

POS UPDATE FEBRUARY 2008

The Planning Officers Society E-Bulletin for POS Members – February 2008

*Click on the heading to go straight to what's new on **POS Update** this month:*

- 1 [Spatial Plans Latest](#)
- 2 [Development Management Latest](#)
- 3 [Breaking News](#)
- 4 [Consultation Latest](#)
- 5 [Brief Updates](#): Calcutt Review of Housebuilding Delivery --- RTPI Planning Awards 2007 --- RTPI Planning Awards 2008 --- Redbridge i --- How to develop a local charter --- Trees in Towns II ---
- 6 [Society Matters](#)
- 7 [Forthcoming Events](#)
- 8 [Correspondence](#)
- 9 [And Finally](#)

1 SPATIAL PLANS LATEST

Did you know that according to CLG 1,000 DPDs were forecast to be adopted by the end of 2007; and that 25% of submitted plans have been found to be unsound or withdrawn following advice? A list of those **DPDs that have been found sound** is maintained on the PAS website (with hyperlinks); to access it [click here](#).

LDFs: Effective Community Involvement

This PAS document provides guidance in three important areas relating to community involvement. Firstly it "provides an overview of the current requirements for community engagement in developing planning documents, guidance on how to design a good engagement process and finally it proposes a programme of activities for each of the key stages of the Local Development Framework production, which will help you to engage your community effectively". To find out more [click here](#).

2 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT LATEST

The Society's **Development Management Practice Project** has produced the final guidance notes on [Validation Registration & Digital Records](#), and [Proactive Enforcement](#) and these now appear on the web site. Geoff Cross and Stewart Glassar are now working with the authorities involved on the guidance notes for Screening & Scoping of ES, and Grampian Conditions and s106 negotiation; when these are available they will be highlighted in the bulletin and posted onto the website.

To find out more about the project [click here](#). If you have any queries about the project contact [Geoff Cross](#).

PINS has invited the Society to be represented alongside the Law Society on a **s106 Agreements Guidance Working Group**. The POS reps are: Komalley@westminster.gov.uk, Richard.Kent@n-somerset.gov.uk, Steve.Ingram@huntsdc.gov.uk and Lesley.Wroe@coventry.gov.uk

ATLAS Planning for Large Scale Development. This [website](#) has been created by ATLAS to guide stakeholders through the town planning process in relation to large, complex or strategic development projects.

Did you know that POS Enterprises can provide a training seminar for staff and members on **what is development management?** Contact andrewwright@posenterprises.co.uk for details.

3 BREAKING NEWS

... the government has just launched a strategy aimed at building more "age friendly" homes. The "**Housing in an Ageing Society**" document provides an overview of work on the National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society, and seeks views on the following questions:

- What should the vision be for the National Strategy?
- What evidence best explains the issues and trends?
- What aims and outcomes should we have for the strategy?
- What should be the priority areas for action in the strategy to achieve our aims?

Comments are invited by 11th June; for details [click here](#).

4 CONSULTATIONS LATEST

The **latest Government consultations** include:

House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee inquiry into the skills capacity within local government to deliver sustainable communities

The inquiry follows on from Sir John Egan's Review of *Skills for Sustainable Communities*. It will have particular reference to the following issues:

- recent changes to the range and detail of knowledge and skills needed by staff within planning departments;
- the main areas where a lack of skills is most pronounced (examples, for illustration only, include: use and viability of carbon reduction technologies, economic prosperity, infrastructure planning and the viability of affordable housing within market housing developments);
- the skills needed by, and level of training provided to, councillors who make planning decisions, including on the proposed local member review bodies;
- the role and effectiveness of agencies involved in monitoring, developing and providing specialist knowledge and skills for planning officials and councillors, and their response to changes to the demands placed on planning departments;

- the effectiveness of Government in supporting local authorities as they respond to changes in the demands placed on them; and
- the long-term effectiveness of measures being taken by local authorities and others to mitigate gaps in the skills and knowledge within planning departments.

Closing date for written evidence is 27th February; for details [click here](#). See below for the Society's submission.

PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Development

This consultation on Planning for Sustainable Economic Development seeks views on a proposed new Planning Policy Statement. Deadline 17th March. For details [click here](#). See below for the POS response.

Review of Call-In Directions

Proposals to reduce planning applications referred to Government by local authorities for consideration of whether they should be "called in" for Ministers to decide. It aims to ensure decisions are taken at the right level. Deadline is 31st March. For details [click here](#)

Improving surface water drainage

This consultation develops some of the key policy proposals set out in the Government's new Water Strategy, *Future Water*. The strategy sets out a vision for more effective drainage of surface water, in order to resolve existing problems and prepare for the impacts of climate change. The floods last summer brought into sharp focus the real damage that surface water flooding can cause. The interim report from the Pitt Review on lessons learned has urged early action to improve the way that surface water is managed, particularly in high risk areas. Deadline is 30th April; for details [click here](#).

Sustainable Communities Act 2007: Consultation on draft regulations and statutory guidance.

This consultation seeks views on the draft regulations and statutory guidance for the Sustainable Communities Act 2007. The guidance is being developed by the Government following the Act coming into force on 23 October 2007. Deadline for comments is 12th May. For details [click here](#).

POS recent responses:

Housing and Planning Delivery Grant [click here](#)

Planning Reform Bill [click here](#)

Streamlining Local Development Frameworks [click here](#); and for an additional response by the Minerals & Waste Committee [click here](#)

PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Development [click here](#)

Local Member Review Bodies [click here](#)

House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee inquiry into the skills capacity within local government to deliver sustainable communities [click here](#)

5 BRIEF UPDATES

Calcutt Review of Housebuilding Delivery

The Calcutt Review has concluded. This was an independent review of the house building industry structure and business model, including land holding, and the capability of the industry to deliver increased housing supply in a low/zero carbon environment. The purpose of the review was to examine how the supply of new homes is influenced by the nature and structure of the housebuilding industry." Click [here](#) for details.

RTPI Planning Awards 2007

Congratulations to [Sherwood Energy Village](#) on winning the RTPI Silver Jubilee Cup at the Planning Awards for 2007. The award was presented by Baroness Andrews, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at a ceremony in London's Hilton Hotel.

And congratulations too to Terence O'Rourke Ltd and ABP Marine Environmental Research Ltd for their [Marine Spatial Planning](#) in the Spatial Strategies category sponsored by POS. The Award was presented by Society President Steve Quartermain.

RTPI Planning Awards 2008: entries invited by closing Date 31 March 2008

The RTPI National and Regional Awards are the UK's premier awards for outstanding achievement in planning.

They celebrate the positive achievements of the profession. There are thirteen categories listed, something of interest for everyone and there is even scope to introduce a completely new category of your own. We are encouraging all types of entries from projects of truly metropolitan or regional planning significance to smaller scale initiatives designed to tackle local planning issues.

The awards are open to all; there is no need for entries to be submitted by RTPI members and this year we are signpost examples of good planning practice on our website, to help promote good planning everywhere.

For further details please contact the awards office on 020 7929 9473 or awards@rtpi.org.uk. An entry form can be found on www.rtpiplanningawards.co.uk

In order to engage more fully with its local citizens to enhance services, and most particularly to increase democratic participation, the London Borough of Redbridge has introduced "**Redbridge i**", a new, highly innovative interactive web site for the Council.

"Redbridge i" utilises a host of features used by leading online companies like Amazon, eBay and MySpace to provide personalisation, collaboration, and interactive communications to increase the dialogue that Redbridge can have with the community. To see how "Redbridge i" is helping Redbridge connect with citizens, click: <http://www.localgov.tv/cgi-bin/details.pl?action=pre&id=322>

"It's both about giving the resident a voice, but in particular it's about changing the balance of power between residents and the council," said Roger Hampson, Redbridge Chief Executive. The council is keen to make "Redbridge i" features available to other authorities free-of-charge and has developed the site in opensource technologies for maximum compatibility.

How to develop a local charter - A guide for local authorities. This CLG guide provides advice and good practice to help plan a charter that meets local needs. It provides examples of successful charters, a guide to the essential elements of a local charter and ideas to help counter some of the challenges. For details [click here](#).

Trees in Towns II. This report assesses the effectiveness of tree management in urban areas in England. It includes information on the quality and quantity of trees; local authority resources and practices in managing urban trees; and the recruitment and skills of local authority tree managers. For details [click here](#).

6 SOCIETY MATTERS

The Society has formulated a draft response on the **Community Infrastructure Levy** proposals ([click here](#)); if anyone wishes to make any comments they should do so by 4th March direct to stuart.hylton@rbwm.gov.uk

To view the notes of the **Development Management Committee** held on 11th January 2008 [click here](#).

The President says

It seems like Spring is here and time marches on! Yet strangely I feel that the frenetic activity before Christmas has lost tempo and we are all in “consultation” mode. Either as individuals or through committees we have been busy responding to and influencing a number of reform proposals, most notably the CIL proposals and the member appeal panels. My thanks to all of you who have contributed; it is always heartening to see the e-mails fly between members and to remember the Society’s strength is its members.

Talking of which, you will be pleased to learn I am sure that this year we have the highest number of corporate and individual members. I am still not sure I understand why those authorities who are not members choose not to join and I propose to write to them to find out. We have over 75% of authorities as members and I do believe that the Society represents an influential and credible voice which has demonstrably had an effect on the Government reform agenda and which continues to build relationships with other professional and non-professional bodies to good effect. It may be we allow non-members too great an access to our success and perhaps we need to look at this; let me know what you think. And in similar vein, it has been suggested we have a smaller window for annual subs – with increased fees for late payers – your views here too please.

I will keep banging on about engaging with the work of the Society and I do want more individuals involved with some of the work. We do need to ensure that our committee and Cabinet structure is resilient and that new faces are drawn into the Society’s organisation. This was brought home to me by John East (Junior Vice-President) joining Savills and us now needing a new JVP for this year and at the AGM in July we will need a new JVP for 2008/09. How about you? Involvement with the POS in this capacity leads to greater involvement with senior figures in the world of planning and is a great opportunity. You should also note that we are trying to pull together a single business plan for the Society so we can be clear where our priorities lay.

On other matters; since the last update I have met with Matthew Taylor MP who has been asked by Gordon Brown to look at policy on affordable housing and the rural economy. Thanks to all of you who responded to my "thinkpiece" on this which will form the basis of a submission to the review. I also attended the Development Management Committee in London in November, had a peer review into Planning at Teesdale, lent support to the "Greening the UK" campaign and judged the RTPI Planning Consultancy of the Year Award.

However perhaps the most significant matter I have been dealing with relates to the issue I raised in my last piece about the future of the Society and whether we should seek a more formal structure. A small workforce, led by myself, has taken independent advice on this matter and we will be considering it at Cabinet on 7 March. It is likely that at that meeting we will be setting out a timetable to follow other professional bodies into incorporating the Society as a formal company. This will not make any difference to the way the Society works on your membership, but it will help the Society create the right environment to continue to build on our strengths and successes in the future. Whilst this is a procedure that takes a little time it need not cost very much and we are likely to be stronger for it. If Cabinet can agree the principle and likely timetable there will be a consultation with all members setting out the proposal and answering those FAQ's.

This is an important time for POS – never have we been more influential and at the same time face the prospect of ensuring our influence can be felt for years to come. There is some common ground on matters in this edition and one of them is that the Society needs to not rely on one or two committed individuals and to achieve this we need to grow as we face change; but we are good at managing change aren't we.

And finally, don't forget the Annual Conference (formerly known as the President's Event) on 17 and 18 April. Put the date in your diary; full details to follow soon [brief details below].

Steve Quartermain
POS President 2007/08

POS Annual Conference at Northallerton, North Yorkshire 17-18 April 2008

This year's annual conference will be hosted in the President's authority of Hambleton situated in a beautiful area of North Yorkshire. Steve has tried to attract a broad range of excellent speakers illustrating aspects of strategic planning practice, together with practical examples of successful planning on the ground. So this is an opportunity to not only hear about the process, but to see some real planning in practice. We will be visiting Bedale to see the work underway to deliver the Renaissance Market Town initiative; a trip to the Dales on the Wensleydale Railway to see the links between tourism and economic regeneration and a visit to Thirsk (Darrowby of James Herriot fame) to visit the new auction mart on the edge of town - a product of the Market Town Initiative. This is a real opportunity to see planning delivering community aspirations! Confirmed speakers include Andrew Whitaker of the Home Builders Federation; Professor Janice Morphet, EPiSP project; Gordon Dabinett, University of Sheffield; and Peter Wilbraham, Solicitor.

To obtain further information contact: membership@planningofficers.org.uk. Watch out for further details coming soon.

Recent Society press releases:

Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives [click here](#)

7 FORTHCOMING EVENTS

POS Events:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Venue</i>	<i>Contact</i>
7 March	Cabinet	RTPI, London	secretary@planningofficers.org.uk
	POSE Ltd Board	RTPI, London	andrewwright@posenterprises.co.uk
11 April	Development Management Committee	Huddersfield	phil.kirby@broadland.gov.uk
17/18 April	Annual Conference	Hambleton	membership@planningofficers.org.uk
16 May	Cabinet	RTPI, London	secretary@planningofficers.org.uk
	POSE Ltd Board	RTPI, London	andrewwright@posenterprises.co.uk
23 May	Management Committee	RTPI, London	d.n.ayre@dorsetcc.gov.uk
26/27 June	Minerals & Waste Committee country meeting	Suffolk	a.c.price@dorsetcc.gov.uk
28 June	Development Management Committee	Liverpool	phil.kirby@broadland.gov.uk

Other Events:

Digital Participation Workshop 2008

10 March 2008, University of the West of England, Bristol

Free workshop to explore the use of 3D visualisation and online forums to engage people in planning. Key questions to be explored include:

- do people find 3D plans easier to understand than 2D?
- can 3D visualisation help people to understand issues such as flood risk?
- does it allow effective commenting?
- what is the future for online participation technology?

The event will be hosted by the Virtual Environmental Planning Project (VEPs) with support from ASK Bristol and the Consultation Institute.

For further information please visit: <http://www.veps3d.org> If you would like to attend contact Nicola.Terrett@environment-agency.gov.uk

Planning Aid Conference

Monday 14th and Tuesday 15th April 2008 at King's College, Cambridge.

The over-arching theme of the Conference will be Regional and Sub-Regional strategies, and how both communities and developers can and should be involved in their development and implementation, with particular reference to the new housing agenda. Our audience will be both Planning Aid staff and volunteers and a range of external stakeholders, ranging from local authority planners, people in RDAs, developers, academics and people working in or for community groups. The emphasis will be on learning from experience and sharing good practice.

The Conference programme is designed to attract both internal and external delegates and to focus on questions around issues like:

- Will promoting Regional Development Agencies in England as guardians of single strategies for their regions mean radical changes to make them locally accountable and fit to take on broader spatial planning responsibilities?
- What will the role of the new Strategic Development Planning Authorities be in Scotland?
- How will all these bodies deal with the new housing agenda?
- What are the best strategies for developers and communities alike in engaging with the new system, so that they can influence the outcomes of regional and sub-regional strategies at an early stage?

Come and hear how senior practitioners including Sir Bob Kerslake, Designated Chief Executive of the Homes and Community Agency and Paul Hudson now Director at Thames Gateway and other key speakers are approaching these critical issue.

For further information and booking contact: Mary Murphy on 020 7929 9488 or email mary.murphy@rtpi.org.uk.

Delivery of Urban Design & Regeneration

15 April 2008, The Ibis, Earls Court, London

The full conference programme is available at www.urbandesignconference.com.

Speakers include: Richard Simmons, Chief Executive, CABE; Hank Dittmar, Chief Executive And Ben Bolgar, Director of Design Theory & Networks, The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment; Riccardo Marini, City Design Leader, Edinburgh City Council; Simon Ogden, Head of City Development And Richard Watts MLI-Principal Landscape Architect/Team Manager, Regeneration Projects Design, Sheffield City Council; Trevor Osbourne, Development Partner, Oxfordshire County Council; Steven Bee, Director of Planning and Development, English Heritage; Rob Cowan, Director, Urban Design Skills.

Waste Strategy for England: Delivering the Infrastructure Investment

15 April 2008, London

Endorsed by POS. See details at

http://www.thewaterfront.co.uk/pdfs/current_conferences/Waste%20Flyer.pdf

Changing Places: Changing World

The Planning Convention – London, Thursday 10 – Friday 11 July 2008

The theme of the 2008 Convention will be *"Changing Places: Changing World"*, focusing on how to equip planners and planning to face a world that is not only changing but changing at an increasing rate. Planning no longer works in isolation, and planners need skills to address broad societal issues including crime reduction, community empowerment, improving health outcomes and providing environmentally sustainable communities. The sessions will reflect a world of change: in places and place-shaping; in practice; and in politics and societal issues.

Last year there were some 700 attendees to the Convention, this year we are looking to better this number and so have a full programme with an expanded range of study tours, workshops and with speakers including Hazel Blears MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Carolina Barco Isakson (Colombian Ambassador to the USA and a Harvard-trained planner, Professor Phil Harrison, Executive Director of Development, Planning and Urban Management for the City of

Johannesburg; and the internationally-famous architect Sir Terry Farrell and many more.



PlanningConvention2
008.pdf

Click on the PDF above to see the full programme and to book online go to:
www.theplanningconvention.co.uk.

8 CORRESPONDENCE

Three letters this month: first from the LGA re the **Young Foundation Seminar Series on Building New Communities**; second re **on-line workshops by the Academy for Sustainable Communities**; and third a request for examples of good **planning for the telly**.

Dear colleagues

I have been approached by the think-tank the Young Foundation who are doing a project for EP and the Housing Corporation on the people aspects of developing new communities. They would very much welcome knowing about good examples under the following headings:

- building community participation in new developments
- participative mechanisms for resolving conflict in the existing community over new developments
- using participative mechanisms to encourage sustainable lifestyles and environmentally positive behaviour change in new developments
- community participation and governance in the longer term management of new communities

They have emphasised that they are looking for actual experience which has been in place long enough to place some weight on its reliability, not plans and proposals, however interesting and innovative! But I think we could count in regeneration projects which have resulted in a radical transformation of the form/character/resident mix of an area previously occupied by housing as well as developments on open brownfield or greenfield sites.

I would be very keen to take this opportunity to raise the profile of any interesting experience of which you are aware. One of the underlying messages in our housing campaign is that councils are uniquely well placed to make sure that new development not just homes, but a properly functioning community.

I would be grateful if you could let Cathy Tanod (cathy.tanod@lga.gov.uk) know of any ideas. Please feel free to pass this on to anyone else you think might be interested.

Martin Wheatley
Programme Director, Policy Directorate, Local Government Association
Tel 020 7664 3286

I would like to invite you and your colleagues to take part in one or more of the online workshops the Academy for Sustainable Communities (ASC) is delivering in February and March 2008.

In April this year, the ASC piloted the first in a series of five 'In a nutshell' online workshops. The workshop – 'introducing sustainable communities' – attracted 20 participants from a range of different professions and disciplines. Over the course of the two week workshop participants took part in a number of activities, discussions and chat sessions debating the issues associated with the sustainable communities agenda, ranging from policy to skills. Throughout the workshop they were supported by an online tutor with over 30 years experience in the sector.

The feedback from the sessions was very positive which has led us to develop the complete series.

I've attached a leaflet which provides further detail. If you or your colleagues are interested, the details of how to register are on the leaflet. The workshops are fully funded by ASC.

Kindest Regards

Nicola Bond
Learning & Skills Officer, Academy for Sustainable Communities
Tel: 0113 394 4574, website: www.ascskills.org.uk



ASC In a Nutshell
Leaflet ASC.pdf

The thrust of the idea is that we want to put together an ob doc on the world of planning. We have seen a number of property shows on tv which all have their place but I haven't seen anything on what goes on in a busy planning office and how planners work with (the sometimes idiotic) general public to resolve planning issues.

I want to assemble some information and list of experts into a package before approaching a broadcaster though we go and see them all the time. In the first instance I want to be able to find the best/busiest planning offices in the country where we could base ourselves. Is there a planning office that would be most amenable to a film crew, is populated with good characters and has a history of great planning stories and one would hope, great planning stories coming up.

All the above is almost impossible of course. The kind of thing we're after (a la Life of Grime) should make good, balanced telly.

Duncan McAlpine
Series Producer, Rapid Broadcast
65 Goldhawk Road, Shepherd's Bush, London, W12 8EG
Tel: 020 8746 0929, email: duncan.m@rapidbroadcast.co.uk

9 AND FINALLY

..... "On arrival I found the people locally were very anti to any proposed development which was to take place. This had been increased by reason of the inquiry which had taken place into the designated area and the evidence offered at that time, and there was of course a number of people who had weighed a degree of anti-enthusiasm for the proposal and were intending to create the maximum of havoc."

An extract from a recent planner's blog? No it's a quote from Phillip Bee the chief planner at Hemel Hempstead in 1937. To see more [click here](#). Plus ca change!

If you have any item of interest that you would like to share with fellow Society members for inclusion in the next [Bulletin](#) please send them to John Silvester by phone, fax or email.

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