



RTPI East of England
mediation of space · making of place

Royal Town Planning Institute

Annual Review 2016



RTPI East of England

Chair's Foreword

Planning is crucial

I have been immensely proud to represent the RTPI East of England Region and its members during 2016. Through a packed year of visits, events, networking and awards, it is clear that the region has a body of really talented professionals. However, the profession struggles with ever-increasing expectations in a changing landscape and is unable to recruit sufficiently due to a significant skills shortage. In this respect, I often wonder why there's not a larger number of young people wanting to shape and protect the look of our town and country by entering the profession. Planning is a crucial and demanding technical activity - it's a vocation, it's worthy, it's rewarding and it's a service that impacts directly and indirectly on everyone on a daily basis.

Top Priorities for 2016

With this background in mind, my top priorities for 2016 were to raise the profile and status of planners and planning; engage with partner organisations; and, roll out the [RTPI Ambassador scheme](#) to inspire school children

to understand the built environment and consider a future career in planning. While some progress towards these goals has been made over the past twelve months, they will continually need to be a focus for regional activity.

Appreciation

I am extremely grateful to the volunteer members of the [Regional Management Board](#) and [Regional Activities Committee](#) for their time, hard work, help and support in providing members with a programme of events. Particular thanks should go to the Honorary Secretary, Jackie Ward, and to the Honorary Treasurer, Rob Hobbs, for their dedication to the business of the RTPI. Behind the scenes, Tina Palmer, the Regional Co-ordinator, works tirelessly co-ordinating the wide range of events and activities for members.

Thanks also to all the event speakers and sponsors; David Lock Associates for sponsoring our [newsletter](#); Peter Hakes for continuing as newsletter editor; Paul Maison for chairing the Awards Panel.

Planning is a crucial and demanding technical activity - it's a vocation, it's worthy, it's rewarding and it's a service that impacts directly and indirectly on everyone on a daily basis.

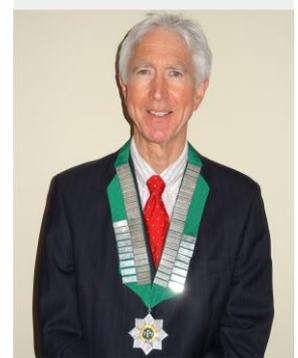
[Regional Management Board](#)

- Michael Hand (Chair)
- Wendy Hague (Senior Vice Chair)
- Adam Banham (Junior Vice Chair)
- David Potter (Immediate Past Chair)
- Jackie Ward (Hon. Secretary)
- Rob Hobbs (Hon. Treasurer & Regional Rep. on General Assembly)
- Liz Beighton (Assistant Hon. Secretary)
- John Young (Assistant Hon. Treasurer)

[Regional Activities Committee](#)

- Graham Bloomfield

- Charlotte Burton
- Dr Martin Cahn
- James Claxton
- John Dagg
- James Farrar
- Dr Peter Geraghty
- Libby Hindle
- Clara Kerr
- Paul Maison
- Lee Melin
- Elizabeth Mugova
- Jake Nugent
- Gemma Pannell
- Robert Purton
- Sandra Scott
- Shaun Scrutton
- Allan Simpson



Championing the Planning profession

Regional Awards

The Regional Judging Panel, led by Paul Maison, were impressed by the quality and diversity of the shortlisted entries, each one of which served to illustrate the creativity and professionalism of planners in the East of England. Schemes ranged from planning policy initiatives and individual sites to master plans covering major developments.

The overall winners of the 2016 Regional Award for Planning Excellence was Bidwells LLP and Pollard Thomas Edwards for "[Chelmsford City Park West](#)", a mixed use redevelopment in central Chelmsford including the restoration of historic buildings. The Judging Panel said: "*The winning entry demonstrates how a major redevelopment of a historic site can be done in a sustainable way. The project has re-invigorated the surrounding area and is providing open space in the city centre.*"

Two highly recommended certificates were presented to "[Hadleigh Park Olympic Mountain Bike Legacy Project](#)", entered by Chris Blandford Associates and "[North West Cambridge Development](#)" entered by AECOM and the University of Cambridge.



Ray Houghton of Bidwells (left) receiving the new Regional trophy and winner's certificate from Michael Hand

Award Presentation Evening

The Award was presented at our Regional Award Gala Dinner evening, held at Girton College, Cambridge with headline sponsors David Lock Associates and Bidwells. Our Guest Speaker, Dame Kate Barker CBE, is an economist who has served on the Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee and has written landmark reports about housing supply and land use planning. She spoke with great insight about planning for infrastructure.

The 2016 President's Visit

RTPI President, Phil Williams, [visited the Region in April](#). A packed itinerary allowed the President to see some of the exciting and challenging planning projects taking place, including: a visit to the Stevenage GSK and tour of the Bioscience Catalyst Campus; a presentation to mark the 70th year of Stevenage as a new town; a meeting at Forest Heath District Council offices in Suffolk to discuss the impact of the proposed MOD site closures; a visit to the former RAF site in Alconbury, Cambridgeshire, to see the redevelopment taking place; a presentation at our Place Making conference; and a social reception with Young Planners.



RTPI President, Phil Williams (left) hearing from Rebecca Britton of Urban & Civic, about the transformation taking place at Alconbury Weald

"Each year we have a wide range of interesting and innovative projects for the Judging Panel to consider, and this year was no exception".

Michael Hand



Guests enjoying the surroundings of the Great Hall at Girton College, Cambridge at Award Gala Dinner

Supporting and Growing Membership

Continuing Professional Development

Providing and supporting [Regional CPD opportunities](#) to meet locally identified needs is a key activity for the Region. Topics included:

- “Development in the Rural Historic Environment”, held in association with the IHBC East Anglia Branch.
- “Place Making – Delivering Successful Places” included case studies and a presentation by the RTPI President, Phil Williams, on the role of planners.
- “Viability Made Simple” included presentations and interactive workshops for those working in development management and forward plans, with a view to demystifying the art of negotiating viability.
- Current best practice and guidance on “Plan Making” included a presentation by a member of the Government’s Local Plans Expert Group.
- Our very popular Planning Law Update annual conference included presentations from leading planning barristers.

Young Planners

Our [Young Planners](#) have an excellent track record in organising and delivering events focused on new RTPI members. The Cambridgeshire Young Planners have been particularly active, with regular social evenings taking place in the city centre. An APC event was held in Hertfordshire, for Licentiates and Mentors. Providing events for Young Planners in other parts of the Region will be a key priority in 2017. Follow the Region’s Young Planners on [Twitter @RTPIEoEYPs](#).

Maurice Hellier Award

Maurice Hellier was a prominent planner in the East of England and, to perpetuate his memory, this [annual Award](#) is presented to the student judged to have achieved the best overall academic performance on the Planning courses at Anglia Ruskin University. The winner of the 2016 Award was Yvonne Dunn.

RTPI Future Planners

RTPI Representatives attended three careers events, encouraging students to consider planning as a career and to promote the RTPI.

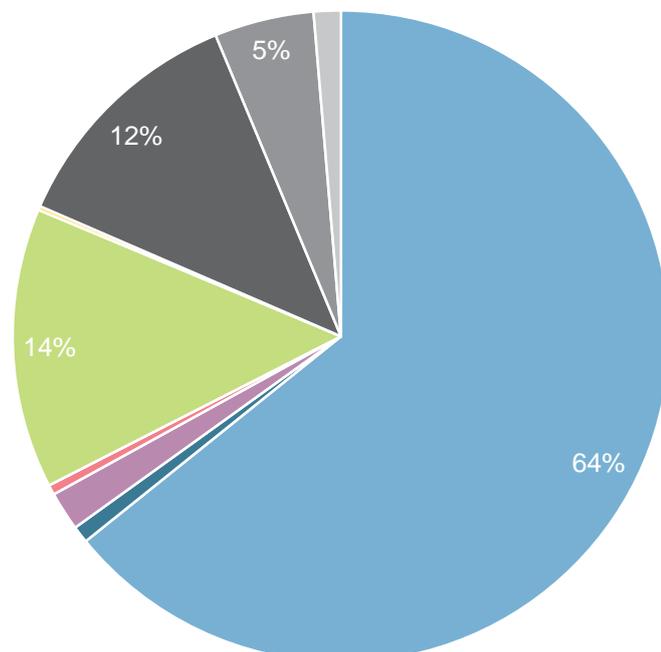
"The whole programme was excellent".
"A very interesting conference with some very knowledgeable speakers".
"An informative and enjoyable event".
Delegates at recent event

Regional Membership

Membership Class

- Chartered Town Planner*
- Fellow
- Associate
- Legal Associate
- Technical
- Retired
- Honorary
- Licentiate
- Student
- Affiliate

*This class includes Legal Members



Shaping and Informing Policy and Practice

Regional Debate

“Devolution Deals” were discussed during a Debate which followed our AGM. It was agreed that whilst the city region model may work in other parts of the country, one size does not fit all. It will be interesting to see how these deals develop and how it will affect planning in the East of England.

The landmark [Housing & Planning Act](#) received Royal Assent just prior to our AGM and discussions also took place on the impact this will have on providing affordable homes in the future.

Roundtable

The RTPI Policy Practice & Research Committee invited RTPI Regions to host a debate on [“Where to House the Nations”](#), to provide the basis for the RTPI’s ongoing policy and research work. The key issues of brownfield land, urban intensification, green belts and greenfield land were discussed during a half-day roundtable debate held in Cambridge, with key planning representatives from around the Region being invited to participate.

World Town Planning Day 2016

World Town Planning Day (WTPD) is celebrated in 30 countries on 4 continents. It recognises the planning role in creating liveable communities, and how it impacts many aspects of our daily life. The theme for the [2016 WTPD](#) was ‘Cities and Climate Change: Local Responses to a Global Challenge’. In the East of England, our colleagues at Anglia Ruskin University organised presentations and discussions on the theme and provided an opportunity for members to follow WTPD events taking place around the world through online Webinars.

Regional Member Survey

Thank you to all those who responded to our on-line survey in December. Analysis of the responses has provided some very useful feedback and guidance for the future planning of our regional activities.

“The [Housing & Planning Act](#) sets out a clear determination from the government to keep the country building ... It will give housebuilders and decision-makers the tools and confidence to provide more homes.....”



Participants discussing Devolution Deals in our Regional Debate

Empowering Communities

Planning Aid England in the East of England

RTPI regions are supported by central Planning Aid England (PAE) staff who help to organise volunteers, projects and work activities. In this region we have substantial experience in delivering [Planning Aid](#) services and we have a core of long standing volunteers. We also encourage students at our universities to volunteer for Planning Aid.

PAE activities in 2016

- Providing an update on PAE services to the Essex Planning Officers Association Policy Forum and to colleagues at the Essex Rural Community Council .
- Organising and running a series of workshops offering advice to local councillors from parish and town councils on responding to consultations for the Sizewell C development proposals.
- Helping provide a series of presentations and running discussion groups at two neighbourhood planning workshops hosted by Bedford Borough Council, with five

volunteers supporting their delivery to representatives from 25 teams preparing plans within the Borough.

- A volunteer provided a talk at the University of Hertfordshire to representatives from alternative energy groups on the local neighbourhood planning picture and on shaping and influencing these plans to include policies on renewable and low carbon energy.
- Providing an update on PAE services, general overview of the planning system, and an outline of the measures introduced in the Housing & Planning Act 2016 to a meeting of Councillors and Clerks from the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Association of Local Councils.

Regional Conference for Elected Members

An important event in the Region's annual calendar is the one-day conference for Elected Members, which this year was held in Woodbridge and included presentations from planning lawyers and other leading speakers from the planning profession.

We continue to provide direct volunteer assistance with casework coming forward via enquiries made throughout the year to the [Planning Aid Direct](#) advice service.



Planning Aid England offers help and advice to local councillors



Councillor Fryatt welcomes his elected member colleagues to Suffolk Coastal District Council offices for our Annual Conference for Councillors

Achieving Good Governance

Our Regional Governance Structure

In 2016, there were 26 volunteer members on our [Regional Activities Committee](#) (RAC), of which 7 were on the [Regional Management Board](#) (RMB). We have sub-groups which, with the Regional Co-ordinator, deliver the wide range of activities for our 2000+ members.

[Find out how you can get involved.](#)

Our Budget and Business Plan

The Region's resources in terms of finances and staff time are limited. However, we continue to operate within our allocated budget, ensuring that the Region is run in an efficient and effective business-like manner.

Sponsorship

In 2016, we welcomed new sponsorship from 39 Essex Chambers and Cornerstone Barristers for our Planning Law Update conference, and from David Lock Associates and Bidwells for the Award Dinner evening. A

charity raffle during the Dinner raised a total of £500 for the MK Community Foundation.

The [East of England Express](#) continues from strength to strength, thanks to the editor, Peter Hakes. This online publication is designed and sponsored by David Lock Associates, with the quarterly quiz sponsored by the Planning Legislation Update Service.

Financial Report from the Treasurer

The Region ran a surplus budget for 2016 to allow for any reduction in income from CPD activities that may arise as a result of cancelled events, whilst enabling expenditure on other activities for the benefit of members and to promote the planning profession.

The Region is very grateful to sponsors who supported the CPD programme, the Gala Dinner and the production of the quarterly newsletter.

The Region held a reserve of £8,200 at the end of 2015 and with the surplus generated in 2016 of £960, the total reserve is £9,160.

We are very grateful to all our volunteers and to our sponsors who have supported us and helped us to provide a wide range of activities for the benefit of members in the East of England.

RTPI East of England Budget Summary

	Budget 2016 (£)	Actual 2016 (£)	Budget 2017 (£)
Income			
Grant from Central Funds	24,362	24,362	23,994
CPD Events	40,000	28,046	32,750
Other Income	4,600	7,508	5,250
Total Income	68,962	59,917	61,994
Expenditure			
CPD Events	9,550	8,825	9,000
Other Expenditure	10,800	8,041	10,400
Regional Governance	43,472	42,091	43,522
Total Expenditure	63,822	58,957	62,922
Surplus / Deficit	5,140	960	-928



RTPI

mediation of space · making of place



The RTPI is a charity registered in England (262865) and Scotland (SC037841).
Registered Office Address: Royal Town Planning Institute, 41 Botolph Lane, London, EC3R 8DL.
eastofengland@rtpi.org.uk