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RTPI Scotland

Royal Town Planning Institute



National Planning Framework 4: A Route Map to the New Normal?

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Editorial

Welcome to the latest edition of the Scottish Planner in what only can be described as strange days. COVID-19 has impacted on us all in many different ways and has meant that we have had to adapt how we work and how we live our lives. I think it is testament to the strength of the planning profession that we have done this, and done this well. The response of planners across sectors, organisations and roles has been fantastic in these difficult circumstances. It had been agreed some time ago that this issue of the Scottish Planner would be used to look at the emerging National Planning Framework and we felt that it was important to continue with this. In many ways NPF4 has a very important role to play as part of the post-COVID recovery and I am pleased that we have been able to use the journal to stimulate debate about how it can contribute to this. We have a number of pieces exploring how

the NPF can look to achieve the six outcomes the Planning Act has introduced, and we have set out the 10 big ideas that the Institute has promoted in its response to the government's call for ideas.

We also, inevitably, have a number of pieces more directly focussed on COVID-19 including some very useful thoughts from RTPI President Sue Manns and an article on new research published by the RTPI on planning's role in the green economic recovery. This research kick started a new campaign from the Institute called Plan the World We Need that aims to place planners at the heart of this. We are urging members to push its key messages out to all and sundry so please have a read of James Harris' piece and think about how you can help this. You can find more on the campaign at www.rtpi.org.uk/plantheworldweneed

And in the meantime keep safe and well!
– Craig McLaren- Editor

Convenor's Comments:

'We are only here once so let's make a difference'



Irene Beautyman
MRTPI
Convenor
RTPI Scotland
[@convenorrtpis](https://twitter.com/convenorrtpis)

Irene Beautyman, Convenor of RTPI Scotland, discusses how the profession has to make the most of any opportunities in the post-COVID 19 recovery.

"We are only here once so let's make a difference" is how I ended my last Convenors Comments. Back when I hardly knew how to use Zoom, hadn't heard of MS Teams and the words "you're still on mute" didn't enter the daily vocabulary. The "difference" I was referring to is to the health of our people and planet. Woeful health inequalities and declared climate emergency. Social and environmental outcomes. Whatever your choice of words these two combine in one word we are hearing a lot more these days: wellbeing. So what now? Now as we talk of a dire need for economic recovery and a new normal, has the difference changed?

Not at all, would be my answer. But the opportunity has.

From improving environmental conditions during 19th century cholera outbreaks to the post WW2 creation of the planning system, Planning has history in being part of the mitigation and recovery from pandemics to post war economic recovery. The difference we can make continues as we step up to play our part in COVID-19 recovery.

But we have a balancing act ahead. Recovering our economy will be crucial and our towns and cities provide jobs and centres for wealth creation. But as we have seen they can also be hotspots of carbon emissions, poor health and inequality. Spawned from prioritising things such as the movement and storage of cars, the unqualified promotion of growth and monetisation of land and buildings. The unintended consequences of

creating conditions for economic success need to now become the foundations for a new approach to recovery. Put simply "economic growth accompanied by worsening social outcomes is not success, it is failure". Not my words, but those of Jacinda Arden who we all know is shaping a pretty enviable new normal in New Zealand. Economic recovery needs to give people better choices. It needs to empower them to behave in ways that lead to a reduction in carbon emissions and better long term health for everyone. It needs to serve our wellbeing.

Katherine Trebeck succinctly explained at the start of the Geddes Lecture that a wellbeing economy is one that is purposed and designed explicitly for human and ecological wellbeing – economic activity in service of these higher order goals. It doesn't turn its back on growth, it simply asks that it serve people and planet not the other way around. Advocating the need to benefit our whole population and consider impact on world resources and climate. If you missed the lecture I urge you to watch it on the RTPI's YouTube channel to get to grips on what is meant by a wellbeing economy and on how Geddes' thinking links strongly to its core principles.

I'm not saying that planning can solve our world, but that it's a corner piece in the jigsaw. Be it remote rural, hinterland or town centre; places are complex. Made up of physical, social and economic environments. Planning must play its part in an interconnected network of principles, policies, procedures and actions that shape the impact places have on peoples choices. To make a difference we need to understand our part in creating the bigger picture on the front of the jigsaw box. We can call it fancier names like "place

based approaches" or "whole system working" but its about all the pieces needing to link up. The opportunity I referred to earlier is that so many more stakeholders are seeing the importance of looking at the bigger picture and their part in completing it.

Fortunately, when it comes to post Covid-19 economic recovery, the system that planning contributes to is shifting its balance. Scottish Government's new normal includes setting up an Economic Recovery Advisory Group that includes "opportunities to operate differently and how Government policy can help the transition towards a greener, net-zero and wellbeing economy".

The opportunity sits within this change of emphasis. A move away from the success of a country being measured purely by growth, by the value of the goods and services it generates.

As planners we are aware that we are about achieving bigger outcomes for the people of Scotland. Local Development Plans full of policies from green space provision to active travel and species protection to housing mix evidence this. But mostly I hope, as people, we inherently just know success is more than the stuff we produce and consume. Especially if generating and pursuing that "stuff" is meaning years of poor health for many people and damaging the environment of our planet.

Closer to home, the system within which planning contributes is also re-balanced by the 6 additional outcomes defined for NPF4. I'll leave those far better informed than me to comment on these new outcomes in the remainder of this issue. The sheer fact they are writing for The Scottish Planner is evidence enough of their recognition they are part of the bigger picture. Our opportunity is to step into the bigger picture and hear what all these new players have to say and where we fit together and, yes, here I go again "make a difference"! ■

"As planners we are aware that we are about achieving bigger outcomes for the people of Scotland."

Article: Plan the World We Need

James Harris, Policy and Networks Manager at the RTPI, outlines the findings of his report looking at how planners can support the post-COVID19 recovery.

To recover from Covid-19, we need to make plans which accelerate progress to a zero carbon economy, increase resilience to risk, and create fair, healthy and prosperous communities. As UK governments look beyond the immediate challenges of the pandemic, and towards economic 'recovery' measures, the RTPI have set out how we must 'plan the world we need'.

The UK has only 30 years left to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero, with an even closer target of 2045 in Scotland. This rapid transition will require structural changes to the economy, and new ways of living and working. The following decades will also see further risks from extreme weather and the breakdown of ecological systems. These will disproportionately affect the most vulnerable in society, who have already been hardest hit by Covid-19.

Investment is clearly needed to tackle these problems, but the economic outlook is bleak. The Bank of England have forecast that the pandemic will push the UK into its deepest recession in 300 years, decreasing output by 30% in the first half of 2020, more

than doubling unemployment, and creating a £337bn deficit over the financial year.

The pandemic has also layered new challenges onto existing problems within the built environment, undermining our resilience to risk. Vulnerable groups, especially BAME communities and older people living in deprived neighbourhoods, have been most affected by the virus. Efforts to reallocate road space for more walking and cycling have proved challenging in places designed around the car. Covid-19 has changed our economic geography, with some sectors and places experiencing significant job losses, while others benefit from the rise of homeworking, or the potential for new green jobs. Shocks to the global economy have created new challenges for decarbonising our buildings, transport and energy networks, where progress is urgently needed.



James Harris
Policy and Networks
Manager, RTPI

“The RTPI has called on governments to complement capital investment with the necessary resources and tools to plan effectively for the recovery.”

In a fragile economy, with pressing social and environmental challenges ahead, recovery packages must be carefully designed and deployed. The RTPI has called on governments to complement capital investment with

conflicts with the view of planning held by some government officials and think tanks, who see it as a narrow and reactive tool for managing the negative impacts of land use change and market-led development.

This neglects both the history and potential of the profession. Modern urban planning was of course conceived during Victorian times as a public health intervention, responding to the spread of disease through overcrowded slums. The UK's current systems were designed to help

“Planning must now respond to new challenges and opportunities: supporting the economic recovery while tackling inequality, accelerating progress towards net zero carbon, building resilience and reversing habitat and biodiversity loss.”

the necessary resources and tools to plan effectively for the recovery, at a range of scales. Planning has seen disproportionate cuts over the past decade, especially in places which were already struggling. Proper resourcing is urgently needed to deliver better local and strategic plans: ones which can direct stimulus measures towards place-based solutions which have local support and deliver multiple benefits.

By examining the impacts of Covid-19 on the built environment, and the challenges which lie ahead, our paper suggests four broad priorities for planning during the recovery:

Tackling place-based inequality by delivering affordable and high quality housing in the right locations, regenerating deprived areas for the benefit of existing communities, and improving access to key services, amenities and infrastructure

Enabling a green industrial revolution by actively planning for the growth of sectors which deliver emission reductions, environmental gains and jobs, while helping places adapt to shifting economic and labour markets

Prioritising healthy and sustainable modes of transport by integrating temporary active travel measures into strategies which lock-in behaviour change and support regeneration, and enable growth in locations which help the public transport sector to recover

Accelerating the deployment of zero-carbon infrastructure by using local and strategic planning to coordinate the delivery of energy efficiency retrofit, renewable energy, smart grids and nature-based solutions to flooding and overheating, guided by ambitious policies and standards

Achieving these objectives will require a re-imagining of planning, which goes beyond purely statutory and regulatory functions. This

the country rebuild after the devastation of World War II. In the decades that followed, planning evolved to reflect wider objectives: improving access to public parks and open spaces, setting standards for high quality and affordable housing, protecting cultural and historical assets, and shaping neighbourhoods to provide a mixture of local services and offer a choice of sustainable, healthy modes of transport.

Planning must now respond to new challenges and opportunities: supporting the economic recovery while tackling inequality, accelerating progress towards net zero carbon, building resilience and reversing habitat and biodiversity loss. Our paper demonstrates the wide range of tools and approaches that planners can draw upon: those which allow for direct engagement with diverse local communities, support local leadership and visioning, enable collaboration across geographical and sectoral boundaries, and provide the flexibility and adaptability needed in uncertain times.

But to unlock the true potential of planning, changes are needed at the national level. Our paper sets out key areas for change, including:

The creation of powerful and effective structures for cross-boundary strategic planning across the UK and Ireland, with investment in the planning services needed to engage with communities, businesses and infrastructure providers

Joined-up national strategies which deliver investment in genuinely affordable homes, retrofit existing buildings, cut emissions from heat and transport, and plan networks of multi-functional green infrastructure

Common objectives and metrics which allow us to test plans, infrastructure decisions and bailout packages against common objectives for the future, with clear metrics and targets for decarbonisation, resilience, health and social justice

Harnessing the power of data and technology, for example by establishing regional data observatories to provide common data and analysis for plan-making, and investing in open source digital planning tools for scenario modelling, public engagement and coordination with infrastructure providers

A growing and diverse international movement is calling on governments around the world to build back better after Covid-19. The RTPI supports these voices, and is campaigning for a recovery that creates a more sustainable, resilient and inclusive society. We know that any failure to act now will simply defer costs to future generations and the most vulnerable, with the risks of climate and ecological breakdown to a weak economy becoming rapidly unmanageable in scale and complexity. At this pivotal moment we must strengthen and invest in planning, building the capacity for critical place-based systems thinking, and giving all parts of the country the tools they need to shape their future.

You can read the full report at www.rtpi.org.uk/plantheworldweneed. ■



The logo for 'Plan The World We Need' features the text in a bold, sans-serif font. The word 'World' is stylized with a globe icon where the 'o' is. The background is a light teal color.

The RTPI campaign Plan the World We need is a far-reaching, national campaign calling on governments across the UK and Ireland to capitalise on the expertise of planners to achieve a sustainable, resilient and inclusive recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The campaign was launched alongside the report and a short film. As part of the campaign, which will initially run for six months, the RTPI will engage with policy makers, Parliamentarians and wider stakeholders in all four countries of the UK and in Ireland. A series of research papers focusing on key issues including healthy place making, the role of planning in achieving net-zero transport and why investment in planning is so vital for the country's future prosperity, will also be published.

Read more at www.rtpi.org.uk/plantheworldweneed

Q&A

Public Enquiries



Katherine Lakeman, Principal Policy Officer at SEPA answers our questions.

Katherine Lakeman
MRTPI, Principal
Policy Officer at SEPA

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

Diana Chapman, who for more than nine years was my team leader in the development plan team at Leicester City Council.

As a relatively new planner Diana instilled in me a real confidence in my own abilities, had an infectious, sunny disposition as to what could be achieved through planning and wasn't afraid to push boundaries. In doing so she really encouraged me to stretch myself to reach my full potential. This led to my involvement in a wide range of fascinating and really rewarding work including the delivery of plans and programmes like the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, Local Agenda 21, Leicester Regeneration Company and the East Midland's first Regional Spatial Strategy. Seeing the potential offered by partnership working to align environmental ambitions with social and economic success is something that has very much stayed with me throughout my career.

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

Making the right space so that we can work more collectively and proactively to ensure we are creating resilient places that will enable a just transition to net zero by 2045.

Every brick being laid in a development today is locking us into a trajectory that will impact on this ambition. There is a real urgency for us to understand how we need to shape and design our places of the future to set us on the right path.

These decisions must be underpinned with sound science and evidence. Creating the right conditions to have these conversations with stakeholders is key if we are to unlock the innovation needed to support the transition in a way that creates the best opportunities for inclusive growth and the health and wellbeing of our communities.

3 Why is planning important?

Planning plays a crucial role in linking together a wide range of interconnecting agendas in way that delivers for the long term public good – this is one of the things that drew me to a career in planning in the first place.

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

This is a tricky one, but as much as I'd really like to pick 'n' mix from a range of places, I'll base my decision on first-hand experience of living somewhere – Leicester. On reflection there was one planning policy that Leicester implemented that really improved my quality of life on a daily basis: green wedges. This was based on a decision by the planning team to go against the grain at the time and, rather than promote a green belt policy, it introduced a policy of 'green wedges' linking the city outskirts to the City Centre. This resulted in a great trans-city walking and cycling network that provided a wide range of routes from most neighbourhoods into the City Centre, easy access to nature including great links to country parks inside and outside the city boundary, and great opportunities to connect residents with the city's cultural heritage along the river, canals and disused railway lines.

5 What do you think that Key Agencies such as SEPA can do to support the post-COVID 19 recovery?

SEPA is acutely aware of the significant challenges ahead and the need, more than ever, to work in collaboration with others in ensuring our places evolve to support a post-COVID 19 recovery. Within this new context, there is an even greater imperative to successfully address significant challenges around climate change, biodiversity loss, health and well-being and inclusive growth. Whatever the answers, taking time to work together to agree a shared perspective is needed to guarantee that every single investment in a place delivers for everyone. Key agencies have a crucial role to play by bringing together our wide range of skills, expertise, resources and evidence to support the innovation and creativity needed. There are significant benefits to be had through a key agency team working with local authorities and other stakeholders to help make sense of the complexity and scale of significant places undergoing change or development to support a green recovery. ■

Article:

Planning and the Post COVID-19 Recovery



Sue Manns
FRTPI
President, Royal Town
Planning Institute

RTPI President **Sue Manns** offers some personal thoughts and reflections.

The origins of our planning system lie in the need to tackle the poor public health and housing conditions of the 19th century. The role of planners and the importance of ‘planning’ as central to our recovery from the COVID 19 crisis cannot be underestimated.

Our short-term focus has been ensuring that the planning system continues to function through this difficult period. In achieving this, planners have shown themselves to be innovative, adaptable and resilient. Ways of working were transformed, with cultural and technological obstacles quickly overcome.

As we gradually return to ‘normality’, we must not lose sight of the lessons learned from this pandemic about the way we live, work and use our homes, our local places and spaces. What will change, why and how does that impact on planning for the future?

We have all spent more time in and around our homes and local areas. As a result, the strengths and the weaknesses of each have become increasingly evident. The suitability of our homes as places to live, work and home school, 24/7, has for many of us been a real challenge.

The High Street has been severely impacted by the crisis; but if there’s one thing the High Street is good at, it’s evolving. So, how can we breathe new life back into our High Streets and shopping centres, making them places that people want to visit once again; it may be that this requires a different way of thinking about the role of our town centres?

With 60% of the UK’s adult population currently working from home “the notion of putting 7,000 people in a building may be a



thing of the past” . How will this affect the demand for, size and location of office space going forward and what will be the ‘knock-on’ impacts?

Social distancing has changed travel behaviour; will those changes be long-term? Reductions in travel, especially by air and private car, have had a marked positive impact on carbon emissions and air quality and there is growing public pressure to ensure that these do not return to a pre COVID-19 level.

And what of our parks, green and open spaces? Their role in improving health and well-being has been well known since Victorian times. We need to ensure that high quality, accessible green space / outdoor space is an integral part of all new development – it is not only good for mental and physical wellbeing, but also plays a key role in mitigating the impacts of climate change.

Digital connectivity is the golden thread keeping individuals, communities and businesses

connected. But in places, especially rural areas, speeds are still painfully slow and connections at best ‘flaky’. Going forward, we need to ensure that high quality digital infrastructure is available to all. The greater use of technology has also opened up other opportunities for engagement and debate in and about planning. As an early advocate of public speaking at planning committee, I was so pleased to see how some ‘virtual’ planning committees have increased ‘attendance’ by members of the public during the crisis.

COVID-19 has reinforced the legitimacy of public investment in health and social care. However if we are to see lasting change then we also need to invest in good quality, well designed homes, spaces and places. There is much to reflect upon and in doing so we must not lose sight of the many other important challenges, such as tackling climate change, that we were working on beforehand – they have not gone away!

Planning must be centre stage in shaping our post COVID-19 future; and it must be properly resourced to deliver this. Planners have the skills and indeed the responsibility to lead the debate. ■

“if we are to see lasting change then we also need to invest in good quality, well designed homes, spaces and places.”

In Focus: The Govan-Partick Charrette 5 years on



Eamonn Campbell
MRTPI
Urban Planner,
Development &
Regeneration
Services
Glasgow City Council

Eamonn Campbell, reflects on the impact of the charrette and the lessons that have been learned.

How many times have you heard the phrase ‘consultation fatigue’? What about ‘consultation energisation’ as an alternative? The Govan-Partick Charrette demonstrated that it is possible to achieve quality planning and urban design outputs, whilst sustaining a high level of community and stakeholder engagement.

The Scottish Government’s charrette mainstreaming fund 2014 / 15 had a particular focus on development plan preparation. At that time Glasgow’s consultative City Development

Plan (CDP) had identified that a Strategic Development Framework (SDF) should be prepared for Govan-Partick. The opportunity to undertake a charrette seemed useful because of the challenges associated with joining the communities on both sides of the River Clyde back together. These issues were related to sites, infrastructure and streets, but the challenge was also social and economic. The historically symbiotic relationship across the River Clyde had been severed by de-industrialisation, transport infrastructure and the closure of the Govan ferry in the 1980s. The Charrette as a planning process and as a social event, offered the opportunity to prototype this new ‘social place’: to consider what the new place could offer and whether the communities wanted it, at the same time as sharing and refining ideas about how to get there.

Many people contributed to making the Charrette a success. Glasgow City Council and Glasgow Housing Association gave match funding. Glasgow Life provided the magnificent venue of the Riverside Museum. Hundreds of residents, local schools and

stakeholders gave their time and energy. Special mention goes to the professional team who delivered the Charrette on the Council’s behalf. Led by Barton Willmore, they brought creativity, organisation and passion to the process. They generated a real sense locally that what was happening was something

important and meaningful. This set the tone for a very fruitful process of spatial strategy development, which continues to inform the evolving planning and regeneration approach to the area. Indeed, I would go as far as to say that

their vitality and focus led to real ‘consultation energisation’ for all involved.

The Charrette report set out an ambitious vision for a re-integration which was about more than infrastructure and site development. It was about people and place and about how urban form should be moulded to facilitate the place people wanted. The report emphasised the role of key site and routes, but it also had a particular focus on the quality of streets and spaces which connected these. It set out a fine grained

urban design approach to building a vibrant and well connected place. Crucially, these concepts emerged from the community and stakeholders through the process.

The Charrette continues to contribute to regeneration outcomes for the area. The Charrette informed and supported the Clyde Waterfront City Deal project, helping to draw in £113m of capital investment and the new opening bridge is due to begin construction this year. The Water Row masterplan is being driven forward with a commitment to the themes of street level activation and public space. The Glasgow Riverside Innovation District (GRID) being led by Glasgow University is a symbol of the economic potential of the cross-river approach the Charrette championed. The Govan-Partick SDF will enshrine the concepts of the Charrette in the City’s development plan.

As I look back on the Govan-Partick Charrette, the over-riding sense I have is of a social process, which showed that communities and stakeholders do have enthusiasm for strategic spatial planning, if we can enable productive engagement. The urbanistic challenges of the next few years may provide ideal conditions for the type of inter-disciplinary, fast paced and open-dialogue approach to planning and design which charrettes exemplify. ■

“Crucially, these concepts emerged from the community and stakeholders through the process.”



In Practice: Planning for Green Infrastructure



Max Hislop
Programme Manager
Glasgow & Clyde
Valley Green Network
Partnership

Max Hislop outlines the approaches being taken by Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership to embed green infrastructure.

The Glasgow & Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership has published a brochure promoting a suite of exemplar planning policies to support the delivery of Green Infrastructure associated with planned development. This article provides a background to development of the policies and suggests how they might be used by planners and developers in Scotland.

Over recent years planners have had a growing interest in Green Infrastructure (GI) and its value to society in built environments, supported by a growing body of research evidence. In June last year SNH published a report to evidence the multiple benefits of GI in urban areas. The report provides some ‘killer facts’:

- Street trees can reduce air pollution by 50% in a neighbourhood
- Green roofs can reduce annual rainwater run-off volume by 50% through retention and evapotranspiration.
- Urban trees can also intercept rain and allow infiltration into the soil reducing the speed of run-off by approximately 60% on impermeable asphalt surfaces.
- On average 90% more adults use greenspace for social activities than non-green space
- Using greenspace regularly for physical activity halves the risk of poor mental health
- Increasing distance from greenspace is associated with less physical activity

These facts hint at the increasingly important role that GI has in making our towns and cities more resilient to climate change and to improving and securing the population’s health – a fact brought to sharp focus in the current Covid 19 crisis.

So, what is GI? The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 says GI means:

‘features of the natural and built environments that provide a range of ecosystem and social benefits’.

This definition emphasises that GI is ‘infrastructure’ because it provides benefits, not simply because it is an open space that is vegetated (green) or comprised of water (blue). All planners will recognise developments with ‘SLOAP’ (Space Left Over After Planning). These spaces are often grassed over and called ‘greenspace’, but they are not GI if they haven’t been strategically planned and designed to perform required functions and thereby deliver ecosystem or social benefits. The European Commission’s definition of GI emphasises this point:

‘a strategically planned network of natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services’.

Development that maximizes the benefits of GI is essential to delivering vibrant, healthy and safe places within our communities and the Planning System has an important role to play to safeguard existing GI and to secure delivery of connected, accessible and well-designed new GI within areas of change.



Figure 1. The delivery of National Outcomes through strategically planned, well-designed, and appropriately managed multi-functional urban green infrastructure.

The ‘Planning for Green Infrastructure’ brochure, published in January by the GCV Green Network Partnership within the support of the Central Scotland Green Network Trust,

provides six exemplar GI policies based on an analysis of Development Plan policies in Central Scotland and is designed to maximise the benefits of GI to contribute to a successful place. The exemplar policies are comprised of

- A Principal Policy;
- Four Functional Policies; and,
- A Stewardship Policy.



Figure 2. Exemplar Green Infrastructure Policies

The brochure goes on to provide some detail on each policy to guide developers on how they should design GI for identified functions and the management and maintenance arrangements that should be put in place to ensure that GI continues to perform its functions after the development is completed.

It is hoped that these exemplar policies will be included as policy in the forthcoming NPF4 and so help to ‘level the playing field’ for GI delivery associated with new developments across Scotland. Local authorities may also wish to consider building on these policies for the local context within their Local Development Plans and to use them as ‘foundation stones’ when preparing new Open Space Strategies (as required by the new Planning Act).

The ‘Planning for Green Infrastructure’ brochure can be downloaded from the GCV Green Network partnership’s website: <https://www.gcvgreennetwork.gov.uk/what-we-do/delivering-green-infrastructure>. ■



Article:

10 Big Ideas for National Planning Framework 4

Scottish Government is in the midst of developing the next National Planning Framework (NPF) and as part of this asked for contributions to its call for ideas. It received over 300 responses. This edition of the Scottish Planner outlines some of this thinking. Over the following pages we have asked key experts to set out how the NPF can help achieve its six new outcomes that have been introduced as part of the Planning Act. By way of context we start this with **Craig McLaren** discussing the 10 Big Ideas that RTPI Scotland has put forward in its submission to the call for ideas.

RTPI Scotland has welcomed the open, transparent and inclusive way that Scottish Government is seeking ideas on the next NPF and so we have been keen to provide constructive thinking to support this. In doing this we have developed 10 'Big ideas' for NPF4, which were informed by a call for evidence we launched for RTPI members in December 2019.

“The new context of the Covid-19 emergency has highlighted a number of issues that will have an influence on the way our built environment needs to change.”



Craig McLaren
FRTPI
Director of Scotland & Ireland Royal Town Planning Institute

The new context of the Covid-19 emergency has highlighted a number of issues that will have an influence on the way our built environment needs to change. Issues about how we ensure people have equal accessibility to the things they need such as shops, green space, leisure and jobs. How the built environment will be changed by new behaviours and how it can also influence how people behave. How communities will function in the future and how they will engage with institutions and one another. How our towns, cities and villages will look in the future given possible new opinions on design and density to minimise carbon emissions as well as virus transfer. And how we take forward and stimulate an economy that serves everyone whilst protecting and enhancing our environment.

To make this change RTPI Scotland is of the view that there is a need to undertake the following shifts:

- From short term thinking to long-, medium- and short- term thinking
- From having many overlapping and disjointed strategies to complementarity
- From an opportunistic, reactive approach to development to a planned, proactive approach
- From economic priorities to holistic priorities covering environmental, social and economic issues
- From a competitive investment approach to one of managed investment
- From a deal-making approach to one based on providing a place vision first
- From short-term, project focussed investment to a planned long term holistic vision

We believe that the NPF should take this approach and provide a long term vision of Scotland in 2050. It needs to set out what we want Scotland to be like in 30 years' time and have clear milestones to provide the pathway to achieving its ambitions. Doing this requires a planning system that is:

- corporate and collaborative to support and influence investment and policy across local and national government
- frontloaded and proactive system to allow for community and stakeholder engagement on the priorities for an area and who is going to take them forward
- able to deliver development by ensuring the vision for an area is viable and resourced

“We believe that the NPF should take this approach and provide a long term vision of Scotland in 2050.”

- recognised as a valuable way of providing solutions to complex issues, and resourced to fulfil this task

Given this, RTPI Scotland's 10 'Big Ideas' aim to help guide the format, shape and content of NPF4. We want to ensure that its objectives are measurable and actionable given the important role the NPF will play in not only providing a vision for

Scotland's future development but also to support local policy and the determination of planning applications. Our 10 Big Ideas are:

1. NPF4 embeds the new purpose of planning. Ensure that the National Planning Framework embeds the purpose of planning, to “manage the development and use of land in the long term public interest” and, as part of this, recast the measures of planning performance to be more focussed on outcomes.

2. NPF4 is supported by a capital investment programme. Ensure that NPF4 is accompanied by a 10 year capital investment programme with buy in from across government.

3. NPF4 is a “First Minister’s document”. Ensure that NPF4 is a key corporate document that influences Scottish Government decision making and has buy in from all Cabinet Secretaries in supporting their Post Covid-19 recovery ambitions and as a vision piece on planning for the ‘new normal’.

4. NPF4 contains milestones that are tracked transparently. Ensure that NPF4 includes short-, medium-, and long-term milestones and establish a delivery oversight group (which should include representatives from younger generations) to report annually on progress being made and implications of changing contexts.

5. NPF4 prioritises climate action and tackling health inequalities. Structure the NPF around outcomes which are tied into planning authority performance assessment frameworks and priority strategic themes on achieving climate action, delivering a net zero carbon Scotland and improved health and wellbeing.

6. NPF4 promotes active and sustainable travel. Include large scale improvements to active and sustainable transport networks across Scotland as a national development.

7. NPF4 embeds the Reuse First Principle Ensure that the reuse first principle - where previously used land, buildings, places, materials and infrastructure are given preference to new - is applied across all of planning for places.

8. NPF4 promotes decision making based around the well-being of future generations. Ensure that NPF4 adopts and embeds the principle of planning decisions that provide long-term positive impacts to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change and which meet the needs of future generations.

9. NPF4 becomes The National Plan for Scotland Position the NPF as the spatial articulation of the Scottish Government's National Outcomes - much as development plans are the spatial articulation of Local Outcome Improvement Plans - which clearly sets out relationships between the planning at national, regional, local and community levels.

10. NPF4 embeds and champions the Place Principle and Place Standard themes Embed “Place and Wellbeing” themes from Place Standard and ensure collaborative implementation of the NPF through the place principle.

We will be looking to develop some of this thinking further and are promoting the ideas to key policy makers as we move towards the position paper to be published by Scottish Government in the autumn. ■



Article:

How can NPF4 improve Health & Wellbeing?



Matt Lowther
Public Health
Scotland

Matt Lowther from Public Health Scotland sets out his views on the opportunities.

Public Health Scotland (PHS) is Scotland's lead national agency for improving and protecting the health and wellbeing of all of Scotland's people. Our vision is of a Scotland where everybody thrives and our focus is on increasing healthy life expectancy and reducing premature mortality.

The foundations of our current public health system were laid back in the 19th century. At the time hundreds of thousands were dying prematurely from both contagious and non-contagious disease such as cholera and life expectancy was roughly half of what it is today. It was recognised then that the key drivers were environmental; for example the water people were drinking or the conditions people were living in. This led to the creation of the first public health act in 1848 and actions that followed to improve environmental conditions significantly improved public health. Fast forward to the current time and we are seeing with the current COVID-19 pandemic just how important good quality local spaces and places are to both our physical and mental health.

We now have a wealth of high quality evidence demonstrating that the places and communities in which people live, work, learn and play are fundamental to health. For example the World Health Organization has published evidence highlighting the links between the environmental and social determinants of health and demonstrating that the way places are planned and maintained has a range of impacts on health. These include, but are not limited to, the following issues:

- Exposure to infectious and parasitic diseases, pollution and poor sanitation all contribute to increased levels of disease in a population
- Design of roads and infrastructure influences levels of accidents and injury
- Safe, convenient active travel and neighbourhood design promotes physical activity, enhanced social connections and good mental health
- Increased access to natural and planned green and blue space has a positive impact on physical activity levels and mental health
- A wide choice of good quality affordable homes enhances health and reduces poverty.

Other positive aspects of place that can nurture health and wellbeing include:

- the availability of services and amenities
- well maintained streets and public spaces
- feelings of safety
- street and urban design
- effective public transport
- having places to meet people
- a sense of belonging and a sense of control
- thriving communities with an abundance of local businesses and good access to job opportunities.

Given this depth and breadth of evidence, improving places and communities is one of Scotland's six national public health priorities and placed-based approaches are fundamental to how PHS works. PHS was therefore delighted to see that improving the health and well-being of people living in

Scotland was one of the six high-level objectives of NPF4. Not only does this strengthen and reinforce the critical importance of well-designed places

for health and wellbeing, crucially it also provides an opportunity and a mechanism to operationalise this and ensure our places are designed and developed in a way that maximises their health impact.

PHS is working with a wide range of national and local partners and with Scottish Government to consider how collectively we can add most value to two key areas: firstly how the relevant policy that sits within NPF4 is developed and written in a way that best achieves the national health and wellbeing outcome; and secondly to consider how best to support the local planning system operationalise this in order to create healthier places. Collectively we have identified a number of health and place themes, based around the place standard that could be used to guide and structure both of these aspirations. The themes are also broadly aligned to Scotland's national outcomes detailed in the national performance framework and so could also be used as a way to demonstrate how delivery of the national planning framework could deliver many of Scotland's national performance outcomes.

Planners and the planning system play a critical role in public health. The focus on health and wellbeing in NPF4 has the potential to be a real game-changer for public health in Scotland. For that reason it is really important that the positive and constructive conversations with Scottish Government and stakeholders continue during these uncertain times. ■



“The focus on health and wellbeing in NPF4 has the potential to be a real game-changer for public health in Scotland.”

Article:

How can NPF4 improve equality & eliminate discrimination?



Andy Milne
Chief Executive
SURF

Andy Milne, Chief Executive of SURF outlines what NPF4 needs to do to help tackle inequality in Scotland.

‘Everyone has a plan, until they get punched in the mouth’. – Mike Tyson

Well, we have all certainly had a massive punch in the mouth.

The impact of the Covid-19 epidemic is being compared to that of WWII, in that it is a powerful catalyst of long overdue change. The bold, collectivist dynamics of post-war planning enabled a radically revised social contract. It involved the creation of the NHS, mass social housing, and a universal welfare state that understood the inescapable interconnections of health, education, environment, employment and economics.

Planning for common good remains a pillar of shared civilisation, but sadly it has been eroded, by half a century of narrow economic dogma, into a tool for the pursuit of financial profit. In the same reductive process, planners have been progressively under-valued, under-resourced and increasingly marginalised to ticking off criteria for conservatories and offering token resistance to mega out-of-town developments that everyone knows suck the life out of town centres and destroy community cohesion and diversity.

Successive governments have struggled with the collapse of the place-rooted industries that had sustained an interconnected nation-wide framework of production and exchange. Latterly, Scotland’s

smaller towns and hinterlands were virtually abandoned. Desperate municipal bets were placed on the shaky theory of trickle-down from the top and out from city centres. That, and the truly outlandish scale of our local government constituencies, only made inequalities worse.

Increasingly centralised decision-makers were disconnected from struggling communities and their distinctive challenges, assets and aspirations. The same disconnects between power, places and people contributed to the still-catastrophic economic crash of 2008, which the uninvolved poor were made to pay for. As some noted at the time, that particularly powerful punch in the face was still not quite strong enough to bring us all to our collective senses and see what we had allowed to happen, and what needed to change.

Since then, however, the Scottish Government has gradually developed a progressive rhetoric and associated policies towards the empowerment of poorer people and places, but too many economic players and policy-makers were still looking backwards. The gulf in shared understanding and access to resources remained, further eroding mutual trust.

Then Covid-19 hit – but again, not everyone equally.

Surely, no one can now doubt the devastating impacts of poverty and inequalities. As SURF has been reporting in its series of special bulletins, impressive community responses to localised Covid-19 crises have both increased shared

appreciation of the deeply damaging and unsustainable status quo and shown the massive potential of local knowledge, assets and action as the basis for collective change.

The biggest mistake would be to apply old thinking to this radically changed situation. The proposed National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) rightly prioritises place, environment and tackling inequality. It aspires to connect national to regional, local and community. It wishes for more ‘bottom up’ collaboration.

To achieve any of that, NPF4 must ensure that planning support and skills are directly invested in the knowledge and aspirations of poor people and places, productively linking them with national policy and resources.

As SURF set out in its well-received response to the Scottish Government’s

“Successive governments have struggled with the collapse of the place-rooted industries that had sustained an interconnected nation-wide framework of production and exchange.”

Advisory Group towards post-Covid Economic Recovery, rhetoric and policies are not enough. Planning is essentially about gathering and allocating vital shared resources. NPF4 could be the catalyst for growing sustainable community wealth and wellbeing, by supporting hyper-local infrastructure, or it will be a huge missed opportunity. Of course, it’s not only about money; but why are poor communities expected to regenerate themselves without external investment, while the wealthiest companies and market centres ruthlessly elbow their way to the public trough?

SURF connects sectors, people and places. It builds trust and cooperation on shared priorities, for a better future for all. So do planners. Let’s not just roll with the punches this time, let’s plan and prevail together. ■



Article:

How can NPF4 increase the population of rural areas?



Dr Calum MacLeod
Policy Director
Community Land
Scotland

Calum Macleod outlines how there is a need to link National Planning Framework 4 and Land Reform for a ‘Rural New Deal’.

The case for linking land reform and National Planning Framework 4 as cornerstones of Scotland’s rural economic recovery is compelling. That’s because how land is owned and used and, crucially, who benefits from these arrangements, are central issues in determining Scotland’s progress towards becoming a greener, fairer and more sustainable society.

The overarching argument for contemporary land reform involves overcoming deep-seated structural problems with the concentrated pattern of predominantly private land ownership in Scotland that impede the sustainable development of the nation as a whole and local communities in particular. These structural problems essentially revolve around monopoly possession and exercise of power (economic, political and social) relating to land as a factor of production. Specifically, who has power; how it is exercised; and in who’s interests it is exercised.

“NPF4 offers the prospect of a step-change in broadening and deepening that community-led, bottom-up development process further.”

These structural problems matter, not least because of the depopulation crisis that much of rural Scotland faces. Research from The James Hutton Institute indicates that Scotland’s sparsely populated areas — covering almost half of Scotland’s land area but containing less than three per cent of the nation’s population — faces losing more than a quarter of its population by 2046.

Scotland therefore needs a Rural New Deal that tackles the economically damaging issues of concentrated land ownership and unsustainable demographic change and population loss head on. Diversifying how land and other natural assets such as forests and marine resources are owned and used will help deliver the climate change mitigation and adaptation, affordable housing, employment creation, and population retention and growth that are essential to the sustainability of our rural places and to delivering wider public benefits.

National Planning Framework 4 has a vital strategic role in helping to deliver that Rural New Deal. Community Land Scotland advocated for incorporating rural repopulation measures into the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. That resulted in ‘increasing the population of rural areas of Scotland’ being included as one of NPF4’s six outcomes. The Act also places a duty on Scottish Ministers to have regard to the desirability of resettling rural areas that have become depopulated when preparing the content of NPF4. Consideration can also be given to allocating land for resettlement when developing both NPF4 and local development plans.

These are welcome provisions, but the heavy lifting lies in their implementation. That demands bold and imaginative policy action.

Such action has happened before. In 1920 the Board of Agriculture used the Land Settlement (Scotland) Act 1919 to buy 60,000 acres of land in north west Skye. That policy decision enabled families, mainly from Harris and Lewis to move to 68 newly created crofts in the area in 1923, establishing a population of 400 people where for over a century there had been none.

Fast-forward to West Harris in 2020, where 7225 hectares of land are owned by the West Harris Trust on behalf of the community living on it. Since taking ownership of the land in 2010, the Trust has overseen a demographically sustainable rise



in its population from 119 to 152 residents, provision of affordable housing and business units, new infrastructure and a community hub incorporating a commercial restaurant and a social space for community events. This is sustainable place-making from the bottom up.

NPF4 offers the prospect of a step-change in broadening and deepening that community-led, bottom-up development process further. Its success in doing so depends on Planning Authorities deploying the full range of repopulation and resettlement provisions, together with compulsory purchase and other legislative measures at their disposal to help deliver the affordable housing and infrastructure necessary to help retain and increase our rural communities’ populations and, by extension, ensure their sustainability.

It also depends on hard-wiring land reform as a cross-cutting policy priority within the wider sphere of public policy in Scotland to better address the structural problems of unsustainable land ownership and use. The stakes are undoubtedly high, but ‘business as usual’ is no longer a credible option for rural Scotland as we continue to grapple with the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic and the ongoing climate emergency. ■

Article:

How can NPF4 help meet climate change targets?



Stephanie Conesa
Policy Manager
Scottish Renewables

Stephanie Conesa from Scottish Renewables provides her views on what NPF4 should do to support ambitions on climate change.

Scotland's commitment to a world-leading target of net-zero carbon emissions by 2045 comes with the possibility to radically transform the Scottish planning system through the upcoming NPF4. Significant deployment of additional renewable energy capacity, well in excess of historical deployment levels, will be needed to achieve our bold climate change ambitions.

The declaration of a Climate Emergency has rendered existing policy frameworks for renewable energy technologies critically out of date, so it is therefore imperative that we take the opportunity to shape NPF4 so that it establishes a planning system that enables Scotland to achieve its climate commitments in the only way possible – by using renewable energy.

Onshore wind is the single largest source of installed capacity of renewable electricity in Scotland. However, as we approach 2030 a significant number of wind farms will reach the end of their consented operating lives. These sites will need to either apply for life extensions to continue operating, repower or decommission. If these existing wind farms are decommissioned, then Scotland will lose over half of its existing capacity by 2040, making it much harder to achieve our targets.

Repowering enables the use of the latest technologies to maximise our existing onshore wind sites. A National Planning Framework that supports repowering and life extension will be critical in ensuring Scotland continues to be able to rely on a proven, low-cost source of clean energy while meeting its net-zero target.

Meeting Scotland's ambition to achieve net-zero climate change emissions by 2045 is an unprecedented challenge that will require fundamental and urgent changes in our society and the policies that shape it.

In Scottish Renewables' view, it will not be possible to deploy the level of onshore wind

generation needed to achieve net-zero without changing our approach to considerations like wild land or landscape impacts and the way they are dealt with in planning decisions to achieve positive development outcomes. Renewable energy is sustainable development in the long-term public interest and should be weighed appropriately in the planning balance, particularly in the face of the urgent need to increase deployment to combat the Climate Emergency. It's important to understand, too, the popularity of onshore wind with the public: UK Government surveys show 78% of the public support its use, and a study by Survation in 2018 demonstrated those numbers are broadly reflected in rural Scotland, with only 11% opposed to the development of new onshore wind farms.

The decarbonisation of heat over the next two decades will also be one of the greatest challenges in meeting Scotland's net-zero target.

NPF4 will have an important role to play in facilitating the roll-out of low-carbon heat by increasing usage of heat networks, which enable harnessing renewable sources of heat in rivers, sewers and the ground. Planning policy is vital given heat networks' spatial characteristics– they must be built in dense areas and across multiple developments. Development planning in combination with planning obligations and conditions has already proven to be successful in enabling rapid deployment of heat networks in London.

The Scottish Government has proposed a mandatory requirement on local authorities to produce a Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) to zone areas most suitable for heat networks in existing buildings and land for development. It will be vital that NPF4 clearly states that LHEES district heat zones and the new-build areas flagged within them, as well as potential sources of heat, should be integrated into Local Development Plans.

Where appropriate, suitable developments within these zones should be directed to use heat networks through planning obligations and conditions. Scottish local authorities will need direction through NPF4 to achieve this.

NPF4 must provide a framework that enables Scotland's world-leading climate change ambitions by supporting increased renewable energy generation, committing to radical change in the face of the Climate Emergency and the move to low-carbon heat. ■



Photo courtesy of Pexels



Article:

How can NPF4 secure positive benefits for biodiversity?

Dr Caroline McParland discusses why and how NPF4 can help implement biodiversity net gain.



In its response to the Scottish Government's Call for Ideas on NPF4, the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) highlighted the need to include Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) in Scotland's planning system. CIEEM believes that BNG is a key element in addressing the climate and biodiversity crises, which are closely interlinked. NPF4 provides a crucial opportunity to implement a requirement for developments to deliver BNG.

What is Biodiversity Net Gain?

BNG is a quantitative, stepwise process which is applied to development to leave biodiversity in a better state than before.

It is an approach whereby developers work with local governments, landowners, wildlife organisations, and other stakeholders to minimise impacts and maximise outputs for biodiversity. Around 100 countries currently have a legislative or strong policy requirement on developers to achieve

either no net loss or a net gain in biodiversity for their projects. The guiding principle is to minimise overall biodiversity impacts through application of the mitigation hierarchy; to avoid, mitigate, restore, and as a last resort, to offset (biodiversity offsetting). The biodiversity value of potential new or restored habitat is then assessed on the same criteria, but with additional measures related to the risk to successful habitat creation or restoration

and the time lag between the loss of habitat and the successful creation of new habitat. Metrics to measure the loss from development and the gains for creation and restoration have been developed and deployed on projects in England and are being adapted to consider SuDS, green and brown roofs, and other elements of 'green' placemaking.

Why is BNG important?

We are losing our biodiversity at an alarming rate. Climate change, pollution, land management and other factors have contributed to what is now the sixth mass extinction in the history of life. The State of Nature Scotland 2019 report shows from 1994 to 2016, 49% of Scottish species have decreased in abundance.

You might wonder what that has to do with people living in Scotland's towns, cities and rural communities. Biodiversity provides the fundamental building blocks for ecosystems – the basic 'stocks' of our

natural capital. Ecosystems provide essential services to economy and society: food, shelter, fuel, flood storage, better air quality (much needed in our cities especially) and improved mental wellbeing. Intact ecosystems are more resilient to change and better at providing the services we all depend upon.

So, we need to do more than simply stop the decline. We need to reverse it.

BNG can be an effective 'tool' to reverse

biodiversity loss through development. If implemented at all stages of development, it can be closely linked with the creation of high-quality places that can benefit the economy and society. Early implementation into development also reduces costs and minimises planning delays.

What could Scotland look like with BNG at the forefront of planning?

Scotland's Land Use Strategy has a vision of "a Scotland where we fully recognise, understand and value the importance of our land resources, and where our plans and decisions about land use will deliver improved and enduring benefits, enhancing the wellbeing of our nation."

With this vision in mind, BNG as a key part of NPF4 would mean encouraging the adoption of nature-based solutions to climate change mitigation and adaptation in the places of Scotland's future. Self-sufficient, resilient communities, making sustainable use of their natural capital, connected by net zero transport networks, would be the norm. These solutions would be the rule, not the exception - with placemaking resulting in greener communities and healthier people using them. ■

"Climate change, pollution, land management and other factors have contributed to what is now the sixth mass extinction in the history of life."



Dr Caroline McParland
CBiol MRSB CEnv
MCIEEM, Ecologist
and Chartered
Institute of Ecology
and Environmental
Management Vice-
President (Scotland)

Article:

How can NPF4 meet housing needs?



Sally Thomas
Chief Executive
Scottish Federation
of Housing
Association

Sally Thomas makes the case for great homes in great places to help deliver the homes Scotland needs.

For much of the last year, a key focus of the Scottish Federation of Housing Association's (SFHA) work with government has been the need for new housebuilding targets to be set which will allow the continuation of the significant increase in supply seen over the last five years. This would comprise a new Affordable Housing Supply Programme (AHSP) for 2021-26 and in the housing targets to be included as part of the NPF4.

It's for this reason that we closely followed the passage of the Planning Bill through Parliament, as part of the Scottish Alliance for Places and People (SAPP). We were pleased that some of the key SAPP 'asks', including the introduction of a purpose for planning, made it into the final Bill. However, some of the most important issues for our members, notably land value capture and the inclusion of housebuilding targets in the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) are now being looked at later than we would have liked. (Land value capture remains a hugely important issue and one which deserves separate consideration, which I'll perhaps return to at another time.)

Now, given the current global pandemic, all these issues will be looked at even later. COVID-19 has also meant the 50k target set by the AHSP will also now not be met by the end of the current parliament.

The reason that we continue to press for an increase in the supply of affordable housing is simple: doing so generates a multitude of economic and social benefits. There's not enough space here to do justice to what SFHA members have been able to deliver under the current AHSP. It's not only that they're delivering many, much-needed new homes, tackling issues like rough sleeping and homelessness, domestic violence and poverty. They are also supporting the achievement of targets for fuel poverty and the climate emergency through higher standards of energy efficiency. The work RSLs carry out through their community resilience activities

directly contributes to the achievement of National Performance Framework outcomes around social justice. Combining this with the development of new housing means that RSLs are creating essential social, economic and environmental impacts.

Our 2015 research with Shelter and CIH informed the current 50,000 target set by the AHSP. We very recently published a refresh of the research, which indicates a further 53,000 affordable homes are needed between 2021-26 if we are to address the backlog of housing need in Scotland as well as future demand. The 2015 research recommended a review of the Scottish planning policy ceiling of 25% of new homes being affordable, indicating that it needed to rise to at least 64% to meet current (2015) demand. The refreshed research notes that while this ceiling remains unchanged, the new Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 stipulates that development plans must account for the housing needs of the area and the availability of housing land to ensure that plans will meet proposed housing targets. There is hope the ceiling may be reshaped in light of these legislative changes.

A key part of SFHA's recent work has been our Innovation and Future Thinking programme; and our current situation demands we look to innovate more than ever. This includes looking at how to deliver greener infrastructure through development activity and findings from one of the projects, exploring the viability of green roofs in the context of a specific regeneration project at Meadowbank, Edinburgh are now available here.

Learning from this project offers important lessons on how housing and the planning system can work together to deliver more of this infrastructure, crucial to the placemaking

agenda. Lessons not only in terms of physical planning but involving local people in development, a key focus of our renewed planning legislation.

The planning system is a key enabler of the delivery of the housing Scotland needs. Rather than the bureaucratic image that the system is perhaps

prone to suffer from, its role is an increasingly important one in terms of the achievement of strategies around placemaking, inclusive growth and numerous others.

While we are all living in limbo, it is essential we do not lose sight of the issues that were key for our organisations pre-pandemic – and especially those which will play a significant role in the recovery from COVID-19, such as the delivery of additional, affordable housing. The most recent housing statistics show RSL stock is up just 1% overall and council stock is static: we are only just now breaking even in replacing the half a million affordable homes lost to Right to Buy. At the same time, there are 160,000 people still on waiting lists for social housing.

It is crucial we use important mechanisms like the planning system to create the great homes in the great places the people of Scotland need and deserve. ■

“The reason that we continue to press for an increase in the supply of affordable housing is simple: doing so generates a multitude of economic and social benefits.”



Update: Scottish Government

A regular update on planning at the national level from the **Scottish Government's** Planning and Architecture Division.

Plenty can happen in the fairly short time between editions of the Scottish Planner. Not so long ago, we were travelling around Scotland on the NPF4 'Scotplan 2050' Roadshow, meeting face-to-face with people from across our society, hearing what they had to say about their aspirations for how Scotland can develop over the next three decades.

The events of the last few months have caused many of us to pause, re-think and re-prioritise. Across the Scottish planning system, we have had to react to events, adjust

how we do our jobs and think carefully about what the future looks like. In fact, just what planning – and planners – always do when things change.

COVID-19 and the Scottish Planning System

Going into lockdown, a couple of things were immediately clear for the planning system in Scotland: the importance of maintaining a well-functioning system to support recovery; and that there were a number of planning processes that would have to change so that we could keep planning services going.

This has been addressed through a mix of temporary legislation, guidance and informal, pragmatic changes to practice that have enabled continued planning operations while maintaining fairness, transparency and accountability.

We have issued several letters from the Chief Planner and the Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning, which have set out the steps that have been taken and can be taken by those involved in planning during this difficult period. You can see those letters at: <https://www.gov.scot/collections/chief-planner-letters/>

Digital Planning

Recent experiences through the lockdown has further highlighted the need to strengthen digital solutions through the digital strategy and transformation programme, which we will say more about in the autumn. One very clear change for many over the last few months has been the sudden shift and rapid up-skilling in the use of digital engagement tools to go about our business; not just in keeping in touch with colleagues but also so we can continue to reach out to stakeholders. Our Digital Planning team has published some recent examples of digital engagement in planning; and we are keen to hear of further positive experiences that we can share.

Our Digital Planning team has also been able to put its skills and its emerging digital mapping technology to very good use during the current emergency, supporting Scottish Government colleagues with COVID-19 data analysis; for example in monitoring and tracking the allocation of the £350m community funding package.

Planning Reform

With the sudden change in priorities and the capacity of many planning stakeholders being affected, much of our work on the implementation of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 and wider planning reforms had been paused recently. We are currently re-scheduling that work with a revised timetable which will replace the Transforming Planning in Practice work programme published last September. We expect to say more about this over the summer and are keen to re-engage virtually with our working groups soon.

Planning for Recovery

While much of the effort over the last few months has been primarily about keeping our planning system's wheels turning, the coming months and years will be a crucial time for renewal and recovery; recognising the impacts this pandemic and the lockdown has had on our society, and to an extent will continue to have for some time to come. Planning will rightly be a prominent player in the way

ahead, developing place-based solutions that innovate and build in resilience in shaping healthier and happier communities.

This will bring a mix of short-medium and long term challenges, priorities and opportunities as we look to emerge from what remains an obvious health emergency, and begin to tackle sustainable economic recovery.

In the initial period, that can mean helping our places, our communities and our businesses to adapt so that they can support our collective wellbeing, and perhaps learning some lessons about what we can do better anyway. That also means being prepared to take a pragmatic view, maybe just for temporary periods, to allow things to be done outwith the terms of planning permissions, to help people get back out to work and to living life.

Longer term, there has been keen interest lately in the new reality for our communities and in what our places will look like in the future. Undoubtedly this crisis has brought great appetite, and also a necessity, for us to plan differently.

National Planning Framework 4

It is helpful that the timing of the work on Scotland's fourth National Planning Framework – setting out a vision for Scotland through to 2050 – is coinciding with the policy thinking and choices we need to be making now. We are very grateful for the thoughtful responses we have had to our early engagement. Since then, we have of course been watching and reflecting on the issues for places arising from COVID-19 and considering what that means for NPF4, and we will be able to have some more in-depth, meaningful discussions over the coming months in shaping the next framework.

NPF4 was already looking at many of the issues that have come into focus during the pandemic. Our new Planning Act requires NPF to address outcomes including improving equality, health and wellbeing of people in Scotland; and facing up to the global climate emergency. Recent events, and the different experiences and difficulties faced by people and whole communities in lockdown, reinforce the importance of these themes and of securing inclusive growth in changing our places for the better.

The early engagement on NPF4 was cut short as a direct result of the need for physical distancing taking hold. Effective collaboration is at the heart of the NPF preparation process and we want to ensure stakeholders are still able to join in. That process also involves a period of engagement with the Scottish Parliament and, with the election coming next May, that has also impacted on the programme. We now expect

to produce the draft NPF4 for consultation in September 2021, which will ensure we can still prepare it in a collaborative way.

In the meantime, we will produce an interim position statement this autumn that highlights key changes and priorities, reflecting on the impacts of COVID-19 and what NPF4 can do to help societal and economic recovery. We look forward to engaging with people again at that stage.

Safer Public Places: Urban Centres and Green Spaces

The necessary restrictions placed on all of us through the lockdown are gradually and carefully being eased in a four phase approach set out in Scotland's route map through and out of the crisis. Connecting with the route map, we have been developing Safer Public Places guidance for Scotland, which focuses on the design principles for safer urban centres and green spaces. It contains examples of interventions that may be undertaken by the owners and operators of public spaces to keep people safe, as and when the restrictions are relaxed and urban spaces become busier. It also includes guidance on integrating active travel into public spaces and relevant case studies <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-public-spaces-scotland-urban-centres-green-spaces/>.

Staying in touch

For the latest messages from the Planning and Architecture Division, make sure you follow us on Twitter [@ScotGovPlanning](https://twitter.com/ScotGovPlanning) and register for our Planning and Building update emails at <https://register.scotland.gov.uk/Subscribe/Step1>.

You can also keep up-to-date on progress with NPF4, planning reform and digital planning on www.transformingplanning.scot.



Update:

Planners Make PAS

Photo courtesy of PAS

Barbara Cummins, PAS Board Member and volunteer makes the case to get involved in Scotland's world-leading planning volunteering organisation.

I have long been a supporter of PAS, working on projects and benefiting from training. So why did it take me over 20 years to volunteer? Good question, and some of you will recognise my excuses:

- I haven't got time – no-one in PAS pressures you; I can choose what I sign up for, and when.
- There is a conflict of interest with my job – it's possible, but you can choose the activity and location to avoid that.
- Advice Service volunteering is all about objecting to planning applications – remarkably infrequently actually, and again you can choose if you want to be involved with giving advice and which cases you take.

In lockdown I have attended PAS training events, a volunteer quiz night and helped people wanting to know everything from basic Development Plan information to setting up businesses. Feedback is universally positive; not an experience I often have in my day job. It amazes me how little information makes folk happy – things we planners take for granted!

You see, apparently I do have time – maybe you have too? But if I can't persuade you – maybe other PAS volunteers can.

Sarah Lapsley, a planner with Stevenson Halliday and Chair of Women in Planning Glasgow says: Having worked in planning since leaving university, I felt I needed to do something positive to assist in making planning more understandable and accessible to a wider audience.

In the 4 years I have volunteered, I have been involved in a wide range of events all of which have been greatly rewarding. One of the best things about PAS is that it allows you to

meet like-minded planners. It is a supportive, social network and provides a great sense of fulfilment to know that you're making a difference.

Isabelle Davies at Angus Council says:

Volunteering is a chance to work directly with those most affected by our profession, whether in their place or with young people and their future. It's an opportunity to let people see that they can make a difference, add their voice and demand better places. Why do I volunteer with PAS... because it's fun actually.

Nicolas Whitelaw, a self-employed planning consultant says:

I enjoy the challenge of resolving Advice Service enquires, even if on occasion it means giving the client news they did not wish to hear! ... It provides me with knowledge and experience of areas of planning that I am not regularly involved in – it's often a two-way learning process.

My involvement with PAS has been invaluable in terms of fulfilling CPD requirements and opening up opportunities through the training and events that PAS has to offer.

Stacey Wotherspoon volunteered as a student and says:

I decided to volunteer with PAS at university as I wanted real experience of the planning industry. Being a PAS volunteer has not only given me this experience, but has also allowed me to work to educate others on how the planning industry works and how it can benefit them, which has been incredibly valuable to me personally and to my planning

career. I have volunteered at events across Scotland, and have met many other planning professionals who I would never have had the opportunity to meet without PAS.

Graham Marchbank, now retired from Scottish Government says:

You're a student, licentiate, chartered or retired planner, starting out or at the top of your game in development management, a specialist in permitted development, or maybe sustainability, design, law, housing or renewables.

You maybe want to externalise that with more and different people or tackle a fresh topic beyond the day-job. Community engagement. Schools. Community Council or Elected Member training. The increasingly busy Advice Service. Explaining plans and processes, the Use Classes Order or EIA. Facilitation. On-line or face-to-face. Across Scotland.

In just four years I've chosen all of that. It's your free time and it's good for your CPD. You have so much to offer. Give it a go. You won't look back!

To learn more, just visit the PAS website www.pas.org.uk or get in touch with Erin Fulton, Volunteers and Interns Manager at erin@pas.org.uk



Immaterial Considerations

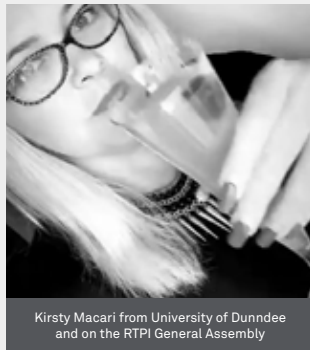
An irreverent look at the world of planning...

All Dressed Up

Lockdown meant that the RTPI Awards for Excellence in Planning couldn't have a nice ceremony where everyone got together to celebrate the great achievements of planners across the world. Undeterred, an online awards ceremony was held with hundreds of people tuning in live to see who had won what. To their credit a number of these very people decided that, despite the circumstances and the need for them to watch from their home online, this was still an opportunity to put on their best clothes to highlight the importance of the event. So dinner jackets, posh frocks, tiaras and hats were dug out and adorned and shared through the marvels of social media. Here are a few of those who joined in...



RTPI Chief Executive Victoria Hills



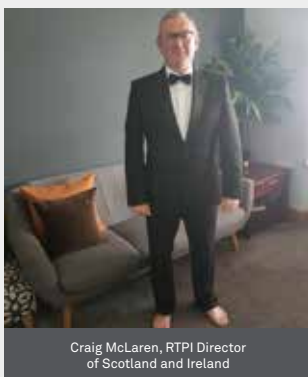
Kirsty Macari from University of Dundee and on the RTPI General Assembly



RTPI Treasurer Andrew Taylor



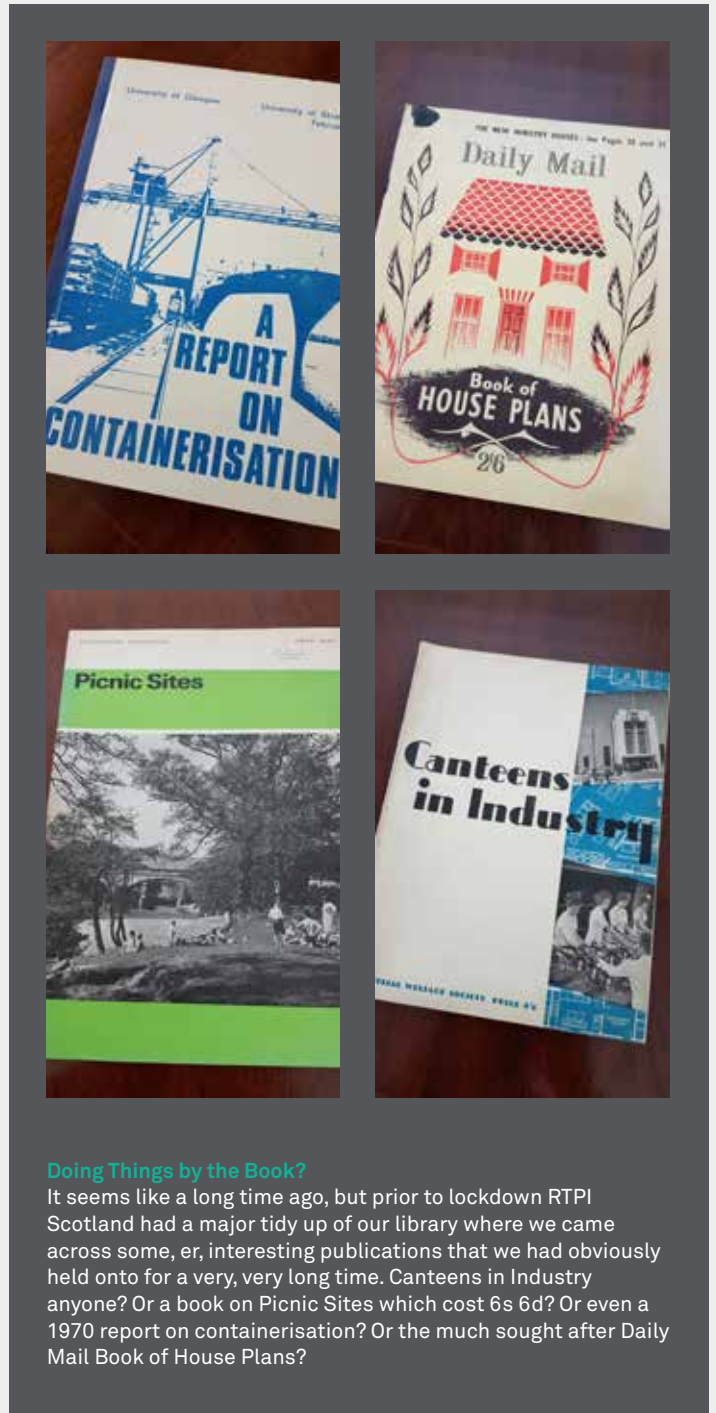
The team from Kevin Murray Associates, who were commended in the small planning consultancy of the year category



Craig McLaren, RTPI Director of Scotland and Ireland



RTPI Board and Scottish Executive Committee Member Stefano Smith



Doing Things by the Book?

It seems like a long time ago, but prior to lockdown RTPI Scotland had a major tidy up of our library where we came across some, er, interesting publications that we had obviously held onto for a very, very long time. Canteens in Industry anyone? Or a book on Picnic Sites which cost 6s 6d? Or even a 1970 report on containerisation? Or the much sought after Daily Mail Book of House Plans?

Update:

OBITUARY



CHARLES PROSSER, HON FRIAS, HON MRTPI, FORMER SECRETARY RFACFS, CHAMPION OF PLACE (27 October 1939 – 10 April 2020)

Charles Prosser, the last Secretary of the Royal Fine Art Commission

for Scotland, died unexpectedly aged 80 on 10 April of a Covid related infection. He leaves his wife Coral, three children and six grandchildren.

Born and brought up in Harrogate, Charles attended the Bath Academy of Art and The Slade School of Fine Art. His professional career started as an assistant lecturer at the Blackpool School of Art in 1962. A Leverhulme European Arts Research Award led to a year in Stockholm (1964-65), followed by a lectureship in Fine Art at Leeds College of Art from 1965-76.

Charles was appointed Secretary to the Royal Fine Art Commission for Scotland in September 1976, retiring as its seventh and longest serving Secretary in 2005. Over 29 years in post he served five distinguished chairmen: Lord Johnston (1976-78); Professor Sir Robert Grieve (1978-83); Professor AJ Youngson (1983-90); Lord 'Willie' Prosser (1990-95); and Lord 'Kenny' Cameron (1995-2005).

Established in 1927, Commission appointments were made by Royal Assent giving it a measure of independence and a sporting chance to act, in the words of Tam Dalyell, 'as an effective watchdog against undesirable development'. Ten out of the seventeen official RFACFS reports were published during Charles' tenure.

The Commission could ruffle feathers, but it could also defuse confrontations and improve design quality through informed persuasion. Much of this patient work was unseen. It was succeeded in 2005 by Architecture + Design Scotland.

At work Charles was calm, thoughtful and master of the well constructed letter. He kept the show on the road with gentlemanly charm, good humour and a great deal of diplomacy. Like his namesake Lord 'Willie' Prosser, (Chair 1990-95); Charles saw the role of the Commission as that of a constructive improver of design quality for the longer term benefit of Scotland, which he loved. Charles was dogged in his promotion of the Commission and worked tirelessly to raise its profile. He introduced Summer exhibitions. He made connections and he spoke out.

The Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland acknowledged his contribution as a passionate champion of place with his nomination as Honorary Fellow in 1997. Charles became an Honorary Member of The Royal Town Planning Institute in 2002.

Peter Robinson MRTPI (Retired)

Update:

RTPI SCOTLAND UPDATE

COVID-19

All RTPI staff will continue to work from home until September, at the earliest. We continue to run an events programme though all events will be held online until the end of the year. The events programme comprises online Chapter and Scottish Young Planner events as well as regular 'member drop-ins' to discuss RTPI work, whilst the RTPI Scotland Annual conference - now entitled The Scottish Planner Live - will become a week of bite sized events around the question "How do we Plan for the Healthy Places We Need?". It will take place between 28 September to 2 October

The annual Sir Patrick Geddes Commemorative Lecture was held online on 18 June where Katherine Trebeck discussed "Shaping the new normal with a wellbeing economy : The role for place and planning". The full lecture is available to watch on the RTPI YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/thertpi

National Planning Framework 4

RTPI Scotland welcomed the open, transparent and inclusive way that Scottish Government is seeking ideas on the next NPF and has been keen to provide constructive thinking to support this. In response to the government's call for ideas we published a paper setting out 10 'Big ideas' for NPF4. These were informed by a call for evidence we launched for our members in December 2019. See pages 10 and 11 for more detail.

Just Transition Commission

RTPI Scotland has responded to the Just Transition Commission's call for evidence where it outlined the key messages that planners should be seen as key to moving towards net zero carbon targets and the important role of the National Planning Framework in supporting this. RTPI Scotland Director Craig McLaren also gave evidence to the Commission in an online evidence session.

Communications

RTPI Scotland has issued the following press releases:

- 3 April - RTPI Scotland welcomes emergency planning legislation
- 14 May - Scottish Government must plan for a 'different' Scotland post COVID-19, says RTPI
- 2 July - RTPI Scotland to sit on Town Centre Recovery Group
- 10 July - Walking vital for green recovery, says RTPI Scotland

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For further information, please visit
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[Twitter.com/RTPIscotland](https://twitter.com/RTPIscotland)



Empower others...

**... from the comfort
of your own home**

Become a PAS Advice Service volunteer!

Your expertise as a planner can have an enormously positive impact on people's lives. Our Advice Service volunteers help individuals and community groups across Scotland to understand and participate in planning processes.

Often a short email or phone call can make all the difference to a member of the public who has no knowledge of the planning system.

We have a large number of volunteers who take part in our wider activities and place-based projects, however, we are specifically looking to recruit MRTPI planners to volunteer for our Advice Service.

As an Advice Service volunteer you can count your volunteering hours toward your Continuing Professional Development. We'll also invite you to our Advice Service Forum to share experiences, network and learn something new.

**For a chat with our Volunteer Manager to find out more,
please get in touch with Erin Fulton:**
erin@pas.org.uk - 0131 659 9778



Planning Aid for Scotland, known as PAS.
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