



RTPI NI

Annual Review

2016

This short report presents the highlights of the year for RTPI NI. It aims to show our members and our stakeholders what we have achieved in 2016.

Policy and Public Affairs

Ministers and Government

We are pleased that during 2016 we have continued our positive partnership with the Northern Ireland Executive and particularly the Department of Environment / Department for Infrastructure.

Election Manifesto

We produced our five asks for the Northern Ireland Executive in advance of the elections in May, to influence each of the Parties' Manifestos. Our asks were:

1. Grow confidence in the planning system
2. Ensure the provision of a quality home for everyone in Northern Ireland that needs one
3. Coordinate policy by focusing on people and places
4. Integrate infrastructure, development and environment
5. Promote a growing sustainable economy.

Jointly with the other professional bodies we held a hustings in April, focusing on built environment issues at The Mac, Belfast. There was a packed auditorium and in addition 600 people watched the proceedings on-line.

Consultation Responses and Evidence

Through our Policy and Research Forum we submitted 3 responses to consultations and calls for evidence in Northern Ireland during 2016.

Policy and Research Forum

In 2016 we established a new Policy and Research Forum to lead on our policy work. The Forum, comprising 18 Chartered members from across Northern Ireland, will contribute to our responses to consultations and also develop a proactive policy programme.

Earlier in 2016, the Forum participated in a round table session to inform a piece of RTPi work on housing.

CPD and Events

In 2016 we introduced a new programme of events in response to the new planning landscape in Northern Ireland. This also included a new season ticket - responding to requests from the new Councils to enable them to manage their training programme for staff.

We had an excellent response to our events, with many being sell-outs. Thank you to everyone that contributed to their success - the organisers, speakers, sponsors, and of course the delegates.

Urban Design Event

The Urban Design: Historic Environments was held on 26th February in QUB Sport Centre, Belfast. Around 30 delegates heard presentations from David Sutherland (Sutherland Architects) and John Smylie (Director of Place Lab and John Simpson Architects) followed by a site visit to Belvoir Park Hospital.

RPA: One Year On

40 delegates attended this event in The Playhouse, Derry. Delegates heard from speakers on how planning in Northern Ireland has changed in the past year. There were speakers from the Department of Environment, Councils spoke about their experiences, DSD and the RTPI.

Community Planning Event

This joint event with EPLANI was held in June at Mossley Mill. 45 delegates attended to hear from speakers around the topic of nurturing the relationship between community planning and spatial planning with a mixture of presentations and workshops.

Planning Law Update

Our Annual Planning Law Update at PAC, Park House on 1st December was a complete sell out. Speakers included William Orbinson QC and Andrew Ryan, TLT Solicitors.

RTPI NI Annual Dinner

The Annual Dinner was held in The Mac on 10th March. Following a drinks reception sponsored by Carson McDowell 140 people enjoyed a 3 course meal with after dinner speeches from the Outgoing Chair, Neil Dunlop and Incoming Chair, Jenny Mawhinney and RTPI President, Phil Williams.

RTPI NI Annual Planning Conference

The Inaugural Annual Conference was held at Riddel Hall, Belfast on 15th November. This full day conference focused on Planning – Delivering Places for Northern Ireland and was over-subscribed.

The speakers at the event discussed how leadership and quality are essential in delivering planning in Northern Ireland and can provide real value to communities. The breakout seminars enabled more detailed and interesting discussions on key issues.

Annual Golf Outing

The Annual Golf Outing was organised by last year's winner Henry McAlister and was held at Galgorm Golf Club. Thank you to Henry for organising this event.

Young Planners Conference

Our Young Planner Committee, headed by Kim Boal organised the RTPI's Young Planners Conference this year in Belfast in October. Around 150 delegates from across the UK and Ireland attended this two day event which included presentations, workshops, study tours and a Gala Dinner in Crumlin Road Gaol.

Great feedback was received on the conference and on Northern Ireland and Belfast as hosts. Congratulations to all those who organised and participated in the conference.

Awards

Hugh McKay Award Presentation

The Hugh McKay award was presented this year to Amy Hewitt for first place for her final year dissertation entitled “An examination of the role of post productive theory and policy in maintaining a successful and sustainable rural economy in Northern Ireland”. This award is presented each year at QUB in memory of the late Hugh McKay.

Communications and Outreach

We have worked to improve our communications and sent out regular bulletins keeping members up to date with forthcoming events. Our Twitter account @RTPINI has just over 600 followers. We have regularly updated our web pages so that they become the key place to keep in touch with RTPI NI activity. We have also been working to ensure that Northern Irish planning issues are given more prominence in The Planner magazine and other RTPI publications.

We published a number of news releases including those on the President’s visit. The RTPI President, Phil Williams visited Northern Ireland in his capacity as RTPI President in March. During his visit Phil met with the then DOE Permanent Secretary. He attended a breakfast with RTPI members as well as meetings with Area Managers and Planning Students. Phil also met with then Minister Mark H Durkan at Ebrington and his visit was finished off with a trip to very windy Giants Causeway and a more warming Bushmills Distillery to hear about developments and future plans.

Thank you to those who helped facilitate and organise this visit.

We published two editions of our journal, PlaNIIt, circulated to every RTPI member in Northern Ireland.

Education

The year has seen visits to both Queen’s University Belfast and Ulster University Planning Schools by RTPI representatives to speak to students about RTPI and career planning through outlining the role of the Institute and the different players involved across the public, private and voluntary sectors.

We were delighted that both QUB and UU continue to participate in the Planning bursary scheme to support students.

Our ‘Planning my Place’ Model is continued to be used to promote planning to school children and has been used widely by Councils, the Universities and planning consultancies.

Northern Ireland's Voice in the Institute

RTPI NI continues to spread our influence within the Institute. RTPI NI has an Executive Committee representatives on the Institute's General Assembly which in 2016 was Diana Thompson. David Worthington briefed the General Assembly about the changes in planning in January.

We also have representatives on a number of key RTPI Committees:

- Policy, Practice and Research Committee– David Worthington
- Nations and Regions Panel – David Brown

This has allowed RTPI NI to engage with and influence key issues such as the RTPI's review of its routes to membership and the future RTPI research programme.

Supporters

Thanks go to the following organisations that have supported our work in the 2016:

- Carson McDowell
- Cleaver Fulton Rankin
- Department for Environment /
Department for Infrastructure
- Francis Taylor Building
- O'Sullivan Macfarlane
Environmental Consulting
- Queens University Belfast
- TLT Solicitors
- Ulster University

And of course not forgetting, all the speakers at our events, our members that have helped with events and activities, written articles for PlaNI, visited schools, entered Awards and attended our events.

RTPI NI Team

RTPI NI Executive Committee 2016

Chair	Jenny Mawhinney	
Vice Chair	Beverley Clyde	
Ex-officio	Neil Dunlop	
Secretary	Helen Harrison	
General Assembly Rep	Diana Thompson	
Corporate Members	Karen Blair	Angus Kerr
	Kim Boal	Mary MacIntyre
	David Brown	David Mounstephen
	Mark Emerson	Gavan Rafferty
	Lee Hannigan	Carol Ramsey
	Andrew Heasley	David Worthington
	Gemma Jobling	

RTPI NI Policy and Research Forum 2016

- Karen Blair
- Richard Bowman
- Seamus Cleary
- John Cleland
- David Donaldson
- Peter Fleming
- Tamasin Fraser
- Ann McCullough
- Carrie McDonagh
- David Mounstephen
- Gavan Rafferty
- Sujeet Sharma
- Emma Walker
- David Worthington

Our **staff** are:

- Roisin Willmott, Director
- Claire Williamson, Policy Officer
- Julie Sullivan, Administrative Assistant