' (City Statute) is the main guideline for urban policy and development for Brazilian cities. Despite the existence of a national planning framework, municipalities in Brazil are the sole Federal unit responsible for planning; therefore, each of them holds autonomy in implementing urban policy in accordance with local specificities. This is based on the Local Plans, or 'Plano Diretor' in Portuguese. Another significant difference between the planning process in Brazil and England is community engagement. Despite the implementation of participatory projects in some Brazilian cities, Brazil is still crawling towards public participation and inclusion in the planning process. A number of factors influence this issue, but more importantly, I believe Brazil can learn from England in this area.

While working with a new planning system was challenging, especially given the fact that I had to learn legislation in another language, I am glad to be working with a system that emphasises collaboration as the key to achieving high-quality developments.



Fabiola Mengotti
Planning Officer, Planning
Services BCP Council

Exeter City Council appoint new director

Ian Collinson is the new Director of City Development at Exeter City Council. He is responsible for all of the Council's Planning Services, as well as leading the ambitious Liveable Exeter initiative.

Ian is a Chartered Town Planner and has spent 30 years in planning, always with a local government focus. He joins the Council from Homes England, the government's housing delivery and regeneration agency, where he spent nine years.

Ian said: "At Homes England I did a lot of things in Exeter, working with colleagues and partners to drive the market and help build more homes across the city and sub-region.

"So I have got to know Exeter well and that will obviously help me, so it feels like I'm going full circle, and coming home to local government. For me that's really important because I think I can really make a difference, working for a great city and its people – for me that's what it is all about."

One of Ian's priorities is to help shape a new Local Plan for Exeter - 'The Exeter Plan'. He said: "Exeter has a fantastic vision – By the time they are an adult, a child born in Exeter today will live in a city that is inclusive, healthy and sustainable.

"The City Council and all of Exeter's institutions are working together to deliver that. So we need a plan, and part of my job will be to lead the team to develop a new plan for the city.

"The Exeter Plan will touch the lives of everyone living, working, studying and visiting Exeter, so everyone needs to own it and have a say. Later this year we'll be reaching out to all of our communities and businesses with a draft Plan," added Ian.

The Exeter Plan will touch the lives of everyone living

"Also, Exeter can't do this on its own. We'll need to work with our neighbours and Devon County, as well as government. So, I'll be talking to lots of people over the next few months.

"Liveable Exeter is ambitious and will help deliver our vision by building 12,000 new homes across the city over the next 20 years, mainly on brownfield sites. Liveable will anchor the Exeter Plan and is the brilliant alternative to building on our important green fields." "But this doesn't mean business as usual - housing. Liveable needs to be transformational, creating vibrant mixed use neighbourhoods. We'll need to build homes at higher densities which are NetZero, provide walkable and wheelable streets with fewer cars and high quality public spaces with plenty of trees and room for nature." Outside of work Ian, originally from Middlesborough, is a big Boro fan. "I've also started watching Exeter City and I'm very conscious that I'm coming to a city that is vested in rugby, so I'll be hoping to see the Chiefs soon," he said.

"I'm a big reader, and love history and culture - Exeter is a UNESCO City of Literature and has a rich history dating all the way back to the Romans. You can see this wherever you walk in the city. So for sport, culture and literature and planning, Exeter is a great place to be," he added.



Ian Collinson
Director of City Development
at Exeter City Council

07 New Members

Congratulations to all our recently RTPI elected members in the South West since the start of 2022

Leigh-Anne Laws **Stride Treglown**

Emily Pugh **AECOM**

Natasha Warren **Laurence Associates**

Adam Bennett **Ken Parke Planning Consultants Ltd**

Christopher Butcher **Lansdown Land**

Ethanb Davies **Lansdown Land**

Tomas Furby **PD Solutions**

Rachel Gaffney **Pegasus Group**

Alice Noyce-Mead **Quod Limited**

Barnaby Orr **Savills - Bristol**

Emily Porter **Savills - Bristol**

Frances Summers **Dorset Council - Colliton Park**

Sarah Toomer **Forest of Dean DC**

Luke Atherton **Mott MacDonald - Temple Back Bristol**

Hannah Cameron **XL Planning**

Sarah Curnow **Stephenson Halliday Ltd**

Suzanne Hares **Publica Group Ltd**

Charles Jones **Bristol City Council**

Laura Mair **Laius AECOM**

George Lewis **Savills - Bristol**

Peter Stapley **Torrige District Council**

Ben Wormington **Cornwall Council**

In one of the first pilot RTPI New Member receptions, RTPI South West invited all newly elected members since January 2021 to the Summer Reception which was held on the 6 July in Taunton. It was an opportunity to celebrate this fantastic achievement in their career. Pictured is many of those new Chartered Members.



08 Summer New members reception

On the 6 July RTPI South West held their inaugural RTPI South West Summer New Members Reception & Award Ceremony in Taunton. The event was joined by RTPI President Tim Crawshaw and RTPI CEO Victoria Hills.

The celebratory event was hosted by our Chair Julie O'Rourke where we not only announced the regional winners in the RTPI Awards for Planning Excellence but we also took time to celebrate over 70 newly elected RTPI Members in the region and met many of those on the day including Sharmaine Katerere and Honorary Member Jeff Bishop from Place Studio. It's an important and valued milestone in all their careers to carry the mark of the profession and so we look forward to continuing these new member celebrations in the future.

Also as part of this event we took time to appreciate all our RTPI Volunteers in the South West. With over 55 members involved in helping us to raise the profile of the profession and organising activities for local members we were able to highlight the value of our volunteers. As part of that appreciation, we thanked Geoff Walker PhD for 40 years of volunteering in the South West. With all his knowledge and connections, we have been able to build the region into the vibrant branch it is today.

A big thank you to Stantec and Ashfords LLP for sponsoring this important celebratory event.



Thanking Geoff Walker for 40 years of RTPI volunteering



Some of our 55 volunteers in the region



Victoria Hills



Sharmaine Katerere

Tim Crawshaw



Julie O'Rourke

09 A day in the life of a Planning Consultant

Brett Spiller founded Chapman Lily Planning in 2015. The Dorset based planning consultancy has grown rapidly and helps land promoters, developers, landowners, businesses and householders with projects across the south coast and beyond. We asked, Brett what his typical day entails:

We are really fortunate to have a wide range of clients and projects - so no two days are ever the same! At the inception of a new project, we spend time understanding a client's needs and their motivations; thereafter appraising a site and mapping out a planning strategy. This is the really exciting part of my role and where we get to add value.

Despite the diversity, there are however some common threads when it comes to the working week: chasing Local Planning Authorities for responses, liaising with and managing technical subconsultants, explaining the issues around phosphates and nitrates to the uninitiated, and discussing the potential implications of forthcoming changes to the planning system. All are necessary evils, but don't necessarily add value to the planning process or its outcomes.

As you can probably detect from the above, my passion is in helping others realise their projects and seeing them make a difference on the ground. This is what gets me up in the morning and in the last week, I have been working collaboratively with colleagues on projects that will:

Help to regenerate town centres through mixed-use or residential-led developments; for example, I have been:

- progressing a planning application for a mixed leisure and residential development in Bournemouth;
- providing points of clarification to the case officer on a scheme for 35 apartments in Southampton; and reviewing a permission for 118 apartments in Poole.
- advising a Local Authority on the redevelopment of their property assets to deliver town centre regeneration.

Provide desperately needed new homes; for example, I have been:

- advising multiple land promoters and house builders on the implications of changes to West Dorset's 5-year housing land supply.
- preparing community engagement strategy and public exhibition material for an emerging scheme of c.60 dwellings in Dorset.
- co-ordinating amendments to a 100% affordable housing scheme in Somerset.
- starting to pull together a planning brief to look at the capacity of a constrained site to accommodate a build to rent scheme.

- advising a new entrant to development on a plot subdivision with surface water flood risk issues.

Helping businesses make efficient use of industrial land to release capital and reinvest; for example I have been:

- reviewing the scope of work for a planning application for an industrial building to support marine related industries in Devon.
- undertaking post submission activities (including reviewing consultee responses) for a planning application proposing a pop-up restaurant in Dorset.

Brett was also Chair of RTPI South West in 2010



Brett Spiller
Chapman Lily Planning

Creating new neighbourhoods; for example I have been:

- submitting a package of amendments to an application for the approval of reserved matters pursuant to 500 new homes in Weymouth.
- reviewing the progress of a submitted application for a reserved matters application for 269 new homes and a community hub, comprising retail, employment and community space.

Addressing climate change and the energy crisis, through the delivery of projects that will help decarbonise the economy, increase renewable energy generation and deliver sustainable waste management infrastructure; for example I have been:

- reviewing an EIA Screening Opinion for a landowner on a solar PV farm in Wiltshire.
- reviewing the conditions attached to a permission for amendments to an innovative hydrogen plant in Poole.
- researching permitted development rights pursuant to an on-farm digestate tank.

Addressing the ecological emergency and promoting health and wellbeing, I have been:

- monitoring stakeholder comments on a c.40ha SANG, designed to ease recreational pressures on the Dorset Heathlands and to help realise the wider ambition for the Stour Valley Park.

I have recently become a Dorset Local Nature Partnership Board Member and am very much enjoying sharing experience and focussing on new opportunities to encourage biodiversity gain and promote access to nature. The planning profession is undergoing profound changes and I feel that planner's skills, particularly in terms of balancing competing requirements, are being systematically eroded. I would urge all to ensure that this doesn't happen and to find ways to deliver sustainable development.

RTPI South West Awards for Planning Excellence 2022

Awarding projects & people who have
helped create exceptional places

Results

www.rtpi.org.uk/southwestawards

RTPI AWARDS FOR
PLANNING
EXCELLENCE
2022

SOUTH WEST

Sponsored by



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STRIDE TREGLOWN

RTPI SW AWARDS FOR PLANNING EXCELLENCE 2022

The Awards champion the very best of examples and planners in the South West. They aim to demonstrate the positive impact planning has on the quality of life and celebrate professional expertise. Entry is open to all planners, both Institute members and non-members, and all other built environment professionals and community groups. Winning an Award or being shortlisted, is a clear demonstration of high quality work and professionalism.

2022 is the 30th year of the RTPI SW Awards competition which has now been completed with 16 entries in five categories being received by the March deadline. Of these 16, 13 were shortlisted for further assessment by a Panel of appointed judges during April and May.

The announcement and presentations of awards took place at a special ceremony in Taunton on the 6th July. You can read more about each finalist including a copy of their entry form as a case study at www.rtpi.org.uk/southwestawards

All the regional category winners and some additional selected high scoring entries will now also be judged in the National RTPI Awards for Planning Excellence 2022 which takes place on the 30 November in London.

Find out more about the National event at www.rtpi.org.uk/excellence

And the winner is...

Jonathan Bell, the Head of Development Planning at Plymouth City Council, has been declared as not only the overall winner of the RTPI Awards for Planning Excellence 2022 in the South West but also as South West Head Planner of the Year 2022



The nomination stated that “Jonathan Bell is the best strategic thinker in Plymouth City Council. He has personally led a number of award-winning initiatives that have pushed the boundaries of creativity and innovation in how planning can help improve people’s lives and create great places. Jonathan has a keen philosophy for planning which embraces personal championing of quality outcomes. Jonathan is an incredibly caring and thoughtful manager, always looking for positive outcomes for staff, the council and the city. Never afraid to take on new challenges, Jonathan embraces the opportunity to think differently and creatively, providing opportunities for his team to shape new ideas”.

In judging Jonathan Bell as the ‘South West Head Planner of the Year 2022, the Judges Panel was impressed with the following:

- His enthusiasm and positivity in relating how he had faced and tackled substantial challenges during his work with Plymouth City Council in particular his recent leadership on the corporate Plymouth Plan, the Climate

Emergency Strategy and the Plymouth and South West Devon Local Plan.

- The clear evidence that he had, and was continuing to have, a key role in the development and implementation of corporate policies and initiatives across the City Council with ‘planning’ at the core.
- His priority in maintaining productive relationships with stakeholders, communities and elected members.
- Boundaries of creativity and innovation have and are currently being pushed by him with an eye to learning lessons and continuous improvement - not just for himself but for his colleagues, the City Council and the wider community.
- In summary, the Judging Panel concluded that Jonathan is a credit to the planning profession.

Congratulations to Jonathan as the first individual planner in the 30 years of the regional competition to be judged as the overall winner of the RTPI South West Awards for Planning Excellence.

RTPI AWARDS FOR
**PLANNING
EXCELLENCE**
2022

PLANS - EXCELLENCE IN PLAN MAKING PRACTICE

Commended:

Climate Positive Planning Guidance

Entered by Somerset West & Taunton Council

Climate Positive Planning is the tool through which Somerset West and Taunton Council have effectively integrated their declaration of Climate and Ecological Emergencies into planning. This Statement is not policy itself but seeks to provide guidance and signposting to support adopted planning policies, national guidance and legislation in the interim period pending the adoption of future Local Plan(s). It underlines that the Climate Emergency is a material consideration and identifies how requirements of development plan policy may be viewed in assessing proposals, to inform effective decision making and improve standards of new development with immediate effect”.

In commending the Guidance the Judging Panel concluded that it was:

- A positive document that has been produced in house reacting to the Council's declaration of a climate emergency - a very welcome 'let's do something on this critical issue' attitude.
- It is currently guidance only and not a material consideration, nevertheless, it provides detailed guidance on how planning applications are expected to demonstrate sustainable construction methods and design by way of interpretation of adopted planning policies, national guidance and legislation. It will no doubt pave the way for more robust policy in the future.



Also shortlisted:

A Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Wiltshire

Entered by CBA in association with Wiltshire Council

The Wiltshire Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy establishes a bold new direction for the management of Wiltshire's natural environment, placing the benefits from the ecosystem services this provides at the heart of sustainable development thinking. It champions nature-based solutions for making Wiltshire's communities, businesses and wildlife more resilient to climate change; achieving net gain in biodiversity to support sustainable development; and greater access to green space for all, encouraging active and healthy lifestyles. The strategy's joined up approach to partnership working across nature, health and business sectors has wider application potential as a good practice exemplar for other rural areas.

In shortlisting this plan, the judging panel concluded that this strategy was

- A valuable framework to work with landowners and community action groups to help shape environmental interventions and management approaches at both the strategic and settlement level.
- Only adopted shortly before the submission entry therefore it was acknowledged that “on the ground” action and application of the strategy was at a very early stage with limited measurable outcomes, but would be interesting to see how its application emerges over the coming years.



PROJECTS - EXCELLENCE IN PLANNING DELIVERY

Joint Winners:

The Box

Entered by Plymouth City Council

The Box brings together museum, archive, local studies, film & photographic collections within a new building crafted from three listed-buildings and organised around a dramatic new extension and piazza below the precious jewelled archive box. At its heart the ethos is conservation, heritage and preservation of Plymouth's rich history and heritage, bringing together six outstanding national collections in a new and sustainable home. This rich blend of collections will enable the stories of international and local significance to be told through immersive experiences and amazing objects. Temporary galleries are integrated enabling both contemporary and heritage exhibitions of internationally significant scale."

In judging The Box as a Joint Winner of the 'Projects' Category the Judging Panel was impressed with the following:

- Planning being at the core of both conception and delivery of this project and central to collaborative working both across the City Council and with other bodies. The Box is the culmination of a 15 year planning journey involving a wide range of stakeholders and funding bodies.
- Substantial actual and potential further economic benefits for the City and sub-region, in particular as a tourist and cultural attraction.
- Imaginative and sensitive design including the refurbishment and integration of the Art Gallery listed buildings within a single Conservation Management Plan - accessibility issues key in the design.
- The apparent broad Inclusive appeal of the facility across a range of diverse communities and age groups underpinned by free entry to the building.
- The wide ranging, imaginative and continuing community engagement.



St Sidwell's Point

Entered by Exeter City Council

St Sidwell's Point, is the first UK leisure centre built to Passivhaus standard and is a demonstration of Exeter City Council's vision for the future of the city, which includes developing a high quality and accessible built environment to encourage healthy, active lifestyles.

The building is an ambitious low energy, high value project that delivers its high-bar brief to provide a highly energy efficient building of striking architectural quality, innovative design and world leading technology, with a person friendly environment, for years to come. St Sidwell's Point is an exemplar for planning and leads a legacy for future delivery.

In judging St Sidwell's Point as a Joint Winner of the 'Projects' Category, the Judges Panel was impressed with the following:

- A clear planning input to the project over many years through visioning, master planning, policy and delivery with extensive collaboration, particularly with accessibility groups.
- That the City Council has embraced Passivhaus as a general construction standard, St Sidwell's Point being the first Leisure Centre in the UK to be delivered to this standard exemplary in terms of contribution to action on climate change.
- A state of the art healthy and highly energy efficient building with strong environmental credential incorporating high quality materials selected as much for their health and well being benefits as their aesthetics and resilience.
- The Passivhaus construction process that has enabled an up-skilling of the workforce; engagement is planned with schools with St Sidwell's Point used as a case study in delivering environmentally responsive development.
- The St Sidwell's Point Leisure Centre reflects two ambitions of the City Council: of the poor standard large out of date bus station sited close to the Princesshay shopping complex and the provision of new modern leisure facilities in the city centre accessible to residents of both the city and the surrounding sub region. The City Council's funding of the new bus station immediately adjacent to the Leisure Centre represents excellent use of the site at the same time providing excellent sustainable transport opportunities for the Centre's users.



PROJECTS - EXCELLENCE IN PLANNING DELIVERY

Highly Commended:

Devonport Market Hall

Entered by Plymouth City Council

The Devonport Market Hall is a world-class centre for digital innovation, enterprise and education, with a state-of-the-art 15m diameter immersive dome, the first of its kind in Europe. It is located in the heart of Devonport, Plymouth and is the final phase of the master plan for the former MoD South Yard Enclave site. As well as rescuing a listed building at risk and opening it up to the local community for the first time since World War II, the project has provided a successful new destination use and a major regeneration catalyst as envisaged by the Area Action Plan.

In judging this Project as being 'Highly Commended', the Judges Panel was impressed:

- That this planning led project by the City Council featured a good level of stakeholder and community engagement, the aim being its development as a catalyst for, and key element in, the regeneration of Devonport.
- With the very high standard of the restoration of the interior of the original market hall building, particularly the metal staircases/railings and also with the successful design and integration of a modern extension with the historic listed building.
- The creation of flexible spaces for use by small businesses and community groups, a vital feature for its growing role as a focus for the on-going enhancement of the Devonport economy.
- The 15m diameter 360° immersive video dome, the first of its kind in Europe used by community groups and schools.



Commended:

Central Park Hub, Plymouth

Entered by Plymouth City Council

Delivering against ambitious city Green Infrastructure Plans, this Council led, partnership project delivered high quality community facilities for accessible sport, natural play, recreation and public engagement, which responded to and enhanced the natural setting, in the heart of Plymouth's Central Park. The process catalysed the involvement of more diverse partners, communities and social enterprise to co-design and manage a new café, community sports hub and events space that support the financial sustainability of the park; created a city exemplar for wildlife friendly management practice and environmental volunteering and generated new investment into nature based solutions for health and wellbeing.

In commending this Project, the Judges Panel was impressed that:

- There was a 'golden thread from Strategic Planning through a Master Plan, providing an overarching vision, to implementation on the ground - the planning process being key throughout.
- The Joint Local Plan, in identifying the Park as a strategic allocation, has secured political prioritization and S106 money.
- Excellent community engagement had ensured that the Hub's evolution/ implementation was secured without significant opposition.



PROJECTS - EXCELLENCE IN PLANNING DELIVERY

Also Shortlisted:

North Prospect Phase 3, Plymouth

Entered by Plymouth Community Homes and Plymouth City Council

The largest of its kind in the South West, Phase 3 is the latest completed development in a five-phase redevelopment and regeneration project in North Prospect, Plymouth. The third phase included the demolition of 141 homes beyond economic repair to enable the development of 159 sustainable mixed tenure properties varying in style and size to contribute to the creation of a socially mixed, sustainable neighbourhood with community at its heart.

In shortlisting this project, the judging panel noted the project was

- A great example of regeneration, in particular because of the significant initiatives to involve the communities many members of which had resided in this part of Plymouth for many years.
- A possible future example of planning excellence given the project is only at phase 3 of a 5 phase re-development.



Park Life, Heavitree, Exeter

Entered by Avalon Planning and Heritage)

In our feature project, Avalon proudly collaborated with a team of inspirational volunteers to deliver an innovative new community hub and bmx track for Heavitree Park, Exeter. Central to this project was providing a facility that could welcome every member of the community without prejudice. This has resulted in enhancing local inclusivity and enabling local community groups, ranging from yoga classes, baby and toddler groups and exercise classes to make use of the facility at reduced rates. Avalon worked closely with the team of Trustees and volunteers to assist Park Life in delivering on their aims and ambitions to reduce social isolation in their community.

In shortlisting this project, the judging panel were:

- Very impressed by how the drive and enthusiasm of a few local residents, aiming to get the most out of their local park and to help address loneliness by providing a place for people to come together, has culminated in a thriving new community building



SOUTH WEST HEAD PLANNER OF THE YEAR 2022

Winner: As detailed at the beginning of this article.

Jonathan Bell

Head of Development Planning at Plymouth City Council

Young Planner of the Year Category:

Jess Glover

Pure Town Planning

The entry form stated “Jess is a Chartered Town Planner, recently appointed to Senior Planner at Pure Town Planning, based in Bournemouth. As an active member of the Dorset Young Planners since December 2019, and Chair of the group since July 2021, her enthusiasm shines through, buoying other young planners who are lucky enough to work alongside her or meet her in passing. The Dorset Young Planners are proud to be represented by such a professional planner who understands the technical aspects of planning.”

In judging Jess to be the ‘South West Young Planner of the Year 2022’ the Judges Panel was impressed with the following:

- Her enthusiasm and commitment relating to a wide range of planning issues; this was illustrated by her recently taking a week’s leave to volunteer at another consultancy to increase her knowledge of heritage issues.
- Her commitment to the Planning profession in particular through RTPI SW as a former Chair of the Dorset Young Planners Steering Group, the organisation and hosting of CPD events and involvement in wider initiatives including ‘Chief Planners of Tomorrow’, the SW Engagement Network and SW pilot mentoring scheme.
- Her broad experience in a relatively short career and that she is passionate in her engagement with others to ensure best outcomes for all.
- She is currently illustrating that you can take a career break while young and has set up her own consultancy while away to stay in touch with planning while currently travelling the world.
- She has clear career aspirations, the Panel concluding she is a role model for future young planners.



Highly Commended:

Jozie Bannister

Tetra Tech Planning

The entry form stated “Jozie is a positive, proactive and professional Young Planner with a strong focus on communication and collaboration and the belief that a phone call can be worth a thousand emails. She has a passion for supporting and developing the next generation of planners, the future of our industry, and for promoting planning as a career as it’s still a little-understood profession outside its own four walls. What we require of our built environment and how we experience it is ever changing and, as planners, we have an exciting role in this constant evolution”

In judging Josie as being ‘Highly Commended’ Judges Panel was impressed that:

- Her experience to date had resulted in a good understanding of the role of all participants in the planning process and also of the need to develop communication skills in finding resolutions to the many issues that arise.
- Her relative lack of public sector experience, compared with some planners at this stage in their career, is not a significant issue as she has good knowledge of planning policy issues.
- She is clearly focussed and career driven with particular aspirations as a chartered young planner for developing the needs of young planners, demonstrated by her role as the Chair of the Devon, Cornwall and Somerset Young Planners.
- She is keen to raise awareness of planning issues in primary and secondary school children; as an RTPI Ambassador she already goes into schools as she said ‘to enthuse the next generation’.
- Her stated overall wish is to engage broadly, to help those starting out and to break down barriers and improve relationships between the public and private sectors.



SOUTH WEST HEAD PLANNER OF THE YEAR 2022

Commended:

Amelia Rose
Feria Urbanism

The entry form stated “Millie is Co-Chair of the Dorset Young Planners and has recently been appointed as an Urban Planner, Researcher and Studio Manager at Feria Urbanism, an award-winning design studio, based in Bournemouth. With experience in various areas of planning, she’s always the first to volunteer for a challenge. Her previous colleagues, Co-Chair and her manager feel that she’s one to watch!”

In commending Amelia the Judges Panel was impressed with:

- Her good understanding of planning policy and the planning system through practical work in the public and private sector.
- Her recognition of the importance of collaborative working between the public and private sectors.
- Her commitment to the profession in particular being the Co-Chair of the Dorset Young Planners



Also Shortlisted

Rachel Schweitzer
Plymouth City Council

The entry form stated “Rachel is passionate about place-making and supporting the planning process. She is committed to the fusion of planning and design to support local character and a sustainable urban realm. In her work with Plymouth City Council and local and regional stakeholders she is an advocate for connectivity, and is always looking for new and exciting ideas. Her work ranges from spearheading responses to government consultations, to the organisation of CPD events, embedding public health in planning, supporting young planners and working with University students. Rachel is enthusiastic about finding synergies between disciplines to foster meaningful change.

In shortlisting Rachel the Judges were pleased with

- Her varied background in architecture and urban design which would be valuable in her career in planning.
- Her enthusiasm to continue in providing opportunities for junior planning officers to learn more about urban design through workshops and webinars.



RTPI SOUTH WEST CHAIR'S AWARD 2022



“The 2022 Chair’s Award is an opportunity to highlight a project, team or person that reflects the theme I have for my year as Regional Chair. My theme for this year is about collaboration and community engagement. Therefore this year I was looking for projects and plans that could demonstrate how communication and collaboration resulted in planning excellence. The winning entry would be able to show how collaboration between different sectors and disciplines, along with innovative engagement led to community empowerment and better places now and in the future. I was particularly interested to see collaboration between local planning authorities, communities and the private sector to deliver development”

Julie O’Rourke,
RTPI South West Chair 2022



The presentation of the Chair's Award to Devonport Market Hall

The Chair shortlisted 4 projects for further assessment and the results were as follows:

Winner:

Devonport Market Hall
Entered by Plymouth City Council

The Market Hall scheme was deliberately located in the second most deprived community in Plymouth as a way of ensuring that people within the area could use the facilities.

In assessing the project Julie was impressed by the level of stakeholder and community engagement and the principle of working closely with and becoming a part of the community. It is considered that the partnership working of Plymouth City Council and Real Ideas resulted in a development which will provide social and economic benefits for the wider community now and in the future.

Highly Commended:

St Sidwell’s Point
Entered by Exeter City Council

This leisure centre is located within the town centre and close to a deprived area. It was located within the town centre to ensure that as many people as possible have an opportunity to use it. The proposal was a result of the health inequalities in Exeter and a need for interaction by the City Council. In assessing the project

In assessing the project Julie considered that there was clear collaboration between the Council, Sports England, the local community and local businesses and a clear emphasis on health improvements. This is an excellent scheme where there are multiple benefits and clear collaboration to achieve a development which will promote health going forward.

Also Shortlisted:

Park Life, Heavitree, Exeter
Entered by Avalon Planning and Heritage

The Box
Entered by Plymouth City Council

PHOTOS FROM THE AWARDS CEREMONY



RTPI AWARDS FOR
PLANNING
EXCELLENCE
2022

A huge thank you to our Judging Panel for 2022

Geoff Walker (Head Judge)

Consultant & retired Principal Lecturer in Planning UWE

Mike Oakley (Judging Panel Secretary)

Retired former Avon County Planning Officer

Rebecca Miller

Principal Planning Specialist, Somerset West and Taunton Council

***Julie O'Rourke**

RTPI SW Senior Vice Chair 2021 & Senior Planner Tetra Tech Planning

Ian Perry

Teignbridge District Council & RTPI SW Senior Vice Chair 2022

Rachel Tadman

Senior Team Leader Development Management, Mendip DC

Graham Stephens

Director Stride Treglown Ltd

Robin Tetlow

Founder Tetlow King Planning Ltd - now retired from practice

Jo Widdecombe

Freelance Planning Consultant & Associate with Creating Excellence

Stuart Wingfield

Strategic Growth Manager, Plymouth City Council

****Emily Johnson**

Senior Town Planner at AECOM and Highly Commended for RTPI SW Young Planner of the Year 2021

****Dawn de Vries**

Service Manager at Sedgemoor District Council

*The Chair's Award only **Judging the Young Planner of the Year Award only

11 Bath's Heritage Action Zones

When people think of 'Bath', they usually think of Bath city, the Roman Baths, Abbey Georgian architecture and golden stone for which the World Heritage Site is famed. However, there is much more to Bath, including the distinct and varied market towns dotted throughout the surrounding north east Somerset countryside. These market towns contributed to the development and success of Bath city as we know it but deserve to be celebrated in their own right. B&NES Council are fortunate to have been awarded £2 million grant-funding from Historic England, DCMS and MHCLG for High Street Heritage Action Zone ('HSHAZ') programmes in two of these culturally-rich market towns: Keynsham and Midsomer Norton.

Both the Keynsham and Midsomer Norton HSHAZ projects are four-year partnership programmes focused on heritage and community-led regeneration. Administered by Bath and North East Somerset Council's Regeneration Team, with oversight and support from Historic England, these schemes are being delivered by and for the community with the active involvement of the respective Town Councils, stakeholder groups, residents and businesses.

Together, these partners seek to celebrate the history and heritage of each market town with targeted interventions and improvements which respond to the unique character, appearance and significance. The aim for each programme is to spur regeneration, promote economic and cultural growth on the High Street and celebrate local pride in these town centres,

improving quality of life and opportunities for residents and visitors alike. This will be achieved through four key project strands for each market town, namely major public realm enhancements, historic shopfront and building improvement schemes, meaningful community engagement and 'cultural programmes' of community events, markets and cultural activities.

Keynsham High Street Heritage Action Zone

Public Realm Improvements

Keynsham's Core High Street public realm has just been renovated as part of a separate Phase 1 West of England Combined Authority funded project. This saw the introduction of increased footways, a one-way system and contraflow cycle scheme, more seating and planting on the High Street.

The focus of Keynsham's HS HAZ Public Realm Project Strand will be Phase 2: Temple Street Improvements. We are currently in the detailed design process and looking to start work on-site later this year.

Initial concept design were created with Landscape Architects Macgregor Smith working with a local steering group. Design proposals were consulted on, and feedback used to assist the finalise the designs.

Shop Front Improvements

A Conservation Area Appraisal (2016) highlighted many poorly altered shopfronts and advertisements in Keynsham. Following on from this, an Audit of Individual Premises was carried out and resulted in a Shopfront and Façade Study (2017). This information has been built upon, to create a new Shopfront Improvement Design Guide for Keynsham (2021).

A Business Scoping and Engagement Report was created with YOU&ME Architects, which is being used to identify key shopfronts to improve through this grant scheme. Keynsham's first properties will be delivered later this year, this includes: Temple Street Canteen, 73 Degrees and Norville Opticians.

Community Engagement and Cultural Programme

In Keynsham the Engagement and Cultural Programme's are closely intertwined. A public launch event connected into the area's history of inventions and artificial intelligence robotics and focused on the future of Keynsham's spaces - through artist installations, workshops, performances and markets. Future activity includes new heritage trails, heritage festival and timeline installation that will all take place later this year aimed at making the Heritage of Keynsham more accessible.

To find out more about all aspects of the programme visit our partnership webpage www.hikeynsham.co.uk



Midsomer Norton High Street Heritage Action Zone

Midsomer Norton approximately 10 miles south-east of Bath, close to Radstock, and has a population of around 14,000. Given its rural location, the town retains its strong agricultural links but the influence of Victorian development and industry is keenly felt through its architecture, character and appearance due to its former glory as a coal-mining boomtown.

The high street now forms part of a larger Conservation Area designated in 2004, however, the general decline of traditional retail uses and shopping habits, as experienced across the country, means that there has been a lack of investment in buildings and the public realm within the town centre for many years. This has resulted in the deterioration of the once-thriving High Street and tired, run-down and poorly-altered shopfronts and public spaces detrimental to the Conservation Area and the visitor experience. Even so, this also presents exciting opportunities to reimagine and redefine the way the High Street functions and to introduce new life, uses and pride in the town.

Working together, the HSHAZ Steering Group and local stakeholders –including the Town Council, Community Trust, Town Trust and local business groups– have devised a plan to celebrate the history and heritage of Midsomer Norton and encourage sustainable economic and cultural growth. Based on long-held community aspirations, the funding provided by B&NES Council, Historic England and the West of England Combined Authority, will be used to deliver a range of improvement works and community projects, including:

- A new multi-use Market Square for markets and community events at The Island, an under-used and heavily-trafficked space at the historic core of the High Street;
- The reinstatement of the Market Hall for community space at the Grade II-listed Town Hall, built in 1859 and subsequently subdivided into small offices and rooms now unfit for purpose;
- Repair and restoration of High Street shopfronts and signage;
- Conservation Area and heritage asset improvements (e.g. public realm enhancements and historic building repairs); and
- A Cultural Programme of community events and activities celebrating the arts, culture, historic traditions and craftsmanship, and new and emerging initiatives.



Concept plans for the new Market Square at the Island, Midsomer Norton

Conclusions

Overall, the High Street Heritage Action Zone projects in Keynsham and Midsomer Norton present a unique opportunity to invest in the economic, social and cultural life of our market towns, to not only address some the issues they face but future-proof and gently shape them in line with community needs. By doing so, it is hoped that further commercial and community investment will be nurtured and the value of each town as vibrant places to live, work and spend time will be better reflected and known.

Even in the 18 months these projects have been running, the Regeneration team and community stakeholders have seen this ‘snowball’ effect in action, with separate but complementary initiatives coming forward through newly-established networks, such as the respective HAZ Steering Groups and ‘Cultural Consortia’, and through public and private sector investment. This includes the European Regional Development Fund’s ‘Welcome Back’ initiative, the B&NES and WECA Recovery Fund’s ‘Vacant Units Action Project’ and now planned and funded masterplanning/regeneration action planning work. The community has also brought in additional grants and their own funding to invest. With two more years of these projects, we look forward to delivering these schemes to improve people’s lives and improve the High Streets they enjoy.

Helen Griffiths and Edward Heritage

are High Street Heritage Action Zone Project Managers for Keynsham and Midsomer Norton respectively, they based in the Bath and North East Somerset Council’s Regeneration Team.

A Conference of the Islands - Heritage at Risk

One of the successes of the Covid era is our increased ability to join into events remotely, and this was very much the case for a two-day conference held in Barbados in February this year, at which the Commonwealth Heritage Forum announced an exciting new programme relating to the development of heritage skills across the Commonwealth, starting with a focus on the Caribbean islands. From my kitchen in Hampshire I was with them in spirit, enjoying the wealth of glorious photos of Caribbean heritage sites, and the inevitable cockerel crowing outside the Barbados National Trust HQ, Wildey House, St Michael.

Throughout the various sessions over the two days of the conference it became clear that the golden thread running through them was the importance of a robust and effective planning system. Many Commonwealth nations have planning systems based on the UK system, with development management and planning policy processes. Other commonalities include shared histories and experiences, often associated with enslavement and migration, and there are connections apparent through architecture which are as yet little documented or understood. In the developing nations especially, there is often little awareness of what exists and what is vulnerable, and an urgent need to explore and determine what matters to communities at the national and the local level.

Sir Rodney Williams, Governor-General of Antigua and Barbuda and Patron of the Commonwealth Heritage Forum, described the fragility of small island states – Hurricane Irma destroyed 90% of buildings in Barbuda – and the challenges facing conservation in the face of increasing pressure both from the economic and the climate point of view. Charlotte Andrews, Head of Cultural Heritage at the Bermuda National Trust, commented that even in relation to World Heritage Sites, whilst they may be overseen by UNESCO, they are wholly grounded in and shaped by local life. “Heritage” should be opened up in a contemporary sense, without the skillset being restricted to the traditional. Jalaludin Khan from Trinidad and Tobago explained the importance of planning agencies and resources including personnel, and emphasized the shared experiences and history of planning systems throughout the Commonwealth.

Challenges relating to perceptions of the value of heritage were discussed by Kara Roopsingh of the Trinidad and Tobago National Trust, where the fine for damaging a protected building is a mere \$750; heritage is not really on the radar and is missing from the country’s national development Policies. The priority is the development of the oil and gas industry. The Covid 19 pandemic has shifted the focus slightly and there is now a 150% tax rebate for historic buildings.

On Day 2 of the conference discussion centered around issues relating to heritage and climate change. Dr Sherene James-Williamson of the University of the West Indies explained that the hurricane season is now starting earlier, finishing later, with more severe events. Storms are engaging the eastern Caribbean much more than before, and are moving further south. The characteristics of the region’s historic buildings make them very vulnerable – timber, balconies and canopies are fragile and easily damaged. Many historic towns on Caribbean islands are on the coast, as the interiors are often mountainous and volcanic. The impacts of storm surges, flooding and salt-laden air wreak havoc on historic structures and also cause damage to the natural environment, with knock-on effects for example relating to biodiversity, land management, traditional crafts and sustainable tourism. Dr Kerry hall spoke about tourism and heritage in the Caribbean; apart from the impacts of the Covid 19 pandemic, cultural heritage is one of the fastest growing sectors of the tourism industry, with heritage travellers generally earning more, spending more, staying longer and tending to be more environmentally responsible.



Participants in the conference emphasized the need for more expertise and international partnerships, along with the need to raise awareness and interest. 30% of mankind lives in a Commonwealth country, and 60% of these people are under 30 years of age. There is often very little awareness of what exists, and what is at risk or vulnerable. The Heritage Skills Programme, announced at the Wildey House conference and launched in May as the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Commonwealth Heritage Skills Training Programme, will build heritage conservation capacity across the Commonwealth by training up to 600 people in a wide range of heritage skills from stonemasonry and joinery to mud brick and thatch. The programme is funded by the Hamish Ogston Foundation and, through targeted training projects, it will help secure the future of up to twenty threatened buildings and places across the Commonwealth. The programme will be delivered by both UK and international partners, including The Prince's Foundation, The World Monuments Fund India and a network of educational institutions. The initial focus of the programme will be on the Caribbean and

the Indian subcontinent with countries including Antigua and Barbuda, Jamaica, Barbados and India benefiting immediately. Trainees are already undertaking crucial restoration work under expert supervision on three historic gateways at the Osmania University College for Women in Hyderabad, India. Later phases of the programme will be extended to cover Commonwealth countries in Africa, Australasia, the Far East and the Pacific. By creating the heritage champions of the future, it will help local people save the buildings and places they value generating unprecedented opportunities to enhance heritage skills, create jobs and build a more sustainable future.

Karin Taylor

Member of the RTPi SW International Group

Planning Inspector

Former Head of Planning for the National Trust



Planning in Jersey: responding flexibly to challenges

Planning in Jersey: responding flexibly to challenges Jersey is the largest of the Channel Islands, 14 miles from the French coast and 85 miles south of England. Whilst only 45 square miles in area, the island has a population of just over 103,000, with St Helier as its primary centre.

It is a self-governing dependency and a 'peculiar of the Crown' owing allegiance, not to Westminster, but to the sovereign (islanders joke that they were on the winning side at the Battle of Hastings and call The Queen the 'Duke of Normandy').

The island has its own fiscal, administrative and legal systems along with its own democratically elected parliament, the States Assembly. The Assembly is responsible for, amongst other things, electing the Chief Minister and Ministers. The Council of Ministers forms the Government of Jersey which has responsibility for all of Jersey's domestic and fiscal affairs and increasingly, the island's international affairs.

The Minister for the Environment holds legal responsibility for planning in the island; in addition to which other States Members are elected by the Assembly to serve on the Planning Committee which considers less than 10% of planning applications, the remainder being dealt with under delegated authority or determined by the Minister following public inquiries; or on appeal (the island's appeal system allows both first- and third-party appeals).

Challenges of planning in a small island

The challenges of planning in a small island are many and varied. The pressure for development in the island is intense where, against the backdrop of a growing population driven by natural growth and continued in-migration, there is a significant demand for the development of new homes and where housing is increasingly unaffordable for many islanders: in the first quarter of 2022, the average price in Jersey for a two-bed flat was £519,000; and a three-bedroom house £898,000.

Economic development pressure arises in a continued demand for grade-A office space to serve the island's financial services industries; growth in the provision of new tourism accommodation for both hotels and self-catering accommodation; retail development; light industrial premises; and development to support a more modern and efficient agricultural industry, including the cultivation and processing of emergent new crops such as cannabis.

The island is also required to plan for and develop the infrastructure that is required to support the local community, including the provision of drinking water; foul and surface water drainage; waste processing, management and disposal; shoreline and flood risk management; energy infrastructure; and public services such as schools and healthcare facilities. Planning permission has just been granted for a new 61,000 sq m hospital to meet the island's health needs within a landscaped health campus on a 13 hectare site on the edge of St Helier, representing the biggest ever public infrastructure project embarked on by the Government.

The Island Plan

Jersey has a plan-led planning system, and the Minister for the Environment is charged with the preparation of an Island Plan at least once every ten years to ensure that 'when land is developed the development is in accordance with a development plan that provides for the orderly, comprehensive and sustainable development of land in a manner that best serves the interests of the community'. The island has had complete plan coverage of the entire bailiwick, where planning powers extend to the limits of the island's territorial waters including its extensive offshore reefs, since 1987.

The Island Plan is hugely important for Jersey. It sets out how, as a community, we will create homes; strengthen the economy; protect and improve the environment; provide for a good quality of life; and enhance what's special about the island; and it is the primary consideration in any planning-related decision-making.



The process for developing an Island Plan is prescribed by law and involves public consultation; independent review by planning inspectors through an examination in public; before debate and approval by the States Assembly. It is the Minister for the Environment who is required to present a draft plan to the States Assembly, and States Members are able to propose amendment to it, for consideration by the island's elected parliament, before the revised approved Island Plan can take effect. The island's planning policy framework, represented principally by the Island Plan but supported by a range of supplementary planning guidance, is prepared and maintained by a small team of professional planners in the Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance department, working with colleagues across the Government of Jersey, including planners in the Infrastructure, Housing and Environment (Regulation) department.

Bridging Island Plan

An Island Plan normally sets planning policy for a ten-year period, and the 2011-2020 Island Plan, despite parts of the plan having the benefit of an interim revision in 2014, was scheduled for a comprehensive review. Owing to the uncertainty created by the occurrence of both Covid-19 and Brexit it was, however, considered inappropriate to reset a new ten-year planning policy framework, particularly as the economic performance and levels of in-migration into the island are so closely linked.

The development of a shorter-term bridging Island Plan - to cover the period 2022-25 - was considered the right thing to do. It is a unique response to unique circumstances, making important changes to planning policies, whilst creating the pathway for the next long-term plan to be in place by 2025, when Jersey and the economy has had time to adjust to its 'new normal'.

The decision to undertake a shorter-term plan, and to complete it within the remaining term of the current government (2018-2022) required change to the plan-making process in the island and the creation of new legislation - made under the island's Covid-19 Regulations and supplemented by a revised Island Plan Order - to enable it to happen. These regulations, which were developed by the Island Plan Review Team working with the island's Law Drafter's Office, set out, amongst other things, the process and period for public consultation; how the examination in public was to be progressed; and the processes for amendments by States Members and Minister for the Environment.

Despite being a shorter-term bridging plan, the Island Plan Review still required the preparation of a comprehensive and robust evidence base and this was scoped and commissioned by the Island Plan Review Team, working with colleagues across government in related areas of expertise. This embraced a range of studies including those which sought to reset and update understanding of and options available to meet the island's critical needs for homes, infrastructure, and minerals. The evidence base also included the RTPI SW Planning Excellence Award-winning Jersey Integrated Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment (ILSCA)!

Following a three-month consultation period in April-July 2021; a two-week examination in public in November-December 2021; and two weeks of debate in the States Assembly, where elected members considered 103 proposed changes to the draft plan, the bridging Island Plan was unanimously approved on 25 March 2022.

The bridging Island Plan provides the island with a revised planning policy framework to help the island respond flexibly to the effects of the pandemic and Brexit and meeting the community's more immediate economic and social needs, whilst also laying down some critical long-term foundations to greater steps to protect our unique environment, respond to climate change and make progress to become carbon neutral.

Kevin Pilley

Head of Place and Spatial Planning
Government of Jersey

Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance
19-21 Broad Street | St Helier | Jersey | JE2 3RR



14 Design Codes - A Blast from the Past?

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill Section 15F “Design code for the whole area” states that “A local planning authority must ensure that, for every part of their area, the development plan includes requirements with respect to design that relate to development, or development of a particular description, which the authority consider should be met for planning permission for the development to be granted.”

Is this a step into the unknown, with unpredictable consequences? Perhaps not. Codes of sorts have been in place for many centuries through Acts of Parliament. What follows below is a quick skim of the legislation. It may seem dry, but many of the buildings and streets that we occupy now have been designed according to the requirements set out in these Acts.

In the medieval period there were “codes” to prevent the spread of fire, a major and significant danger in towns and cities. There were requirements for the minimum width of highways between market towns, dating from the time of Henry I. There are medieval statutes that control the establishment of new markets within six and two thirds of a mile of another market with a Royal charter, that apply to the present day, such as at Dorchester (see the Dorset Council website for a licence if you want to set up a market within 6 2/3rds of a mile of Dorchester). And, though not covered by Act of Parliament, there are sets of standard dimensions used to lay out medieval towns and burgage plots.

Fire protection and structural soundness have been principal objectives over the centuries, but aesthetics and social structure has been addressed too. The Rebuilding of London Act 1666 (passed in 1667) set out four types of house to be built respectively on by-lanes – houses of 2 ½ stories, on streets and lanes of note - houses of 3 ½ stories, on high and principal streets - houses of 4 ½ stories, and so on. Building was to be of brick, not only for reasons of protection against fire, but because brick, according to the legislation, was more “comely”. But this was London and not England. National legislation was brought forward in the Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847. This set down many requirements. Fire protection was included. Party walls for example, were required to be carried through the roof in order to compartmentalise fire and prevent its spread. Public health was addressed: buildings were required to be served by sewers. There were many other details. New streets intended to be carriage roads, were required to be at least thirty feet wide, or, “not being a carriage road”, to be at least twenty feet wide. Front doors were required to open inwards. There were provisions for buildings to be brought forward to improve the line of the street.

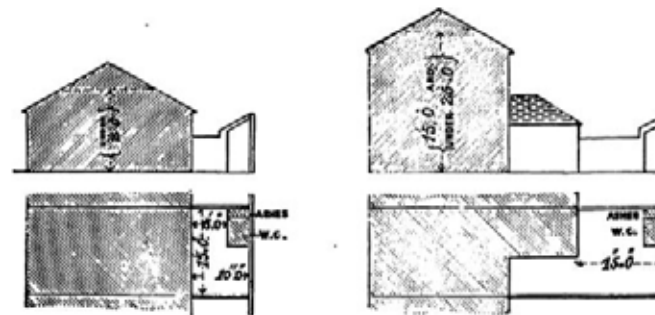


Diagram No. 24.

Diagram No. 25.

Byelaw No. 53.

An extract from Knight's Illustrated Guide to the Model Byelaws showing minimum required space and dimensions for the rear yard

The Model Byelaws

A major step in codification came with the 1875 Public Health Act, and the Model Byelaws that followed in 1877, intended for use in urban authorities, and with adoption discretionary. Building regulations were covered: foundations, wall thickness, and materials used to ensure structural soundness, and fire protection. Light and air (vital in the Victorian mind as a means to vanquish disease) was to be ensured by a requirement for minimum rear open space 150 square feet, and a minimum separation between buildings (24ft at front). Each room was to have at least one window, minimum window area 1/10th floor area, half of this area to be openable.

The minimum width of streets intended as carriage roads was increased to 36ft, with a footway of at least one sixth the width of the street on either side, and a carriageway of 24ft (or 7.32 metres) – a standard for new streets that remains in use today. The reason for the 24ft carriageway width was to allow two vehicles to be parked on either side of the street, with room for a third to pass between. And in many of our urban streets this is exactly what has happened. But for 21st century two-way traffic, where cyclists are to be encouraged and accommodated, 7.32 metres is an awkward width, as it provides insufficient width for cycle lanes, but width enough to encourage close-passes.

Not everyone liked the Byelaws. Some groups criticised them as being oppressive and bureaucratic, or stifling innovation. But sometimes the motives may have been more to do with landowners and employers seeking to find as cheap a route as possible to build accommodation for their workers while maximising their own profits; or builders trying to skimp on construction quality. And this is the old story: some companies trade on their reputation, others trade on what they can get away with. And in the case of building, human life and the wider public interest is placed at risk.

The Byelaws were also criticised for creating uniform development: street after street of identical housing, laid out on grids. But the Byelaws did not require development to be uniform, nor to be laid out on grids. This was entirely down to the decision of the builder or developer. If they chose to build down to the minimum threshold standards set out in the Model Byelaws then uniformity and a grid would follow.

From Byelaws to the first Planning Act

The Model Byelaws operated at the scale of the individual building or groups of buildings, and street cross sections. They were silent on the amenities and uses necessary to create a balanced development, and were emphatically not a sufficient model for the creation of new, or the extension of existing towns. This was recognised and the void that was filled by the Housing and Town Planning etc Act of 1909 and the Town Planning Procedure Regulations (England and Wales), of 1910, which enabled local authorities to put forward town planning schemes, subject to the approval of the Local Government board. The approach was through the creation of maps detailing the area and nature of development: the approach was in essence strategic

urban design and masterplanning at the larger scale, and, at the smaller scale, a baseline code provided by the Model Byelaws (although the Act did provide powers to an authority to diverge from the Model Byelaws such as introducing narrower streets).

Coding the future

So there really is nothing new or novel about Design Codes, be they about buildings, highways, drainage or general development. We have been there, done that, and live in, use and (mostly) benefit from the product of the codes of yore. There are lessons. Codes must steer but not stifle the private sector. They must engender creativity, innovation and variety, and guard against the uniformity that follows when design is reduced to mere code compliance. But above all other things, they must promote and protect the long-term interests of the public. Failure to achieve the right balance results in poor public health, damage to the environment, and death, as in the case of the Grenfell scandal, where the overall building control and regulation system failed to stop dangerous products and construction methods from being used.

The one risk with a design code is in the importance that will be placed upon it. Because the Design Code will be followed by all new development in an area, if the code is defective or deficient, then the development that is carried out according to the code also risks having the same defects, but writ not in ink, but in bricks and boundaries. It is therefore imperative that Codes are carefully and competently prepared, and that sufficient resources are made available for this to happen. And, as we all know; sufficient resources is what local authorities do not have.



The Headington Shark - which would also be permissible under the Model Byelaws, were it made of non-combustible material

Robert Huxford
Urban Design Group

15 Putting Nature Centre Stage?

The challenges of 'mainstreaming' biodiversity in the planning process. Read the full article at <https://doi.org/10.1080/09640568.2021.1999219>

The global rate of biodiversity loss has become an international concern. The UN Convention on Biodiversity provides a framework for participating countries, including the UK, to agree international goals and targets to reduce the rate of biodiversity loss and to increase its protection. In 2010, an international Strategy for Biodiversity was adopted that set out 20 targets to be met by 2020 (known as the Aichi targets after the prefecture in Japan where the agreement was signed). Currently, a new set of international goals and targets are being agreed (known as the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework). These goals and targets are more closely linked to the UN's SDGs and include the ambitious target to 'ensure that all land and sea areas globally are under integrated biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning addressing land- and sea-use change'. Spatial planning is, therefore, identified as a key requirement to protect biodiversity both on land and at sea.

In my article, I analyse how the 2010 Aichi targets were incorporated into England's biodiversity strategies and how the targets are reflected in the NPPF. I concluded that despite a supportive national planning policy framework there are three key challenges for local planning authorities if they are to achieve biodiversity net gain while meeting national housing targets. First, local planning authorities need to develop strong policies to protect local wildlife sites and to identify and protect 'irreplaceable' habitat sites that lie outside protected

sites, as the NPPF is weak on these topics. Second, national policy should be tightened up to support local authorities to identify, enhance and protect local wildlife connectivity features and identify them in local plans, as current national policy is also weak here. Third, local authorities should work together at the sub-regional scale to develop a strategic approach to biodiversity protection and connectivity (as biodiversity does not conform to administrative boundaries).

The introduction of a statutory requirement for 10% biodiversity net gain on all development (with specified exceptions) and the requirement for local authorities to develop local nature recovery strategies through the Environment Act 2021 will provide local authorities with new powers and opportunities to enhance biodiversity. They will, however, face significant challenges if they are to implement these changes in ways that enhance biodiversity on the ground. The importance of biodiversity as a material planning consideration in England is about to grow and local planning authorities are already preparing themselves.

Local authorities in the South West are rising to the challenge. For example, the Devon local authorities have all declared climate emergencies, with many also declaring associated biodiversity or ecological emergencies. Devon County Council is leading on the preparation of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for the whole of Devon including Plymouth, thereby enabling a strategic shared approach to this requirement that will support the participating local planning authorities and encourage joint working. Many Devon authorities are promoting high profile strategic projects to promote biodiversity connectivity, nature recovery and wider green infrastructure benefits: such as the Clyst Valley Regional

Park in East Devon, the North Devon Biosphere in North Devon and Torridge Districts and Exmoor and Dartmoor National Parks and new SANGs (Suitable Alternative Natural Green Spaces) such as Dawlish Countryside Park in Teignbridge. Plymouth has recently announced the Plymouth and South Devon Community Forest project that will include South Hams and West Devon authorities. Many local planning authorities are updating local plan policies and guidance relating to net gain and nature recovery. The upcoming public examination of Cornwall's Climate Emergency DPD in June 2022 will be a test for how policy to secure biodiversity net gain and local nature recovery networks can be integrated into local plans. These examples show how local authorities in the South West can lead the way in developing innovative policies and projects to support local, national and international goals, including the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework goals.

Dr Olivia Wilson,
University of Plymouth



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16 EV Charging provision

EV Charging Provision and Approved Document S: What does it mean?

When the Government updated Building Regulations with 'Approved Document S: Infrastructure for charging electric vehicles' in December 2021, the industry reacted in different ways. From June 2022, all new build homes with associated parking (including those undergoing major renovation), and buildings undergoing a change of use, will require installation of EV charging infrastructure during construction. New non-residential properties, such as retail and commercial builds, will also have to install charging infrastructure.

Some viewed it as the start of what is anticipated to be a long run of trickling legislation that forces the developer's hand to provide EV charging infrastructure, with others welcoming the latest compliance-led move towards future-proofing for net zero.

The adoption debate - as ever - boils down to whether provision should meet the 'bare minimum', or go 'above and beyond compliance'. The answer lies in understanding the myriad of influential factors affecting implementation, uptake, use and effectiveness of EV charge point infrastructure.

Rather than regarding the provision requirements outlined in Approved Document S as another cost, they can instead be regarded as a way to future-proof assets and even generate revenue.

Approved Document S in brief

Amongst a raft of changes, key aspects of the document include the requirement that EV charging provision must be provided to new residential and non-residential buildings; buildings undergoing a material change of use to dwellings; residential and non-residential buildings undergoing major renovation; and mixed-use buildings that are either new, or undergoing major renovation.

The question any developer will be asking is, 'how many chargers are needed?' and this is dependent on the number of parking spaces available, and the number of dwellings - whichever is lower.

For other uses, where there are more than ten spaces, one of those must have charging provision and 20% of the spaces must have cable provision.

Exceptions

There are exceptions. Areas of covered car parking have no requirements other than providing cable routing; and there are also exceptions based on the cost of the connection and infrastructure (if the average connection cost for each charge point is greater than £3,600 on a new build, for example, or exceeds 7% of the total cost of the major renovation). Again, this isn't exhaustive but gives an indication of areas of exemption.

Thinking more laterally

Meeting compliance is one thing, but considering the bigger picture will save time and money. If we are to meet the Government's 2030 targets, we should be seeing 700 chargers a day rolled out. Instead, just forty are currently installed.

The target is a reflection of the level of EV uptake we're about to see. We are on the cusp of mass EV adoption as access to more affordable electric vehicles is easing significantly as manufacturers start to realise economies of scale.

Access to charge points remains a challenge but the industry is moving fast. Whilst publicly available charging is starting to increase, homeowners are installing their own, private charge points. This has the benefit of allowing consumers to charge their vehicles when it suits them, especially at points in the day when energy tariffs are low. Access to a private domestic charging area - whether this be a driveway or shared residential car park, for example - is a big advantage for consumers. Buyers and occupiers will expect good EV charging provision in the same way they do broadband connectivity, helping to increase the demand and value of these properties and new developments. However, it remains that in many areas, a high proportion of homes will be reliant on on-street or other public chargers.

In addition to understanding how many chargers to install, knowing what type and the associated power draw is critical to calculating grid connection costs, which are proving one of the biggest development constraints and the area where we are often seeing clients significantly overspend without reason.

EV charging as a revenue stream

Landowners and property developers can generate revenue while meeting government regulations for installing and running EV charge points.

This can be achieved by working with charge point operators to lease or even sell part of the development for EV charging, or, on commercial sites, entering a profit-sharing agreement from the revenue generated from those paying to charge their vehicles.

For those that diversify the accessibility to their chargers - e.g., for public use, or private electric fleet use overnight - further income opportunities await.

Avoiding over-provision and over-specification is key to success, however.

At planning stage, evidencing provision is key

Approved Document S provides a framework for evidencing provision, but to really understand the requirements of any development - new or existing - a data driven method is needed. Underpinning provision with an evidence base demonstrates a considered approach which meets the needs of users today and into the future.

There are data-driven tools on the market, all of which work in different ways. At Hydrock, we believe we have developed the most technically advanced of these models, due to the breadth of data sources we analyse and, crucially, the interpretation of this data from transportation planners and engineers from our energy and utilities teams.

This includes analysis of factors such as journey origin, which dictates likely charge upon arrival, and therefore relative charging requirements once parked up. By analysing thousands of data points, our model can inform how many chargers are required, what type, and over what period of time to install them as demand increases and revenue surpasses implementation costs.

In conclusion

There's no doubt that fundamentally, Approved Document S leads to extra cost for developers. However, with a cost cap of £3,600 (average) for the work involved in installing charge points, developers need only install the cable routes if spend is set to exceed this. This stops the provision of EV chargers becoming prohibitively expensive, and helps continued efforts to decarbonise the built environment.

Sarah Langhorne

National Campaigns Manager
Hydrock



17 Okehampton - A Strategic Success

Usually a strategic study will be driven by a number of factors such as demand, housing or business growth and changing dynamics in the population, this wasn't the key driver in this case, it was a campaign by local group OkeRail and their belief that reopening the railway to the town would have a case. So strong was their belief that they travelled to London with their MP Mel Stride to meet the Transport Minister to convince him that this was the case. This lobbying and strong local support convinced the government that Okehampton had some merit and built it into the franchise agreement for GWR to develop the idea further.

Unfortunately, Okehampton had not really appeared on Network Rail's radar probably as if was off the national network and work concentrated on the existing rail routes, and this is something to consider in the future, how do towns and communities such as Okehampton and North Cornwall get noticed by the national network and its future new structure of Great British Railways. It would appear that the Welsh and Scottish Governments have been able to find a route to look beyond the traditional rail routes to secure reopens to the Borders, Alloa, Ebbw Vale and Vale of Glamorgan, whereas English communities have struggled to break into this territory.

The advent of the "Restoring Your Railways" programme has changed that and along with the Political interest and a positive focus by the local authorities and its Peninsula rail strategy changed Okehampton, as well

as the campaign group into a scheme that was worthy of investment by the rail industry.

The line to Okehampton, formed part of the Southern Railway's mainline from London Waterloo to Plymouth via Exeter and Tavistock, with a branch to North Cornwall and served towns such as Bude, Wadebridge and Padstow. The advent of the cuts in the 1960's under the infamous Dr Beeching, saw the closures of the railway to the those seaside towns as well as the Dartmoor route to Plymouth via Tavistock, leaving just a stub to Okehampton to Exeter and Bere Alston (Gunnislake) to Plymouth. This eventually succumbed in 1972 and only freight to/from Meldon Quarry kept the line in place. If wasn't for this we may not be even writing about Okehampton to-day!

Since the closure there has always been a significant interest in the line with specials run at Christmas to get shoppers to Exeter and during the Summer to access the moors with buses radiating from the stations to places like Princetown, Castle Drogo, Gunnislake and Tavistock. In the last decade a private operator has also run tourist trains between Okehampton and Meldon Quarry and Sampford Courtenay, although they gave up operations and all was thought lost until the success of the campaign to get the line reopened.

The industry now found itself having to develop a strategic strategy under the microscope of the Government ministers, the Department for Transport, OkeRail and various bodies that make up the Peninsula Transport body. Our first aim was for Great Western Railway and Network Rail strategic teams to work together, which was basically Matt Barnes and myself, with assistance from NR

Economic team in London. The challenge was where to start, which seems strange as we are always developing strategies, it felt like we had to approach this one differently and explore every avenue possible. This including research into similar schemes such as the Border rail reopening in Scotland, with Galashiels aka Okehampton, Tweedbank as possible park and ride close to the A30 in Okehampton and an overheated housing market in Exeter (just like Edinburgh).

If you were to look at Okehampton in isolation with its population of circa 9000 inhabitants the positive business case required to open the railway would have been a challenge, so using the Borders model and reaching beyond the normal boundaries we soon came to realise there was a rich stream of potential users of the railway, just like the Borders line reaching out to towns like Melrose, Hawick, Jedburgh & Kelso. It was obvious that Bude, Launceston, Tavistock, Holsworthy and Hatherleigh could be part of our strategic thinking.



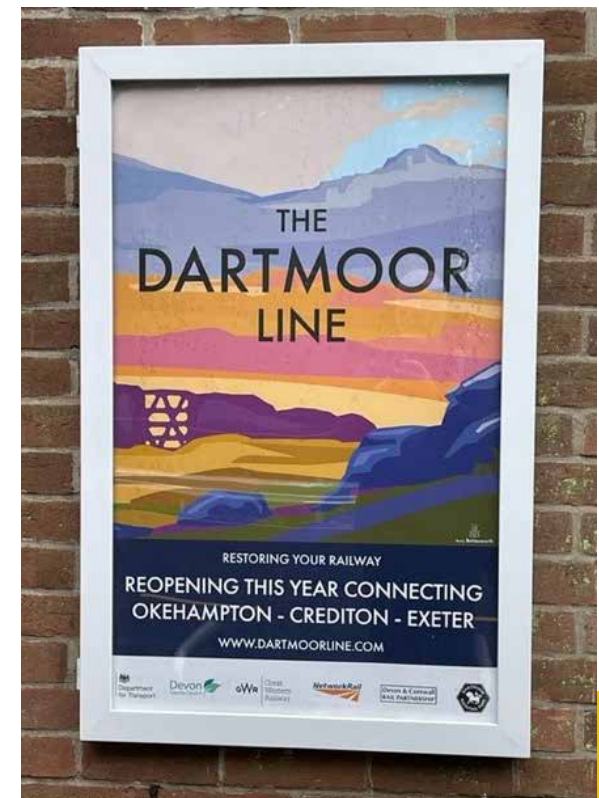
Many hours were spent running through population figures for postcodes and communities across the region and then between us make an informed judgement on how many of that population could be potential rail users. We used our own personal knowledge of the region, how easy would be to access by car or bus and weighted each area with a conservative margin from 5% to 45%. At the same time, we also looked at the challenge of travelling into Exeter during the peak and the congestion that happens in the last few miles of journey from Okehampton and North Cornwall. In the past the rhetoric had been the A30 has significant areas of dwelling and congestion was not seen as problem, its only when you add local knowledge and the forensic analysis of what was happening between the Alphington interchange with the A30 and the roads into Exeter, to discover that it could take just as long to travel the last three miles as it took to drive 30 miles. When you added in the parking fees in a city like Exeter this was a game changer. It's an interesting point that perceptions are vital to challenge at all steps of the journey, and this was the case with parking costs. It was thought that it was either free or of insignificant cost when this wasn't the case.

We were often challenged by various parties on these findings and through the diligence and supporting evidence we were able to show that the numbers were legitimate and should be used in the business case. At times I was surprised by these questions as it felt that what we were producing was a strong and well-rounded business and strategic case that others may not have completed in the past.

The work didn't stop here as we also explored the opportunities for access to education and health in Exeter, especially Exeter College who already had in excess of 1500 rail scholar tickets and the opportunity to enhance the reach by using rail to improve connectivity and lessen journey times was another block in our strategy. The indices that measured Health and Wellbeing and average wages were also used and enabled us to get a clear vision of the impact of removing the railway's in this region might have had over the last 50 years.

One other key area that we considered was onward connectivity by bus from Okehampton which would act as a rail head for North Cornwall and Torridge, as well as parts of Dartmoor. These offered significant benefits in bring these towns closer to the rail network. Although, these visions will take some time to develop post reopening of the railway, GWR worked with Devon CC and Dartline to make one improvement. This was to the Tavistock / Okehampton route which was re-cast to meet the trains and connected on a two hourly basis and initial indications are that people are using the bus to connect with the train. I had a conversation with someone in Tavistock who in order to travel to college in Exeter would leave home just after 6am in the morning to get the bus from Okehampton, under these proposals they can now leave just before 7am and be in Exeter by 8.20am.

The building of the strategy and business case all happened in record time, even though we had carried out such detailed analysis and turned over every stone to find potential rail users. I believe it was through the local knowledge that Matt and myself possessed and the ability to work together and help our colleagues in the economic teams that made this such a success. We had to challenge and fit our case, even though the local and political will was so strong, but it was worth all the time, figures, debates and strong opinions to finally submit a viable business and strategic case, which as we know turned into reality and the scheme was funded.



It's easy to say in hindsight that why did we go to all this effort when we look at the numbers us-ing the railway today, if we hadn't then maybe we would have reached a positive case and the line would not have reopened. It's difficult to measure faith and gut feelings as they don't appear in the Green Book, although it's an integral part and drove us to look at everything that could be considered in building a strategy and I am proud to have been part of the Dartmoor line work.

Since the railway reopened in November 2021 with a two hourly service, business has exceeded the planned numbers and if it continues at the rate we have seen, the targets set in the business case will be surpassed. This just goes to show that "if you build it people will come" and this has been the case with Okehampton and from May of this year the service increased to hourly. This has given a further boost in numbers and not only in Okehampton. The town of Crediton has seen a 30% increase in passengers as services to/from Exeter have become half-hourly as well as opening access to the Dartmoor region.

The success of the Okehampton line is driving other communities to think about their towns and this has led to the campaign to reopen the line between Barnstaple and Bideford, with a popula-tion of over 31,000. Watch this space for how this project progresses and I am sure others will fol-low.

If you haven't been then do please take a trip to Okehampton, use the bus or cycle along the Granite Way or walk up on to the moors, or travel to Exeter and beyond. It's a railway that meets everyone's needs and opens up the way to a more flexible, healthy and economic boost for West Devon, North Cornwall and UK PLC



David Northey
Retired Network Rail Senior
Strategic Planner

In early July we welcomed RTPI President **Tim Crawshaw** for a 3 day visit to the region. Highlights of the visit included:

Celebrating our RTPI Award winners in the South West, **thanking RTPI Volunteers** and **celebrating our newly elected RTPI members** at the Summer Reception in Taunton.

Meeting with Planners at Somerset West and Taunton where they discussed the new Council for Somerset, their Climate Positive Planning Guidance which was recently commended in the RTPI Awards in the South West, the issue of Phosphate and the impact this is having on development, the Taunton Garden Town as well as discussions about resourcing, skills and budgets.

Keynote speaker at the RTPI & Landscape Institute South West Natural Environment Seminar where Tim talked about the importance of using the natural environment to plan for health and wellbeing. The seminar then followed to discuss BNG and Nutrient Neutrality.

Meetings and visits with Exeter City Council including discussions about Liveable Exeter and the Future of Exeter lego exhibition at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery. Then a site visit to the RTPI South West Award winning St Sidwell's Point, an exemplary Passivhaus leisure centre.

An evening with the Devon, Cornwall and Somerset Young Planners where they discussed raising awareness of planning as a profession, the many different routes into planning and recruiting the next generation of Planners from various pools of exciting talent. There was even talk of a mini festival for Planners!

Tim then spent his final day with hosts **North Devon Council and Torridge District Council** where they discussed the opportunities and challenges of planning in a rural area, the coast and estuary and the effects of climate change. Then in the beautiful sunshine they walked out to Pebble Ridge and then headed over to Braunton to discuss the Local Nature Recovery Strategy with Natural England and the North Devon UNESCO Biosphere. Then a walk out onto Braunton Marsh and Horsey Island before then a relaxing afternoon tea with many of the Young Planners from both authorities.

We were delighted to host Tim who listened, inspired and took interest in the challenges and opportunities that planning has in influencing our communities and protecting our future. We hope to welcome him back to the sunny South West in the near future.

At St Sidwell's Point in Exeter



Meeting with Somerset West and Taunton Council



If you would like to host the RTPI President for a visit and meetings in your area and showcase your team and local projects then please do get in touch as we work to plan the next visits for 2023 with incoming president Sue Bridge.



With North Devon Council and Torridge District Council out on site visits

Following feedback from our previous event (Engagement in the Planning Process for Elected Members), members of the SW Planning Aid England (PAE) Task Group organised a webinar concerning Engagement in the Local Plan Process for Elected Members.

The event was chaired by myself, Katie Graham, as PAE Representative for the SW and Chair of the Regional Task Group, and we had some amazing speakers included Councillor Philip Broadhead, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Development, Growth & Regeneration, BCP Council, Councillor Judy Pearce, Member Salcombe and Thurlestone Ward, Leader South Hams District Council and Andy Reading, Principal Planning Officer – Policy, Sedgemoor District Council.

To start us off, Councillor Philip Broadhead talked us through the progress on the 1st local plan for BCP (Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole), a new authority formed in 2019. BCP is characterized by one large urban area, surrounded by countryside, waterfront, flood plains and 22 SSSIs. This has resulted in BCP becoming the tenth largest authority in the country, and its planning function is the 6th in country for major applications received.

The BCP plan had the challenge of a legacy of a combination of over 300 planning policies contained in three Local Plans, an Area Action Plan, saved policies and development plan documents.

Philip advised that he saw the Local Plan as a blue print for vision, a plan for place.

In terms of the BCP journey so far, the last few months have seen a significant amount of public consultation focused on the Issue and Options. The consultation ran Jan - March 22, and included a variety for consultation methods, from the traditional surveys (online and paper), library events press releases, to more interactive digital methods such as interactive mapping, a Local Plan podcast, promotional video ([link here](#)) and Facebook live sessions, which also taps into other social media platforms.

Phillip emphasized the importance of this consultation, which was considered to be very heavy for a pre local plan consultation and also taking the time to reflect back and embed the outcomes into the Local Plan process.

Interestingly whilst there was a focus on digital engagement to try and attract younger people to engage, there was still more engagement from the over 50s, and it was acknowledged that there is more work to do engage with the younger people.

The consultation also included objectives for feedback in terms of their importance, and it was found that there was a high level of agreement in terms of the objectives put forward.

BCP have also appointed a Cabinet lead member purely for engagement, and this role will be crucial in the local plan process going forward.

Work is also being undertaken on housing target figures, focusing on a locally derived figure.

The second speaker, Andrew Reading, gave an overview of the plan process, from preparation through to adoption, using the adopted Sedgemoor Local Plan as an example. Sedgemoor Local Plan was created over a 4 year period from scoping in 2015 to the 2019 adoption and publication. For members new to the local plan process, Andrew explained that this is a long term process that takes place over years.

Issues specific to Sedgemoor include rural affordability issues, the need for a step change in housing growth, and environmental constraints, with flood risk in particular as a significant constraint. Andrew noted there will always be challenges with regard to the various demands and constraints, and members will need to balance the difference issues.

In terms of member oversight in plan preparation, Sedgemoor had a Local Plan Working Group, which was politically and geographically proportionate, chaired by the Portfolio Holder for the Local Plan, with the Shadow Portfolio Holder and representatives from the Development Control Committee in the group. This group was responsible for making input into Local Plan process, and making recommendations to the Executive, Scrutiny and Full Committee.



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One of Andrews tips for members if new the Local Plan process, is to make yourself as familiar as possible with the Regulatory and Policy framework.

Political buy-in on cross boundary strategic matters is also important for examination.

When looking at the evidence base, members will need to consider the financial implications, including how the policy function will be resourced and the extent of any consultancy resource. In terms of considering whether evidence should be consultants or “in-house”, Sedgemoor took the approach that issues that would be regularly revisited with members (e.g. Sustainability Appraisal and land availability) may be better in-house in order to control the ownership and cost.

Another tip for members with regard to the evidence base is to reflect and look at past performance and what policies have worked, e.g. “looking back before you look forward.” Members will need an appreciation of how the evidence base will inform policies and what options have been tested.

With regard to consultation and engagement, members have a key role as they know how best to engage in their own communities, which is an important opportunity to give officers a steer in what would work for their community. For example, Sedgemoor delivered targeted parish council meetings following such feedback. Another useful tip for members, is to try to get the consultation right each time, as multiple consultation events can be inefficient and time consuming.

Whilst a Local Plan should be aspirational, deliverability is also a key consideration. Compromises may be required to make sure sites are deliverable based on the land available, development viability, relevant infrastructure thresholds and land supply pressures. Sedgemoor has had to compromise on delivery in flood risk areas, which has meant infrastructure considerations such as flood defense barriers, are even more important.

In terms of making decisions, often there no easy decisions with competing planning considerations, so there is a need for justification of decisions and how the council has exercised its planning judgment. Members need be able to articulate why a choice has been made. Members who use Development Management policies also need to be at the heart of the discussion to avoid unintended consequences.

Andrew finished his whistle stop tour of the Local Plan process, by summarising the benefits of plan making for members; it provides a vehicle for members to engage with communities with regard to their needs, to provide certainty to communities of what will happen in their area and provide increased confidence of infrastructure delivery and helps to attract new investment.

Finally Councillor Judy Pearce talked about the risk and opportunities of the Joint Local Plan process, focusing on the journey of the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan. In 2016, it was decided that South Hams, West Devon and Plymouth would join forces. The authorities were all either without a five year land supply or getting very near it, so needed to get a plan adopted as soon as possible.

The three Local Authorities formed a recognised housing market area as Plymouth was largely ‘full’ and needed to expand outside its boundaries. South Hams would take on additional housing but not change administrative boundaries in order to retain the council tax. There was also social-economic and environmental benefits for the authorities to join.

In terms of risk, there was a risk that Plymouth would dominate smaller districts. In addition, Plymouth had more resourced strategic planning team, and ultimately were able to work with the other planning teams. Judy noted a lesson learned, which is the importance of a having a shared Joint Local Plan team from the beginning. Initially there were issues with sharing information, and IT systems need to be able to work together from the start to support this process.

There was debate over member oversight and it was decided that a small team, with 2 members from each authority, formed a steering group which would oversee day to day work, but not have formal decision making powers.

Key milestones were mapped, taking account of purdah periods, and then taken to the 3 councils meetings when needed. Even with a change in political hands at Plymouth, this did not make much difference, due to the cross party support of the plan.



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Engaging Communities in Planning

In terms of housing requirements, the proposals included a large urban extension in South Hams, along with several smaller areas to the west of Plymouth's city boundary. Both South Hams and West Devon are constrained and therefore it was determined that for sustainability reasons, development should be concentrated in and around the market towns in the two districts.

Due to the urban and rural differences, this led to two distinct sets of policies.

The urban policies became the 'Plymouth Policy Area' or PPA, and for rural became known as the 'Thriving Towns and Villages' or TTV. There is one set of strategic overarching policies.

One tip from Judy is to try to "Keep Calm and Carry On" when government throws changes your way. There were two major government changes during the JLP process, the NPPF was updated and then standard housing figures emerged, but they were able to deal with these changes using the transitional arrangements.

One the benefits for the Joint Local Plan is having an integrated Joint Strategic Planning Team. This means they have capacity and resilience to do all the monitoring work required, and all 3 Local Authority areas are jointly monitored.

The Joint Local Plan has brought order and stability to development in the area.

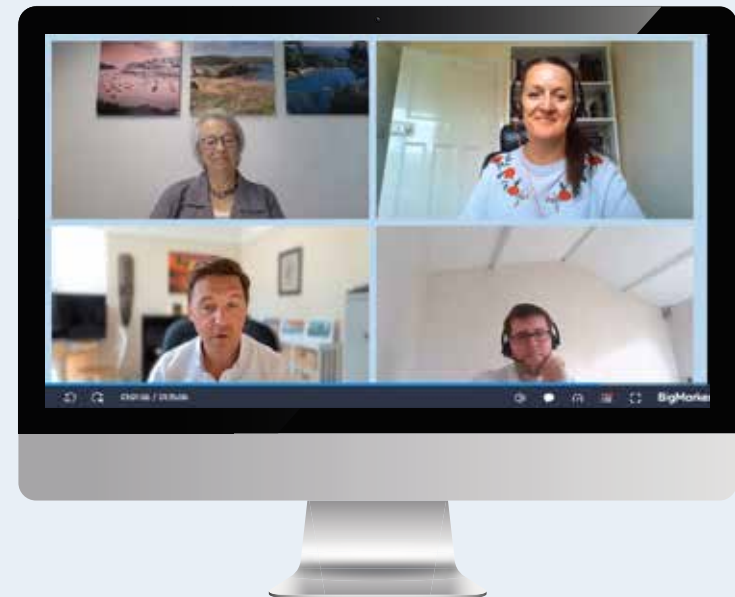
The Steering Group has been formalised into a Board, which meets roughly quarterly with an AGM in public when other members and members of the public are able to put questions to the Board and officers. Any major decisions still need to go to the three councils.

Other benefits are still emerging as Plymouth and South Hams embark on joint arrangements for a Freeport, and the Plymouth Marine Park also involves all three authorities to some extent.

I would like to say a massive thank you to our three speakers for this webinar.

Katherine Graham

RTPI SW PAE Task Group Leader



20 RMB/RAC Updates

RTPI South West Regional Management Board and Activities Committee updates

The Regional Management Board (RMB) and the Regional Activities Committee (RAC) 2022 jointly met on the 28 April and 6 July 2022 for their third and fourth meeting of the year. Key updates and discussions included in those meetings are reported to all members in the South West as a way of keeping members updated and provide opportunity for feedback.

Regional operational matters and business

- **Nominations for elections** to the RMB and RAC will open in September and close in October. New members are encouraged to apply. For existing committee members on a 1-year term or coming to the end of their 2-year term will need to reapply. It was noted that there are many other volunteering opportunities available across the RTPI including the General Assembly and Board of Trustees. Nominations for these are currently open. Find out more <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/about-the-rtpi/governance/rtpi-elections-2022/>
- **A financial report** highlighted how the region was in a positive position and the forecast indicated that there was likely to be some surplus funds to help further support current and new activities in the region. The September report to the committee would provide a more accurate position given the recent dinner and Summer Reception.

- **Business Planning for 2023** has begun and will continue over the Summer. All RTPI members are encouraged to put forward ideas of what they would like to see in the region. Contact southwest@rtpi.org.uk with your ideas and feedback.

Over the next few months, the committee will look at the current business plan being delivered and consider what activities the region should stop, continue and what new things we could do to help raise the value of membership and profile of planning.

For 2023 onward there will be some shared priorities across all the RTPI regions which will be placed into every business plan and regions can choose which to focus their activities on. These include, but not limited to:

1. Engaging with key employers and stakeholders to support GROWPLAN and CHANGE, providing support and networking opportunities to planners in the public and private sector and collaborating with the wider built environment sector to demonstrate the value of RTPI membership.
2. Promoting Planning as a career of choice to schools and students, targeting hard to reach demographics. Support our Planning Schools and Apprenticeship Schemes.
3. Helping members to maintain their professional competence through the provision of CPD, supporting the specific needs of local members, including the Young Planners network.

4. Celebrating the profession and advocate planning through our Awards for Planning Excellence, Welcome Events and Communications.
5. Supporting the delivery of RTPI's policy and research objectives, harnessing local knowledge, expertise, and insight to inform RTPI work, widen our influence regionally and nationally.
6. Supporting our committees and volunteers to flourish through the implementation of the Volunteer Strategy, widening our reach and appeal and becoming representative of our membership.
7. Supporting the delivery of Planning Aid England activity in the region.
8. Supporting the delivery of the RTPI's International Strategy by integrating an international dimension into regional activity.

To date, New ideas put forward for the business plan for consideration include:

- Consideration of activities/events with the Channel Islands/Isle of Scilly
- A Planning San Frontiers (RTPI South East) like event for 2024 to bring public/private sector together
- Digitalising the archive of Branchout
- Submitting a bid in 2023 for the RTPI Young Planners conference in the South West for 2024
- Networking and social opportunities for those no longer on the Young Planner Network. Also consideration for those on paternity / maternity leave.
- Study Tours of Award winning projects
- Raising the profile of Local Planning Authorities

Other key discussions

- The challenges and concern in LPAs on resourcing, membership fees and budgets was discussed at length. The committee resolved to consider activities and engagement with LPAs to help promote the value of membership. Several ideas being considered as part of business planning.

Key projects/activity updates

Climate Change Seminar

This event was held on 10 May in Taunton, it was sold out and well received. The event included afternoon workshops where attendees learned about allocating sites for wind energy and managing development viability and high energy efficiency of buildings, the workshops helped maintain interest into the afternoon.

RTPI Presidents' reception in Birmingham

Julie O'Rourke (Chair), Angharad Williams (Past Chair) and Katherine Graham (PAE Task Group Leader) attended the Presidents reception where Tim Crawshaw, this year's RTPI president, reiterated his interests regarding health, wellbeing and sustainability.

Inaugural RTPI South West New Member reception and Award ceremony

The region held the first ever summer reception that combined the results of the RTPI Awards for Planning Excellence, a celebration of newly Chartered Members and appreciation of RTPI volunteers with equal weighting. The South West, Wales and Northern Ireland piloted these 'new member' events with the potential to roll out further as annual events to celebrate newly chartered members. Invitations were disseminated to new Chartered, Associate and Honorary members in the South West since January 2021. The South West welcomed Victoria Hills, CEO of the RTPI and Tim Crawshaw, RTPI President for 2022 to the event which kicked off his 3 day presidential tour of South West.

Annual Dinner

The annual dinner was held on 10 June at Wills Memorial Hall in Bristol and chaired by Julie O'Rourke, Dawn de Vries and Angharad Williams, our previous chairs who were unable to attend annual dinners during their years as Chair due to cancellations because of Covid-19. More tables were sold than ever before and the event raised around £1,685 for the 3 nominated charities!

RTPI Awards for Planning Excellence

The South West winners were announced at the Summer Reception with awards and Commendations presented for Best Plan, Best Project (this is the winner of seven project categories), Head Planner of the Year, Young Planner of the Year and The Chair's Award. Details of the results are included in this edition of Branchout. Read more here ([link to the page this is on](#))

RTPI Presidential Visit to the South West

Timothy Crawshaw joined us in the region for a very sunny three days from the 6 to 8 July. An interesting and informative schedule was drawn up to help him meet lots of members and experience our best attributes! As part of this tour, he joined the Summer Reception to recognise our new Chartered members then joined a meeting with Somerset West and Taunton Council. He gave an inspirational keynote speech at our Natural Environment seminar in Exeter on 7 July and then met with Exeter City Council where he visited the Royal Albert Memorial Museum and St Sidwell's point, an award winning Passivhaus leisure centre. On his final day he headed up to Northern Devon to hear more about the North Devon Biosphere Project. The visit included site visits to Braunton Marsh and Horsey Island as well as the Northam Burrows visitors centre and Pebble Ridge. As part of his tour he also met with many Young Planners. We thoroughly enjoyed welcoming him to the region.

Reports from working groups / representatives

The region has several working groups focussing on delivering local activity in areas such as Education, Policy and Research, Mentoring and CPD. They cover a broad range of activities and report back to the RMB/RAC regularly. We also have 3 active young planner steering groups and volunteer representatives on national RTPI committees/groups such as EDI, One Institute, Volunteering, Nations and Regions and the General Assembly.

Highlights/updates so far this year include:

- At **Nations and Regions** the great work and success of events in the South West was recognised. The panel are also encouraging Councillor engagement with the Politics in Planning network (PIPn) and Planning Aid to try and improve the quality of decision making.
- **Mentoring Working Group**
Through this initial pilot programme which was aimed at early and mid career planners, 24 members have been paired with a mentor in the region. Mentees included many licentiates looking for support with their APC. If you could help mentor a licentiate, please do get in touch. The working group supporting this pilot programme will be reviewing the pilot in the early autumn and consider re-opening the programme to new mentee & mentor applicants. The longer-term aim is for this to be included within the RTPi NUTURE programme.
- **Policy & Research WG**
Rebecca Windermer was successful in her Research bid with UWE and the working group will be meeting in late July to discuss next steps and RTPi input. Well done Rebecca!
- **Young Planners** are delivering a range of events but do need more volunteers for their steering groups. We would like to re-launch the Gloucestershire Young Planners group in the very near future.

- **Editorial WG**

The 3 times a year e-magazine is currently under review. A survey will be sent to members in the near future to help inform decisions.

- **Planning Aid**

After a successful webinar on Engagement in the Local Plan Process for Elected Members in June, the group are now considering ideas to celebrate the 50th anniversary of PAE in 2023

- **CPD WG**

The group needs support on populating the programmes for the forthcoming Heritage, Rural and Planning Law Seminars in the Autumn. The group has now also begun thoughts on key topics for 2023.



A bit about yourself

I grew up on the beautiful south coast of Wales and I moved to the South West of England in 2012 to take up my first role as a planner in Bournemouth. I'm a committee member, and past chair of the RTPI Dorset Young Planners and I am also the Honorary Treasurer on the RTPI South West Regional Management Board

Why a career in Planning?

Like many planners I undertook my undergraduate degree in Geography. This was at Swansea University. While I had studied mainly physical geography the opportunities that planning offered to shape our built environment piqued my interest. I had always fascinated by the development of the M4 corridor in South Wales where I grew up and how the decisions of government bodies and planners shaped the places and spaces in the area. After graduation from Swansea, I chose to do a master's degree in Planning, Practice and Research at Cardiff University.

When I graduated from Cardiff in 2010-11 there were very few job opportunities in Wales for a graduate planner. After a gap year working and backpacking around Australia and New Zealand, I returned to the UK in 2012 and secured my first job as a temporary planning assistant at the Planning Bureau, a consultancy which provided planning advice for McCarthy and Stone

(now McCarthy Stone) the leading private retirement housing developer. My first day of work as a planner coincided with the release of the NPPF on 12th March 2012 and I progressed to a Senior Planning Associate with the company in 2014. After a spell working in consultancy for Turley and WYG (now Tetra Tech) I returned to The Planning Bureau in 2015 and I was promoted to my current role in January 2020. While I am based in Bournemouth, I have a national remit and I really enjoy my role, especially the opportunity to travel and explore England and Wales, looking to deliver specialist retirement accommodation as far afield as Northumberland down to the furthest reaches of Cornwall and Kent.

What does your current job involve?

My current job is as Group Planning Manager. I specialise in promoting specialised housing for older people at local and national policy levels. I also manage the Planning Appeals for McCarthy Stone nationally. My job is to ensure the planning appeals submitted by McCarthy Stone are arguable and critically, winnable! The sites McCarthy Stone develop are almost always brownfield so present a number of challenges and the issues are rarely the same which makes the role very interesting.

Why did you get involved in the RAC?

I was a founding member of RTPI Dorset Young Planners and while I stepped down as chair of the steering group in November 2021, I will remain a member of the steering group until I am 'timed out' of being a 'Young Planner' later this summer. As I reflected last November on the past five years of brilliant CPDs,

Seminars, Conferences and social events with the Young Planners I was really keen to see if we could work to bridge the gap between young planners and those becoming more established in their roles. As planners, we often have this type of role, as the 'go between' across many built environment professions but bridging the gap so that older and younger planners can socialise and exchange ideas I think is a very worthwhile project, and something I want to explore while I am on the RMB and RAC.

What do you do when not planning?

In my spare time I love playing tennis and hiking. I'm an avid sports fan as well and love cheering on Arsenal, England's cricketers and the Welsh Rugby Union team. I really enjoy listening to live music and the theatre and there's rarely a month where I don't have a gig of some sort to enjoy.



22 Forthcoming events WEBINARS & TRAINING

AUGUST

- 10 Transport - the race to net zero**
Is radical action needed to get to net zero?
More info: www.rtpi.org.uk/events/2022/august/transport-the-race-to-net-zero-is-radical-action-needed-to-get-to-net-zero/
- 17 EP-APC information session**
More info: www.rtpi.org.uk/events/2022/august/rtpi-apc-webinar-ep-apc-august-2022/
- 31 Reflective Journal**
More info: www.rtpi.org.uk/events/2022/august/rtpi-apc-webinar-reflective-journal-august-2022/

SEPTEMBER

- 6 A-APC information session**
More info: www.rtpi.org.uk/events/2022/september/rtpi-apc-webinar-a-apc-september-2022/
- 7 Heritage and Conservation**
More info: www.rtpi.org.uk/events/2022/september/online-cpd-heritage-and-conservation/
- 8 Flooding: Effective Management of Surface Water Through Planning**
More info: www.rtpi.org.uk/events/2022/september/flooding-effective-management-of-surface-water-through-planning/

- 12 Planning Law Update**
More info: www.rtpi.org.uk/events/2022/september/east-midlands-planning-law-update/
- 14 Written Communication for Planning**
More info: www.rtpi.org.uk/events/2022/september/online-cpd-written-communication-for-planning/
- 20 Effective Leadership Skills for Planners**
More info: www.rtpi.org.uk/events/2022/september/online-cpd-effective-leadership-skills-for-planners/
- 20 Role of planners in creating sustainable communities in deprived areas**
More info: www.rtpi.org.uk/events/2022/september/role-of-planners-in-creating-sustainable-communities-in-deprived-areas/
- 21 Planning and Good Design**
More info: www.rtpi.org.uk/events/2022/september/online-cpd-planning-and-good-design/
- 21 Role of planning in designing healthy places and tackling health inequality**
More info: www.rtpi.org.uk/events/2022/september/the-role-of-planning-in-designing-healthy-places-and-tackling-health-inequality/
- 22 Planning for Non planners**
More info: www.rtpi.org.uk/events/2022/september/online-cpd-planning-for-non-planners/

New Webinars, Training & other online learning opportunities are often added to the diary so do take a look at the events calendar for the latest CPD opportunities
www.rtpi.org.uk/events

- 26 Community Engagement - The Craft of Collaborative Planning interactive session**
More info: www.rtpi.org.uk/community-engagementsept2022
- 28 Development Viability and Finance Introduction**
More info: www.rtpi.org.uk/events/2022/september/online-cpd-development-viability-and-finance-introduction/
- 29 Project Management for Planning**
More info: www.rtpi.org.uk/events/2022/september/online-cpd-project-management-for-planning/



23 IN-PERSON EVENTS/ NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

AUGUST

25 Summer Boat Social at Poole Quay

Dorset Young Planners are delighted by the return of this networking social. The trip will take you on a cruise past Brownsea Island; a wildlife sanctuary for a variety of animals, including the famous red squirrels. We will cruise past Studland Bay & its beaches with a stunning sunset backdrop that leads the way to the Jurassic Coast & Old Harry Rock.

More info: www.rtpi.org.uk/events/2022/august/summer-boat-social-at-poole-quay/

31 Beach Clean up event in Bournemouth

Open to all members (not just Young Planners) this event could be a great opportunity to bring your office team together and out in the fresh air.

More info: www.rtpi.org.uk/beachcleanaug2022

SEPTEMBER

7 A Hard Hat Tour of Clifton Suspension Bridge, Bristol

The one-hour tour will provide an insight into the construction of the iconic Clifton Suspension Bridge spanning the Avon Gorge through a visit into the bridge's vaults (which were rediscovered in 2002). The tour itself will take place within the abutment on the Leigh Woods-side of the bridge and will be led by the Clifton Suspension Bridge Trust.

More info: www.rtpi.org.uk/events/2022/september/a-hard-hat-tour-of-clifton-suspension-bridge/

13 Balancing Heritage and Planning, Bath

This one day seminar in conjunction with the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists invites you to explore the importance of heritage assets above and below ground. The seminar will discuss how we can protect and enhance heritage while delivering development and meeting the Governments climate reduction aims. Furthermore, this seminar explores how can we use heritage as an asset to revitalise our high streets and businesses.

More info: www.rtpi.org.uk/swheritage2022

26 Walking discussion tour along the east bank of the River Severn, Gloucester

The area is home to the huge Gloucester landfill now complete and awaiting restoration, as well as Netheridge Sewage works. These and other developments provide interest and opportunities, which will be the focus of our discussion. Along the way we will talk to rangers and landfill operators to give a real flavour of what potential the area has for landscape, biodiversity, amenity and climate resilience improvements.

More info: www.rtpi.org.uk/Gloswalksept2022

28 Planning for Housing Delivery Symposium, Exeter

Organised by Young Planners, this discussion seminar will explore some of the biggest barriers to delivery and what we can do as Planners to better plan for delivery, and bring these figures closer together.

More info: www.rtpi.org.uk/events/2022/june/planning-for-housing-delivery-symposium/

OCTOBER

12 Planning for Rural Communities, Manor House Hotel, Okehampton

This one day seminar invites you explore the range of competing interests facing rural areas. How do you deliver housing, both market and affordable, rural employment and community facilities and sustainable energy, which is sustainable while maintaining the intrinsic qualities of the countryside? How can we deliver innovative housing whilst protecting the rural environment?

More info: www.rtpi.org.uk/swrural2022

NOVEMBER

17 Planning Law Update

Sponsored by Burges Salmon this seminar will update you on the latest government legislation and what's forthcoming.

More info: www.rtpi.org.uk/swplanninglaw2022

