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Royal Town Planning Institute



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Editorial

Welcome to the 189th edition of the Scottish Planner!

This issue very much concentrates on highlighting and sharing some of the great work being undertaken by planners across the country that have been part of the inaugural RTPI Scotland Awards for Planning Excellence. The awards were presented at a special ceremony, attended by Planning Minister Tom Arthur on 16 June.

We all know that planning has the ability to change peoples' lives for the better, to create a greener, net zero world and to build a sustainable future for future generations. But too often this isn't seen, heard or understood by others. These awards attempt to go some way to rectify that. They celebrate outstanding plans, projects and people that demonstrate the power of planning and aim to highlight exceptional examples of how planning and planners have a positive impact on our

quality of life in creating exceptional places and protecting our environment. We were delighted that 26 submissions were received which were then whittled down to 12 finalists and then winners and commendations. There is much to learn from what they have achieved and how they have gone about doing this so it will be worthwhile reading about this on the pages of The Scottish Planner. It is fantastic so see so many great examples of planners and planning making a difference to places and people. And none more so than our overall winner the Fraserburgh Conservation Area Renewal Scheme Townscape Heritage Project which is already making a remarkable difference to the town and its people and the belief in its future. Happy reading...

- Craig McLaren Co-editor

Convenor's Comments: The Golden Thread



Andrew Trigger
MRTPI,
Convenor
RTPI Scotland
[@convenorrtpis](https://twitter.com/convenorrtpis)

RTPI Scotland Convenor Andrew Trigger discusses the societal contribution planning makes and the need to celebrate it

Planning. Town Planning. Town and Country Planning. Regional Planning. Urban Planning. Land Use Planning. Spatial Planning. Placemaking – the list goes on. Trying to succinctly label what we do as a profession for those that don't regularly engage with the plannersphere is no easy task - answers on a postcard (or tweet) but for now I'll stick with Planning.

For me, Planning is like a golden thread that runs through our society – infrastructure; housing delivery, cultural and natural heritage, energy, economic development, and tourism are just some of the areas that we get involved in. That's in addition to providing the holy trinity of planning policy, development management and enforcement. That variety also, in my humble opinion, helps to develop our 'planning people' with an arsenal of key skills that are transferable to any setting – research and analysis, engagement, communication, perspective, negotiation, mediation, project management, reasoned arguments, consensus building, and a bit of fortune telling!

Rarely does Planning get the public recognition it deserves although we often take the flak if something goes wrong. However, in football terms, Planning is the manager's dream – the model professional that has the skill and versatility to cover multiple positions; the unsung hero who manages the game but is happy for others to seek the headlines. Maybe though it's time for a change of mindset – should Planning now be the glory hunter?

We all have our views on what planning can help to (and does) achieve but I would suggest they may be along the lines of:

- Public Health – whether it be a deadly virus; rising obesity levels or growing awareness of mental health, Planning helps shape our local environment in the short, medium, and long-term in the form of supporting active travel; protecting, enhancing, and supplementing our green spaces, and improving air and water quality.
- Climate Emergency – from unlocking investment in brownfield sites (for development if cost effective to do so or 'greening' them where not); to safeguarding our natural floodplains from development pressure and supporting means of reducing our carbon emissions.
- Cost of Living Crisis – acknowledging that change won't happen overnight, Planning can continue to help ease the transition to more sustainable forms of energy that has the potential for considerable high-skilled job creation; instigate hubs for our supply chains to embrace sustainable transport options and support the rollout of digital technology that can aid more balanced working patterns and business practices.
- Nature Crisis – we need to continue supporting efforts seeking to allow our native flora and fauna to thrive and to ensure that new development plays its part in meeting that objective.

- Safe Shelter – Planning is a key component in the drive to ensure that everyone has access to a safe, warm home. Planning needs to be open minded about how it sets about reaching that goal (not all greenfield development is bad – it is about the right development).
- World Peace – if we can crack that one then we're guaranteed to ringfence increased planning fees!

“For me, Planning is like a golden thread that runs through our society – infrastructure; housing delivery, cultural and natural heritage, energy, economic development, and tourism are just some of the areas that we get involved in.”

It's worth remembering that Planning is a statutory function of Scotland's local authorities (along with the education of 5 -16 year olds and social work services). So, we have the people (albeit getting older and we need more); we have the skills, and we have the means - there is a framework in which to operate, to be on the front foot and help guide Scotland along a more sustainable path in its post-Covid recovery.

There is no question that Planning can be headline grabbing and should be – for all the right reasons. The onus is on all of us to help shine the light and that's why I'm delighted that this edition of Scottish Planner focusses on the very best that this profession of ours has to offer and I can't wait for the RTPI Scotland Awards for Planning Excellence to start building that momentum. ■

Article: Future Planners



Amy Bristow,
Planning Project
Officer at the
Improvement Service

Amy Bristow, Planning Project Officer at the Improvement Service, looks at the resourcing issues faced by the Scottish planning system and considers the options available to increase the pipeline of future planners.

Heads of Planning Scotland (HOPS), the RTPI and the Improvement Service were commissioned by Scottish Government to undertake collaborative research to explore the options available to support the growth of entrants into the planning profession in Scotland. The research is focused on the needs of Scotland's planning authorities, however many of the recommendations will be relevant and pertinent to other employers including Scottish Government, Key Agencies, planning consultancies and third sector planning organisations. The methods used

these demands, namely: the rise in the number of statutory planning duties; the increased complexity in planning application and infrastructure delivery; a decade of underfunding in planning authorities with ongoing issues of resourcing, and challenges in the recruitment and retention of staff.

The Planning (Scotland) Act places 49 new and unfunded duties on Scotland's planning authorities and research by the RTPI estimates that this could cost between £12.2 million and £59.1 million to deliver over the next ten years¹. Additionally, the

draft Fourth National Planning Framework sets out an ambitious role for planners in achieving net zero targets, tackling the climate emergency and supporting a post-COVID-19 economic recovery. The demand for planners with the necessary skills to achieve these new aims is therefore set to increase.

Our research found there are currently 74 vacant full-time posts

across the 26 Scottish planning authorities that provided this information. Moreover, an ageing workforce will result in a significant amount of senior experience being lost in the near future. Skills Development Scotland have estimated there will be a need for 500-600 new planners to replace those retiring in the next 10-15 years, and an additional 130 to cover the projected expansion of the sector². The same research demonstrated that challenges exist at every stage of the supply pipeline, concerning: the general image of planning and awareness of the

profession; the availability of teaching provision; increased competition for talented applicants, and the diversification of career choices across the UK.

Considering this current context, our research sought to identify which promotional strategies would be best suited to promote careers in Scotland's planning authorities, and to ascertain the particular challenges facing Scotland's planning authorities in recruiting and retaining planning staff.

Findings showed that the promotional strategies considered most suitable for use in planning were: diverse media materials to promote job opportunities, such as videos and social media posts; making better use of existing materials and platforms for career promotion, e.g. the recently-launched RTPI Plan Your World resources; reinforcing the important role that planners play in contributing to national strategies like reaching net zero and delivering key infrastructure; and ensuring regular engagement with secondary, further and higher education institutions.

In terms of recruitment, routes into planning careers in Scotland were found to be very narrow and broadening these will be key to bringing more people into the sector in the next 5-10 years. The most common route into planning is now through an RTPI-accredited postgraduate course; in order to increase the number of qualified planners entering the system through this route, there is first a need to address the limited funding available to assist with the rising financial costs of studying a postgraduate degree. Secondly, it would be pertinent to improve understanding of why the increasing number of overseas students studying

“If Scotland is to develop and maintain an effective, high-performing planning service, there is a need to ensure the planning workforce is equipped to meet the future demands that will be placed upon the sector.”

in the research were desktop analysis, key informant interviews, a survey of planning authority managers, and a survey of young planners working in Scotland. The full report will be available online upon publication.

If Scotland is to develop and maintain an effective, high-performing planning service, there is a need to ensure the planning workforce is equipped to meet the future demands that will be placed upon the sector. However, there are presently a number of interconnected pressures on the Scottish planning system which are intensifying

planning in Scotland often return to their home countries after graduation and to remove any barriers that may be preventing those who wish to work in Scotland from doing so at present. Alongside this, there remains a crucial need to widen routes into the profession beyond the degree pathway.

An RTPI-accredited Chartered Town Planning apprenticeship scheme already exists in England, with approximately 280 apprentices studying across 10 RTPI-

accredited training providers. Our research has led to initial discussions exploring the possibility of introducing a comparable apprenticeship scheme in Scotland.

Regarding staff retention, results from the planning authority survey cited retirement as the second most common destination for planners leaving planning authorities in the past four years, supporting previous projections by Skills Development Scotland³. The most common destination was other Scottish planning authorities, therefore it is accurate to suggest that

authorities compete for staff at present. The most common reasons for staff departures (other than retirement) were to seek career advancement and increased salary and benefits. Survey responses stated staff often leave to take up promotions where

“Our research has identified that planning authorities are already operating in a challenging environment of continued budget cuts, increased statutory planning duties and skills requirements, and an ongoing loss of expertise due to retirements”

there is limited opportunities at their own authorities; 17 planning authorities said they would like to see more opportunities for career progression and a move away from flat structures within teams.

In light of these findings, thirteen actions have been recommended, with support and buy-in required from Scottish Government, Scotland’s planning authorities and key agencies, the RTPI, HOPS, Scotland’s planning schools, and other sector employers. The actions considered to be of the highest priority for the future are:

- Increase the number of qualified planners graduating per year through funded postgraduate opportunities. This could be achieved by expanding the available bursaries for students, or increasing opportunities for work/study placements in planning authorities;
- Consider the general messaging around planning and the language used in job advertisements, to place more focus on the strategic priorities of planning and its position as a ‘green’ career;
- Promote planning more widely at universities and careers fairs, including raising awareness of planning amongst students on related degree courses. HOPS will seek to develop a more collaborative relationship with university planning schools in order to achieve this;
- Introduce an RTPI-accredited planning apprenticeship scheme for Scotland, as exists in England;
- Extend opportunities for students at all levels to gain practical experience within a planning environment, and explore the possibility of embedding planning work placements into the university curriculum in the long term; and
- Undertake an annual workforce strategy and skills survey, in a collaborative action between Scottish Government and Scotland’s planning authorities.

Our research has identified that planning authorities are already operating in a challenging environment of continued budget cuts, increased statutory planning duties and skills requirements, and an ongoing loss of expertise due to retirements. All of the actions recommended above require either monetary resourcing, staff hours, or in most cases both. HOPS have welcomed the recent increase in fees, however this only forms one part of the proper resourcing of planning authorities; there must therefore be a commitment to providing the funding required to enable planning authorities to deliver these actions, to the benefit of the whole sector in the long-term. If meaningful progress cannot be made towards this goal, and the requirement for ca. 700 new staff over the next 10-15 years is not met, there is a real danger that Scotland’s planning authorities will simply not have the skills, resources, and staff hours available to deliver a high-quality, functioning planning system. ■

¹ RTPI Scotland (2019), Financial Implications of Implementing the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, page 2. Available: <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/media/1211/rtpi-scotland-financial-implications-of-implementing-the-planning-scotland-act-2019.pdf>

² Skills Development Scotland (2020), Skills in Planning Research. Link: https://www.partnersinplanning.scot/_data/assets/pdf_file/0016/23623/Skills-in-Planning-Research-Final-February-2021.pdf

³ Skills Development Scotland (2020), Skills in Planning Research. Link: https://www.partnersinplanning.scot/_data/assets/pdf_file/0016/23623/Skills-in-Planning-Research-Final-February-2021.pdf



Q&A

Public Enquiries



Maria Francké
MRTPI,
Director of
MF Planning

Maria Francké MRTPI, Director of MF Planning & Vice Chair of the Scottish Property Federation answers our questions.

1 Who has been the biggest inspiration or influence on your career and why?

This is always a hard question to answer as I have had lots of excellent mentors early in my career who took me under their wings and pushed me to take on challenges, allowing me to stretch and grow in confidence in my own planning abilities.

Two people I will highlight are Charles Prosser, Secretary of the Royal Fine Art Commission for Scotland and Sir Colin Buchanan, both now sadly deceased. I spent an engaging year working alongside Charles as the Commission's first planning assistant in my sandwich year at Heriot Watt University and his enthusiasm and dedication to design quality and creating places has remained with me. Whilst also studying for my degree I attended the RTPI's annual conference in Plymouth and had the benefit of hearing a seminar by Sir Colin Buchanan. I was in awe listening to him speak about the purpose of planning and the impact of car usage on the environment – issues which remain very relevant today some thirty years later. I knew for certain from that point on that I had made the right degree choice.

2 What do you feel is the biggest issue facing planners and planning at the moment?

At a local level, the resourcing of planning departments is a major concern and a recurring issue which doesn't yet seem to be any closer to a resolution. There are some good initiatives in the pipeline to encourage more young planners into the industry, but my concern is that this will of course take time

to come to feed through. Although planning is much more than a regulatory process, there remains considerable pressure on development management teams which have a huge responsibility to appraise applications and keep the system moving. Planning is an essential wheel in a cog which keeps the construction and development industry in motion. Without planning permissions being issued the construction and development industry will grind to a halt.

3 Why is planning important?

Planning is at the heart of our built and rural environments. It influences everything we see around us and can make a positive difference in this world. I tell my children that every small planning decision we make can affect the lives and prosperity of others. Whether or not we all agree with the defined purpose of planning - now written into the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 - planning has a greater purpose to make balanced decisions in the long-term public interests. As planners, we need to think about our future generations; what legacy are we going to leave future generations as we transition to a low carbon economy?

4 Where do you think best exemplifies planning's role in creating great places for people?

I live and work in Glasgow it would be remiss of me not to mention this great city as being an exemplar for waterfront regeneration and urban renewal. There is still significant investment needed to transform the 13 miles of the River Clyde corridor into an accessible waterfront but each new project delivers enhanced pedestrian connectivity along the banks of the river. However, what excites me most is when I visit other towns and cities

abroad and discover spaces where people love to gather. It is these areas which exemplify all those vibrant and place-based qualities that show off planning for what it is – places with people and communities at its heart, sometimes mixing old and new buildings and sometimes creating entirely modern spaces with new buildings.

5 What are the greatest challenges and opportunities currently for planning practitioners?

The Draft NPF4 introduces a whole raft of policy requirements that may be needed to support future application proposals such as evidence of community wealth building and enhancing biodiversity, health impact assessments, whole life assessments and decarbonisation strategies. Planning professionals across both the public and private sector will need to upskill to gain new competencies and understanding of these concepts and also keep pace with the technological change and digitisation of the planning and real estate industry. ■

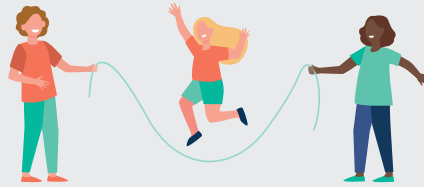
Immaterial Considerations

An irreverent look at the world of planning...

Sign of the Times?

We were intrigued by the road sign above and then realised that it is from a public artwork created by Amy Rose and Chris Pirie called Essential Repair. It was produced by Amy Rose Projects in response to last year's Summer of Play; a campaign to enable children to have space and time for play this summer as they emerged from lockdown and Covid restrictions. The project has aims of "reclaiming streets" and the sign is for use alongside temporary street play road closures; designed to be displayed alongside, and complement, but not obscure or replace, official street closure signage.

Amy conceived the art as, and we quote, "a playfully subversive road sign.. (that) asks adults to take responsibility to reduce the impact of ...the 'invisible harm' of traffic. As an act of tactical urbanism, it also defends children's basic right to play and to breath clean air." You can find out more at <https://playingout.net/covid-19/summer-of-play/>



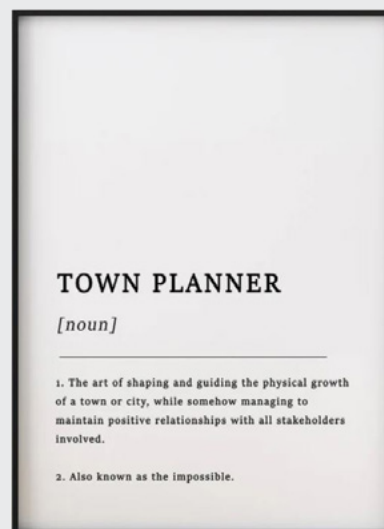
Planning Portraits

So are you looking for the ideal present for the planner who has everything, and who has a space on their wall? Are you looking for a fantastic gift that a planner will remember forever due to its uniqueness and thoughtfulness? Do you want an amazing looking gift dedicated to city planners and urban engineers that will make their eyes light up as soon as they see it? Well, CartoonPortrait may have the perfect solution for you. So, err, why not commission them to draw a Simpsons like personalized yellow cartoon character portrait for that planner in their natural habitat that creates the impression of being a part of the cartoon? Examples below...

Available online at https://www.etsy.com/uk/listing/634481434/urban-planner-gift-custom-portrait-as?ref=share_v4_lx

The Art of the Impossible

We liked the framed definition of a Town Planner (below). Especially the second part! If you are really interested to be regularly reminded that you are working to achieve the art of the (im)possible it's a snip at £9.99 from https://www.etsy.com/uk/listing/871319650/definition-of-a-town-planner-quote?ref=share_v4_lx



In Focus:

Response to the review of the Town Centre Action Plan



Professor Leigh Sparks
Deputy Principal and Professor of Retail Studies at Stirling University

Leigh Sparks, Professor of Retail Studies and Deputy Principal at Stirling University, discusses the recently published Scottish Government/COSLA response to “A New Future for Scotland’s Town Centres”.

In 2020 I was asked by the then Cabinet Secretary to chair a review into the Town Centre Action Plan. The resultant report “A New Future for Scotland’s Town Centres” was published in February 2021. The formal Scottish Government/COSLA response to “A New Future for Scotland’s Town Centres” has now been published. The Response formally adopts the Review Group’s vision for towns and town centres. It places this “Town Centre Action Plan 2” as a Call to Action for all and not purely a government centric approach, reflecting the uniqueness of our towns and communities across Scotland. Governments though at all levels do have a role to play as enablers and funders as well as providing the frameworks and alignments, but they cannot do this alone.

TCAP2 comprises four categories making up the Call to Action:

1. Putting the right policy framework in place
2. Ensuring the right kind of support
3. Providing a framework for investment, and
4. Working closely with partners.

In each of these categories, a structure has been adopted that aligns with appropriate outcomes that the Review Group identified as being needed: planning, town centre first, taxation and fiscal levers, town centre living, digital towns, enterprising communities and vibrant local economies, climate action, measuring and evaluating progress and demonstrator towns.

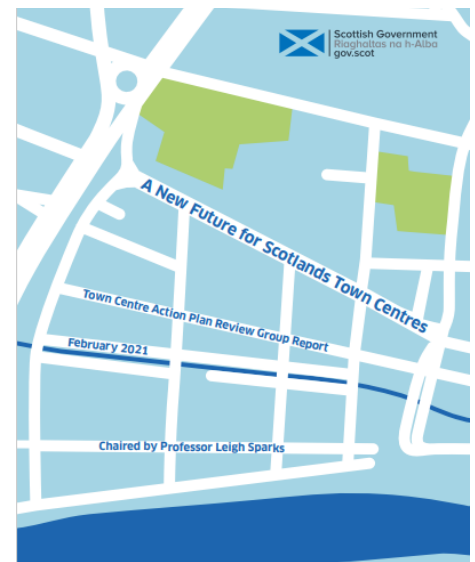
It would be invidious to select specific suggestions at this juncture; TCAP 2 needs to be considered in the round and in the light of the other major documents with which it aligns, as for example in NPF4 in planning, and in the actions already underway through the Place Based Investment Programme and other initiatives (Scotland Loves Local, Community Wealth Building, Just Transition,

Climate Action, 20-minute Neighbourhoods). Taken together these lay out a coherent approach to town centres and begin the process of reversing the harms to town centres from disaggregated, decentralised development.

As Chair of the Review Group, it is a reasonable question as to whether this response meets what would have been my ambitions. Three areas of recommendations were identified in “A New Future”; strengthen planning, sort out the fiscal and taxation levers and focus on specific “demonstrator” aspects of town centres. Progress since “A New Future” on the first and third of these has been strong, and TCAP2 reinforces and extends that commitment and actions. The response to the second recommendation area is, understandably, more mixed. There are good statements on trying to sort out online taxation and VAT on refurbishing buildings. There is less on the suggested more challenging aspects of taxation on out-of-town developments, car usage and non-domestic rates. But no review gets everything it wanted, and certainly not in the immediate timescale. We have spent 50 or more years damaging our town centres; it does take time to put a genie back in a bottle.

There is thus, in my view, much to applaud in this response, not least the action-oriented style of writing and the specifics. Investment has been made and promised and one hopes that more will be forthcoming. The proof will be on the ground in towns across Scotland, but it does feel like the good work stemming from the Fraser Review through the first Town Centre Action Plan and subsequent actions, is being built and extended upon. We all now need to be even more ambitious for our town centres and seek to live up to the vision stated by the Review Group:

“Towns and town centres are for the wellbeing of people, planet and the economy. Towns are for everyone and everyone has a role to play in making their own town and town centres successful.” ■



In Practice: CIEEM Local Authority Planning



Annie Robinson
Project Officer at
CIEEM

Annie Robinson, Project Officer at the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), discusses the current ecological skills gap in Local Planning Authorities across Scotland.

At the start of 2022, CIEEM held an event which brought together Scottish Local Planning Authorities to discuss NPF4, specifically Policy 3 and the Developing with Nature Guidance; read the report [here](#). At the event, capacity concerns were raised repeatedly. CIEEM conducted a survey of Local Planning Authority (LPA) staff to establish current LPA ecological expertise and capacity in Scotland in collaboration with the Association of Local Government Ecologists (ALGE). We received responses from 26 of the 32 LPAs and 2 National Park Authorities in Scotland, with multiple responses from some LPAs.

Capacity

Over a fifth of respondents said they have no current ecological resource or expertise available. Capacity is very low; over half of respondents (56%) said that there is less than 1 full time equivalent ecologist available for planning work. Planning case work is only one component across a very wide portfolio of work, with capacity stretched thinly or areas of work not addressed.

Two thirds of respondents rated lack of enforcement staff to ensure compliance as a high or very high risk to their LPA's ability to implement the forthcoming NPF4 and Positive Effects for Biodiversity.

One third of respondents said there had been cutbacks to ecological provision within their LPA (either staffing or resources) over the past 5 years, with many others citing that cutbacks had happened prior to this. This highlights the real risks to the consistent delivery of NPF4 and Positive Effects for Biodiversity. Encouragingly, a few respondents reported that there has been a slight increase in personnel in the last few years.

Differing approaches across Scotland

It was apparent that planning applications are dealt with differently by each LPA in Scotland. Some LPAs have ecologists that routinely comment on planning applications. Depending on which team the ecologist sits in, planning work is included (or not) within their work plans and this can result in conflicting demands from managers. Some LPAs have service level agreements, principally via contracts with local biodiversity record centres to screen planning applications against biological records to highlight protected species and species of conservation concern. However, there is not complete geographic coverage of record centres throughout Scotland and even where they do exist not all are of sufficient size to provide this service.

Training

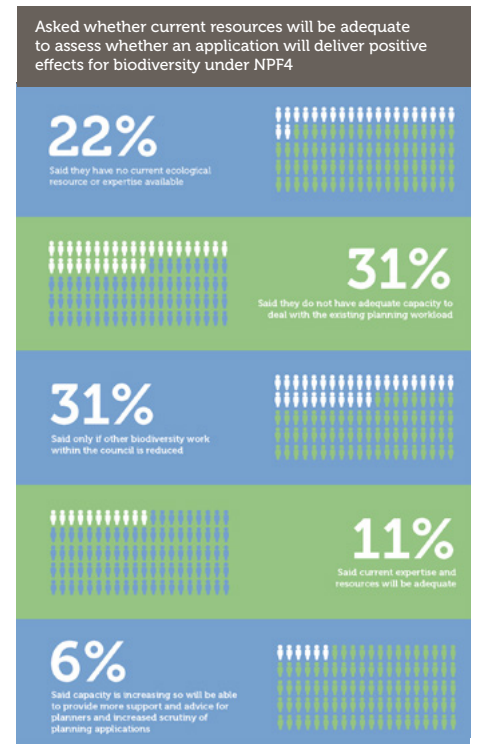
There is clearly an ecological skills gap within the planning system with many respondents requesting targeted cross-cutting training. Training on nature conservation legislation, interpreting biodiversity information and the processes required to consider and enhance biodiversity through the planning system was requested by many. Likewise, training on detail of new legislation and implementation of NPF4 and Developing with Nature will be required.

We recommend that each Local Authority should have, as a bare minimum, ecologists and environmental planners who are appropriately resourced and trained. The expertise and expectations of planning and ecological staff needs to be clear so that individuals are not having to make professional judgements outside their area of expertise and competence. Biodiversity ambitions must be backed by the necessary funding earmarked to deliver them at LPA

level to ensure we deliver the transformative change needed in biodiversity and planning in Scotland.

CIEEM as a professional body and training provider is looking to support some of the training requests and provide more member network events for ecologists and environmental planners to help knowledge sharing and networking opportunities across LPAs.

Read the [Briefing Paper](#) and full survey [report](#).



Article:

Fraserburgh Conservation Area Renewal Scheme Townscape Heritage Project



Fraserburgh Conservation Area Renewal Scheme Townscape Heritage Project, Submitted by Aberdeenshire Council

RTPI Scotland Award for Planning Excellence Winner 2022, Submitted by Aberdeenshire Council in partnership with National Lottery Heritage Fund, Historic Environment Scotland, NB Planning and Architecture, Alan Marshall Conservation Architect, Doug Wheeler Associates and Elevator.

In the run up to the Fraserburgh 2021 CARS/TH project, the town was facing many socio-economic challenges, including the town centre being significantly run down and the historic building fabric suffering from neglect and decay. The Scottish Indices of Multiple Deprivation (2012 and 2016) indicated that Fraserburgh was struggling to improve in terms of living standards, employment opportunities, health and wellbeing and other key indicators of prosperity. Town Centre Health Checks showed it had declined more than most in Aberdeenshire, with niche retailers struggling to survive and national high street brands mainly limited to bookmakers, pound shops, pawnbrokers, and payday lenders. There were a high number of vacant and under-used premises, and the quality of the town centre environment was poor. The public realm was functional, but not at all pedestrian or cycle friendly. All of this led to Aberdeenshire Council prioritising regeneration activity in Fraserburgh.

The Fraserburgh 2021 heritage led regeneration scheme is a multi-agency, multi funder project with the core strategic aim of improving the economic success and vibrancy of Fraserburgh Town Centre. The project utilises the inherent placemaking qualities of Fraserburgh's built and cultural heritage to create buildings, spaces and places that capitalise on civic pride, local identity, local connection and a sense of place. It is a showcase of planning at all levels delivering strategic goals and planning policy to create a better environment for the community of Fraserburgh. The scheme has targeted numerous derelict and vacant properties in the Fraserburgh Conservation Area bringing them back into active use. This included shopfront improvements,

reinstatement of original architectural detail, public realm and an extensive training and engagement programme. This programme was a means to raise awareness but also gain buy-in from the community and give them the skills and knowledge to continue to improve post project. Priorities were informed by widespread local consultation.

The project addressed aspects such as retail and the town centre, by improving the appearance, condition and use of the premises in the town centre. Environmental improvements to the buildings and the wider public realm were also carried out to create a welcoming environment for commercial and retail purposes. Facilities such as an Enterprise Hub to support entrepreneurs in the town and shopfront schemes to better advertise existing and new businesses were also key elements of the regeneration.

Judges' Comments

The judges were extremely impressed with the way in which this project 'flipped' the idea of conservation and historic buildings being seen as a constraint on development and economic growth to becoming the key asset for the reinvention of the town. The team took their time and fully assessed the scale of the problem before they started thinking about a project, allowing for political buy in and a place-based approach. Imaginative and effective engagement, especially asking young people what they wanted, was also very powerful. Judges liked how there had clearly been a culture change as a result of the work undertaken, with real evidence of strong collaboration across the council, between officers and councillors and with communities and local businesses. It was also good to see that the approach taken in

Fraserburgh was being rolled out across other parts of Aberdeenshire.

Fraserburgh has not always been a "pretty" place and it had a poor reputation, so the changes that have been delivered are welcomed and significant. Planning and investment in the historic fabric were seen as catalysts to focus on a few key sites whilst delivering training and establishing an enterprise hub. The judges saw how they were already making a remarkable difference to the town and its people and the belief in its future. ■



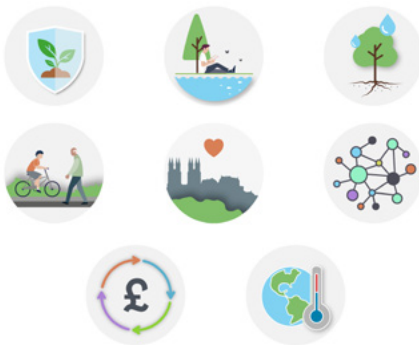
Article: Edinburgh Strategic Green Blue Network & Glasgow Strategic Development Frameworks



Edinburgh Strategic Green and Blue Network,
Submitted by Atkins

Glasgow Strategic Development Frameworks,
Submitted by Glasgow City Council

Best Plan: Finalists, Submissions from Atkins and Glasgow City Council.



Edinburgh Strategic Green Blue Network, Submitted by Atkins

Partners including City of Edinburgh Council, Scottish Water, Scottish Environment Protection Agency

As a progression from Edinburgh's Water Vision and to further the City Vision 2050, Atkins were commissioned by City of Edinburgh Council to develop a holistic Green-Blue Network Strategy for the city. Development of the network involved bringing together information from multiple sources to consider climate change adaptation at a city scale, to support and inform environmental policies and development briefs set out in Edinburgh's Cityplan 2030. The scope of the Green Blue Network project included creation of the first comprehensive Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the City of Edinburgh.

This project was developed collaboratively with input and funding support from Scottish Environment Protection Agency and Scottish Water, along with City of Edinburgh Council and Sustrans and data and expertise from NatureScot.

The next stage of the project, a Green Blue Neighbourhood study for the Craigmyle

catchment, responds to the new standards set out in the draft National Planning Framework 4 calling for a spatial planning response to the climate emergency and will act as a blueprint for other catchments throughout the city.

Judges' Comments

The panel thought this was a ground-breaking, holistic approach to sustainable water management and climate change adaptation at a strategic level, which was particularly relevant at a time of climate and nature emergencies. They liked how the strategy was also feeding into action at local levels through identifying opportunity areas. The commitment to collaboration across stakeholders to develop the evidence base and to take forward the strategy is admirable.

The judging panel was pleased to see how investment in analysis from the outset has allowed the strategy to develop joined up spatial evidence and data to support the direction of future policy approaches. It is welcomed that this is feeding into the decisions on future change and development as part of Edinburgh Cityplan 2030 and City Vision 2050.

Glasgow City Development Plan – Strategic Development Frameworks, Submitted by Glasgow City Council

Glasgow's 2017 City Development Plan marked a shift in planning practice from an emphasis on land use planning, to an approach based on placemaking and spatial planning. This has led to the adoption of 3 Strategic Development Frameworks as spatial Supplementary Guidance to the City Development Plan covering the River Clyde Development Corridor; Govan; and Partick and the City Centre.

The Strategic Development Frameworks (SDFs) were seen as a necessary tool to bridge citywide policy aspirations and the need for detailed guidance in areas of complex change. Delivering the 3 adopted SDFs required varied and responsive approaches to planning practice across the project areas, taking account of the place context and existing regeneration process.

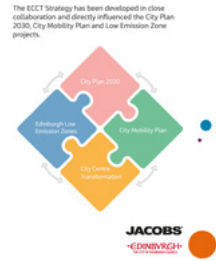
Each of the 3 SDF required the planners leading on the strategies to be creative and flexible in their approaches. Given that the SDFs form part of the statutory adopted development plan, this required a process of engagement with communities and stakeholders which was at the same time detailed, meticulous and transparent, whilst also being open to build upon the knowledge and input of local place experts.

Judges' Comments

Judges welcomed the fact that the need for the SDFs came directly from Glasgow's 2017 City Development Plan which identified the need for more detailed spatial planning activity to support regeneration in areas of particularly complex urban change.

The judges commend how each document was delivered through a tailored process focused to the needs of each place and community. They appreciated the need for strong leadership and management to provide staff with the time and space to develop these carefully and collaboratively. A testament to this is that the SDFs are informing and influencing the wider corporate activity of the Council and other stakeholders whilst providing a crucial spatial planning and regeneration vision to support capital funding bids and project design. ■

Article: Edinburgh City Centre Transformation



Edinburgh City Centre Transformation,
Submitted by Jacobs

Best Plan: Winner, Submitted by Jacobs in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Planning and Building Standards, OP-EN (Optimised Environments Ltd), BIG Partnership, Turley, Moffat Centre at the Glasgow Caledonian University, Simerica-Jacobs, Space Syntax, Citymart and White Young Green.

The Edinburgh City Centre Strategy (ECCT) is seen as a once in a generation opportunity to overhaul the operation, quality and experience of the City Centre, bringing health and wellbeing as priorities to the streets, public spaces, amenity of access and movement. The strategy influenced a policy review, benchmarking and setting the scene for future developments up to 2050. The City of Edinburgh Council appointed Jacobs to lead the production of a coherent strategy to provide direction for future development of the city centre and detail the required changes to urban infrastructure, public transport and public spaces to achieve a transformed city centre with social, environmental and economic benefits for the community. The strategy is supported by an evidence-based delivery plan and a detailed business case.

A ten-year £314 million plan, the ECCT Strategy, was approved by the Council in 2019, which outlines a programme to enhance

public spaces to better support life in the city by prioritising movement on foot, by bike, and by public transport. The Delivery Plan is structured within a series of gateways, currently proposed at 3, 5, 7 and 10 years, where key decisions can be taken to allow for changes to programmed activities. The proposal sat alongside and directly influenced the proposed Low Emission Zone to tackle air pollution by reducing the number of car journeys in the city and the City Mobility Plan to maximise public participation. A joined-up public transport and active travel network were vital, with the Capital's population expected to increase by 15 per cent by 2041 to around 600,000.

Some of the interventions proposed on the ECCT Strategy allowed a quick implementation by the Council. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of providing more space for people on foot and by bike to move safely through the city. The scheme included

39 km of segregated cycle infrastructure, 54 measures around schools to give pupils and their parents/carers more space to distance and remove street clutter such as unused poles and parking signs. Such measures had a significant impact on the community's health and wellbeing during a difficult time. Consequently, these tests and the overall strategy directly informed policies on the emerging City Plan 2030 and the City Mobility Plan (2021-2030), which the Council approved in January 2021.

Judges' Comments

The judging panel were of the view that this transformation plan sent out a number of very important messages about the future design and management of our urban places and spaces within a post-pandemic and Net Zero-driven context. It was deliberately seen to be a placemaking strategy rather than a transport driven scheme. This supported planners to be at the centre of the work whilst breaking down silos in order to tackle the complexity of the challenges and to enable the multi-player approach required.

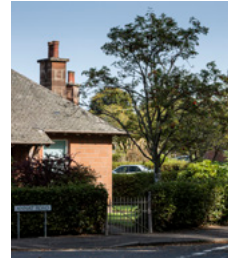
The strategy also tackles some difficult and fundamental questions about what – and who – our towns and cities should be for and worked hard to bring the range of people and perspectives along with its ambitions. The judges were also very impressed with the way the team used the SEA process and other assessments to ensure consistency of approach and develop a 'quality of life' assessment process and evidence base. It was also pleasing to see that a budget has been identified for implementation so as to ensure that it can deliver the inspiring, forward looking and people-centred transformation of the city. ■

Edinburgh City Centre Transformation



Article:

The Gannochy Estate Housing Expansion, Perth



The Gannochy Estate Housing Expansion, Perth, Submitted by Anderson Bell Christie

Best Project: Commendation, Submitted by Anderson Bell Christie in partnership with the Gannochy Trust, Perth & Kinross Council, G3, MHLA, Brownriggs, Hawthorne & Boyle and Campion Homes.

This project comprises two pieces of work carried out by Anderson Bell Christie for the Gannochy Trust – an initial masterplan (completed in 2017) and a new housing development (completed in August 2020). The initial masterplan identified that older people in the area were living in hard to adapt family homes (around 60% of households were over 55) and there were few young families. To address this imbalance, the new neighbourhood supports an intergenerational community, nurturing a sense of ‘ageing well’. New homes use a fabric first approach to energy efficiency and an innovative pilot approach to ‘passive stack’ ventilation.

The scheme has made a positive impact on health and wellbeing. The masterplan and new housing have been informed by ongoing research and knowledge transfer partnerships with Scottish Academics including Mobility Mood and Place and “Memory Friendly Neighbourhoods” with the University of Edinburgh. These studies stressed the importance of getting outdoors for people as they age – with associated improvements in mobility and sociability.

The approach encourages people to get outside by:

- Incorporating a south facing ‘Sitooterie’ into every new home. These are a covered semi-outdoor space which have been very popular with residents during the Covid period. They have allowed residents to set up an ‘outdoor living room’ and have helped them to build positive relationships with their neighbours.
- Linear green spaces have been built-in to the site layout. These incorporate a range of types of sociable spaces - from sheltered seating areas where people can sit quietly and observe activity to



spaces for shared activities such as community gardens. Detailed planting areas are currently being co-designed with residents.

- The initial masterplan identifies improvements and connections to blue green routes throughout the wider Gannochy Estate. These are being developed to provide interconnected areas which improve biodiversity and habitat for local wildlife and better links to the immediate countryside beside the estate for pedestrians.

The project has addressed safety in the public realm; The wider masterplan identifies areas within the Gannochy Estate which are in need of improvement, but the estate as a whole was already very safe and easy to get around. All new public areas are well-overlooked and carefully managed by the Gannochy Trust. The scheme has addressed issues of inequality. At present, across Scotland, people with a disability do not have the same access to attractive new homes as able – bodied people. At the Gannochy development, all new homes are wheelchair accessible, so access to new homes is equal.

Judges’ comments

Judges were very impressed with the vision that drove this project - the idea of the Gannochy extension being a ‘Pilot Lifetime Neighbourhood’ and the commitment to provide homes and a place that embedded health and wellbeing. The ideal of using the masterplan to create a demographic including the old and the young and singles and families to support an intergenerational community, nurturing a sense of ‘ageing well’ was commended.

The design of the neighbourhood and the houses were considered to be particularly innovative and effective in providing access to open space, fresh air and sunlight, whilst the commitment to the ‘fabric first’ approach to energy efficiency and to ‘passive stack’ ventilation showed the schemes ambitious environmental credentials.

Judges also very much welcomed the early engagement of planners in the process and the important role of the masterplan in supporting the development of a high quality scheme which is very fitting to the issues faced today and tomorrow. ■

Article:

The Fife Pilgrim Way

Best Plan: Finalists, Submitted by the Fife Coast and Countryside Trust in partnership with Fife Council Planning Services, Historic Environment Scotland, Fife Cultural Trust, Forth Pilgrim, University of St Andrews and Scottish Pilgrim Routes Forum.



The Fife Pilgrim Way, Submitted by the Fife Coast and Countryside Trust

The Fife Pilgrim Way is a long-distance walking route that winds its way eastwards for 64 miles through the very best of Fife's villages, towns and rolling countryside before terminating in front of the spectacular ruins of St Andrews cathedral. Themed around Fife's rich medieval heritage, the fully way-marked, richly interpreted and actively managed walking route delivers unparalleled access to the countryside. It includes many miles of upgraded and new path and historic features along the way, with online interpretation, companion maps and the official path guidebook ensure an enjoyable, cultural and recreational experience for all.

Under-investment and the poor physical condition of Fife's public path network had long been a problem for which no funding

could be found. The Fife Coast & Countryside Trust was established in 2001 as an arm's length/ sister organisation to Fife Council to address this issue and more generally, to deliver Fife Council's ranger and countryside management functions. But paying for this is a constant challenge that requires creativity and the ability to make opportunities happen. This was the origin of the Fife Pilgrim Way. Considerable investment was required to upgrade Fife's failing path network. Resurfacing, drainage, fencing, gates, way-marking, planting, screening, new paths and interpretation were all desperately needed, but there was no budget to pay for any of it!

The solution was the Fife Pilgrim Way. It was a heritage themed planning project that created much improved public access

to the countryside whilst at the same time, delivering positive outcomes for health, education, sustainability, mental health, culture, heritage, tourism and the local economy. This breadth of outcomes allowed an uncommonly wide range of funding sources to be accessed, and ultimately, it was this creative and inclusive approach that delivered the £837,000 needed to deliver the project.

In consultation with landowners, the project allowed problem paths to be re-routed, failing paths to be dropped, new paths to be created, access to be managed and legal agreements to be signed. This has delivered a sustainable, fit for purpose path network that isn't simply intended to be supported on a begging bowl basis, but has been designed to be income-generating, shaped to support the local economy and promoted to drive tourism whilst delivering real, meaningful and tangible social, cultural, educational, health, wellbeing and recreational opportunities for the people of Fife.

Judges' Comments

The panel commended the tenacity of the team in making this project a reality, in often difficult circumstances, including challenges in achieving buy in across players and stakeholders, in attracting financing and funding and in the very practical issues of delivering things on the ground. The judges thought that the project showed great partnership working and hugely impressive engagement with communities and landowners. This included the responsiveness to communities and giving them bespoke solutions, as well as events like archaeological digs and using trainee placements. The judges were very taken by the way that this project had been built on dual drivers of heritage and economics, and how this was embedded into it from the outset so as to ensure that it could be self-sustaining in the future. ■





Article: Glenrothes Town Centre Masterplan

Best Plan: Finalist, Submitted by Halliday Fraser Munro in partnership with Fife Council, AECOM and Rettie & Co.

Glenrothes is a successful new town but is let down by its town centre, which has experienced gradual decline and has been described as a carbuncle. Fife Council recognised this and the need to deliver an aspirational and ambitious but realistic vision and a masterplan framework over the next ten years to support and coordinate future decisions on planning applications, regeneration initiatives and attract new investment opportunities. Fresh thinking combined with an understanding of commercial realities was required, supported by in-depth local knowledge and an understanding of the problems specifically facing Glenrothes as well as the opportunities ahead of it. This required a coordinated and committed approach to help stimulate the local economy, improve the quality of place and change negative perceptions of the town centre. The final masterplan was submitted to the Council in July 2020. A presentation to Councillors followed later in the year and the Council formally approved the masterplan subsequently in March 2021 at Committee.

Following the inception meeting, the project team reviewed all the relevant work carried out to date on the town centre as part of a contextual analysis and understanding. This was supplemented by site visits, demographic and market sector analysis and a planning application history review. A series of targeted workshop sessions (mini

charrettes) were organised covering themes relevant to the project. This included specific focuses on the evening economy, place and public realm and diversifying the uses within the centre. This involved engagement with town centre users, local businesses and other stakeholders, building upon but distinct from previous engagement exercises as a progression of the collaborative working and approaches that had been carried out to date.

Design and development were then tested, working towards developing a holistic, evidence based, plan for the whole town centre supplemented by focussed site analysis. Development concepts and design principles were prepared for the key opportunity sites within the centre, with indicative costings and options identified to support realistic change and potential for investment from various sources. This informed an action programme that identifies project/opportunity leads over the short, medium and long term. The members of the project team combined invaluable local knowledge with high quality design expertise and renowned property market intelligence that would deliver genuine transformational and long-lasting positive change for Glenrothes town centre.

The masterplan proposes significant regeneration, replacing out-dated buildings with new workplaces to complement modern working patterns and lifestyles and

will provide low energy buildings that will foster civic pride. It also looks to introduce more housing, improve public realm and greenspaces, reconfigure the town's retail infrastructure to reflect changing trends and consumer behaviours and create opportunities for start-ups and small businesses.

Judges' Comments

The judges there agreed that this was a complex and difficult project that provided many challenges for the consultants. In facing up to this, judges gave kudos to them for undertaking useful and informative analysis of the issues and opportunities in and around the town centre and for providing some creative ideas on how to take this forward. Land ownership issues and buy in from landowners and business in the area were seen as being vital to instigating the change required and to ensure that the masterplan provided the context for future investment. ■



Glenrothes Town Centre Masterplan, Submitted by Halliday Fraser Munro



Article: Park Quadrant, Glasgow

Best Project: Finalist, Submitted by Glasgow City Council in partnership with Homes Millers.

Scottish architect Charles Wilson's 1850's Park area masterplan in Glasgow's West End envisioned a grand concentric tenement building form on the crest of the hill above Kelvingrove Park (an Historic Environment Scotland designated Garden and Designed Landscape). The masterplan was considered to be a highly ambitious form of town planning and the Park area is now one of the finest examples of townscape design in Scotland. Wilson's masterplan included the laying out of the full length of Park Quadrant and



Park Circus, with Park Circus Lane running between them. These sandstone terraces were completed over a 20-year period. The limited palette of materials (e.g. natural sandstone, cast iron railings, timber sash and case windows) contributes to the unity of the architecture.

Although Wilson's masterplan intentions were clear, one part of the scheme was never implemented. The site for the final piece of the masterplan, which would continue and complete the Park Quadrant terrace, lay

vacant and unused until 2016 when architect Holmes Miller (on behalf of developer Espresso Ltd – now Ambassador Group), were successful in gaining planning permission for residential development, almost 170 years later. Until then, the application site had been neglected, bound by iron railings and inaccessible to the public, unmaintained and left for invasive vegetation to self-seed.

To take this forward the site was compulsory purchased by Glasgow City Council in 1981 to facilitate residential development. A series of proposals were developed over the years for the site by various parties, however, none were ever implemented. In taking forward this development bids were invited by the Council and assessed with more emphasis on planning and design objectives than financial offer. The overall scoring of submissions was weighted at 60% planning and design with the remaining 40% based on net price. The factors included within the scoring matrix were influenced by the original masterplan, principles within Local Development Plan policy and guidance and architectural features and characteristics identified the Council's Conservation Area Appraisal for the Park. This gave bidders a clear steer on the direction which the Council wished for the development to go, which was key to realising the potential of this constrained and significant site. By combining this

assessment with the sales process, this helped pre-empt any planning issues prior to the application being submitted and ensured that the best possible outcome could be achieved at the time, in the interests of the city.

Judges' Comments

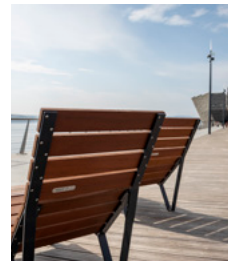
The judging panel very much agreed that The Park Quadrant project delivers high quality residential development within a uniquely sensitive historic setting. They commended the approach taken in the tendering process to ensure high quality development and the role of planners in enabling this to happen. Judges felt that this was very good example of planners providing strong leadership in keeping with ambitions of the project in often difficult and often pressurised circumstances. The team worked closely and transparently with developers throughout the process which helped to ensure a can-do approach to delivering a high-quality development. The approach taken by the Council and tools used held this project up as an excellent model of proactive, constructive and creative development management. ■

Park Quadrant Glasgow, Submitted by Glasgow City Council

Article:

Waterfront Place Dundee

Best Project: Finalist, Submitted by Dundee City Council in partnership with Morgan Sindall Construction, OPEN, Urban Foresight, University of Dundee, Abertay University, University of St Andrews, Konglomerate Games, InGAME, Create Converge, Lee Simmons, Holmes Miller.



Waterfront Place Dundee, Submitted by Dundee City Council

The bold ambitions for Dundee Waterfront were set out in a Masterplan published in 2001 and are now being realised. As one of the most active regeneration projects in the UK, it has driven the city to international acclaim. Waterfront Place is an integral and complimentary component of the wider waterfront development, which boasts high-quality design and delivers a distinctive landscape inspired by coastal forms.

The brief for Waterfront Place took an integrated approach to the design of the 7,044 sqm space to include the following facilities: hardstanding for event use; a landscaped zone; an interactive play area centred on a life-sized whale sculpture; an urban beach and an Active Travel Hub. It is a major civic space that excites, encourages a range of active uses and engages all who choose to explore the wider waterfront. The project delivers a key point of outdoor activity and interaction on the edge of the River Tay and incorporates a range of features, surfaces and opportunities for play and socialising. The space is designed to be distinctive in its own right, but also integrate with the formal layout of Slessor Gardens and the public realm associated with the V&A Dundee.

Waterfront Place is a project that offers the opportunity to create a powerful space that is both dynamic and playful, that consciously addresses the River Tay and Dundee's relationship to its maritime environment. The project is a physical example of high-quality design and placemaking, with a coherent concept of 'a walk to the beach' inspiring the proposal for the development. Planting types and landscape are combined to create this experience, moving through pine planted areas, through grassed mounds, over the urban beach and ultimately to the river edge. The urban beach helps to animate the waterfront offering an environment that was not available elsewhere in Dundee and

creates opportunities to reinforce the city's connection with the River Tay by providing a setting in which to play, relax and enjoy views across the river.

The works at Waterfront Place started on site in February 2020 and despite delays as a result of the pandemic, the site was officially opened in July 2021. The planning team and other council services worked collaboratively with the contractor to deliver the project. There remains a shared optimism that it will spur the ongoing renaissance of the city's waterfront area, meaningfully promote active lifestyles and low carbon transport, while enhancing the experience for local people and visitors alike.

Judges' Comments

The judges agreed that the 2001 Dundee

Waterfront Masterplan was a key catalyst for regeneration of the area and that it was good to see how Waterfront Place had been transformed into an animated place for people that encourages a range of active and interactive uses through attracting a range of people to engage with the area. It was commendable that the project provided a focus for a number of health and wellbeing focused initiatives in the city such as walking, cycling and for promoting active lifestyles. Judges welcomed the investment in high quality materials and features in the area and the approach taken to future proofing its engineering and future uses. They also praised the commitment to public art to help 'landmark' the area and to allow for interactive experiences within it. ■



Article:

Scottish Young Planner & Small Planning Consultancy of the Year



Rhiannon Moore
MRTPI,
Senior Planner At
Montagu Evans

**Scottish Young Planner of the year:
Winner Rhiannon Moore, Senior Planner at
Montagu Evans**

Rhiannon's passion for planning shines through everything she does. Be it her previous role as Chair of the Scottish Young Planners' Network, her volunteer efforts with Planning Aid Scotland and the RTPI, or her day-to-day job in planning consultancy, Rhiannon is an excellent role model for future young planners.

Rhiannon is a vital member of her planning team working as a planning advisor on several of the firm's main planning and development projects across Scotland and England. Rhiannon's public and now private sector experience in her career brings a unique sense around planning issues and approaches.

Rhiannon's personable manner is what makes her work so successful. Rhiannon leads the 'Next Generation' group at Montagu Evans which seeks to create networks and platforms for young professionals. Rhiannon also takes responsibility for graduate recruitment and in nurturing the careers of early professionals, including mentoring a commendable number of candidates through their APC process.

As well as leading by example through the quality of her work, Rhiannon continually seeks to promote the planning profession. As part of this, Rhiannon was influential in organising the first Young Planner Award in Scotland, with her commitment to celebrating success amongst young planners clearly a passion.



Kathryn Cockburn
MRTPI,
Planner at Glasgow
City Council

**Scottish Young Planner of the year:
Finalist Kathryn Cockburn, Planner at
Glasgow City Council**

Kathryn is an inspiring young planner with a broad knowledge of the planning system. She works tirelessly to promote the planning profession through her volunteering and acts as a role model for her peers. She exudes confidence and has a reassuring presence that makes other colleagues feel supported and valued.

Kathryn started her career in the private sector at Cushman and Wakefield where she provided commercial planning advice across a range of market sectors in both rural and urban locations. Her adaptability and proactive responses to challenges has enhanced her professional skills and knowledge.

Kathryn now works for Glasgow City Council where she has shown a great ability to work from her own initiative. Kathryn's first rotation was within the Development Management team where she determined 124 applications and provided 23 pre-application enquiry responses. Kathryn's second rotation was within the Spatial Planning team and for her final rotation, Kathryn returned to the Development Management team to help relieve the pressure.

Kathryn regularly participates in the RTPI Scottish Young Planners' Network and Women in Planning Glasgow, serving as a committee member from 2019-2020. Kathryn helped to organise regular Continuing Professional Development and networking events to promote diversity and equality across built environment professions.



**Kevin Murray
Associates**

**Small Planning Consultancy of the year:
Winner Kevin Murray Associates**

Kevin Murray Associates (KMA) is an established independent spatial planning consultancy, who celebrate 20 years of practice during 2022. With a mixed team, they are particularly conscious of diversity, and employ techniques to embrace the inputs of diverse cultures, religions and economic and physical circumstances. KMA work across the UK, and in Ireland, with occasional work in places like Egypt and Jordan.

The strength of the team is in its diversity of age, outlook and experience and their willingness to draw empathetically upon the experiences of others, whether policymakers, developers, designers or community members. Because of the team's capability they have increasingly been called upon to facilitate complex online planning processes for Councils, Government, Key Agencies, Universities, community groups and developers.

KMA's sensitive approach and techniques always try to build trust in planning, its purpose and its institutions, as well as specific proposals. Their inclusive place momentum approach transcends different cultures, disciplines and administrative systems.

KMA is a creative and inclusive small practice that adds value to planning and its place constituencies at different scales, looking beyond 'narrow' statutory planning to apply a 'broadband' practice philosophy that embraces community engagement, stakeholder facilitation, narrative development, research-based policy and strongly sustainable place-based strategic outcomes. ■



Update:

RTPI Update

Policy Consultations

RTPI Scotland have submitted responses to the following consultations and requests for written evidence:

- Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee's call for views on Environmental Common Frameworks
- Draft second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) for Scotland
- Finance and Public Administration Committee call for views to inform inquiry into the National Performance Framework

Consultations currently under consideration are:

- Changes to fees charged for applications under the Electricity Act 1989
- Review of permitted development rights - phase 2 consultation. Deadline 3rd August
- Environmental Standards Scotland - draft strategic plan. Deadline 17th August
- Delivering Scotland's circular economy: A Route Map to 2025 and beyond. Deadline 22nd August
- Scottish Biodiversity Strategy 2022. Deadline 12th September

Parliament

RTPI Scotland Director Craig McLaren, appeared before Scottish Parliament's Economy and Fair Work Committee's to input towards the town centres and retail inquiry.

Future Planners

RTPI Scotland was a partner in the Future Planners research that explored the options available to support the growth of entrants into the planning profession in Scotland. You can read about this on pages 4 and 5.

Digital Planning

Two new research paper on digital planning have been published in conjunction with Scottish Government and Ekos.

Digital Planning Capabilities Scoping: Baseline Analysis aims to gather insights/intelligence and promote understanding of the supply-side issues such as current skills/ knowledge and gaps, to ensure that upskilling efforts are tailored and robust and will be effective in meeting the needs of the profession and those that interact with it. The purpose of the study is to assess current skills and knowledge of planning practitioners to understand the barriers that planners face, and behavioural changes they need to adopt to embed and embrace digital approaches within the planning profession.

Digital Planning Capabilities Scoping: Skills Investment and Action Plan comprised a set of further consultations with other (non-planning) organisations to learn from their experience of delivering digital change; desk research to identify some examples of other practice; and further focus groups with Planners and those working in the profession to test some of the initial findings and conclusions. The main output from this is a final skills strategy and action plan.

RTPI Scotland has subsequently been commissioned by Scottish Government to develop the infrastructure required to support the delivery of a digital skills development programme in 2023/24. In doing this we will look to develop a skills development programme comprising research to establish the different levels of understanding, awareness and ability to engage with digital planning and then design a blended digital planning skills development programme and a digital planning skills diagnostic tool.

We will also be developing a knowledge transfer programme through an online good practice portal for digital planning skills and the Introduction to Digital Planning handbook. The third element is a Champions and Innovation Programme which will explore how to put in place a digital planning champions network and a digital planning disruptors network.

Media

The following news releases have been published

- Aberdeenshire Conservation Area scheme picks up top planning award – June
- RTPI Scotland welcomes the ambitions of the Scottish Government's draft NPF4, but highlights the need for more robust policies and a focused delivery plan to make these a reality – April

Social Media

The @RTPIScotland Twitter account has 4821 followers and the @ConvenorRTPI account has 1658.

Petra Biberbach

RTPI Scotland's best wishes to Petra Biberbach who has announced that she is retiring as Chief Executive of PAS. Petra has been a key driver in the expansion and development of PAS over the last decade or so, building a network of planner volunteers that goes a long way in supporting communities to improve their understanding of planning and how best to engage. Petra has been a great friend of the Institute and has our best wishes in her future endeavours. ■



Update: Scottish Government

The collaborative work towards the reformed planning system, including on Scotland's fourth National Planning Framework, is continuing at pace and is the major focus of our planning team just now. Here we give an update on news and activity over recent weeks across some of those workstreams, and point to what you can expect to see soon.

Team restructure: Planning, Architecture and Regeneration Division

The Scottish Government's Planning and Architecture Division recently merged with the Regeneration Unit. The expanded Planning, Architecture and Regeneration Division (PARD) sits within a broader Local Government and Housing Directorate, which also includes the More Homes and Better Homes Divisions, as well as the Building Standards and Local Government teams.

This merger will strengthen synergies across Government, particularly as we move beyond planning reform to focus collaboratively on supporting place-based delivery in the future.

National Planning Framework 4

The public consultation and Parliamentary Scrutiny period for the draft of [Scotland's Fourth National Planning Framework 'Scotland 2045'](#) has been completed.

As expected, there has been a great deal of

interest in NPF4 and a lively debate across the planning community and beyond about the direction we must take together to respond to the challenges and opportunities in front of us, and to recognise and fully embrace the value that planning can add in leading positive outcomes. We are grateful for the time and input that so many people and organisations have given through the consultation and engagement processes, drawing on a wealth of knowledge and experience.

The Scottish Government is now carefully considering all the responses received, before producing a final NPF4. We want to get the detail right and make sure NPF4 provides a sound and reliable basis for future decision-making and is able to deliver on its ambition and objectives.

Planning Reform Programme

In parallel with the NPF4 process, we have also been progressing with the arrangements for the new-style local development plans that will in future sit alongside the NPF as the statutory development plan. Following the recent public consultations on development planning, open space strategies and play sufficiency assessments, we are now carefully considering the consultation outcomes and will finalise the regulations and guidance to come into force later this year, to coincide with the adoption of NPF4.

On 11 May 2022 we published a public consultation on Phase 2 of the review of permitted development rights (PDR). The Phase 2 consultation seeks views on new and extended PDR related to electric vehicle charging infrastructure, changes of use in city, town and local centres as well as port development. The consultation is open until 3 August.

The [Transforming Planning in Practice work programme](#) summarises progress and sets out our schedule for the remainder of the implementation of the 2019 Act and wider planning reforms. You can keep up-to-date and view all planning reform consultations and legislation at www.transformingplanning.scot/planning-reform/.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Legislation and Pre-application Consultation (PAC)

A number of temporary legislative provisions were introduced in response to the pandemic to enable specified aspects of the planning system to continue to operate. Those which remain in force are now due to expire at the end of September. Specifically, those which provided for the temporary:

- Extension of the duration of planning permission, listed building consent and conservation area consent.
- Suspension of the requirement for physical public events as part of the PAC process.
- Suspension of the requirement to make environmental impact assessment reports available at a physical location.

In August 2020, the Scottish Government [consulted on a package of changes to pre-application consultation \(PAC\) requirements](#) – including an additional mandatory public event, statutory prescription as to the

content of PAC reports and a number of exemptions from the process. [Legislation giving effect to these changes](#) was laid in the Scottish Parliament in February 2021. However, these new PAC requirements coming into force have been delayed while the requirement for physical PAC public events remained suspended. Accordingly the new PAC requirements will come into force on 1 October 2022 once the above suspensions lapse. We will publish guidance on the new procedures.

Temporary COVID Related Permitted Development Rights

There are currently temporary permitted development rights (PDR) in force, introduced in 2020 and expanded in 2021, which allow:

- development by, or on behalf of, local authority or health service bodies, involving the erection of temporary buildings or the temporary change of use of existing buildings or land for facilities associated with the pandemic; and
- the use of Crown land for purposes related to the pandemic.

In both cases, the intention of the temporary PDR has been to facilitate a rapid and appropriate response to the pandemic by removing potential delay due to the need to secure planning permission. The duration periods of the temporary PDR have previously been extended on several occasions over the course of the pandemic as required. We do not intend to extend these PDR further and they will cease in due course.

The PDR include requirements that the relevant activities cease either by a specified date (30 June 2022) for local authority or health body development, or after a certain period of time (24 months from the date the use started) for the use of Crown land, with the land subsequently being restored to its previous use and temporary buildings removed, unless of course planning permission is sought and granted for their retention.

Digital Planning

The Digital Transformation of Planning Programme has entered Year 2 and a number of priority actions for this year have been identified and ratified by the programme board. These priorities include:

- making progress towards a new and improved digital application process for planning and building consents;
- producing our strategy and roadmap for access to high quality, reliable data to support decision making, and

- bringing it all together through an easy-to-access digital gateway for planning services, backed up with digital skills development for the workforce.

The Digital Planning delivery team is also continuing with the work for a single payment system and fee calculator, with this project move into the 'Alpha' phase, where a number of working groups are supporting the development of working prototypes. These groups are a great example of collaborative working with a mixture of technical supplier, central government and local authority team members.

After doing much of the behind the scenes work on the digital transformation programme last year, we are now starting to see progress towards some digital solutions and easier ways for everyone to engage in planning and do their jobs.

You will be able to keep up-to-date as all of the strands of the programme progress on our [Digital Planning LinkedIn page](#) and at: www.transformingplanning.scot/digital-planning/.

Staying In Touch

For the latest messages from the Planning and Architecture Division, follow us on Twitter [@ScotGovPlanning](#) and [@DigiPlanningSG](#) and register to receive our Planning and Architecture news updates. ■



Update:

Heads of Planning Scotland

As my year as HoPS Chairwomanship ends, I have reflected back on the highlights, the strengthened relations with partners across the planning system, and the challenges that remain.

Since my last update, HoPS has provided a robust response to draft NPF4 along with other national policy and guidance consultations. 'Getting it right' in finalising NPF4 will be a challenge, and I hope across the planning system we work with what emerges, focus on the key principles where change is essential to address climate change and create even more sustainable, healthy quality places across Scotland. Personally, I do hope we avoid legal challenges, further delays and put collective energy into making it work.

After over a decade of seeking a restructure of fees, new Regulations have been achieved. This starts to address the decade of under funding, but there is much more needed to properly resource planning. It is heartening for HoPS to have the support cross sectors, including Scottish Property Federation.

Along with Craig McLaren, Director of RTPi Scotland, I turned my focus on how we can recruit, retain and promote planning as a career in local government. The Future Planners project, funded by Scottish Government, is soon to be published. Action is needed now if we are to address the shortage of planners and the ability of planning authorities to deliver.

At our recent AGM in sunny St Andrews we reflected on the strength of leadership and

collaboration across planning authorities. It was a pleasure to have Keith Winter, my recently retired boss and long time mentor, provide such a positive pre-dinner talk. The importance of working together and believing was fabulously delivered by the Lord Provost of Fife, Jim Leishman who put us in great spirits as we continued on to enjoy the St Andrews nightlife! The next day (or same day for some of us!) the conference heard a range of talks, all with a focus on delivery.

Thank you to everyone whom has supported me in my Chairwomanship. I know HoPS new Chair Jim Miller, North Ayrshire will continue to provide strong leadership. Over to you Jim and enjoy!

-Pam Ewen, Outgoing Chair of HOPS, Head of Planning, Fife Council ■

Update:

PAS



Following the success of last year's pilot Sustaining Choices project, we are delighted to announce that the second cohort of Sustaining Choices participants is now up and running. The six participating communities for Sustaining Choices 2022 are located across Scotland, in both rural and urban areas. Sustaining Choices is funded by Paths for All's 'Smarter Choices, Smarter Places' fund.

The participating communities are: Garnock Valley, Glasgow Eco Trust, Kilmadock Development Trust, Milnbank Housing Association, Oban, and Ullapool Community Trust.

Throughout this year-long programme, we will be working alongside these communities to provide them with the skills and support to develop their own Sustainable and Active Travel Action Plans. Through the project, the participating community groups aim to:

- Develop an evidence base to support sustainable transport interventions.
- Improve collaboration with local stakeholders by building capacity through community engagement and supporting future aspirations to develop Local Place Plans.
- Increase awareness and develop positive attitude towards sustainable transport needs and aspirations.
- Increase resiliency and support behaviour change to promote better health and wellbeing.
- Developing their engagement skills through our SP=EED Verification training.
- Identifying key stakeholders and planning for an inclusive engagement process.
- Holding conversations with community members using the Place Standard Tool.
- Running a community event and publishing a final Sustainable and Active Travel Action Plan for their community.

A key outcome for Sustaining Choices will be the development of community engagement capacity at a local level and to inform the action plans and future decision-making. Community facilitators will play a vital role in co-ordinating engagement in their community throughout the course of this project by:

If a community you know or work with is interested to take part in a future cohort, please contact Erin Fulton, Community Development Manager, at erin@pas.org.uk.

Erin Fulton, Community Development Manager at PAS . ■

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