

Tripwire



In the late 1970s I visited a curious place in north Wales called *Canolfan y Dechnoleg Amgen*, otherwise known as the **Centre of Alternative Technology** (CAT). I remember having an experience of something like a 1960s hippie colony. I recall an excessive quantity of bright clothing, beads, beards, beans and sandals on display and the whole place did indeed seem to be 'alternative', especially to someone like me who was brought up in a standard semi, my dad washed his red Morris Minor Traveller every Sunday and watching *Little House on the Prairie* was about as exotic as it got.

Fast forward to last Monday when I was back at CAT. Some of the beards and sandals were still in evidence but it no longer felt quite so 'alternative'. Whilst it remains a strong expression of responsible environmental living, the technology and the



Watching Little House on the Prairie. An exotic treat growing up in the Vout household.

philosophy of the centre was remarkably familiar and in fact, although it continues to use the word 'alternative' it is now identified with sustainability. In

short, the 'alternative' has, in one sense become main stream and far more conventional.

This is not to say that society has fully embraced the 'alternative', as current *Extinction Rebellion* protests demonstrate, but the planning profession in particular quickly embraced sustainability as a fundamental principle of good planning and so it is not surprising that any planner visiting CAT today would recognise many of its features and concepts.

This edition of Tripwire contains the usual updates and announcements but is particularly focussed upon environmental matters, sustainability and climate change.

Good planning is critical in addressing the myriad of interrelated environmental, social and economic aspects of sustainability and in meeting the challenge of climate change (a council in Devon has just recently voted to give "appropriate weight" to climate change policies in its local plan). It is therefore extremely important that planners have a good understanding of the issues and that their thinking and actions are shaped and directed by that knowledge.

As always, the West Midlands RTPI would express its gratitude and thanks to all those who have contributed to this edition of Tripwire. ■

Michael Vout

West Midlands RTPI Regional Secretary



Centre of Alternative Technology.

Tripwire



Tripwire magazine is published four times a year in digital form by the West Midlands region of the RTPI. The opinions expressed in Tripwire are the view of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the editor, publishers, or the RTPI.

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Can Planning provide certainty and assurance just now?

This year has exemplified the greatest period of political, social and economic uncertainty I have witnessed. Yet we all yearn for a time where there was some degree of security in our lives. Our communities thrive when the social infrastructures – schools, doctors, health, youth services – and jobs for local people as are all well-resourced, supported and encouraged.

But what we are living through just now is hugely difficult for many communities.

So what role can planners play to ensure that the development decisions affecting communities are fully consulted on, well-designed and implemented in line with agreed development plans?

Having asked the question, it is not easy to answer! I am writing this after the political party conference season. It is so apparent that politicians on the national stage just cannot stop themselves trying to grab headlines with further planning statements. For example, the announcement by the Housing Minister that two storey extensions on purpose-built blocks of flats and detached houses would be automatically allowed without recourse to planning approval. I don't think this gives reassurance to communities.

This has to be seen coupled to the announcement that there will be a "National Design Guide" which



Sandy Taylor.

local authorities must apply, with an option to create their own design guides. To be fair this is a response to its own Beautiful Buildings Commission Interim Report and the House of Commons Public Affairs recommendation that a design guide must be announced soon. But will this result in a form of "nationalised" set of designs without a community voice?

But, as a half full optimist, I take the view that planners are good at taking the long strategic view and ensuring that communities can have some say in what physical changes are proposed for their areas. At least that is what the planning profession does try to do. But when planning is seen as an easy political football to kick this is not easy.

As the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee also said in its report in June (<https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/public-accounts-committee/inquiries/parliament-2017/inquiry21/>), "Local authorities are often under-resourced and under-staffed and struggling to produce plans as they can be technically complex, time consuming and resource intensive".

So in principle I believe that planners can provide reassurance to communities, but with a big caveat that they must have much better levels of resources to deliver the much needed sense of optimism we all need just now! ■

Sandy Taylor
RTPI West Midlands Chair

“ what we are living through just now is hugely difficult for many communities. ”

The European Council of Spatial Planners (ECSP) held their Biennial Conference in Plymouth on 11-13th September. The Conference was jointly organised by the ECSP, RTPI, Plymouth City Council and the University of Plymouth with the overarching theme of 'Planning on the Edge'. The 'edge' in this instance includes coastal and marine planning, planning the rural-urban fringe and planning at borders and boundaries. It was attended by Alex Oxley, John Acres, Charles Goode and Jenna Langford (from the West Midlands).

Plymouth was an ideal location for such a Conference with its longstanding naval and maritime connections, strategic location on the River Tamar (the boundary with Cornwall) and post-war reconstruction guided by Sir Patrick Abercrombie's *Plymouth Plan*. In keeping with the event's theme, the conference included a boat trip around Plymouth Harbour and a drinks reception in the Royal William Yard (a formal victualing yard)!

The Biennial attracted planners from Europe and the wider world in a constructive atmosphere of mutual learning and knowledge exchange. The Conference was supported by both the current and immediately past presidents' of the RTPI. Keynote speeches included Councillor Tudor Evans (Leader of Plymouth City Council), Professor Ronald Waterman (an international authority on building with nature), Bernie Foulkes (Director of LDA Design), Vincent Goodstadt (an international expert on spatial planning) and Lord Matthew Taylor (formerly a Cornish MP and a very

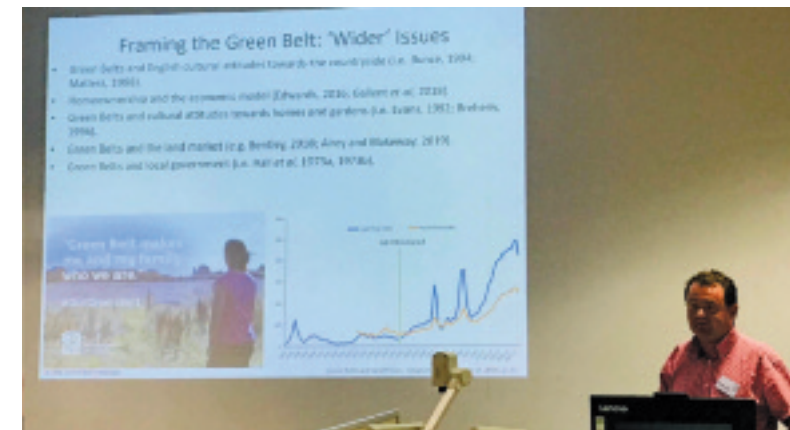
Biennial of European Council of Spatial Planners, Plymouth



Ian Tant, President of the RTPI with Ignacio Pemán, the ECTP-CEU President.



Vicent Goodstadt talks about the work of the UK2070 Commission



Charles Goode presenting on the Green Belt.

influential figure behind Neighbourhood Planning and the National Planning Policy Framework).

There were a number of presentations including a lively session on 'Planning the Rural-Urban Fringe' and the governance and management of the Green Belt planning policy (with presentation by Charles Goode). This session also included presentations by Charlotte Morphet and Ollie Norman, planners from the Waltham Forest, whilst Dr Ute Knippenberger presented on the effects of urban containment in Wiesbaden, Germany, providing the opportunity to debate the Green Belt and international comparisons. ■

Charles Goode

Doctoral Researcher in Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Birmingham

Responsive Housing Design // An Architect's perspective

RTPI West Midlands // Autumn 2019



As a practice we have seen a trend towards clients calling us in to review their relatively newly built houses, which have been designed and constructed to meet the market demand, but

haven't been given consideration in terms of future flexibility / adaptability.

Once the client has occupied the property for a while, its shortcomings in terms of spatial arrangement, light and adaptability can become a bit of an issue. This is because in most cases the homes are 'standard house types' and are not designed to suit their specific location or orientation.

There is also the matter of how different people choose to live and therefore demand different requirements from their properties.

There has to be a balance of build costs and sale values - 'saleability' is important to any developer - but I wonder whether the 'liveability' of the properties is being properly considered given what we are currently experiencing.

Properties need to have the ability to develop and change along with occupiers' needs.

As families grow more space may be required and, in later life, as families shrink the property may need to contract or have the ability to reduce unnecessary areas from heating / cooling loads.

Later life can also bring challenges which can take the form of physical and / or mental issues, which may require a home to be adapted. An example of this could be a downstairs conversion of a study to a bedroom or a ground floor wet room.

The 16 criteria to meet lifetime homes standards is principally focused around the potential for change in life circumstances involving a reduction in mobility, and improve the chances of the occupiers staying at their home and not having to move to a property that is more adaptable or Part M friendly. Lifetime homes does not cover the needs of a growing family or a family downsizing, relationships ending, new ones starting and therefore they focus on smaller improvements which are important, but are only part of the solution.



Properties need to have the ability to develop and change along with occupiers' needs.

“ As pressure grows on providing more housing at an affordable level we need to bear in mind that we don’t create a future problem where a large proportion of our housing stock is limited by its inflexibility. ”

In order to give a domestic property the chance to adapt, a slightly larger garden could be allocated to allow for a future extension, or the construction of the property could be considered to allow the internal layout to be altered without the need for structural intervention.

Generous sized windows could allow for better natural lighting and ensure that any extensions have more flexibility by avoiding dark corners.

The costs involved with moving home are considerable, and should be taken into account when considering whether to move home or extend your house.

There are also the community and social aspects that need to be considered when moving home, such as the impact of changing schools, neighbours etc. Growing with your home has many benefits that are sometimes overlooked.

As pressure grows on providing more housing at an affordable level we need to bear in mind that we

don’t create a future problem where a large proportion of our housing stock is limited by its inflexibility. Timber framed structures that have been designed to the minimum structural requirements do pose significant issues in relation to modification, as often the timber frame solution relies on the overall system for its stability. So removing or adapting a wall could have knock on effects not just in the location where the wall has been modified, but throughout the property. Timber frame does have speed of build benefits so does have its place. It maybe that the timber frame could be designed with an extension or modification in mind, so it can be more readily adapted.

Modern Methods of Construction are usually factory produced systems which are designed with efficiency in mind. These systems suffer similarly to the timber framed systems as they are designed to be structurally integral. Thought could be put into key parts of the structural system, so that elements could be removed, without affecting the integrity of the rest of the system.

Identifying the potential for a future extension during the design phase of the original house is a way to provide a future option to the potential purchaser to grow with the house. This would give clarity as to what is achievable when buying the property especially if it is part of the original planning consent.

The problem is that this is of no benefit to the housebuilder as they will not see any benefit from including this expansion option in their offer.

(Ed. Comment. Could highlighting the ability for future expansion to potential buyers either make a property more saleable or attract a slight premium?)

I appreciate the pressures of having to deliver housing that is economical in order to meet the current demand, but feel we are looking too short term, and a more balanced and considered approach should be pursued. ■

Carl Huntley BA(Hons), DipArch(Dist), RIBA
Managing Director base ARCHITECTS



“The air quality tail is wagging the planning dog,” a friend of mine said to me about 15 years ago. By which he meant, the planning system was being asked to treat

quality standards as a non-negotiable requirement. If air quality standards are compromised, then the development doesn't go ahead, end of story.

In practice, it didn't turn out like that, although the planning system did stick up for air quality by refusing or mitigating some of the more severe potential impacts – at least, in some individual cases, such as the recent [Court of Appeal decision](#) upholding refusal of consent for a residential development in Newington, Kent on air quality grounds. Thank you, planners, for sticking to your guns when it mattered.

In fact, the interaction between planning and air quality is no different in principle from interactions between planning and other technical disciplines.

The strategic planning system has a vital role to play in ensuring that low-pollution living, working and recreation environments are built into our infrastructure for the long term. And the land-use planning system is essential to ensure that new properties don't create new problems for their residents and neighbours.

What's perhaps a bit different about air quality is that the UK has (at the time of writing) legally enforceable air quality standards – the duty ultimately falling on the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and compliance being determined by a national programme of monitoring and assessment. This national obligation doesn't mean that every individual measurement which exceeds an air quality standard is an illegal situation. What it means is that national and local governments are obliged to work together to achieve air quality standards in the shortest possible time. This is what lies behind the current programme of Clean Air Zones (CAZs) in dozens of towns and cities throughout the UK.

Alongside this obligation to achieve air quality standards, we air quality specialists are blessed and cursed with the ability to forecast levels of air

pollution to as many decimal places as you care to mention. Mind you, while we can calculate nitrogen dioxide levels in 2030 to six decimal places, we can't be sure we're any more accurate than, say, $\pm 30\%$. The availability of methods to forecast air quality perhaps sets us apart from other environmental disciplines, where much more judgment is involved.

I had a short but revealing conversation with the landscape expert witness at a public inquiry into a new housing scheme. This poor chap, with his pages and pages of photomontages said that he was perhaps a bit envious of me with my short table of numerical results, showing that the levels of pollution would comply with the standards. All I could do was agree, and wonder why anyone would specialise in anything other than gloriously quantifiable air quality. But there is a bit of a mismatch between the superficial black and white certainty of an air quality assessment, and the shades of grey which are often involved in reaching a planning judgment. I don't envy planning officers their jobs for many reasons, and one of the reasons is that you often have to reach a compromise while working with a heterogeneous mix of technical scientific data, qualitative assessments,

“ the interaction between planning and air quality is no different in principle from interactions between planning and other technical disciplines. ”



professional judgments – all of which you have to understand, process and make intelligible to a non-specialist audience. Respect!

So, looking forward, what are the interactions between air quality and planning?

Strategic planning keeps an important role in ensuring that air quality, particularly in city centres, continues to improve. Without doubt, there is a potential conflict between improving city centre air quality, and encouraging new development in sustainable locations close to urban centre transport hubs. The strategic planning system will need to do what it does best, in finding resolutions to these problems before they occur.

A key part of this will be ensuring that new development is low-polluting or zero polluting – for

example, by facilitating the increasing uptake of electric vehicles, and avoiding local air pollution issues from space heating. Planning policies can be designed to take advantage of synergies between low-carbon and low-pollution technologies and solutions, and to avoid the kind of conflicts that we've recently seen in relation to diesel vehicles and the use of biomass heating technologies. This will take place in the context of improving air quality, as road vehicles become progressively lower emitting in response to national and international standards.

We can expect this improvement in air quality to be accompanied by tightening air quality standards. At some point, the UK's air quality standard for fine particulate matter, PM_{2.5}, will be aligned with the World Health Organisation's guideline of 10 µg/m³, in response to what we now know about the substantial health effects of air pollution. This will be

a big step forward from the current UK standard of 25 µg/m³, and will keep the pressure on improving air quality for many years to come.

At a practical level, one of the challenges facing many planning authorities at present is dealing with the effects of (often marginally) increased pollution from strategic development plans or individual developments on European designated habitat sites. The uncompromising nature of the legislation and guidance makes it expensive and time-consuming to carry out these assessments. And the hoops you have to jump through are many and demanding (if there is such a thing as a demanding hoop, you'll find it when assessing air quality impacts on habitat sites).

But on the plus side, the tough constraints which prevent effects on our most precious habitat sites are effective: the authorities that we are working with are building protection of these sites into strategic development plans – not just in the fairly standard air quality policy which now features in every local development plan, but in land allocations, transport and energy policies. Building in air quality considerations to strategic thinking in this way has to be the future for air quality and planning. ■

Dr Mark Broomfield

Dr Mark Broomfield is a national air quality expert and the author of *Every Breath You Take: a user's guide to the atmosphere*, published by Duckworths.

Introduction

Increasingly my husband and I (aged 75) have focused on finding ways to address climate change and biodiversity issues with our lifestyle choices. In this short article I will try and provide:

- some insights into measures we have taken to make our home as sustainable as is possible,
- other features that help us live 'low carbon' lives

and, thirdly but importantly,

- aspects that increase our emotional and spiritual satisfaction with life.

Some might argue that we live very privileged lives in retirement. We would respond by saying that we are aspiring to live a 'low carbon' life in retirement rather than spending our pensions on overseas holidays, new cars and a generally 'high consuming' life-style.

Insulating, improving and heating our house

For the last ten years we have lived in a 1932 semi which we call, not our "eco-house", but our "insulated house".

We used savings and a loan so we could spend six months retrofitting the semi before moving in. To achieve u-values of 0.1, 0.19 and 0.2 in our loft, walls and floors respectively we used about £15,000 cash and months of DIY. We spent a further £10,000 completely replacing the gas heating

system and installing a wood burner. An unheated, but well insulated, conservatory spanning the back of the house cost £18,000. Heat saving features including "air locks" for exterior doors mean less heat loss as well as essential space for coats, boots, hats, umbrellas etc. We now use some of the old garage to house bicycles, bins and tools.

Our home has no draughts, but, regrettably, is not quite air tight and lacks a ventilation system with heat exchanger. Most nights we open bedroom windows. In hot weather we keep cool with cross ventilation from upstairs windows at night combined with closing windows and blinds in the day.

Renewable power generation

Ten years ago solar thermal water heating panels on our roof cost £3,350; 2.4kWp solar PV on a specially built garden pergola cost about £14,000 all told. Our annual electricity generation (c.1,800kWh) equates to our total annual electricity usage. Our thermal water heating and wood burner probably reduces our annual gas consumption (3,400-4,000kWh) by about a third. (In the winter we aim to keep the house at 18°C.) We buy both gas and electricity from a sustainable supplier, Ecotricity.

The Renewable Heat Incentive will have paid half the cost of the solar thermal panels after seven years when it finishes. The solar PV feed-in tariff will have covered the cost of our PV panels after about thirteen years but will continue for a further twelve years.



Food storage.

In total it cost us £60,350 and months of DIY to upgrade our home's Energy Performance Certificate from an F to a B.

Need for passive houses in future

In retrofitting our 1932 semi we took all the practicable sustainability measures we were able to do but failed to achieve the passive standards possible with a new build.

There is no doubt in our minds that in future the government must require every newly built home be built to passive (EPC A) standard.

Living an active 'low carbon' life in retirement

Living a low carbon life in retirement has many facets besides the energy efficiency of our house. It also involves:

Being able to walk places: I walk on average three miles a day. It is a mile walk to a bus or train which can take me anywhere, from Birmingham's centre to open countryside and a similar distance to three different shopping centres, seven churches and four Quaker meeting houses. At least half of these walks are through parkland and along foot paths.

- **Access to good local public transport:** This has been key to reducing our emissions from driving.
- **Space:** Our house is spacious enough to enable us to continue to live full and active lives.



Garden with pergola and PV from Conservatory.

- **Food storage:** Minimising carbon emissions from our diets involves cooking meals "from scratch" and being able to refrigerate or freeze leftovers. This requires space for food storage

and appliances. What had been a passage from the front of the house through to the garden at the back has been converted to provide 40 feet of shelving, space for storing jams, chutneys and

bottled fruits made from garden and allotment produce.

- **Air drying washing:** In the summer we dry clothes under the pergola for our solar PV in the garden. In the spring and autumn, we dry them in the conservatory and, in the winter, at night in front of a wood burner stove. Our well insulated walls means condensation has not been a problem.
- **Small fridge, ample freezer and good clothes washing machine:** These have been essential in achieving our low carbon life style.

Emotional and spiritual well being

Emotional and spiritual well-being are important aspects of an active retirement, not the least because they carry health benefits. In general terms our emotional and spiritual well-being benefits from:

Living a relatively simple, non-consumerist, life-style: Every £2,500 spent on 'stuff' generates, on average, 1 tonne CO2. By reducing what we buy, repairing and reusing when we are able and having sufficient storage for tools and less frequently used

items, we try to reduce significantly our carbon emissions from "stuff".



Having a garden: Our plot measures 10m x 55m. and is on Bournville Village Trust, one of the original garden suburbs. Rain or shine, stepping out from

our home, especially into the rear garden, brings a feeling of renewal and joy. In summer I delight in photographing the bees, butterflies, damselflies and dragonflies visiting our pond, long grass and wild flowers.

Local parks and green spaces: Only after we moved in did we fully appreciate the joys of living surrounded by quiet, leafy streets, footpaths and parks. Our street is 8.5m wide with 2m pavements either side studded with lime trees. Parkland, allotments and playing fields surround it.

Community: After forty years in Birmingham, we are embedded in strong and varied communities. Bournville housing is mixed, privately owned houses interlaced with houses let to tenants. Our nearby allotment community is also very mixed with people from all walks of life.

We are very fortunate to live where we live. ■

Harriet Martin

“ By reducing what we buy, repairing and reusing when we are able and having sufficient storage for tools and less frequently used items, we try to reduce significantly our carbon emissions from ‘stuff’.”

There were two meetings of TDAG Midlands during the summer. The first on 6th. June in Birmingham received a presentation from Simon Atkinson the Conservation Manager at the Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust. His presentation focused on ecological mapping in the West Midlands. He provided a fascinating overview of the work that the Wildlife Trust undertakes to increase biodiversity in the Region. This includes woodland management, seeding flower meadows and clearing water channels. Work is prioritised in those areas that can link green spaces and promote connectivity across the Region. For more information go to www.bbcwildlife.org.uk.

The second speaker was Bryan Cosgrove from Manchester City of Trees where he works on modeling provision and need of ecosystems in the urban environment. The Manchester City of Trees movement is engaged in the development of green infrastructure and brings together the public, private and third sectors with the people of Manchester to improve the environment and plant a tree for everyone that lives there.

Bryan described some of the work, including planting trees to improve air quality and drainage. Included in the work is forestry skill building for vulnerable adults. Their recent i-tree survey is the largest undertaken outside the US and three times the size of London. Bryan also introduced the Tree Strategy that is being prepared on behalf of Greater Manchester.

Simon Needle from the City of Birmingham introduced the Draft Supplementary Planning Document for the Rea Valley Urban Quarter in Birmingham. This 73 acre project aims to become one of the City's most exciting and diverse regeneration areas. It will accommodate over 5000 new homes with integrated space for business. Central to the areas future success will be the delivery of high quality infrastructure and a network of public realm, green spaces and pedestrian routes. The centre piece of this network will be the River Rea together with a rejuvenated Highgate Park. Once adopted the SPD will be used alongside the City's other planning policies.

The second meeting on 10th. July took place at the University of Birmingham. This was a joint meeting with the Landscape Institute Midlands. The tour focused on two sites on the University Campus. The Green Heart tour was led by Landscape Architect Chris Churchman of Churchman Thornhill Finch. Chris was the lead Landscape Architect on the Green Heart development.

The Green Heart is striking new parkland at the centre of the University's historic campus. It was completed in January 2019. The 12 acre Green heart opens up the centre of the campus for the enjoyment of students, staff and the local community. The project team aimed to create a sustainable, natural and environmentally friendly landscape for both people and wildlife.

The second tour was around the 7 acre Botanic Garden at Winterbourne House. Winterbourne is one

of the best surviving examples of an Edwardian Arts and Crafts Edwardian suburban villa in Birmingham. Winterbourne House and Garden is now open to the public.

The meetings also discussed holding a joint event with the RTPI West Midlands (two successful previous joint events have been held) probably at the University of Birmingham. The theme for this event could be "Exemplar Green infrastructure Projects in the West Midlands". Further information on this will be made available to members as discussions proceed.

Many tools are now available for valuing trees and other green infrastructure. A short guide "*First Steps in Valuing Trees and Green Infrastructure*" has been produced in partnership with the Birmingham Institute for Forest Research (BiFOR) and the Scholl of Geography, Earth and Environmental Science at the University. The Guide provides advice on the main tools available for valuation projects in the UK and offers some case studies illustrating good practice. The Guide is free to download. There are also various new publications available from *Forest Research*.

The next TDAG meeting will be held in Leicester on 9th. October and includes a tour of the city centre. Further information about TDAG can be obtained at www.tdag.org.uk ■

Michael Barker
Chair TDAG Midlands

Making People Friendly Places // National Urban Design Conference

RTPI West Midlands // Autumn 2019



The National Urban Design Conference was held in the West Midlands this year. The annual conference is hosted in a different city each year and Birmingham was chosen for 2019. The

West Midlands Urban Design Forum (WMUDF) was invited to host the opening event of the conference. As chair of the WMUDF I was delighted to accept this invitation and it got the Forum a great platform to explore some of the pressing design issues throughout the region.

Furthering the discussions at our quarterly Forum sessions, it was decided to use the Conference to explore how we can raise design quality across both the region and nationally. In parallel, the overarching theme of the National Conference was 'Making People Friendly Places'. Combining these two complementary aspirations, the **Design Quality Summit** was born.

An action packed day at the Design Quality Summit saw an exclusive announcement on the launch of Design:Midlands (the new combined midlands design panel, combining Made and Opun, more on that elsewhere within Tripwire). Andy von Bradsky, Head of Architecture at MHCLG gave an update on the forthcoming Design Manual, new national

design guidance to supplement the NPPF. Then a carefully selected panel gave a series of quick-fire presentations provoking thought and discussion on how we can raise the quality of design at a local, regional and national level.

Valentina Giordano of the Place Alliance and UCL presented the Ladder of Design Quality, a research

based data driven tool enabling designers to design with certainty to produce high quality places. Laura Alvarez of Nottingham City Council presented the Nottingham Design Quality Framework, a series of design guidance documents which are constantly evolving and being updated, to raise the quality of design across Nottingham. Louise Wyman, Head of Design at the West Midlands Combined Authority





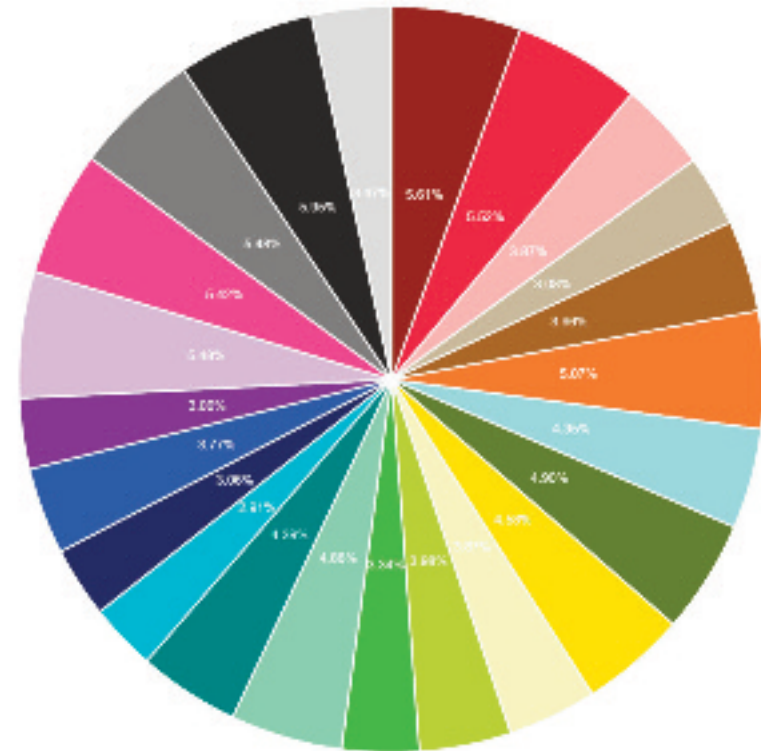
Photographs courtesy of Hannah Smart.

gave us an exclusive insight into the emerging West Midlands Design Charter, which will guide design proposals across the region. Kevin Parker, Urban Design Lead at Redrow Homes, explained how the housebuilder uses the 'Redrow 8', eight key design principles to deliver better places. With Nigel Longstaff closing the series of presentations on

DESIGN QUALITY SUMMIT

OVERALL RESULTS
33 ENTRIES

- Response to Local Character
- Historic Assets & Features
- Car Parking
- Footways (Including footpaths)
- Boundary Treatments
- Environmental Sustainability Features
- Materials
- Futureproofing & Adaptability
- Future Management & Maintenance
- Architectural Versatility
- Building Materials Palette
- Roofscape (Including material)
- Roofs & Facades
- Housing Mix & Types
- Visual Aesthetic Considerations (Telecoms)
- Incorporation of Modern Technology
- Facading Building Standards (F&S)
- Exceeding Building Standards (Construction)
- Public Transport
- Legibility & Wayfinding
- Accessibility in Facilities & Services
- Connectivity & Permeability (Foot/Cycle)
- Connectivity & Permeability (Motorist)



Name: Marko Zouroski
Company: Urban Designer-Architect/Director



Name: James Welch
Company: Design Director / Pegasus



Name: Luke Blain
Company: Design Director, Barton Willmore

Great Places, Barratt's equivalent of Building for Life 12, which they use to assess their development proposals against design criteria.

The Design Quality Summit concluded with an interactive digital workshop session on 'Delivering Better Places'. Using what was learnt and discussed throughout the day, attendees were invited to get involved and assess what they think are the most crucial attributes that contribute to creating great places and raising design quality. Using new technology developed by Barton Willmore's Urban Design and Masterplanning team, attendees used their smart phones to contribute and collaborate in real time, with results reported back live on the big screen. You can see the results of the workshop at this website: www.bwdigital.co.uk/charts/results.html ■

This is just the start of the conversation, we need to continue to work together to deliver better places.

Luke Hillson

WM Urban Design Forum Chair
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Luke is both the Urban Design and Masterplanning Director at Barton Willmore and RTPI West Midlands Vice-Chair. He is also the chair of the RTPI West Midlands Urban Design Forum who meet on a quarterly basis to present and discuss design issues throughout the West Midlands. The group is open to new members and anyone with an interest in design and the built environment is welcome to attend.



Announcing: Design:Midlands

Thursday 26th September at the Design Quality Summit (hosted by our very own West Midlands Urban Design Forum) at the National Urban Design Conference saw the launch of 'Design:Midlands'. Glenn Howells of Glenn Howells Architects announced that MADE, the West Midlands Design Network, and Opun, the East Midlands Design Network would combine to create Design:Midlands.

"Design:Midlands – an independent, impartial resource providing design support for local authorities, communities, decision makers, housebuilders, businesses and design professionals. We believe in the importance of creating sustainable places where people want to live, work and socialise. We support Education, Advocacy and Education" – Design:Midlands

More information is available on their website: <https://www.designmidlands.org/> ■



Urban Design and masterplanning for planners – the basics

26 November, Crowne Plaza (Birmingham).
From £50 +VAT

This event is suitable for people working or with an interest in the built environment, particularly planners, landscape architects, surveyors, architects etc. It will address the basics of Urban Design and Masterplanning, understanding place-making and

how can we make a greater contribution to creating good places.

It will explain the approach to the design process, the factors that affect design development and resultant proposals and will explain how planning and design are indivisible in delivering better places.

Book here: <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/events/events-calendar/2019/november/urban-design-and-masterplanning-for-planners-the-basics/>

YP West Midlands RTPI and Women in Planning West Midlands

Advice for my younger self

07 November 2019, Shoosmiths (Birmingham).
FREE

What would I tell my younger self in 10, 20, 30 years' time? Join Women in Planning West Midlands and Young Planners West Midlands for their seminar: 'Advice For My Younger Self', on World Town Planning Day, to hear our speakers reflect on their career experiences to date and what they wish they had known...

Speakers include Anna Rose, Head of the Planning Advisory Service, Stephanie Chettle-Gibrat, Head of Growth and Investment at Rugby Borough Council, Angela Reeve, Head of Planning Midlands at Turley and Jo Davis, Managing Director of Planning at Avison Young.

This seminar is hosted and sponsored by Shoosmiths.

Book here: <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/events/events-calendar/2019/november/ypwestmids-and-women-in-planning-west-midlands-advice-for-my-younger-self/>



YP West Midlands RTPI

Delivering Industry and Employment: Planning for Logistics and Warehouses

25 November 2019, Savills (Birmingham). FREE

This YPwestmids event is suitable for those with an interest in planning for a 21st Century economy. It will explore how new patterns of consumption, including recent explosive growth in ecommerce, have resulted in complex supply chains and a requirement for large buildings with very specific locational requirements. This, coupled with rapid technological advancement, present challenges for the current planning system that must adapt to ensure it can support sustainable development whilst bringing increasing productivity and prosperity to the UK economy.

Book here: <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/events/events-calendar/2019/november/ypwestmids-delivering-industry-and-employment-planning-for-logistics-and-warehouses/>

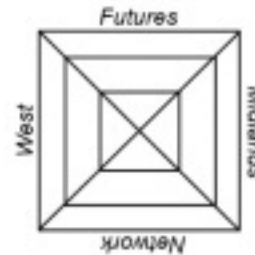
YP West Midlands RTPI Christmas Social 2019

10 December 2019, Zen Metro (Birmingham). FREE

YP West Midlands would like to wish all its members a Merry Christmas. Please come and join us for Christmas drinks and networking at the Zen Metro in Birmingham. We look forward to seeing you there.

Book here: <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/events/events-calendar/2019/december/ypwestmids-xmas-social-2019/>

Futures Network West Midlands (FNWM)



Developing a Spatial Blueprint for the Midlands Region

The next meeting of the Futures Network West Midlands (FNWM) will be held from 5.30p.m. – 7.00p.m. on Thursday 31st October at the Princes Trust HQ, the Cold Store, Digbeth, Birmingham: <https://www.princes-trust.org.uk/about-the-trust/where-we-work/central-england/birmingham-centre/birmingham-centre-directions>

The meeting will focus on developing a Spatial Blueprint for the Midlands Region and will be introduced by Ben Taylor, Planning Director at Barton Willmore.

Ben and his team are responsible for undertaking work on the 'blueprint' on behalf of the *One Powerhouse Consortium*. The presentation and discussion are central to FNWM's key concern of promoting spatial planning to help shape a better long-term future for the West Midlands.

To confirm your attendance please contact: sandy.taylor2020@icloud.com

FNWM was established in 2011 and comprises individuals from professional and academic backgrounds who have experience of, and a commitment to strategic and spatial planning, with a particular interest in the West Midlands. The Network came into being as a direct response to the abolition of the Regional Assembly, Advantage West Midlands and the Regional Spatial Strategy by the then incoming Coalition Government.

Our key concerns lie in the vacuum created by the absence of effective 'evidence-based' strategic spatial planning as a result of that decision. The outcome is plain to see with the plethora of "local", "sub-regional", "regional" and "pan-regional" bodies and mechanisms all having various "plans", "strategies", "scenarios" etc.

We have continually emphasised through our voluntary efforts that:

1. there is an urgent need to re-establish an integrated policy approach to place making.
2. that the role of infrastructure investment is therefore to support not just economic objectives but also wider social and environmental aims.

