

School of the **Built Environment**

OXFORD  
**BROOKES**  
UNIVERSITY

# The Future of the Planning Discipline

A one-day conference  
hosted by Oxford Brookes University  
18 May 2011

**Keynote Speakers:**

***Steve Quartermain CLG***

***Sue Percy RTPI***

***Hugh Ellis TCPA***

***Stephen Tapper POS***

Image courtesy of Diamond Light Source



# The Future of the Planning Discipline

A one-day conference, Oxford Brookes University, 18 May 2011

The arrival of the Coalition government in May 2010 instigated yet another round of major reform of the Planning system in England. The abolition of RDAs, Regional Spatial Strategies and the nascent Infrastructure Planning Commission, the introduction of Local Enterprise Partnerships and prospective 'Right-to-Build' powers, and the promised fundamental reform and streamlining of national planning policy were just some of the headline announcements from the first 6 months of the new administration. Seen alongside the radical programme of cutbacks in public sector spending, a revitalised drive for localism and civic engagement, and the urgency of the national growth agenda, it is clear that Planning faces the most challenging times ahead.

In these circumstances it is not surprising that voices have once again been raised regarding the future of planning practice and the planning profession. Built Environment interests of all shades have lobbied the Government regarding the loss of strategic regional planning on the one hand, and the critical need to engage and empower communities on the other. Academic commentators have announced the failure of New Labour's experiment with an integrative 'Spatial Planning', which proved too complex, ambitious and burdensome. Even BBC2's Culture Show (4/11/10) reflected on a 'broken' system, with architecture(!) critic Tom Dyckhoff offering a three point plan for reform - more pro-active engagement with local people, a radical simplifying of the system, and a call for renewed passion in Planning.

Alongside these immediate practical and professional concerns, however, critical issues emerge for the future of Planning as an academic and educational enterprise. Indeed, the current turbulence extends 30 years of experimentation and reform which has increasingly eroded the foundations upon which Planning was constructed, thereby questioning the very nature and standing of the discipline: its basic aims and objectives, its distinctive content and skills, and its capacity to attract and develop students in a diverse, fluid and challenging landscape. As a result there is a clear need to reassert the ambition and vitality of Planning *per se*, and to engage critically and positively with associated educational implications in order to forge a strong and cohesive disciplinary context for the future. The Planning academy must be at the forefront of this debate, stimulating and guiding new thinking and providing leadership and innovation. The time is surely ripe for creativity and radical reform not least given the profound challenges posed by climate change, global economic slowdown and the emergence and consolidation of new technologies.

The Spatial Planning Group in the Department of Planning at Oxford Brookes University will host a one-day conference on Wednesday 18 May 2011 on ***The Future of the Planning Discipline***. Major academic, government and professional speakers will outline future directions and prompt workshop-based discussions, including:

- The changing nature of Planning as an academic and educational enterprise
- Aims, objectives of the Planning discipline
- Response of Planning education and research to new government priorities
- Relations with cognate disciplines in the social sciences, built environment and environmental science disciplines
- Implications for Planning research

Delegate fee £10

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- 8.45 - 9.15 Arrivals Coffee etc  
9.15 - 9.30 Welcome; Introductory Comments  
9.30 - 10.50 **Perspectives from Practice and the Profession**  
9.30 Steve Quartermain, CLG *Planning Reform under the Coalition Government*  
9.50 Sue Percy, Director of Professional Services RTPI *The Future of the Planning Academy - the RTPI perspective*  
10.10 Hugh Ellis, TCPA *Planning for a New Age of Challenge*  
10.30 Stephen Tapper, Planning Officers Society *'We're All Planners Now' - Planning in a new context*  
10.50 Break  
11.20 **Academic Perspectives**  
11.20 Prof. Heather Campbell, University of Sheffield *The 'idea' of planning: alive or dead – who cares?*  
11.35 Prof. Graham Houghton, University of Manchester *The rise and fall of spatial planning: hubris and its aftermath*  
11.50 Prof. Mark Tewdwr-Jones, Bartlett School of Planning, UCL *Forward to first principles: planning's changing guises*  
12.05 Prof. Simin Davoudi, University of Newcastle *The planning discipline and the problem of 'something more'*  
12.20 Dr Bridget Durning, Oxford Brookes University *The Spiral of Knowledge Development: Professional Knowledge Development in Planning*  
12.40 Discussion  
1.00 Lunch  
2.00 - 3.15 Split workshops:  
**A. The future of planning pedagogy**  
**B. New directions for planning research**  
3.15 - 3.30 Refreshments  
3.30 - 4.00 Feedback and summary. Close.

For more information and to register please visit our website:

[www.brookes.ac.uk/schools/be/development/courses/fpd.html](http://www.brookes.ac.uk/schools/be/development/courses/fpd.html)

Or contact Karen Hughes:  
tel: **+44 (0)1865 483560**  
email: [khughes@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:khughes@brookes.ac.uk)

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# Three ways to book

## By post:

Post the completed booking form to:

Karen Hughes, CPD Coordinator, Department of Planning, Headington Campus, Gipsy Lane, Headington, Oxford OX3 0BP

## By fax:

Fax the complete booking form to 01865 483406

## By phone:

Telephone 01865 483560 to provisionally reserve a place, then post or fax the complete form

Please book by Wednesday 4 May 2011

## Conference booking form *The Future of the Planning Discipline*

Wednesday 18 May 2011

Please reserve me a place on this conference

I understand the fee will be £10 (fee includes light lunch and refreshments)

Title..... First name .....

Surname .....

Address .....

.....

..... Postcode .....

Day-time telephone..... Fax .....

Email address .....

Organisation .....

Occupation .....

Special dietary/mobility requirements .....

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Payment details follow

# Payment details

Please find cheque enclosed (payable to Oxford Brookes University)  
Please debit my credit card  
(Visa/Mastercard/Access/Switch/Delta)

Card No .....Security code .....  
Start Date ..... Expiry Date ..... Issue No (where applicable) .....  
Amount £ ..... Signature .....  
Name.....  
Address.....  
.....Postcode.....

Please invoice  
(for applicants being funded by their employers)

Name.....  
Address.....  
.....Postcode.....

Your Purchase Order No.....

Please send this form with either:

- i) your purchase order; or
- ii) written authorisation from your sponsor

Applicant's signature .....

*A full refund will be given for cancellations received in writing at least 1 week prior to the course/conference.*

*No refunds will be made for cancellations received less than 1 week prior to the course/conference.*

*Non-arrivals will be charged the full fee.*

*A substitute delegate is welcome at no extra charge.*

*Oxford Brookes University reserves the right to alter the programme without notice.*