



IN PERSPECTIVE

WINTER 2020

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For further information
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The Chair's Word

Anyone who has ever debated with me knows I like the last word (sorry to all my previous managers!) and this will be my final word before I hand over the Chair role to Simon Taylor for 2021.



**Eleanor Gingell,
MRTPI**

RTPI South East
Chair

I am immensely proud and humbled by what we have achieved in the region over the past two years given everything. I'm not sure when I stepped into the shoes of Chair I could have predicted what would be thrown my way. My two years as Chair have been characterised by a global pandemic as well as personal tragedy. The latter has certainly helped me to keep things in perspective, but also remind me how close knit the planning world can be, and how colleagues, clients, employers (current and ex) can become friends and confidants.

So then, 2020. The year which started with an optimistic tweet by the Prime Minister heralding a *"fantastic year for Britain"* and then threw several curve balls. Who would have predicted loo paper would become such a valuable commodity, or that facemasks and personalised hand sanitiser bottles would be branded as a "perfect stocking filler"? In the first "In Perspective" of 2020 I wrote, *"no matter how bleak things feel now, there will be another side, we will emerge, and our skills will still be required"*. I stand by this statement. As a profession known for being a little risk adverse, the speed at which we have adapted has been inspiring. In 2019 I made a promise to a colleague that by the time I left the role of chair we would have hosted at least one online event... well, we've done far more than that! Sometimes it takes a huge global pandemic to force us into action.

One of the final events held in 2020 was the [Planning Awards for Excellence](#). I make no secret; I LOVE the awards and the chance to showcase the fantastic work carried out by planners. For the second year running a project from Milton Keynes took home the top spot, this time it was the Campbell Wharf Marina. If you ever find yourself in Milton Keynes it's certainly worth a visit (or you can visit via Google Maps, it is 2020!).

The region also crowned Daniel Young as the Young Planner of the year for his commitment to helping address climate change and delivering improvements through policy, based on his national and international research. Both Campbell Wharf and Daniel will be put forward to the national awards and I'm sure you will join me in keeping my fingers crossed for both!

Which leaves me with one last thing to do and that is to thank you all, the SE RTPI membership for all that you do. As your regional representatives we have tried to ensure the committee becomes more diverse. We have made huge leaps, and have many exciting plans for the year ahead, but we recognise that there is still a long way to go. So, if there is someone or something you would like to see more of, or an event or project you would like to assist with, please do contact us via **Susan Millington**. I hope you all manage to take some time off now...and if anyone has seen the T&C for 2021 please forward them on to me!

**Get in touch to
contribute to the
Regional magazine**

**Please contact:
Susan Millington
Southeast@rtpi.org.uk**

Congratulations!



Gareth Giles
Partner at
Whaleback

Congratulations to Gareth Giles, Partner at Whaleback who has been elected as a Fellow of the Royal Town Planning Institute. Gareth was a member of the Regional Management Board (RMB) until 2019. Gareth said ...

“I am immensely proud to be elected to Fellowship of the Institute which has real significance for me personally and professionally. Fellowship is a special recognition of a contribution to the Institute, profession and colleagues in the field that goes above and beyond what is expected of a professional planner. It is one of the highest professional attainments available to a planner and I am so grateful to those in the industry who have supported and encouraged me throughout my career and nominated me for this honour.

I started work as a local authority planning officer and after 12 years of public sector service founded a small planning consultancy business with a former colleague. I now have the privilege of employing four town planners, including two Young Planners at the start of their careers.

My most rewarding experience has been volunteering for the RTPI, which I have done for over 10 years. It has enabled me to travel around the UK, gain invaluable learning opportunities and meet many other planning professionals. I would thoroughly recommend volunteering on an RTPI Regional Activities Committee to anyone that may be interested as they are a cornerstone of learning and help steer the direction of the profession.

I hope through my Fellowship I can be of further service as an ambassador for the Institute, and continue to focus on promoting the essential role of a thriving planning profession in shaping our natural and built environments. I will also maintain my objective of supporting the next generation of planners and ensuring they have the same opportunities that I was afforded when I started out.”

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RTPI South East Awards for Planning Excellence 2020

A planning project that transformed an underwhelming location into a 'vibrant and unique' mixed-use development has scooped the top prize at this year's prestigious Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) [South East Awards for Planning Excellence](#).

Campbell Wharf, in central Milton Keynes, was entered by property developer Bidwells and won the award at an [online ceremony premiered on YouTube](#) on November 16.

The scheme, which was praised by the judges, includes 383 new homes, a nursery, a pub, retail and commercial units, public open spaces and a short-stay marina.



Campbell Wharf, central Milton Keynes, entered by property developer Bidwells

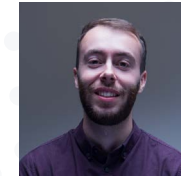
Chair of the RTPI South East judging panel Sue Percy CBE MRTPI said: *"The project represents a real planning success story, demonstrating excellence in land use planning, regeneration, sustainable transport and a wonderfully designed piece of civil engineering as a centrepiece. The planning team managed to overcome viability issues and have delivered a project that not only regenerated the site, but will hopefully trigger improvements to the wider area to the benefit of current and future residents and visitors."*

Planning Partner at Bidwells Mike Jones MRTPI said: *"It is fantastic that this scheme has the recognition it deserves as a truly mixed-use development of the highest quality. This is a testament to the success of local engagement and partnership working between the project team and Milton Keynes Development Partnership. It was particularly pleasing to hear that the judges acknowledged the enhancement of the wider setting, establishing a benchmark for future development along the canal side."*

The other project recognised at the ceremony, the **Romsey Town Centre Draft Masterplan**, was submitted by Romsey Future Partnership, Test Valley Borough Council, Nexus Planning and Perkins and Will. The masterplan for the regeneration of the area south of Romsey town centre includes improved public transport, public realm, and residential development and community facilities.



Romsey Town Centre Draft Masterplan, was submitted by Romsey Future Partnership, Test Valley Borough Council, Nexus Planning and Perkins and Will



Daniel Young MRTPI

Elsewhere at the ceremony, **Daniel Young**, Senior Planning (Policy) Officer at Portsmouth City Council, was named as the RTPI South East Young Planner of the Year 2020. Daniel's enthusiastic commitment to helping to address climate change and delivering improvements through policy based on his national and international research impressed the judges. They wish him every success in taking these forward and feel he has a bright future ahead of him in town planning.



Beth Watts AssocRTPI

Beth Watts, an Associate Planner at Bloomfields, was highly commended in the Young Planner category for her commitment to rural matters which judges said stood out amongst a very competitive field.

Both Bidwells and Daniel Young are now automatically shortlisted for the prestigious national RTPI Awards for Planning Excellence 2021.

[Click here and watch 'Top of the Planning Pops'](#) where you will hear the judges discuss highlights of this year's regional awards and also answer your questions on the judging process, the future of the awards and what makes a winning entry.

Interested in being a judge?

Get in touch with Susan Millington
southeast@rtpi.org.uk

RTPI South East Awards judging panel 2020

Hear what the 2020 judges have to say

Sue Percy CBE MRTPI

Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation

Chair of the judging panel

"It's a privilege to be a judge as I get to see the best of planning practice and projects and meet inspiring and passionate planners"

Eleanor Gingell MRTPI

WYG and Chair of RTPI South East

"I became a judge as an opportunity to celebrate and share the success and help to raise the awareness of the positive contributions that good planning makes"

Stephen Harness FRTPi

Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO)

"Being a judge is a privilege and I'm keen to see achievements recognised and championed as good practice for others to learn from and follow"

Gareth Giles FRTPi

Whaleback Ltd

"I am privileged to be invited to judge the Regional Awards again this year and always thoroughly enjoy reviewing the excellent entrants"

Dr Christopher Maidment MRTPI

University of Reading

"I really enjoy learning about the people and exploring the interesting projects that are entered into the awards – it's great to be part of recognising what good planning can achieve!"



Committee 2021

RTPI South East committee members are all volunteers with expertise in many aspects of planning and represent both the private and public sector. Activities are provided by members for members and include CPD events, social events, policy consultation, roundtables, APC briefings and debates. There are lots of great opportunities to get involved with these activities even if you are not a committee member.

All activities are co-ordinated through our Regional Management Board (RMB) and Regional Activities Committee (RAC). Together we support members and champion planning in the South East.

Members are welcome from all areas of planning and we are always ready to welcome new recruits.

Regional Management Board

Chair:

Simon Taylor MRTPI, MHCLG

Immediate Past Chair:

Eleanor Gingell MRTPI, WYG

Senior vice-chair: *vacant*

Junior vice-chair: Laura Archer, Barton Willmore

Honorary Treasurer:

Jeffrey Ng, West Berkshire County Council

Honorary Secretary:

Emily Fitzpatrick MRTPI, Woking Borough Council

General Assembly Representative:

Katherine Green MRTPI, Turley



Regional Activities Committee

John Alcock MRTPI, *Retired*

Tony Chadwick MRTPI, *Gravesham Borough Council*

Steve Lees MRTPI, *Independent Consultant*

Luke Smith MRTPI, *Troy Planning and Design*

William Sparling MRTPI, *South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse DC*

Christopher Maidment MRTPI, *University of Reading*

Harriet Richardson MRTPI, *Batcheller Monkhouse*

Annabel Le Lohe MRTPI, *Storey Homes*

We welcome our new 2021 RAC members

Edward Cheng MRTPI, *Highways England*

Jayanand Kumaraguru AssocRTPI, *LG Planning Ltd*

Paula Onyia

Reece Lemon AssocRTPI, *Hume Planning Consultancy*

Andrew Smith MRTPI, *Navro Asset management*

Lucy Wilford MRTPI, *Barton Willmore*

Roger Smith MRTPI, *Savills*

Aline Hyde MRTPI, *Elmbridge Borough Council*

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Presidential visit to the South East

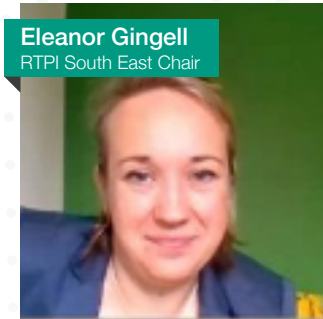
Sue Manns report on the visit

Sue Manns has had a **‘full steam ahead’** in October as the Presidential Team travelled virtually the length and breadth of the UK Nations and Ireland to meet members, politicians and others with an interest in planning and the power of good planning.

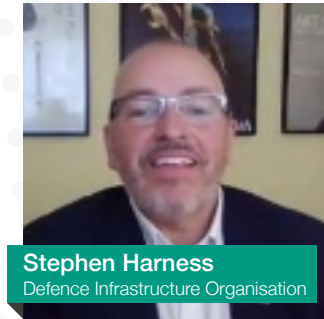
Here is her report from her virtual visit to the South East



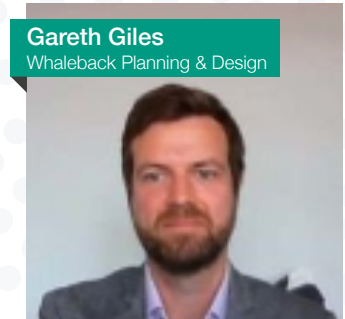
Sue Manns
RTPI President



Eleanor Gingell
RTPI South East Chair



Stephen Harness
Defence Infrastructure Organisation



Gareth Giles
Whaleback Planning & Design

On 20 and 21 October, the focus for the Presidential virtual tour was the south east of England. The visit started with a 500-mile whistle stop tour showcasing the very best of planning in the region.

Chaired by Eleanor Gingell, this tour took in eight counties, dropping in to share experiences of projects ranging from the ‘Creative Estuary’ in Kent, five nationally significant infrastructure projects (Lower Thames Crossing, The London Resort, Southampton to London Pipeline Project, the AQUIND Interconnector and M3 Junction 9, A34), a heritage-led regeneration project in Folkestone and Huntley Wharf regeneration scheme in Reading, before coming to an end in Milton Keynes, hometown of the Regional Chair. As the tour drew to an end, I was honoured to present the Award of Fellowship to two Chartered Members from the region - Stephen Harness (Defence Infrastructure Organisation) and Gareth Giles (Whaleback Planning & Design).

The Award of Fellowship of the Royal Town Planning Institute recognises those who have made a major personal contribution to planning and the planning profession. Through their work both Stephen and Gareth have delivered innovative and creative solutions in response to a range of planning challenges, they have

both been active members of the RTPI South East region and given time to support others and the wider community. I am so pleased to see that the inspiring work of Stephen and Gareth has been recognised by the RTPI through the Award of Fellowship.

It is also really important that our Fellows reflect our diverse membership. Fellows are role models for our younger planners. With this in mind we need to celebrate the achievements of more women, more BAME planners and more planners with disabilities. If you know someone who you think should be a Fellow, please [encourage them to apply](#)

Later that day, I was delighted to join a webinar chaired by Sue Percy, chair of the judges for the RTPI Regional Awards 2019.



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The [webinar focused on Milton Keynes](#) where Michael Moore from Milton Keynes Council and David Carlisle (AECOM - Buildings Places) explained the background and process of preparing Plan:MK (2016-2031) which was delivered on time through the use of a dedicated project manager and with significant stakeholder and community support. It is little surprise that it was the [RTPI South East Regional Award Winner 2019](#).

The presentation was followed by an inspirational session with the RTPI South East Young Planners of the Year for 2018 (Jeffrey Ng, West Berkshire Council) and 2019 (Laura Archer, Barton Willmore). What talent and insight they have into planning and the future that they want to be a part of shaping. Both are extremely worthy winners of the South East Young Planner Awards and great role models for other Young Planners.



The RTPI Degree Apprenticeship Scheme was launched in 2019. It provides a route into the profession for many who would not otherwise have been able to fulfil their ambitions and in doing so helps to widen the diversity of our profession.

On 21 October, as part of the RTPI South East visit, I was delighted to join a session chaired by Chris Maidment (University of Reading) to meet with three apprentices (Alishba Emanuel, Amber Willard, Andrew Motley), their employers (Daniel Vick of Arun District Council, Ann Howells of Uttlesford District Council) and their tutors (Helen Walker and Georgia Wrighton of the University of Brighton) to share experiences and reflections on the first year of the Apprenticeship programme.

The apprentices clearly appreciated the opportunity to connect the academic side of planning with practical experience in a planning team. Workplace support was 'really crucial', with employers and tutors described as 'brilliant'. The enthusiasm and commitment of everyone involved was evident and there is no doubting the [significant contribution of the scheme](#) in ensuring a diverse and talented pipeline of future Chartered Town Planners; thank you all.

The visit to the south-east ended with a [virtual dinner](#). 'Come Dine' with the [RTPI South East](#) Young Planners if you want a really special evening that you will remember for many years to come - the guest list was awesome.



Laura Archer (Barton Willmore) and Simon Kennedy (Havant Borough Council) of [South Coast Young Planners Network](#), Annabel Le Lohé MRTPI (Storey Homes) and Suzi Green MRTPI (Bidwells) of [Thames Valley Young Planners](#), and Harriet Richardson MRTPI and Nicholas Webb (both Batcheller Monkhouse) of [Kent Young Planners](#) put together an amazing guestlist, inviting some of the greatest and most inspiring planners from the past and present, including Jane Jacobs and Sir Patrick Abercrombie and the current RTPI South East regional chair Eleanor Gingell.

Whilst I can only imagine how the conversation would have flowed, I know for certain that it would have been lively, creative, thought-provoking and inspiring, just as the conversation with these six young planners was. Once again, I can confirm that [the future of planning and the profession is in very safe hands](#).

[Read more about Sue's latest monthly update here](#)

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Regional Awards winner 2020

Campbell Wharf, Milton Keynes

Campbell Wharf, Milton Keynes is a vibrant and unique development of 383 homes, a nursery, pub, retail/commercial units, public open spaces and a short-stay marina. It has transformed an underwhelming canal-side location into a vibrant and unique development.

Extensive pre-application engagement and partnership working was involved with this scheme, with all development partners supporting the final proposal and 86% public support for the overall scheme at a public exhibition event. This site has created an impetus for growth, and improved the viability of surrounding undeveloped land, and the scheme has also unlocked the start of the new Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway.



Background

Campbell Wharf is located in Milton Keynes, at the edge of 'Campbell Park' a linear park at the centre of the town. The site benefitted from outline planning permission (04/00586/OUT) dating from 2007, however the (then) Homes and Communities Agency struggled to bring the site forward twice for viability reasons. In 2013, there was a £32 million land transfer of sites from the Homes and Communities Agency to Milton Keynes Council (MKC). Milton Keynes Development Partnership (MKDP) was set up by MKC to manage this portfolio and took ownership of the site.

In 2014, MKDP prepared a development brief and reworked the design moving the marina to south side of the canal, making the development more viable. At this point Crest Nicholson were brought on board as a development partner and Bidwells as the planning agents to manage a project team.

Bidwells oversaw an extensive masterplanning exercise for the site alongside the architect tp bennett. This sought to develop a vision for the area whilst respecting the context of the site, to develop the inter-relationship of the two sides of the canal and sought to ensure that the development would be viable. Bidwells submitted an EIA Screening Request in 2016 which confirmed the need to submit an Environmental Statement.

The project team undertook extensive pre-application engagement. Four pre-application meetings were held with MKC Officers and a tour of best practice examples in Cambridge was arranged for MKC Officers in August 2015. Bidwells led on a series of stakeholder workshops on key themes including: 'Landscape, Ecology and Trees', 'Transport', 'Water' and 'Design'. Presentations were arranged for Town and Parish Councillors.

Bidwells organised a three-day public consultation event in the Centre:MK Shopping Centre as, although this site had few neighbours, it was considered to be a scheme of wide interest to residents in Milton Keynes.

In March 2017, Bidwells submitted a reserved matters application (RMA) for Campbell Wharf. This included detailed plans for 383 dwellings, retail and restaurant floorspace, a nursery, a 9 berth (short-stay) marina, public open space and associated infrastructure. Planning permission was granted 14 November 2017. Bidwells prepared an Environmental Statement, a Planning Statement and a Statement of Community Involvement to support this submission, alongside project managing the submission process.



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Once submitted Bidwells pro-actively engaged with Council Officers as required following submission.

In parallel, a hybrid planning application (17/00967/OUTEIS) was submitted in April 2017 for the adjacent side of the canal which included a full planning application for the construction of a marina and an outline application for the bridge and a pub. This application was granted permission 20 December 2017. A full planning application for the bridge and the pub followed in due course to complete the wider public realm.

Bidwells project managed the discharge of conditions for the outline application, RMA and bridge application, and coordinated further planning applications for the development compound and an NMA to the reserved matters.

Development began on site in February 2018 and the first completions were made in Autumn 2019.

Outcome

With its link to the canal and relationship with Campbell Park at the centre of Milton Keynes, this site is of notable importance to the residents of Milton Keynes.

As part of this development a new canalside walk, with active frontages has been introduced. This has increased the safety of the area and links to wider Milton Keynes. Four high quality new landscaped spaces including the civic plaza combined with the commercial units and terrace to the canal create a vibrant heart to the development and can be enjoyed by the wider community. The development has been built to a high specification ensuring that there is a high-quality of living for residents. It will result in financial contributions of over £1.1m to local services through the section 106 agreement and the development includes the provision of 115 new affordable homes (equating to a policy compliant 30%) ensuring that the development supports the wider community needs.

When this project began it was an unviable site with a stalled planning application. The site had been sat as an undeveloped, underwhelming piece of land right at the heart of Milton Keynes with little benefit to the local community. The project team has created a scheme which has brought substantial investment into the local economy through the creation of a number of highly skilled construction jobs as well as in the nurse, pub and retail offering on site. In addition, development will also unlock further development along the canal on nearby sites,

which would have historically been considered unviable without the impetus that Campbell Wharf has created through its sense of place. This will unlock land for circa 2,000-2,500 units and further investment into the supply chains and economy along with further enhancements to the canalside. A strong sense of place has been created through the design and the creation of high-quality public realm. The homes themselves are designed to a high specification creating a high-quality built environment. The scheme also incorporates a range of sustainable measures including energy efficient building techniques and sustainable drainage. Renewable energy technology in the form of PV panels and air source heat pumps have been included. Further, the site is located in a sustainable location with improved footpaths and Redways for cycling included as part of proposals to support sustainable means of transport to reach nearby shops and offices.

The development is sensitive to, and has drawn design inspiration from, its environment with distinct features such as the tri-span bridge. The project has enhanced the ecology of the area and has respected its environment. The setting of the site on the Grand Union Canal been carefully considered in the design of the scheme and has influenced proposals, e.g. the



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integrity and width of the tow paths were considered given their value as non-designated heritage assets. The scheme has also facilitated the future creation of the Milton Keynes - Bedford Waterway for which the start has been integrated into and safeguarded as part of the design of the scheme.

Planning contribution

MKDP and Crest Nicholson (as Landowner and Developer) initially worked together with stakeholders to establish a clear vision for Campbell Wharf. Bidwells project managed a consultant team to develop and realise the vision and played a key role in the masterplanning process, attending various design workshops. Through this process, Bidwells provided advice in relation to matters such as density, building heights and the relationship with the nearby grid road.

The pre-application process with MKC and stakeholders was rigorous and complex due to the significant interest in the proposal as a result of its location at the heart of the town. Bidwells had to engage with Officers on key issues such as highways, urban design, landscape and ecology. Bidwells' planners advised on and guided:

- 4x Pre-application meetings with MKC Officers (Planning, Highways, Ecology, Urban Design, etc.);
- Meeting with Ward/Parish Councillors;
- 2-3 Stakeholder Workshops for each key topic noted above;
- Public Exhibition – 3 days.
- Supporting planning documentation inc. Planning Statement, Statement of Community Involvements and EIA Compliance.

This proposal involved extensive partnership working. Bidwells worked closely alongside MKDP and Crest Nicholson to develop a viable and deliverable proposal on this site.

The project team worked closely with MKC to understand key parameters given the lack of an up to date development plan. Four pre-application meetings were held with MKC Planning Officers and relevant teams including Highways, Ecology and Urban Design to discuss proposals.

The project team worked closely with the marina developer, including having representatives at masterplanning sessions, to ensure that the two schemes came forward with one overarching vision (despite two separate planning applications). The wider site fell under two separate MKC Wards. Meetings were held with Ward/Parish Councillors from both areas to ensure that these partners felt engaged.

Extensive engagement with key partners is demonstrated by the Stakeholder Workshops. Through these workshops the project team engaged with Anglian Water on the drainage scheme, and Milton Keynes Parks Trust, being responsible for the stewardship of Campbell Park and the canal area, provided their expertise on enhancing the environment and its long-term

management. The Canal and River Trust provided feedback on tow paths, bridge heights and how the proposal integrated with the canal. Similarly, through discussions with Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Trust it was agreed that the start of the authorised route should be moved as it was identified as being above an Anglian Water Sewer. All these key actors supported the application when formally consulted.

Bidwells has supplemented the original planning applications process through assistance in the implementation and delivery of the site. Bidwells has project managed the discharge of conditions for the different applications which covered the site and advised on any pre-commencement conditions. Bidwells was also involved in Bridge application which followed the main application. As part of the delivery process Bidwells submitted a further application to enable Crest Nicholson to set-up a site compound and advised on the matter of site flags ultimately seeking planning permission for these.



Sustainable development

In the short term, this scheme has created a number of jobs in the local area, including apprenticeships, and has had a positive impact on local perceptions of how the planning process can be used to bring about change. Medium term, this scheme has provided much needed market and affordable homes at the centre of the Oxford to Cambridge Arc. The scheme has transformed this location setting a high design standard. A number of new services have been provided on site for public benefit e.g. shops and the public realm has been made accessible for the wider community. For the longer term, this scheme provides the impetus for further growth and has made provision for the Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway project.

This scheme has taken a holistic approach to growth and development promoting a balance of economic, social and environmental objectives, and in doing so embodies a number of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

From an economic perspective, the scheme has supported the local economy and created construction jobs for younger people through apprenticeships. Crest Nicholson have ensured that the working conditions on site have been managed properly, supporting the aspirations of Goal 8 'Decent Work and Economic Growth'. Employment opportunities are provided on site making this a place where people can live and interact, whilst enhancing links to the central district of Milton Keynes containing major shopping and employment uses.

Socially this scheme has created a new, vibrant community supporting Goal 11 'Sustainable and Communities'. With no immediate neighbours a key objective was to foster a new community and create sense of place. This has been considered in the scheme through the provision of high-quality public spaces, alongside affordable homes which are indistinguishable from market housing and a focus on mobility with good pedestrian/cycle/public transport links.

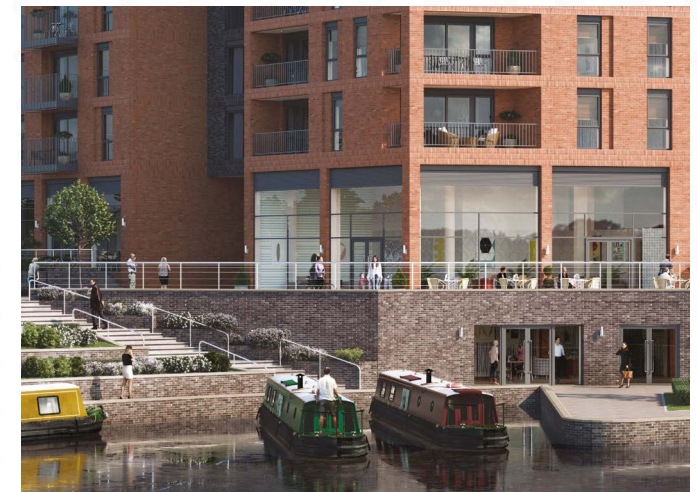
Environmentally it was seen as important to respect the rich ecological setting of the site whilst bringing forward enhancements as part of the development process supporting Goal 15 'Life on land'. The project team considered how development would integrate with the existing ecosystem and biodiversity of the site, with particular regard to the site's distinct canal setting. Engagement was undertaken with local environment charity The Parks Trust and the Canal and River Trust in order to get their views on the scheme, and measures have been included in the scheme to enhance the environment, such as a new swale between the canal side houses and canal footpath to provide an open water feature creating habitat and clean surface water. The scheme incorporates a range of sustainable measures as a means of addressing the impacts on climate change, and in doing so supports sustainable development goals Goals 7 and 13. For example, the development includes renewable energy technology in the form of Photo Voltaic panels, efficient building techniques such as air source heat pumps and sustainable drainage. This has resulted in an overall saving in carbon dioxide emissions of over 12.7% over total emissions.

Community benefit

This project has set a high benchmark for engagement with the community, increasing the confidence of the public in the planning process and creating a sense of ownership by the public. Given the wide interest to residents in Milton Keynes, the project team organised a three-day public consultation in the main shopping centre with the aim of consulting local residents and businesses. The level of interest meant that the number of people that visited the stand could not be monitored. However, the openness and willingness of the project team to engage with the community is reflected in the feedback at the public exhibition which saw 86% of those attending supporting the overall vision for what was being proposed.

The development includes the provision of 115 affordable homes which are indistinguishable from the market units. This is a policy compliant amount on a city centre site which others had struggled on viability grounds. Through unlocking the ability to bring forward the marina development, the scheme has also enabled those that want to live a transit life-style to find moorings. Crest Nicholson have delivered a high specification development with beautiful public realm and units which meet national space standards. The development provides access to a canal walk and a large linear park and other linear parks given its strategic location as part of a green infrastructure network. This promotes healthy living and an active lifestyle. The site also has good footpath links and is in walking distance of the main centre meaning that residents can walk to key services and places of employment instead of paying over £500 a year for an annual employee parking permit.

There were a significant number of tangible benefits which resulted from this proposal. The development has created jobs for the construction industry and its supply chain, including apprentices.



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The scheme has delivered employment opportunities on site e.g. a pub, shop/retail spaces, café, canal boats and in the nursery. The development has brought forward a distinct and artistic tri-span bridge, one of only a few in the UK, which adds to the sense of place and is a focal point of the development whilst being functional and sensitive to its surroundings. Development has activated the frontage of the canal and has improved footpath connectivity. The layby marina on site allows for short-stay barges to stop off in Milton Keynes. The marina also includes a community run boat and shop boats, including a cinema boat. Infrastructure, including the marina, the bridge, the pub and the shop, has been delivered in advance of the occupation of the housing. The development has brought forward 115 units of affordable housing and £1.1m in Section 106 money to invest in infrastructure. Renewable energy technology in the form of PV panels and air source heat pumps have been included. This is to result in an overall saving in carbon dioxide emissions of over 12.7% over total emissions.

Leading practice

This development is considered to be a landmark scheme in Milton Keynes. The development itself has been incredibly popular, with queues out the door at the launch event. The scheme has incorporated unusual elements such as the tri-span bridge which is sympathetic to environment and yet at the same time beautiful statement feature. It has given a distinct vision and identity to the place which only had the canal side setting as any real design precedent. The site was in a sensitive location from an environmental and heritage perspective. These considerations were put at the heart of the design process and have been respected in terms of the final scheme.

There are a number of key aspects that make this scheme an exemplar project. A scheme was delivered on what was considered to be an unviable site. Working through the problem and exploring different options, a solution was found which reworked the vision favoured by the Council.

The viability of the site was then further strengthened through design work at the masterplanning stage, which through sensitive design ultimately enabled the delivery of a policy compliant provision of affordable housing. This site is located in an area where there were no neighbouring buildings. The scheme is an example of how to create a new community and a design rationale from scratch. It has established a design precedent and character for the wider area. The site also demonstrates how development can spark a wider change and increase the viability of its surroundings – without this development the future housing coming forward in the surrounding sites in Campbell Park (circa 2-2,500 units) would unlikely have been possible.

The scheme saw the forward delivery of infrastructure which is often desired by Councils, but is not always possible. This was achieved through effective communication with the council throughout this process and effective partnership working. Extensive public engagement was also undertaken as part of this scheme with a range of actors as discussed previously - this scheme is an example of effective public engagement and the different ways in which it can be undertaken e.g. stakeholder workshops, meeting with Councillors, Pre-application meeting, public exhibitions, etc.

The scheme has delivered 115 affordable housing units which will help to support those most in need in Milton Keynes in a location which is sustainable and close to key facilities. The proposal includes homes of a high specification, which meet minimum space standards and are of a considered design ensuring a good standard of life for all residents. The scheme will support mental health and wellbeing through the improved accessibility to green space and the canal. The development has also provided an active frontage increasing the sense of safety for this canalside environment. Public open space on site is also accessible to all potential users and is safe, enabling all individuals to feel comfortable using it.



Sue Percy CBE,
Chair of RTPI South East
judging panel, said:

“The project represents a real planning success story. The project demonstrates excellence in land use planning, regeneration, sustainable transport and a wonderfully designed piece of civil engineering as a centrepiece.

The planning team managed to overcome viability issues and have delivered a project that not only regenerated the site, but will hopefully trigger improvements to the wider area to the benefit of current and future residents and visitors.”

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An Interview with the

RTPI South East Young Planner of the Year 2020 Daniel Young

How and why did you embark on your planning career?

Like a lot of planning officers I suspect, I came into planning from a geography background. It was whilst travelling abroad after my undergraduate course that I began to ask questions about what makes great places. From there, I started to develop an interest in creating resilience and the urban environment. I wanted to get involved in developing places that are not only pleasant and healthy for people, but that can withstand various challenges like climate change and biodiversity decline that every city around the world faces.

I quickly identified that local authorities and the public sector would be a really valuable position to place myself in. The primarily positive role of local authorities, in that we are effectively here to make places better for the people that live, work and visit was something that really rang true with me too.

What does your current job involve?

I work in the planning policy team, primarily the focus of our work at present is developing the new Local Plan for Portsmouth. I take responsibility for a lot of the more environmentally focussed topics in the Plan, including green infrastructure, climate change, energy, flooding, and open space.

Do you feel you have gained something from the experience / do you have any goals for your time as South East Young Planner of the year?

My time in the profession to date has involved working on a wide variety of exciting and interesting topics. I've definitely begun to specialize towards the more environmentally focused aspects of planning, but I've come to understand that these matters touch upon all aspects of place making really from health housing, to a successful economy as well as preserving history and heritage.

What advice would you give to students and recent graduates about to start their career in Town Planning?

Don't be afraid to ask questions. As planners we are often expected to know about a broad range of topics, and unfortunately the planning system is a complex one with many interrelations with other areas. That can be a pretty daunting realisation for anyone starting out in their career, even if they've studied planning at university. But I've learnt that there's always someone who knows more about a particular topic, or who has had experience in a work area that can be of benefit to you. Talking to people and asking questions, even when they seem stupid or simple, not only shows that you're curious and eager to learn, but can expose you to ideas that you hadn't thought of before, and it the best way to develop yourself professionally.

If you could make one positive change to the current planning system what would this be?

I think one of the most important things we need to get better at as planners is how we can help wider society to think over longer term timescales. Shaping places takes a long time, it's an iterative process that happens over decades, even centuries. Whilst the tendency at present is to think along shorter timescales, such as what we can achieve before the next election, or during the immediate Local Plan period, we need to have one eye on the future and be thinking more seriously about how the decisions we are taking today relate to the world in a hundred years or more, for example, how will this building and its inhabitants fit into a climate that is more susceptible to heat wave events in the summer, or heavy rainfall events in the winter.

Of course that's not always an easy feat when we're faced with more immediate crises like the Covid pandemic or homelessness, and a lot of the people we have to engage with on a daily basis just don't have the time or resources to worry about issues that far in the future. But as planners I think we have a responsibility for trying to ensure that longer term issues are still part of the conversation wherever possible, and for helping people to connect with these issues without losing sight of more immediate concerns.



An Interview with the

RTPI South East Young Planner of the Year 2020 continued ...

What do you think planning will be like in 2050? How the current situation has brought about a positive change?

Bearing in mind everything I just said... I'm conscious that it is also incredibly difficult to predict what anything will look like in 25 years, let alone 50 or 100 years. But, one hope I have would be that we have a system in place which is much more adept at quantifying and communicating the multi-functional benefits and ecosystems services that the natural environment can provide for places. Crucially it needs to be easy to understand and to use not just for planners, but also the wider public so that they can take informed decisions about these matters.

We've begun to take steps towards this with ideas like biodiversity net gain, and natural capital accounting, but there are a much broader set of benefits that the environment when space is made for it in new developments. I would hope that with an improved understanding of all this, we will be able to better embed these into the design of our towns and cities from the beginning and maximise the benefits they can offer.

Where do you see yourself in 20 years as a planner and how the current situation will shape your career in planning?

In 20 years, I would hope to still be involved in developing planning policy to some degree. It's interesting and exciting tackling the big challenges like climate change, aging populations, environmental net gain and trying to translate that into policy that will hopefully help to shape places for the better.

I would also hope that I'd have had the chance to broaden my experience by working in a range of different settings, rural and urban, as well as by getting some international experience, so that I can get a feel for how other countries around the world do planning and perhaps learn a thing or two from them that I can apply in my own work.

It's a great honour to receive this award. I truly believe that planners have a vital role to play in creating healthy, sustainable places for all and I will continue to champion the benefits that our profession can bring to addressing the challenges we face today and in the future."

Daniel Young MRTPI - RTPI South East Young Planner for the Year 2020

"Daniel's enthusiastic commitment to helping to address climate change and delivering improvements through policy based on his national and international research impressed the judges. They wish him every success in taking these forward and feel he has a bright future ahead of him in Town Planning."

Quote from the judges

Mental Health and town planning

Build in resilience

In the UK and Ireland, the rates of mental health illness are high. It is estimated that around one in four people will experience a mental health condition. This places a huge burden on individuals, their families and on society, where someone lives can have an impact on their mental health.

The quality of the wider built environment is also a determining factor for mental health, with noise, pollution levels, quality of green space, access to services and even 'beauty' all playing a part. Therefore, town planning decisions can have an impact on mental health. Creating an accessible, inclusive built environment that enables everyone to play an equal role in society is important in protecting and enhancing everyone's well-being and mental health.

This practice note gives advice on how planners can work within the current UK planning systems and with other professionals to take account of mental health when making changes to the built environment. It summarises expert advice, outlines key planning policy, good practice and case studies. The policy context applies to England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Ireland, but the principles of good practice apply wherever you work in the world.

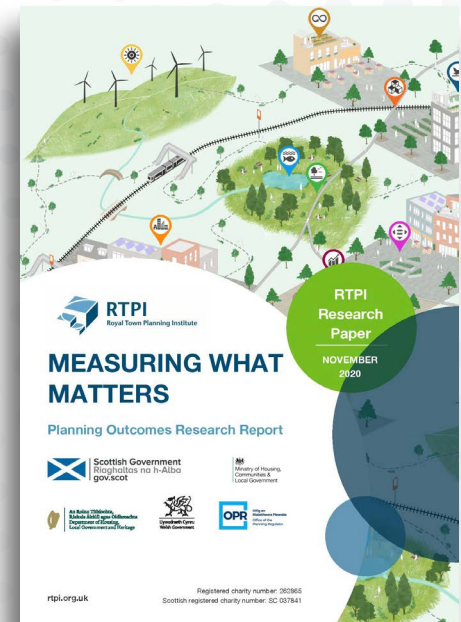
[Read the full report here >>>](#)

Measuring What Matters: Planning Outcomes Research

The RTPI is pleased to publish new research which considers how local authorities across the UK and Ireland can measure the outcomes of planning.

This means going beyond simple metrics like speed of processing applications and number of housing units delivered and assessing planning in terms of placemaking aspirations and social, economic and environmental value, in order to track and improve the impact of planning. Building on previous work that has taken place across the nations, the project has culminated in the development of a report and series of toolkits which can be adapted by local planning authorities across the UK and Ireland to improve their outcome measurement.

This research was commissioned by the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) with funding support from the Governments of Ireland, Scotland and Wales, along with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Office of the Planning Regulator in Ireland. The research was delivered by a consortium of planning consultancies and academics from around the UK and Ireland, led by Kevin Murray Associates.



The research can be accessed via our website:

www.rtpi.org.uk/planningoutcomes

RTPI welcomes climate report but repeats calls for **more funding**

The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) has welcomed a new report from the Climate Change Committee (CCC) that sets out a route map for an almost fully decarbonised nation.

But the Institute has also warned that planning will play a crucial role in delivering many of the CCC's recommendations, and therefore needs to be adequately resourced.

RTPI chief executive Victoria Hills has repeated calls, first made in [a formal response](#) to the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR), for £500m over the next four years to enable planning departments in England to deliver outcomes efficiently, effectively and equitably. RTPI Cymru has also called for [more funding for planners](#) to enable them to deliver ambitions for a sustainable future.

The CCC's Sixth Carbon Budget charts the four key steps needed to reduce emissions by nearly 80% by 2035, compared to 1990 levels, bringing forward the UK's previous 80% target by nearly 15 years. The next 10 years will be crucial in scaling up the policy required.

These include making all new cars, vans and boiler replacements electric by the early 2030s, making offshore wind the backbone of the energy system, changing diets to reduce consumption of high-carbon meat and dairy products, increasing woodland cover and restoring peatlands.

RTPI chief executive Victoria Hills said: "The largest proposed investments in this report are for low-carbon power capacity, building retrofit and the added costs of batteries and infrastructure for electric vehicles. Planning will play a vital role in coordinating this investment across the built and natural environment, and ensuring that new development is located and designed in ways that support the rapid transition to net zero, including increased take up of active travel.

In order to do this local authority planning departments must be adequately funded. The £12 million allocated by the UK government to support its planning reform agenda in England is not enough for planning to effectively deliver the requirements of this carbon budget."

Ms Hills added that she was pleased to see climate justice being recognised as integral to the transition to net zero and pointed to a recent RTPI report, [Five Reasons for Climate Justice](#), which shows that planning plays a key part in embedding climate justice in local decision making and tailoring policies to support vulnerable communities across the UK.

The RTPI's [Plan the World We Need](#) campaign calls 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. Upcoming RTPI research will also demonstrate how place-based approaches support the CCC's recommendations for reducing travel demand, which is critical to cutting emissions.



For further information on the RTPI's climate change work please click here.



Coronavirus and Planning-the implications

Charles Goode
University of Birmingham

In this article Charles gives us his thoughts on the Coronavirus, including the key implications for planning, and how policy should evolve. Charles has recently published articles for [Town Planning Review](#) and another article that examines the [implications of COVID-19 on planning in Britain](#).

Additionally he recently spoke at an RTPI WM webinar on the subject.

Housing

Consumer preference surveys since Lockdown have shown that people have been re-evaluating their household situation and now desire more domestic indoor and outdoor space alongside access to local greenspace and facilities (Greenwood and Whittaker, 2020). Arguably, national space standards for housing are required in terms of indoor space and access to natural daylight etc. but also for access to local greenspace. This poses challenges for urban densification and it maybe that a more medium level of densification takes place in cities but, in order for cities to thrive and survive post-Coronavirus, the range of services provided alongside development and place-making agenda is very important.

Changing residential preferences towards semi-rural locations combined with less densification in cities may mean that there is more development pressure on the Green Belt. Reviving strategic planning and perhaps a regional Green Belt review to explore the various spatial visions for growth and options for meeting housing need, i.e. 'new' new towns, is vital. However, it is very important that we do not 'leave behind' the millions of people constrained by affordability, who cannot move out of cities, through continuing to focus on regeneration and the quality of the urban environment.

Retail and Economic Growth

Geographically, there has been a shift towards people using and shopping in local centres rather than city centres whilst life is often being breathed back into 'commuter' towns, like Halesowen (notwithstanding the enormous shift to online retail). This clearly poses enormous challenges for city centres, especially now that people are much likely to only be in the office 2-3 days a week. Consequently, city centres need to be re-imagined and re-purposed away from the traditional concept of a 'Central Business District' (CBD) towards perhaps more community uses, like the Preston Model or Doncaster's re-use of vacant shops. However, this poses challenges, especially securing buy-in from owners used to the high rents generated from Grade A office space or the certainty of long-leases with national retailers. Another option is residential development in former office spaces and shops but this returns to wider importance of place-making to ensure that appropriate facilities, like GP surgeries and schools, are in place for the re-population of city centres. To improve urban access to greenspace, urban farming could potentially be a very valuable land use in city centres/inner cities as a 'meanwhile' use and on the street scene, like Bristol's Get Growing Garden Trail or farms, with animals and agriculture, like Bristol's Windmill Hill City Farm.

However, this requires having a supportive local authority, with farms often paying a peppercorn rent on council owned land, alongside a clear, up-to-date but flexible local plan. Again, strategic planning is urgently needed to more effectively manage the growing demand for warehousing/logistics space which will exert (more) pressure on the Green Belt/greenfield land as often being located near arterial routes.

Concluding Reflections

Coronavirus has had a profound impact of how we live, work, shop and play and therefore has and will shape the broader context within which planning operates. A mixture of vision/imagination, flexibility and planning knowledge has and is going to be vital for planners as we respond to the emerging impacts of Coronavirus. Planners and planning has never been so important and it is vital that we heed Daniel Burnham's advice to make 'no little plans' (UK 2070 Commission, 2020, p.1).

References:

[Greenwood, L. and Whittaker, G. \(2020\) Coronavirus and Residential-Development, Savills.](#) (Accessed: 30 June 2020).

[UK 2070 Commission \(2020\) 'Make No Little Plans'](#), (Accessed: 15 April 2020).

Future of town centres - The regeneration and re-imagining of high streets (webinar)

[Book here](#)

Meeting the South East housing needs - A focus on the greenbelt (webinar)

[Book here](#)

RTPI Online Events series 2021



We are delighted to announce the launch of our 2021 RTPI Online Events programme.

This is where you can access the most cutting edge events on planning. Brought to you by our Regions and Nations, this [new 6-month calendar](#) of webinars replaces our face to face Regional and National event programmes, and brings all our events under one roof, keeping you connected and up to date digitally, wherever you are based.

The RTPI Online Events series is **FREE** to members. Non-member tickets cost £25.

The RTPI South East 2021 online programme provides free CPD for members. Undertaking CPD is an important part of maintaining your competence as a professional. The CPD programme could count towards your minimum 50 hours of CPD activity in each two year period. Read more about [CPD requirements and assessment](#) as an RTPI member.

Planning on the Coast Thursday, 28 January 2021 (12:30pm - 01:30pm)

Coastal communities have special characteristics, especially where they are on peninsulas or islands. These are challenging locations facing issues of coastal erosion, flood risk and sensitive habitats. Hence, planning authorities on the south coast face a number of challenges as they look to review their local plans.

In this webinar the speakers will consider:

- Strategic planning issues facing south Hampshire and West Sussex
- Work of the Coastal Partners
- Highlight recent research on the challenges facing local planning authorities in responding to climate change adaptation

Through a combination of expert speakers and discussion, you will learn:

- The planning issues facing the south coast
- Case studies responding to coastal planning issues
- The findings of recent research which will inform future thinking and actions.

Future of town Centres - the regeneration and re-imaging of high streets Thursday, 04 March 2021 (12:30pm – 01:30pm)

COVID-19 has seen communities, businesses and leaders adjust, make plans and take actions for a different kind of new town, which looks at the future of our high streets and town centres.

In this webinar experts will:

- Discuss the recovery and future of town centres in the south east
- Talk about the High Street Task Force COVID-19 Recovery Framework
- Delve into what the future of high streets in the region might look like in terms of destinations for shopping coupled with spaces for community hubs and meeting places
- Give a case law update
- Discuss regional changes in demand post-Covid (qualitative and quantitative) for economic floorspace and its impact on our built environment.

Through a combination of expert speakers and discussion, you will learn:

- How the High Task Force COVID-19 Recovery Framework can adapt and populate with the local plans towards recovery
- Planning for sustainable new towns centres and
- Case law update

Plan Making in the South East Tuesday, 23 March 2021 (12:30pm – 01:30pm)

This seminar is aimed at those interested in the preparation of Local Plans in the context of change and uncertainty. Whether a plan is 'almost there' or at the early stages this seminar will examine key issues relating to the development of Plans and policies. Speakers will also provide an insight into the role of Neighbourhood Planning as part of the Planning Framework.

In the webinar you will hear from various speakers including:

- The 2019 SE Award for Planning Excellence – Plan : MK (2016-2031)
- Those engaged in Neighbourhood Planning in Oxfordshire
- Community engagement specialists

Through a combination of expert speakers and discussion, you will:

- Learn about the process and lessons from Neighbourhood Planning, including how it can help to deliver locally-specific place visions.
- Hear about the challenges of preparing a Local Plan under a strict timetable
- Understand ways in which Local Plans can deliver a vision for a place's future
- Appreciate different methods of engagement for plan making; and
- Receive an update on relevant case-law as applied to the preparation of local plans

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Meeting the South East housing needs - a focus on the greenbelt

Monday, 24 May 2021 (12:30pm – 01:30pm)

As pressure for housing continues to build nationally, the provision of well located, affordable homes to meet demand remains a key issue. This event will consider the role of planning in seeking to meet the housing challenges in the green belt areas.

Speakers will discuss the

- Demand and supply, barriers to delivery, and potential solutions in the green belt
- The environmental impact on the green belt
- Access to the countryside and impact of travel

Through a combination of expert speakers and discussion, you will:

- Housing challenges in the green belt areas
- Update on relevant Case law
- Understand the environmental impact on the green belt

Biodiversity and ecological conservation

Thursday, 25 June 2021 (12:30pm- 01:30pm)

The South East has a cherished and diverse range of habitats and species, from internationally designated forests and wetland to back-gardens and pocket parks. The development process has a critical role in biodiversity planning from surveying, mitigation and enhancement.

Our speakers will consider:

- How policy and development management can help protect wildlife and deliver biodiversity net gains, including interim policies ahead of the Environment Bill
- Recent projects demonstrating best practice in the region, together with their thoughts on the benefits of strategic planning.
- Case law

Through a combination of expert speakers and discussion, you will learn:

- Best practice examples in the south east
- Understanding of how best to interpret ecological and biodiversity related strategic and development management planning policies
- Update on relevant Case law
- The objectives of Biodiversity Net Gain and interim policies

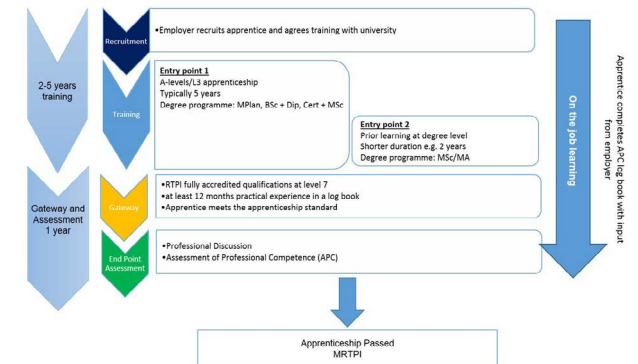


RTPI Apprenticeships

Our built environment is changing fast and to face the challenge of planning our future towns and cities you need up-to-date skills. However, you don't need to sit in a classroom all day to get them.

An apprenticeship is a real job with training and can be a first step to a career in town planning and Membership of the RTPI.

[Click here to find out more >>>](#)



The RTPI South East Young Planners' Networks



The [RTPI South East Young Planners' Networks](#) organise free social, CPD and APC training events throughout the year.

There are four local groups in the region

- Kent Young Planners Network - covers Kent area
- South Coast Young Planners Network (SCYPN) - covers West Sussex, East Sussex, Hampshire, Isle of Wight
- Surrey Young Planners Network – covers Surrey area
- Thames Valley Young Planners Network (TVYPN) – covers Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire

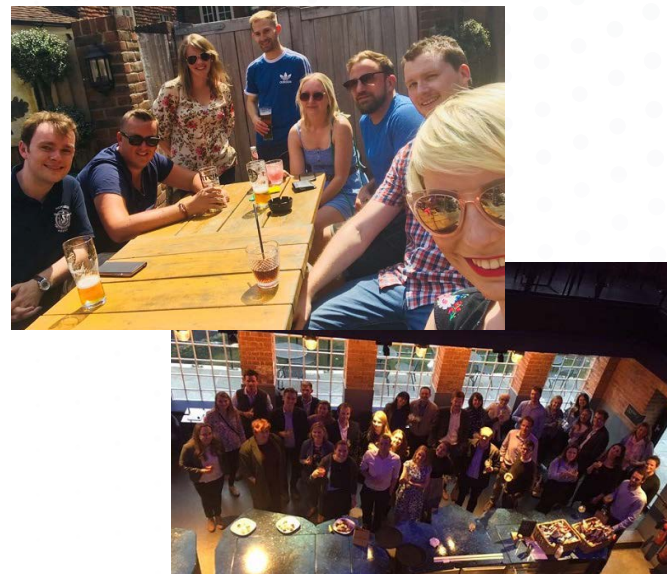
Do I count as a 'young planner'?

A young planner is any student, licentiate or corporate member of the RTPI with up to 10 years' experience post-qualification.

What do young planners do?

Young Planners have a very important role to play in promoting planning to people during all stages of their careers. **There are lots of different things Young Planners do including:**

- Making presentations to universities on the role of planning
- Social events including drinks nights, BBQs, pub quizzes in a range of locations across the region
- Seminars on topics of interest in planning



Why should you get involved?

RTPI South East Young Planners' Networks have an opportunity to:

- Foster professional relationships
- Network with other professions
- Develop soft skills in project management and leadership
- Contributes to career progression
- Promote Planning
- Inspire the next generation
- Share experiences
- Support L-APC Candidates
- Have fun and socialise with like-minded people

Make sure you receive the latest news and event information by signing up to the Young Planners' Network.

Join the [Young Planners' network](#)

*Wishing you all a very
Merry Christmas and a
Healthy and prosperous 2021
from us all at ...*



RTPI South East
Royal Town Planning Institute