

Tripwire



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Tripwire



Tripwire magazine is published four times a year in digital form by the West Midlands region of the RTPI.

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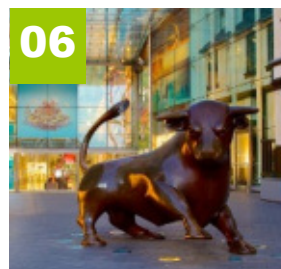
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Your opportunity to contribute to Tripwire in 2017 and / or be 'guest' editor for later editions

After a long and distinguished period as Editor of Tripwire John Acres has finally stepped down due to his commitments as this year's Vice President and next year's President of the RTPI. I know that you will join me in expressing both our gratitude for his considerable work in producing a highly topical, interesting, stimulating and often amusing regional magazine and our congratulations on his new RTPI appointment.



The departure of John as Tripwire Editor and a move to its production as fully electronic provides the opportunity to look afresh at the way we put Tripwire together plus review what it looks and feels like.

Recent discussions at the Regional Activities Committee and Regional Management Board meetings resulted in an agreement that for the current year at least we will invite guests to edit the four editions of Tripwire due in 2017. This is an opportunity for any regional member to shape and mould the content of Tripwire and offer something different, whilst maintaining the standards and value of the magazine we have come to love and respect.

Hugh Lufton, consultant practitioner has kindly accepted the invitation to edit this 2017 spring edition and there are guest editors lined up for summer and autumn. There is still a vacancy for the Winter 2017 Edition.

As Editor you will be responsible for choosing themes, seeking and perhaps writing contributions and generally ensuring that material is appropriate for the magazine. Guidance on the role including advice on do's and don'ts will be provided as will administrative support in terms of collating, coordinating, printing and publishing the final product.

If you don't want to be an Editor but are happy to contribute informative articles or opinion pieces for

Tripwire, again please make yourself known! There's plenty to get your teeth into; the Housing White Paper, Government consultations, strategic planning, the West Midlands Combined Authority, the WM CA Land Commission report, the role of the RTPI, working with sister professions etc. Tripwire provides a platform for you and regional RTPI members to express the things that you and they feel are important.

What do you think? How can the RTPI influence crucial national and regional debates, where and how can planning make a real and positive difference? What CPD would help you in your current role and what would help you to progress as a planner?

If you are interested in either being a guest Editor and/or contributing to upcoming editions of Tripwire drop a line to either myself, Michael Vout (Hon Sec) or Sue Griffith-Jones (Regional Coordinator). ■

Best wishes

Craig (RTPI Regional Chair)

West Midlands RTPI Chairman's opening remarks

Exciting wasn't it, the wait to find out what the Government thinks should happen to rectify the nations housing problem....and then when the White Paper arrived it was well, a bit disappointing really.... saying lots of things but arguably saying nothing new and certainly not appearing to have any clear answers....what now? Well we are in a consultation period until 2nd May and therefore there is the opportunity for all those interested to respond accordingly. That opportunity must be taken to ensure that Government in any subsequent legislative changes and new/amended guidance addresses the real issues preventing housing coming forward to meet needs.

John Acres gives his considered views on the contents of the White Paper in our feature article but as a general thought...

What I think is missing with the White Paper and in many consultations regarding spatial policy over the last few years is not only a real understanding by Ministers and Civil Servants of the issues facing planning, planning professionals and all those engaged in the 'development industry', but perhaps more importantly, those who are not involved in



Craig Jordan

planning but whose lives are impacted upon – that's right the public and local communities.

Do we ever ask why there is opposition to housing from people who now occupy the houses that previously another generation objected to? Do we as a society actually speak to and hear the views of those wishing to have their own roof over their heads? When talking about the possibility of releasing green belt do we ever ask why the green belt is viewed as important by those who wish to comment? What does the green belt mean to people and is it as important as other areas of policy? How does it compare to say upgrading our high streets or delivering the social and community facilities people demand and expect in a civilised and advanced country as ours?

Why in an age of constant and varied means of communication including instant comment, do we not have proper debates based on the questions above?

This is not populism or some kind of version of the X-Factor, playing to an audience and seeking instant endorsement of a particular stance but rather a serious question as to why in England and the wider UK we don't establish more of an understanding as to how planning relates to the wider agenda. Putting it bluntly, why is development seen as a bad thing when as a society we need such development to meet our needs. Where are the proponents of sustainable growth when you need them?

It all sounds basic stuff and hopefully to you the reader quite credible and common sense – you identify what is required, you consider your options, you choose an appropriate option and then you deliver – why do we have the challenges we clearly do? In my first planning job I worked with a guy who with a very straight face said to me ‘I love this job but for one thing, the public!’If society and local communities are our problem, maybe they are our solution too.

to say you know you can have growth and still have wonderful environment, prosperity and social justice?

As a profession planners have many skills but I think we underplay what is a crucial one and that is taking people with us, being strong, firm but telling a good story and then delivering. If we are to have the growth which we need as a country and to support our local communities we need to better engage with our communities. We need to break down the barriers that clearly exist and which prevent

and what the subject area throws at you. It’s never dull however and the motivation is that I and all of you fellow planning professionals are making a difference to people’s everyday lives. Quite a responsibility and one to be proud of.

We have the national President visiting the region in the next few days where myself and colleagues will be showing him around a series of projects in Walsall and Stoke on Trent. We aim to showcase how through good planning and application of our skills as planners we have delivered sustainable growth which enhances people’s lives and counters the commonly held view that planning is a ‘difficult’ matter.....maybe if we spent more time highlighting the positives and doing so working with communities we would overcome this and begin a new dawn... ■

Craig Jordan is Head of Economic Growth at Lichfield District Council and is Chair of the West Midlands Branch of the RTPI

“ why is development seen as a bad thing when as a society we need such development to meet our needs? ”

My argument here is we need to be finding ways to overcome opposition to development in fact we need to go further and look at what will encourage residents and local communities to embrace change and support/demand new development.

For many of us the day job involves finding ways to pass on bad news, pacify the vociferous minority and generally agree lots of plainly unpalatable compromises. Is this what planning in England has come to? Where is the positivity? Where is the drive

meaningful dialogue taking place and we need to show why planning is a good thing.....at the moment Government doesn’t have the answers, local politicians are influenced by people with vested interests and the benefits of planning are not being properly advocated. Surely, that needs putting right.

As I write this I am nearly 3 months into my time as regional chair. I am very much enjoying the role whilst experiencing the ups and downs of planning

As guest editor for just this one edition it is my gift to sift and select from the many burning issues of the day that may be of relevance and interest to West Midlands planners. I start in no particular logical order with, a literal, not a planning appeal.

Ask not what the RTPI can do for you, ask what you can do for the RTPI.

I have no shame in a blatant plagiarism with slight adaption of John F. Kennedy's most known line from his inaugural address (which itself, "ask not what your country..." was plagiarised) to call for an upsurge of support to the RTPI. I have heard time and time again members bemoan their professional body rarely considering what it is that it does and what they themselves could do to make it better.



I think the RTPI is quite unlike many other professional bodies in that rather than being just a

sanctuary to protect its members from unqualified practice it is a genuinely outward looking body that both challenges and accepts challenge. At its best it pushes the planning agenda forward, seeks to raise and protect professional standards and is innovative and creative. You simply get out what you put in.

As members and subscription payers I think it's entirely reasonable to have expectations, indeed high expectations, of our Institute – but we must challenge ourselves raise our standards and our good practice for the wider good.

Is Birmingham batting as England's second city?

In September 2012 the BBC Politics programme did some sound-bite interviews in London asking people if they could name the second city <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-19635618>. One replied "you got loads of landmarks up there" Interviewer, "like what, what's a Birmingham landmark?" "oh the cow, the big cow in the city, you



know what I mean" Interviewer, "the big cow?" "yes that big cow" Interviewer, "Oh, the Bull ring, the bull in the bullring in the shopping centre?" "the BULL RING yes that's the one the shopping centre..." Interviewer, "So apart from a big cow what else has Birmingham got going for it?" "I don't know the train station".



In answer to the second city question another replied "Manchester" then "Liverpool" then "Leeds" and then we can only assume gave up guessing.

In a poll commissioned by the Birmingham Mail in 2017 more respondents, 38%, thought Manchester was the second city 2% more than those who said Birmingham.

<http://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/midlands-news/more-people-think-manchester-uks-12433529>.

For those of us intimately involved in the passage of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy circa

2005-2009 I am sure there is fond recollection of the debate around Birmingham's role as a *world city*. Now arguably there is a debate around Birmingham's role as a European city more focussed given the possibilities of HS2 and Brexit.

Without pouring over justification from the more quantitative spatial economic indicators I simply make observation from just a visual perception that the city centre is now thriving.

Is this testament to local, city and regional planning or just that point in the economic and physical regeneration cycle? Is the built regeneration in tune with social regeneration and improvements in housing conditions?

End of the Road: Challenging the Road Building Consensus?

The Campaign for Rural England (CPRE) has very recently produced two publications drawing on its own commissioned research "*The Impact of Road Projects in England*" and related summary "*End of the Road: Challenging the Road Building Consensus?*". The front cover of the summary document shows the be-moth that is the M25 brimming with traffic. We can feel relieved that we have no such beast in the West Midlands our motorways are no more than 8-lanes wide and if they get too big we just pop another one in to run parallel so it doesn't seem quite so monstrous.



In CPRE's forward they say "*Unsurprisingly, evidence from the 13 cases analysed in detail for traffic impact concluded that road schemes generate more traffic. On average, traffic grew 47% more than background levels, with one scheme more than doubling traffic within 20 years. None of the four schemes assessed in the longer-term showed the promised reduction in congestion; all put pressure on adjoining roads*"



My hedonic calculus is that there must become a point where there is so much road capacity that there isn't actually anywhere worth going unless you just want to look at road junctions and fly-overs. We all stay at home. ■



Hugh Lufton

Guest Editor Hugh Lufton BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI is the Principal of Lufton & Associates Chartered Planning Consultancy

A report by Craig Jordan, West Midlands RTPI Chair

Monday

Awet morning welcomed the President on his arrival into Birmingham Grand Central Station just after 9.20am. From there and having checked his bags into his hotel the President accompanied by myself then took the Midland metro to the Hawthorns in Sandwell where Neville Ball from Walsall Council met us. By now it was lashing down and as we walked across the car park the short distance from the tram stop to Neville's car we all got drenched.

From there Neville drove us through the streets of West Bromwich and then the Sandwell Valley. The rain was heavy but it didn't seem to dampen the spirits as questions were asked about which bit of the Black Country we were in and comments made about the fact that whilst called the Black Country lots of it looked even at this stage of proceedings quite green!

We visited the St Margaret's Hospital site – the location of a major housing development which has attempted to reproduce the layout of the former main hospital buildings and made good use of the surrounding grounds to assimilate the housing into the wider environment. Again belying the image, the

whole site lies in Green Belt and appeared well designed and clearly popular with a mix of tenures including affordable properties.

After St Margaret's the President was transported to Barr Beacon, a nature reserve and the highest point in the Borough of Walsall to provide a view of the wider Black Country and also show the contrast between the mainly built up and in many places deprived areas of Walsall to the west and rural, open and more affluent areas to the east. Unfortunately, as the rain swept in and the low cloud cover doggedly refused to move away the President was asked to visualise the vistas which on a clear day are visible, he was told. Luckily, he had Neville to describe what he would have been able to see if the weather wasn't too bad aided also by a very helpful display showing the directions of towns and other places of interest within Walsall, the wider Black Country and beyond.

The visit moved on to Goscote and Blakenall part of the more urban area of Walsall with its challenges. Planned housing developments were interspersed with the areas of environmental despoilation where the problems of low demand and market viability were clearly evident. Here though the President was shown round a large housing renewal scheme which was proving very successful in terms of housing people and integrating with the local community and environment. Accompanied by Lyndon Parkes and Connie Jennings of the Walsall Housing Group, the



Stephen at Barr Beacon the highest point in Walsall Metropolitan Borough being shown views of the Borough, the rest of the Black Country beyond and parts of Staffordshire by Neville Ball (Walsall MBC).



Stephen at a development of mixed social/affordable housing at Goscote/Blakenall, Walsall known as Waters Keep involving developers Keepmoat and Walsall Housing Group. In the picture showing Stephen the overall site plan is Lyndon Parkes of WHG.

President was shown the current phase of development and the overall plan for the area.

A quick drive from Goscote/Blakenall brought the President into central Walsall where a major initiative to promote hi tech office uses known as Gigaport was highlighted abutting the inner ring road wrapping round the centre. Some impressive new buildings were noteworthy and gave an impression of some innovative and creating thinking.



The President duly visited the offices of Walsall Council where he met some of the Council's planning staff. Over a sandwich and possibly the biggest mug of tea ever seen on the planet, the President heard about the history of the Black Country and the issues facing Walsall and its BC neighbours Wolverhampton, Dudley and Sandwell. It was very apparent from the comments made by the officers that the industrial activities of the past continue to have a huge impact on the ability of this part of the West Midlands to attract good quality development and viable investment. The President asked a number of questions to better understand the problems but also to see what could be done.

After lunch a walk around the centre of Walsall followed where the President took in various



Stephen meeting Walsall MBC planners at their Civic Centre offices, Walsall. In the picture on the left Mike Smith, Neville Ball both of Walsall MBC Policy team and Stephen. Discussion centred around issues facing the Authority and the wider Black Country about planning for growth against a backdrop of historical land availability issues (industrial legacy, remediation costs), demand and viability.

developments which have taken place in the last few years and are intended to refresh and revitalise the area. These include the Art Gallery and new retail/commercial and housing development based around the Walsall Canal.

Back in the car and a very short trip to Willenhall where an interesting and illuminating trip took place



Stephen being welcomed to Stoke by members and officers of City of Stoke on Trent Council. In the picture Stephen is talking to Cllr Follows on the left cabinet member for Greener City, Development and Leisure and next to him & slightly obscured Cllr Brereton Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Transport and Heritage.

amongst some classic Black Country development and lesser known but quite revealing Georgian townscape. A stark reminder of how the Black Country grew up was found where an affordable housing scheme literally co-existed alongside a large, metal bashing factory. Only a couple of 100 metres away stood the centre of Willenhall with its quaint streets and Georgian architecture. A strange but fascinating juxtaposition.

Returning to the Midland Metro via Wednesbury Parkway Station the President experienced the improved transport links which have helped to open up parts of the Black Country to new employment and housing. The Black Country route via Darlaston and Moxley highlighted the importance of movement and accessibility in transforming the look and feel of an area.

As the rain at last gave way, some sunshine appeared allowing the President to view more of the Black Country as he travelled back to Birmingham for the evening programme.

To the Old Joint Stock in the centre of Birmingham and the first of a series of evening events – a drinks reception laid on by the WM RTPI Young Planners. A well-attended event and an opportunity for the President to mingle and meet a number of the young planner fraternity. The offer of a free drink and some food had clearly had an effect as the mezzanine above the main bar area, booked for the do, was packed out.

The formalities of the WM RTPI AGM swiftly followed where the President was introduced and gave a potted history of his background, explained his themes and ambitions for his year and took questions. Later on the agenda he presented some gifts to mark the stepping down of Paul Harris the longstanding Hon Sec for the region from the RAC and John Acres for his services in editing the regional newsletter Tripwire and also leaving the

RAC on becoming the Vice President of the RTPI this year. Both well deserved.

After the AGM the President joined a number of colleagues for a meal at a local restaurant and a chance to let his hair down over some very nice wine, tapas and Paella!

Tuesday

The sun was out and a great contrast to the previous day.

An early start for the trip to Stoke via the famous or rather infamous M6, the chair of the region confidently predicting that driving rather than going by train would be fine, just as he and the President met a good impression of a car park on the first junction coming out of Birmingham.

Arriving in Stoke a warm welcome was extended by key members of the City Council together with officers from a number of departments. The enthusiasm of the elected members and desire to make positive changes to Stoke and its people really came across and extended to officers who in a session with the President took him through a variety of development and regeneration projects, some of which he would see at first hand later on. The impressive list of achievements, ongoing schemes and plans for the future highlighted the benefits of having a clear vision, strong leadership but also team work across varied disciplines.



Stephen at the site of the mixed housing and employment Wedgwood Centre, Barlaston, Stoke being shown some enabling development by David Wilson Homes. In the picture Melanie Hughes Senior Planning Policy Officer, City of Stoke On Trent Council (on left), Stephen and Joanne Mayne, Team Manager Planning Policy, City of Stoke on Trent Council.

After the session and presentations the President was taken on a tour of Stoke and its numerous centres to see for himself examples of new housing, infrastructure improvements, major new employment developments etc.

Driving through Fenton, Longton, Meir and Trentham amongst other places the President was



Stephen pictured standing next to a statue of Josiah Wedgwood at the Wedgwood Centre, Barlaston, Stoke. The centre contains a museum, exhibition space, tea rooms, shop, café/restaurant alongside the Wedgwood factory/offices. It is planned to expand the centre with a factory outlet shopping area. New housing is being built elsewhere on the site as part of an enabling development (see earlier photo).

shown the regenerated area of Weston Heights, Weston Coyney formerly a mining estate known as Coalville. Progressed under the previous National Housing Market Pathfinder Programme, new housing was going up alongside refurbished dwellings with the result that the whole community was changing in appearance and for the better.

Harking back to its past but also very much to the present and the future, the President was then transported to the Wedgwood Centre at Barlaston within Stoke but close to the border with Stafford Borough. Here the site of the former Wedgwood Ceramics and Pottery factory including surrounding open land is being transformed into a 21st century mixed use development intended to preserve the name of Wedgwood, help develop as a business but also diversify and offer people a visitor experience. The President heard from Jonathan Poole of the Wedgwood business who explained the history of the site and detailed the background to the new development as well as future plans.

After lunch and a brief tour of the Wedgwood Centre and its impressive facilities the President travelled back into the city's northern and central parts to visit some other key sites and projects, including new and planned developments in Stoke-on-Trent City Centre such as the Unity Walks retail and leisure scheme and the Central Business District. After seeing the core of the city centre the President visited the £1 houses of Hanley, here housing in poor condition and in a rundown part of the City,



Stephen visiting the Middleport Pottery and conservation area, Stoke including regenerated and improved terrace housing adjacent the pottery. Stephen is accompanied by Melanie Hughes (City of Stoke on Trent Council), Joanne Mayne (City of Stoke on Trent Council) and Elaine Moulton (Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council).

had been refurbished and brought back into use. Under the scheme purchasers for the price of £1 could effectively acquire a property and borrow monies with which to then improve and make habitable their property. An interesting and innovative way of addressing problems within the housing market and supporting people in housing need and on low incomes who otherwise would face great difficulties.

Moving onto the Etruria Valley based around the A500 and Ceramics Valley Enterprise Zone, the effects of major infrastructure investment, public policy and good planning were evident in the form of significant new employment developments. Good transport links to the M6 and other parts of the Strategic Transport Network together with land availability and supply of local labour clearly had influenced the decisions of companies to locate in the area. Cabinet members and officers were keen to explain the thinking behind a new proposed link road in the Etruria Valley which when built will improve strategic connectivity, reduce road congestion and open up further land for development.

Returning to an earlier theme and in recognition of what 'the Potteries' is famous for, the President then visited Middleport Pottery – home to the BBC's Great Pottery Throw Down Programme. This historic building has been completely refurbished and sits within a tightly drawn conservation area containing some lovely improved terrace properties.

Sitting alongside the Trent and Mersey Canal the Pottery offers a wonderful setting for a visit and a cup of tea!

Before being dropped off at the station for his return trip to London, the President was shown the nearby University Quarter consolidating existing and new Higher and Further Education facilities and providing for enhanced public realm.

Overall Summary: A good opportunity to see parts of the West Midlands which traditionally are ignored in favour of other locations. However, the visits highlighted what planning is about – identifying needs and coming up with solutions to meet those needs. Where market failure is an issue it requires a strong will and a desire to take challenges on and effect positive change. It was heartening to see the good work being done by professional planners working with elected members and partner organisations and what was being achieved. Something to be very proud of! ■

West Midlands Planners discuss with HRH The Prince of Wales

One of the biggest challenges being faced globally in the 21st Century is the rapid pace of urbanisation - much of it unplanned and lacking basic services. Continuing urbanisation and population growth are projected to add 2.5 billion people to urban areas by 2050 - many living in informal settlements and slum conditions. Rapid urbanisation is of particular relevance in the Commonwealth where many cities are expected to double in size in the next 20 years. Problems are exacerbated in many countries by there being far too few built environment professionals, including planners. The shortage of professionals is particularly acute in developing countries many of which are experiencing the most rapid rates of urban growth.

The Commonwealth Association of Planners (CAP) (www.commonwealth-planners.org) is working with the Prince's Foundation for Building Community and the Commonwealth Local Government Forum on a project to develop planning approaches for use in urban areas experiencing rapid urbanisation and where resources are limited. The 'Planning for Rapid Urbanisation Project' was launched by HRH The Prince of Wales, President of the Foundation,



Afternoon Tea at Clarence House discussing the Rapid Urbanisation Project with The Prince of Wales, Clive Harridge & Christine Platt (CAP Past President).

at CAPs biennial Conference held in Fiji in November 2016. The project is being developed in the context of the UNs New Urban Agenda (NUA) agreed at Habitat 3 in October 2016, and CAPs Fiji Declaration which calls on Commonwealth governments at national, subnational and local

levels to take urgent actions to deliver on the NUA and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

CAP and other partners in the project recently convened a 2 day conference at Australia House, London in February which concluded with a round



Tom Perry (Prince's Foundation), John Archer & Philip Clarke. [Photographs courtesy of The Prince's Foundation for Building Community]

table meeting and afternoon tea with the Prince of Wales at Clarence House. The conference provided an opportunity to share emerging thinking on the project with UN-Habitat and New York University, who are also developing planning approaches for rapid urbanisation. The outputs from the project will be a free access online toolkit combined with a range of measures to improve capacity, education and skills of planners and other built environment professionals in the Commonwealth.

The methodology for the toolkit is currently being developed and is due to be tested in a number of pilot cities in Sierra Leone, Ghana, Uganda, India, New Zealand and Jamaica.

One of the pilot cities for the project is Bo, the second city of Sierra Leone with a population of some 250,000. Bo has a friendship link with Warwick District here in the West Midlands through the One World Link (OWL) organisation (www.oneworldlink.org.uk). John Archer and Philip Clarke from OWL are exploring with colleagues in Bo the mechanisms for testing the methodology. The challenges of planning for the growth of Bo are enormous especially as the city has a complete lack of qualified planning staff. OWL has worked with the City Council and other agencies in Bo over many years to assist with skills transfer as the country recovered from the devastating Civil War and more recently from the ravages of the Ebola crisis. Though poor, communities in Sierra Leone are keen to learn and develop. Whilst hampered by lack of technology and skills there is an energy and determination to improve and One World Link,



through its fundamental aim of increasing understanding through friendship is playing its part in its growth.

The aim is to have the methodology and toolkit agreed in time for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting to be held in Spring 2018 in the UK. The Commonwealth provides a top level political platform to promote the need for effective planning to tackle rapid urbanisation and deliver the New Urban Agenda and SDGs.

Finally, the personal support provided by the Prince of Wales for this initiative raises its profile and will help secure successful outputs bringing benefits across the Commonwealth.

For further information please contact Clive.harridge@amec.com. ■

Clive Harridge is Head of Planning, Transport & Design, Amec Foster Wheeler and Secretary-General, Commonwealth Association of Planners.

Planning Law Update 16th March 2017

Three speakers and chair presented an informative morning updating relevant planning law and national policy direction to a packed house of RTPI delegates at the Offices of DLA Piper in Birmingham on the 16th March.

Trevor Ivory and Pieter Claassen from DLA Piper began the morning with a round-up of housing policy and the NPPF looking at the legal interpretation of paragraph 49 and particularly cases *Hunston Properties v Secretary of State* [2013] EWCA Civ 1610 at 26 <https://www.innertemplelibrary.com/2013/12/bailii-recent-decisions-1282/>; *Shropshire v Secretary of State* [2016] EWCH 2733 at 29 <http://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWHC/Admin/2016/2733.html>; *Suffolk Coastal v Hopkins Homes* [2016] EWCA Civ 168 at 32 <http://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWCA/Civ/2016/168.html>.



Pieter Claassen had to explain the consequences and complications of the 12/12/2016 Ministerial statement because Trevor was too emotionally aghast to be able to speak about without foaming from the mouth. This is the short statement that introduces the twin track 3-year land supply consideration where there is a Neighbourhood Plan in play. It was interesting to hear that the claimants to Judicial Review now total some 25 parties.



If we were to do nothing more as 'homework' than re-buckle our shoes and sharpen our pencils we would do well to look up the recent Secretary of State decision in Lichfield District in Staffordshire Trevor advised <https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/ViewCase.aspx?CaseID=2224354&CoID=0>. This is a recovered appeal were seemingly against the odds and with agreement that the LPA could demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply the Secretary of State has allowed the appeal for 750 new homes at Curborough.

Hugh Richards of Counsel took us through a tour of selected current legal issues in planning. Three cases were looked at in relation to rulings on 'reasons' in planning decisions; *R (Hawksworth Securities Plc) v Peterborough City Council* [2016] EWHC 1870 (Admin) <https://high-court-justice.vlex.co.uk/vid/645717033>; *R (CPRE Kent) v Dover DC* [2016] EWCA Civ 936 <http://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWCA/Civ/2016/936.html> and *Oakley v South Cambridgeshire DC* [2017] EWCA Civ 71 <http://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWCA/Civ/2017/71.html>.



Another area of Hugh's presentation looked at s66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

This concerns, "*In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of*

preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”

Leading cases cited were, East Northants DC v SSCLG [2015] 1 WLR 45 CA, R (Forge Field Society) v Sevenoaks DC [2014] EWHC 1895, Mordue v SSCLG [2016] 1 WLR 2682, CA and Palmer v Herefordshire Council [2016] EWCA Civ 1061.



In Mordue in the Court of Appeal the judgement as Hugh pointed out referred to the *'fasciculus'* of policies of the NPPF paragraphs 131 to 134 and that the balancing exercise required by NPPF 134 to give effect to the presumption against granting permission for development which harms the significance of a designated heritage asset.

Hugh Richards in giving us a signpost handout of illuminating cases to look at in our own time gave way to allow the conclusion of the morning with group discussion on the Housing White Paper chaired by Sandra Ford. Unfortunately there was little time to explore issues at depth and give everyone time to contribute, however a number of interesting perspectives emerged.

We were assured by Hugh that the HWP has status in that it is now a material consideration for development plans and planning decisions. Trevor Ivory viewed the white paper as *'Evolution not revolution'*. There was discussion on the implications of the HWP post-Brexit and matters from the implications of regulatory reform. Will Great Crested Newts simply be ordered to pack their little bags and leave the country we mused without emotion.



We left the seminar for our sandwiches with some useful notes, substantially better informed, and with some concerns about the direction of government policy but with some hope of positive signs emerging in the rationality of the courts. ■



Hugh Lufton BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI
Principal, Lufton & Associates

A Special Feature Report by the RTPI Vice-President

It is a strange admission after 7 years in Government, to concede that the housing market is broken and that there is no 'silver bullet' to fix it – as if bullets ever actually fixed anything!

The 'housing market' is of course a simply general term to describe the collective actions of everyone – rich and poor – of whatever tenure, who strive to achieve the best deal for themselves and their families – in obtaining a home. So to blame the housing market for our ills is to blame society, or put simply, to blame ourselves – and not the Government.

In the current climate, most young people and those on low incomes trying to enter the market could never hope to buy a home of their own. Yet the well-heeled who have enjoyed past house-price inflation, can comfortably accumulate property, whether to occupy or rent out. We live in an increasingly divided society and some would say that until those disparities are eased the broken housing market will never be repaired.

In 1977, 40 years ago, as a young planning student in London undertaking a thesis on the 'Revival of the Private Rented Sector', I ventured to Marsham

Street, (the three ugly concrete blocks which housed the Department of the Environment, now thankfully replaced by the Home Office/DCLG building), to meet a young civil servant to discuss the (then) new Housing Green Paper. The Labour Government had published a comprehensive 'state of the nation' report on housing tentatively looking forward to solving some of the intractable problems of housing shortage and decay.

At that time, there were acute housing problems, in both quantitative and qualitative terms, yet at the time

declined ever since – only slightly recovering again in the last few years.

Fast forward to 2017, and I therefore had a strange feeling of déjà vu recently when sitting in a 150 seat 'round table' meeting in Birmingham with Gavin Barwell, (who is clearly on top of his brief) debating the recently published Housing White Paper.

The White Paper (really another Housing Green Paper) is promoted not only by Sajid Javid, the Secretary of State, but also in a separate Foreword

“ In the current climate, most young people and those on low incomes trying to enter the market could never hope to buy a home of their own. ”

we were building nearly 280,000 new homes per year with municipal housing almost matching private sector completions and our New Towns programme was still forging ahead. At the time, the Green Paper admitted *'there remains a demand and need for an adequate supply of rented accommodation which will be met overwhelmingly by the public sector. But equally there is a strong and growing desire for house ownership which should be met'*. Sadly, the build rate has

by Teresa May, the Prime Minister, demonstrating, in case there were any doubt, firstly, that she is firmly in control and secondly, that she wishes to see a society which works for everyone – throwing off the elitist image of the previous administration.

The long-awaited document contains many fine words and much common-sense. The good news is, that for the first time, planning is not viewed as the

main constraint on housing, but one of a number of inter-related issues to tackle. There is an ambitious housing target, of between 225,000 and 275,000 homes per year, but more importantly there is a drive for homes where people want to live, for more diversity in the market with more small and medium sized firms and above all, a renewed focus on delivery with everyone playing their part in helping out.

For developers, that means a 2 year default time for planning consents and a commitment to build to a timetable, for local authorities it means a requirement for 5 yearly Local Plans and a 'delivery test' - designed to 'hold their feet to the fire', with those who fail to meet 85% of their target being required to produce an Action Plan.

But in a repetitive document containing few new initiatives and many measures already announced in the budget or contained either within the Planning & Housing Act 2016 or the emerging Neighbourhood Plans Bill, it is hard to muster too much enthusiasm for the new White Paper which was clearly 'watered down' over Christmas.

The welcome idea for the consistent measurement of housing needs which was explored by the Local Plan Advisory Group 12 months ago, is thrust back into the 'melting pot' and the Government's solution to the ineffective 'Duty to Co-operate' is merely a 'Statement of Common Ground', something which many authorities produce already in the form of



John Acres, Vice-President of the RTPI.

Memoranda of Understanding. In truth, until we have an effective strategic planning process – on whatever level – we will never sort out the tensions between authorities which underlies so much indecision. There is also no sign of any relaxation of Local Authority borrowing powers which could release the funding to allow the scale of affordable housing which is needed to be built – albeit this would naturally emerge from a Budget or Spending Review.

On a positive front, it announces 14 new Garden Villages and 10 new Garden Towns but most of these

are already committed in Local Plans and so the consequence for delivery is simply in the additional funding from Government they will attract. The proposal for legislation for locally accountable Town Development Corporations is however a forward step.

Some were hoping that green belt policy might be relaxed to allow brownfield sites to come forward or for sites close to transport nodes to be released, or maybe as the Institute has suggested, that they should have a more positive social role. Instead the Government has said that guidance will be changed so that local authorities will need to demonstrate that all other options have been explored before releasing GB land. So not only is the responsibility (and the blame) left firmly with local Councils, but a sequential test exercise will need to be done for each local plan – on a matter which cries out for a strategic approach.

So will the Housing White Paper succeed in delivering 250,000 new homes per year and 1 million houses by the end of the Parliament. Probably not, but if so it won't be the fault of Government – it will be down to the failure of the housing market – and that means everyone.

RTPI Policy Team has been liaising with civil servants in DCLG on the content of the White Paper. ■

John Acres is Vice President of the RTPI – the views are not necessarily those of the Institute.

At an interesting multi-disciplinary event of professionals involved in development (e.g. architects, surveyors, planners, engineers etc.) mayoral candidates for the West Midlands presented their ideas on what they perceive to be the main issues to be addressed under the Government's devolved financial controls. Unfortunately the absence of the prospective candidates representing the Labour (declined to attend) and Green (family emergency) parties somewhat diluted the debate.

Candidates on behalf of the Conservative, Liberal Democrat and UKIP parties, all from a business background, introduced themselves and identified the main focus of their respective agendas. With Louise Brookes-Smith chairing the debate and putting submitted questions as well as those from the floor the evening largely focussed on the regional economy, including investing in skills and entrepreneurship, transport, and satisfying health demands.

With £8 billion of investment to manage in the increasingly uncertain environment created by Brexit the three candidates often concurred on what they perceived as the best way forward. One interestingly different approach was suggested by the Conservative candidate who saw the opportunity to make economic progress through the use of mutual organisations; this being based on his experience of a career with the major national retailer John Lewis.

All candidates saw a priority for the West Midlands to effectively compete with the former Chancellor's pet project relating to the Northern Power Hub.

Unsurprisingly the demand for housing and its invariable impact on the Green Belt was a focus of some debate. It was perhaps at this stage of the evening that the absence of Labour and Green Party representation was most missed as the debate lacked a social and environmental "edge" that those parties strongly represent.



But was it my imagination or did I detect a significant "financial elephant" in the room. There seemed at times an ever pervasive aroma of

financial scepticism notwithstanding government promises of access to business rates, increases on local taxes for contributions to social care and health, etc. Eight billion pounds might sound a lot but to manage much of the West Midlands economic and social structure there was a feeling that some central government buck-passing was being introduced leaving the local authorities, including the elected mayor, to suffer a future kicking from the public. ■

Bryan Smith
Bryan Smith Associates

“ Looking forward, we have an exciting programme of events planned for the rest of 2017. ”

The Young Planners in the West Midlands have enjoyed a busy start to 2017, building upon the successes of last year under the Chairship of Luke Coffey. We started the year with a seminar on Rural and Utilities Planning which was kindly presented by Kay Davies and Sarah DeRenzy-Tomson of Fisher German.

This was swiftly followed by our annual drinks reception with the RTPI President on 20 March. The event was very well attended and provided an opportunity for young planners to meet and greet this year's President, Stephen Wilkinson, to discuss all things planning.

Looking forward, we have an exciting programme of events planned for the rest of 2017. This includes an APC event at Birmingham City University on 6 April and a presentation on Garden Cities by Pinsent Mason on 25 April. We also look forward to co-hosting the popular inter-professional speed networking event with our sister professions of architecture, engineering, landscape and surveying later in the year. Further details will be published very soon.

On a final note, we would like to thank Mott MacDonald for kindly sponsoring the Young Planners during 2016.

The 2017 Young Planners Conference will be in Manchester on 3rd and 4th November. The theme will be 'Healthy, Happy Places and People: Planning for Well-being'.

Email marketing@rtpi.org.uk to be put on the mailing list for the conference. ■

Chris Moore
Chair of the Young Planners
West Midlands 2017



Eleni Randle

An Insider's View

In my opinion (what a way to start an article!), despite promises of a simplified planning system, in many ways the planning system has never been more challenging. Yes, we may have simplified systems and policies but with that comes room for different interpretations and that brings with it appeal decisions and case law. We have to then take into account such a vast array of considerations in preparing, and determining, applications as professionals. Combine this with public access, and greater community involvement, and we are all faced with a lot of “boxes to tick” within the planning process. A professional planner needs a wide skill set, however, even the best of planners will need involvement from other professions such as architects, highways experts, ecologists and surveyors to name but a few. I, personally, am a Chartered Surveyor. As with most people's career path it “sort of happened”. From day one, in my initial job after graduation from university, I became involved in the planning process in my day to day work to deliver projects. In my second role I got to work with Dr Malcolm Bell and loved the variety of planning work. It expanded from there until, as of today, about 80% of my instructions/work is planning based. As a result of this, two years ago, I became an Associate of the RTPI and would hope to dual qualify this year via the new A-APC route. So, what? Good for you, you may be thinking! The purpose of the above is to set

the scene for where I am going next. I believe there has never been a more important time for sister professions to work together, and indeed promote each other, for the good of the planning system and in order to deliver planning projects.

I have found, amongst some planning professionals, that the idea of surveyors undertaking or being involved with planning work is less than pleasing. I can, to an extent, understand why as looking at some of the applications submitted (by a small number of my peers within the RICS) it is clearly outside some people's competence! Why though are these professionals attempting such work and why could they be one of the most important sister professions you interact with?

Surveyors/agents manage, and often have the trust and respect of, land and property owners who hold several thousands of acres or millions of pounds worth of urban and rural property or land. With someone they trust assisting planning professionals the surveying and agent profession could be the difference between land and property coming forward at the right time or not being released at all. I see several letters, to my landowning clients, from developers and promoters and the first thing they do? Call me, or send me the letter, and ask me to explain what it means and what I think they should do. I believe that professionals should not see working with other professionals as “losing work or fees” but as ensuring the right person for the job - for the benefit of our mutual clients. Some

professional roles are not separate but very much interactive/overlapping. If people have trust in us, as professionals, we should be actively building relationships between the professions to keep things moving. If a professional is confident in their ability, but acknowledges some work is outside their competence (as they ethically should), it will be easier to develop relationships and “power teams” without fear of losing work or clients.

I have had some experience of developers or planning professionals trying to cut me out of a project, however, thankfully have yet to have a client allow that to happen. Sister professions should be seen as not competitive but there to work with to achieve a better project outcome. I would urge anyone reading this to not underestimate the power of sister professions working together and their ability to deliver projects in any area of practice, not just planning.

Eleni Randle

BSc MSc MRICS FAAV AssocRTPI

Eleni is a Partner of G Herbert Banks all views expressed are her own.

Guest Editor’s comment

We will all no doubt have views on how the professions interact and work or fail to work together in the planning system based on our own experience.

In the wider political context we all watch with interest as the incumbent US President Trump seems to be leading a popular consensus (at least the media portrays it as such) of professional battering. Don’t believe the expert, don’t believe the educated and the qualified they’re all wrong and they have invested and self-serving interests. In the UK despite the country’s will to leave the EU against the established political and to some extent professional and business consensus our political leaders have yet to follow President Trump’s path.

Planning is a difficult profession in that everyone knows something about it and most people have some interest in it and to our credit we work to keep open and accessible. ■



A Feature Report. Application: Elephant House, Sutton near Newport

Guest Editor's comment

I came across this appeal decision in some desk-top research into the application of paragraph 55 of the NPPF. This application relates to the last clause of the paragraph allowing exception to the restriction of new isolated dwellings in the countryside should they be of *"exceptional quality or innovative nature of the design of ... truly outstanding or innovative, helping to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; ... reflect the highest standards in architecture; ... significantly enhance its immediate setting and ... be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area."*

The article is by **Sandy Greenhill of Vivid Architects based in Worcester.**

Background Mark Armitage has lived in Sutton for most of his life, running a successful small business employing local people. He is dedicated to the village and its community, and hence his drive to undertake this project to create a new family home in the village.

The use of Elephant Grass, both on and off site, to create a sustainable and zero carbon home, is a vision researched for over a year by the applicants before approaching Vivid Architects to develop the architectural solution to achieve this vision.

Miscanthus Giganteus, also known as Elephant Grass, is a species of woody, perennial, rhizomatous grasses, originating from Asia. It has an attractive and distinctive appearance, and grows to around 2.5 to 3.5m in height at its peak. It is easy to grow and virtually zero maintenance, and can

therefore dramatically reduce farm workloads. It has a very low agro-chemical requirement in terms of pesticides and chemical fertilisers compared to arable crops. Importantly for energy production, Miscanthus Giganteus is one of the fastest growing, highest yield per hectare agricultural biomass fuel feedstocks available.

Process The development of this 5-bedroom family home will enable the applicant to continue to live and work in Sutton for generations to come with a zero carbon footprint, whilst supporting local



enterprise, and providing local employment both in its construction and in the cultivation and management of Miscanthus Grass. With that in mind, the team is working in partnership with Birmingham City University, using the house as a study project for new research into the use and efficiency of Miscanthus Grass for carbon offset. In support of this education and research project, there will be an annual 'Open Day' to allow students, local people or school children to visit the house by appointment with an aim to disseminate the findings of this research more widely.

To achieve planning approval the applicants had to demonstrate that the house would comply with the stringent requirements of NPPF Paragraph 55 for isolated new homes in the open countryside. Over a two and a half year process, including two MADE Design Reviews and an Appeal (FBC Manby Bowdler Solicitors), the Design Team was able to demonstrate that the scheme did meet the four strict tests required.

Is the proposal truly innovative?

The Design Team includes Professor Jankovic and his team from the Zero Carbon Lab at Birmingham City University. Their outputs have been evaluated as world leading in the recent Research Excellence Framework, and Professor Jankovic's book on Designing Zero Carbon Buildings has been adopted as core text by a number of UK, US and European Universities, and has been used as a handbook by major international consultancies, such as Arup.



Professor Jankovic therefore has a very good overview of what is innovative, not only in the UK context but also worldwide, and he describes the project as '*an unprecedented example of holistic and truly innovative sustainability*'. He explains the principles of the project as follows: '*There are not many zero carbon buildings in the UK and worldwide. The existing examples are primarily zero carbon from the operational point of view, so that carbon dioxide arising from conventional energy use is compensated by carbon offset from renewable energy use, so that the net balance is zero or below zero. There are two key differences between Elephant House and the majority of other zero carbon projects in the UK and around the world:*

- a. *Carbon absorption by Miscanthus Grass used in the Elephant House project is a natural way of offsetting carbon emissions in comparison with renewable energy systems, such as solar PV. Although Miscanthus grass will also be used as biomass for heating, the majority of carbon offsetting will be achieved by growing Miscanthus grass in quantities well in excess of the heating requirement.*
- b. *Elephant House has been designed on a trajectory to become zero carbon within five years from construction, not only from the point of view of operational carbon, but also from the point of view of embodied carbon. In other words, all carbon emissions generated whilst*



producing the construction material for Elephant House, as well as carbon emissions from its operation, will be eliminated, and the house will continue carbon emissions free for the rest of its life cycle. This kind of performance will be achieved on the basis of advanced design methods that we have applied, achieving and exceeding Passivhaus performance and incorporating Miscanthus grass into the equation.'

Does it achieve the highest standards in architecture?

Using cutting edge computer simulation, the team alters various design parameters for the building, comparing tens of thousands of possibilities to find the optimum sustainability solution.

The team will also monitor the *completed* building as a living case study. The results will be published

so that the project may be clearly judged against industry standards to verify that it does indeed achieve the highest standards in practice.

In terms of its aesthetic design, MADE described the scheme as, *'a much more resolved piece of architecture which is bold, confident and dynamic. To the passer-by it will be intriguing but still be recognisably domestic.'*

The Planning Inspector observed;

'This is a large house and I consider that the articulation of the various elements is necessary to ensure that it properly relates to the near-domestic scale of local farm buildings.'

The oriel windows were added for energy efficiency reasons but to my mind they humanise the scale of the sweeping roofs, ensuring that the building is perceived as a house. In my view the design is of the highest quality.'

Does it significantly enhance the immediate setting?

Environmentally, the habitat improvements will certainly increase the biodiversity of this site. The existing site has a low biodiversity value. It is primarily made up of rye-grass pasture with negligible value for wildlife. The existing hedgerow is species-poor and runs along just one side of the site boundary. Heavily managed agricultural land surrounds the site.

The applicants commissioned Ibbotson Studios to create a landscape design to improve the habitat for biodiversity on the site. This design process was closely guided by specialist Ecology Consultants, DW Ecology, to advise on the potential for betterment to biodiversity on the site as a whole, as well as looking at the characteristics of Miscanthus Grass for potential habitat.

The proposals include:

- Introduction of native species hedgerows
- Broadleaf trees added to boundaries with bird & bat boxes
- Wildflower margins & wildflower meadow areas
- Wetland / biodiversity pond area
- Living walls or willow fences to define the landscape
- Log piles, invertebrate stacks and rock features

Is the project sensitive to the defining characteristics of the area?

This two storey, redbrick house has a pitched slate roof, using recycled materials to reflect the typical buildings of Sutton. The dynamic roof profile and curves of the building are inspired by the gently undulating landscape.

The Planning Inspector reflected;

'The design concept is particularly interesting, with essentially lean-to structures against a central



curved spine wall reflecting something of the simple long low roofs of traditional farm buildings. I consider that this modern interpretation of a defining characteristic of the local area would be entirely appropriate. The quality of the local landscape is high. One notable local characteristic is the small clumps of trees located at random intervals among the otherwise open fields. The new house would be located within a new clump of trees, reflecting this characteristic feature. The trees are not intended to hide the building but to anchor it in the landscape.

The house would not be particularly prominent in the limited range of local views of the site. Built of local red brick, roof tiles and timber boarding, the house would harmonise with the character and appearance of its rural surroundings.

The carefully designed landscaping scheme, increasing the biodiversity of the area, would complement the house and, taken altogether, in time would significantly enhance its immediate setting.'

Success Ultimately, two separate MADE Review Panels conclusively found in favour of the project, criticising the Council for failure to participate in pre-application consultation, and stating that under national policy their preferred use of a Design Advisor is *'not equivalent to, or a substitute for, using independent design review'*.

The Planning Inspector determined that the appeal should be allowed, concluding that the Elephant House is *'truly innovative and would help to raise the standard of design, not just in rural areas but in the field of zero-carbon design more generally.'*

The applicants are now reviewing the process required to manage the long list of Planning Conditions on their approval before commencing work on the challenging Technical Design stages to make this exciting project. ■

Designing Accessible, Safe & Active Neighbourhoods for All

RTPI West Midlands // Spring 2017

An RTPI Seminar Report. The Bond Company 1st February 2017

The first of the programme of CPD events for 2017, held at The Bond Company, overlooking the canal in Digbeth, was attended by approximately 36 members. The event had the somewhat misleading title for a very interesting session about the forms and advantages of good cycle route design in various urban environments, and connections with public transport; as opposed to accessible neighbourhoods for people of all abilities.

Phil Jones of Phil Jones Associates whom was involved in the documents 'Manual for Streets' and 'Manual for Streets 2' amongst others, spoke about



'Active Travel Design Guidance and Policy Update'. Principally concerned with the design of larger settlements of at least 1500 homes, Phil Jones looked at examples of active travel routes in garden towns, villages, cities and suburbs, utilising a hierarchy of cycle tracks, cycle paths and cycle streets, as the desire routes increase to form a cycle network linking the primary centres within the settlement. Primary centres may include travel

hubs, schools and shopping centres, with travel routes in straight lines with minimal deviation. Tom Bailey of Almere Consulting looked at how the cycle routes integrate with other new and existing routes, such as footpaths and highways, with traffic volume reduction and safe traffic areas.

Consideration was given to shared surfaces, and the issues of creating safe pedestrian, cycle and highway





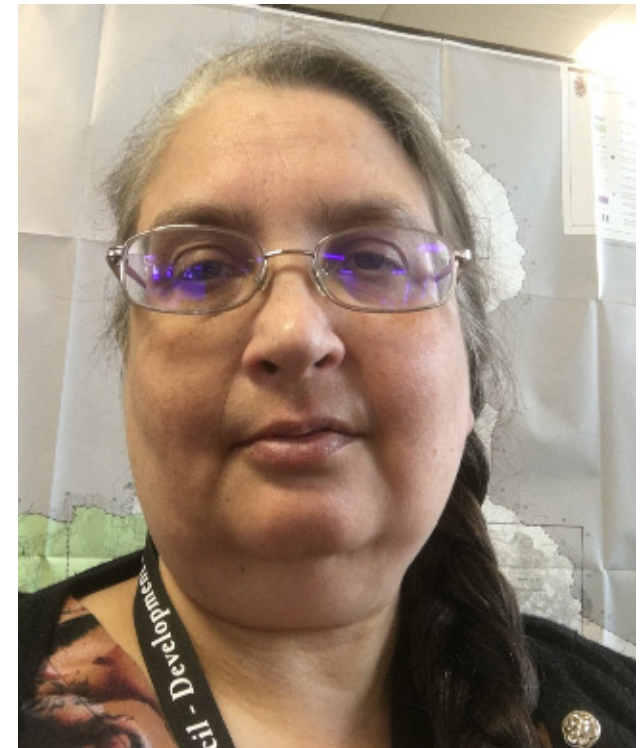
routes necessitating a 7 metre wide travel one, and active travel intersections. A variety of intersection designs and controls were considered, together with advance stop lines and Toucan crossings.

The main needs of cyclists are to be considered when designing a successful cycle route. Houses should be within 250 metres of a cycle route; that should minimise the gradient and maintain the continuity of speed, by avoiding junctions and crossings where possible; and avoiding headwinds by introducing natural windbreaks.

The last part of the session was a workshop where participants worked in small groups to design an Active Travel network of primary and second routes through an allocated site for a new garden village. The aim was to form a grid of primary and secondary routes, whilst considering desire points and the design principles for successful cycle routes, and also leisure routes. The groups were then given the opportunity to feedback to the room and highlight the main points of their discussion in arriving at their proposal.

An enjoyable lunch that catered for everyone was available with the opportunity for networking.

A recommended event, but maybe reconsider changing the title to 'Active Travel Design'. ■



Christina Fortune
Assistant Planning Control Officer
North Warwickshire Borough Council

RTPI WM 2017 Regional Awards are now open for nominations

You are invited to make nominations for the RTPI WM 2017 Regional Award for Planning Excellence and Young Planner of the Year. Find out how here: http://www.rtpi.org.uk/media/2283345/wm_awards_2017.pdf

These awards will be presented at the RTPI WM Ball and Award Ceremony Dinner at the Macdonald Burlington Hotel on Friday 7 July. Details about the event and how to book can be found at the link below.



Are you coming to the Ball?

Booking is now open for the RTPI WM Ball and Award Ceremony Dinner on Friday 7 July at the Macdonald Burlington Hotel in Birmingham. Details about the event and how to book can be found here: <http://www.rtpi.org.uk/events/events-calendar/2017/july/rtpi-wm-ball-and-award-ceremony-dinner/>

RTPI WM BALL & AWARD CEREMONY DINNER



Date

Friday, 07 July 2017 at 7:00PM -
Saturday, 08 July 2017 at 1:00AM

Venue

The Macdonald Burlington Hotel, Burlington
Arcade, 126 New St, Birmingham B2 4JQ

Organiser

RTPI West Midlands
westmidlands@rtpi.org.uk

RTPI WM 2017 CPD season ticket programme

RTPI West Midlands // Spring 2017

Good design – making it happen Thursday 27 April (am), Birmingham

Tourism - new horizons Wednesday 24 May (am), Stratford-upon-Avon

Effective planning applications Wednesday 28 June (am), Birmingham

Neighbourhood planning – here to stay? Thursday 20 July (am or pm tbc), Birmingham

Preparing for public inquiries and examinations in public Monday 11 September (am and pm), Birmingham

Planning and health Tuesday 26 September (am), Birmingham

Building new homes: the challenges of housing supply and delivery – a regional perspective Friday 13 October (am), Birmingham

Planning law update Tuesday 31 October (am), Birmingham

Flood protection – the role of planning Thursday 23 November (am), venue tbc

Seminars (except Preparing for Public Inquiries) cost £50 + VAT (£60) for RTPI members, £60 + VAT (£72) for non-members and £20 + VAT (£24) for RTPI student members. All seminars include lunch. Preparing for Public Inquiries is a full day of training and charges are £120, £144 and £48.

Reduced rates if purchased as part of a multi-buy

The multi-buy prices:

£220 + VAT (£264) for 5 places/credits

£415 + VAT (£498) for 10 places/credits

£635 + VAT (£762) for 15 places/credits
£830 + VAT (£996) for 20 places/credits

Other Events

RTPI WM Ball and Award Ceremony Dinner, Friday 7 July, Macdonald Burlington Hotel, Birmingham

RTPI 2017 Planning Convention, "Delivering a strong, inclusive future", Wednesday 21 June, London

RTPI West Midlands are looking for the best planning project of the year and the brightest young planner in the Region !

The RTPI West Midlands Regional Awards are designed to showcase the Region's best planning achievements of the year. **The 2017 awards are open for nominations now.**

The prestigious Regional Award for Planning Excellence offers the opportunity to promote the most successful planning projects from the Region, these can range from physical development schemes, strategies and guidance, processes, to important research documents. Entering the awards will raise the profile of your project and ensure it is promoted to a wide audience.

The 2016 award was presented to 'The Old Glasshouse' bar and restaurant in Dudley, managed and delivered by Dudley Council, the project brought a vacant locally listed building back into use through sensitive restoration works.

Mark Clarke of New Heritage Regeneration said: "Dudley Council and New Heritage Regeneration were delighted to receive the West Midlands Regional Award

for Excellence for The Old Glasshouse Project. In particular, the project team were grateful to receive peer group acknowledgement of the successful delivery of a complex heritage base regeneration project in difficult market conditions. The award has done much to promote the project on a regional and now a national stage and this has helped to highlight the continuing programme of investment and regeneration activity being undertaken within Dudley Town Centre."

The Young Planner of the Year award offers the opportunity to recognise the outstanding contribution that young planners make to the profession within the Region.

The 2016 award went to Luke Coffey of Mott MacDonald for his leadership and desire to make a difference.

Luke said: "I was delighted to be awarded as the RTPI West Midlands Young Planner of the Year for 2016. The award has helped raise my profile within the region and provided me with the platform to continue my professional development and further expand my network."

Nominations received will be assessed by a panel of high calibre professionals from across the Region and entrants recognised at the presentation of the awards at the **RTPI WM Ball and Award Ceremony Dinner** in Birmingham on Friday 7 July where over 200 professionals from the public, private and academic sectors are expected to be in attendance. The winners and runners up will receive additional publicity via Tripwire and social media.

We strongly encourage you to submit a nomination for the regional awards

Find out how!