



13th Biennial of European Towns and Town Planners

# Planning on the edge

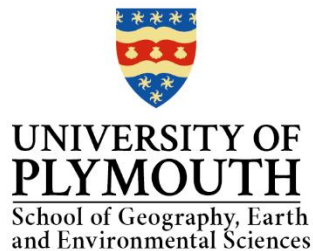
11th - 13th September 2019 | University of Plymouth | UK

## Conference Proceedings Report

*Creating our futures*

**ECTP-CEU**

European Council of Spatial Planners  
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**13th European Biennial of Towns and Town Planners 2019  
Planning on the Edge, Plymouth, 11-13 September, 2019**

## **Conference Proceedings**

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## 13th EUROPEAN BIENNIAL OF TOWNS AND TOWN PLANNERS 2019 PLANNING ON THE EDGE, PLYMOUTH, 11-13 SEPTEMBER, 2019

### Introduction

The 13<sup>th</sup> Biennial of the European Towns and Town Planners convened by the ECTP – CEU. Hosted by the City of Plymouth and the University of Plymouth from 10 – 13 September 2019, the theme of the conference was ‘Planning on the Edge’. The three-day event was attended by about 160 academics and practitioners from across the whole of Europe and included 41 papers and three walking tours exploring aspects of regeneration in Plymouth. This conference proceedings provides a summary of each of the papers presented at the conference as a record of the event.

With thanks to Julian Hills (ECTP-CEU Secretariat) for permission to use his photographs in the volume. The full collection of presentations and photographs can be viewed on the ECTP website:

[http://www.ectp-ceu.eu/index.php/en/?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=494:biennials-13&catid=38:biennial](http://www.ectp-ceu.eu/index.php/en/?option=com_content&view=article&id=494:biennials-13&catid=38:biennial)



The conference was hosted in the Sherwell Centre at the campus of the University of Plymouth. The building is a converted church, which has two large lecture theatres together with break-out spaces and rooms.

Wednesday, 11 September, 2019

## WELCOME SESSION

Chair & Rapporteur: Paul Barnard (Plymouth City Council)



Councillor Tudor Evans OBE, Leader of Plymouth City Council, making his opening welcome speech to the conference, together with the RTPI Jubilee Cup, which the Planning Service at Plymouth City Council has won three times (2005, 2016 and 2018).

The Biennial got underway with a rousing welcome to 'Britain's Ocean City' by the Leader of Plymouth City Council, **Councillor Tudor Evans OBE**. He referred to the Mayflower commemorations, which will celebrate 400 years since the Mayflower sailed from Plymouth to the United States of America in 2020. Building on the theme of the conference, it was highlighted that Plymouth, within the context of enormous structural challenges that cities are currently confronting, faces three strategic challenges: a connectivity challenge, a productivity challenge and an inequalities challenge. Plymouth has a long and proud tradition for strategic planning, but planning has been the subject of a neo-liberal assault within the UK with numerous deregulatory reforms that have disempowered communities from what planning is essentially all about – an inherently democratic process of change and renewal which should benefit all stakeholders not just a few. Nevertheless, there are undoubtedly challenges for cities pursuing solely growth-dependent strategies, particularly in response to the declarations by many councils of a climate emergency. The purpose of planning needs be rediscovered – which at its most dynamic, its most innovative, and its most creative - can truly

transform people's lives for the better. The spatial planning system needs to be values-based, people-centred, and focused on sustainable outcomes. The alternative is a leap into the abyss of a market free-for-all: where climate change impacts on the most vulnerable in society in ever more horrific ways; where jobs are lost and communities devastated by ideologically driven, uncaring, macro-economic policies; and where the basic human right of a decent, warm and affordable home is denied to an increasing larger number of citizens.

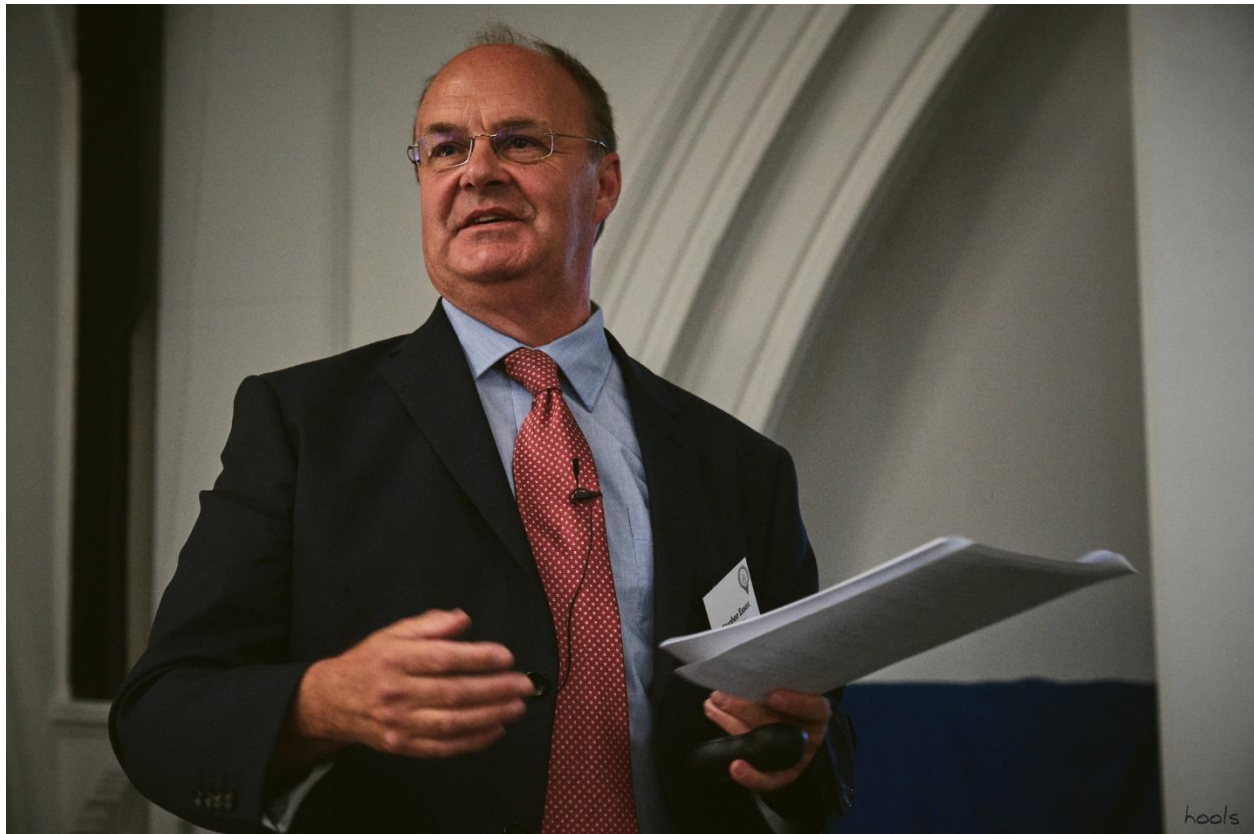
**Professor Julian Chaudhuri** (Deputy Vice Chancellor Education and Student Experience, University of Plymouth) welcomed the delegates to the University and outlined the key themes of the conference. Coastal communities, such as those around Devon and Cornwall, have experienced significant social and economic change during the last 30-40 years. Port cities have experienced dereliction from the consequences of the globalisation of trade, changing shipping techniques and deindustrialisation. Seaside resorts have suffered from an outdated infrastructure and increasing competition and coastal fishing and market towns have been affected by changing agricultural and fisheries policies. Coastal settlements generally rank among the most deprived areas in many European countries, albeit with substantial inequalities in population structures, employment, health, education and skills. Despite the significance of these challenges, coastal communities have often been described as the 'least understood problem areas' and have been neglected in public policy. In the UK, 15 of the top 20 most deprived areas are actually in our seaside resorts, yet they are often superficially perceived as attractive and affluent places.

Coastal areas are, in addition, especially vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, which threatens significant centres of population, infrastructure and industry, as well as important natural habitats and heritage. Regeneration strategies can be thwarted by the peripherality of coastal settlements, combined with poor transport connections, reduced catchment areas and difficult or protected topographies. Marine spatial planning offers new challenges and opportunities for integrating land-based and marine activities. Other peripheral territories and urban spaces 'on the edge', such as on political boundaries, can also experience similar issues together with added potential for territorial disputes. Such places can also become places of new opportunities for connections between spaces and territories as they often share more in common with the neighbouring territory, than they do with the centre of their own country. Border cities close to the boundary between two countries, states or regions often to have highly cosmopolitan communities based on the populations travelling and trading through the town.

All these issues are well represented in the Faculties and Schools of the University of Plymouth. The Marine Institute offers multidisciplinary expertise in marine and maritime research, education and innovation to train new scientists, engineers, policy-makers, artists, technicians and business managers of the future. The Sustainable Earth Institute brings researchers together with businesses, community groups and individuals to develop cutting-edge research and innovative approaches that build resilience to global challenges. The University's MSc Planning programme offers professional education for new and practising planners and includes a specialism module in Coastal Urban

Regeneration. Civil and Coastal Engineering programmes train civil engineers with specialist knowledge in the realisation of projects that are essential to the functioning of coastal societies. Indeed, a priority in the University's new 2030 Strategy are marine and maritime environments and societies.

## HOST CITY BACKGROUND SESSION



Dr Stephen Essex (University of Plymouth) presenting his paper on the post-war reconstruction of Plymouth.

In the first of the presentations about the background to the host city, **Dr Stephen Essex** (University of Plymouth) outlined one of the defining characteristics of Plymouth, namely the post-Second World War reconstruction of the city centre. The paper was based on original research using a rich, but neglected, archive of original correspondence between key actors involved in the formulation, modification and implementation of the post-war *Plan for Plymouth* (1943). The reconstruction plans were led by a small elite network of actors, including Lord Astor (the city's wartime Lord Mayor), Professor Patrick Abercrombie (as the external consultant) and James Paton-Watson (the City Engineer and Surveyor), who established the main components of the Plan within six to seven months of the blitz. Their vision was radical, involving the creation of a completely new street layout based on a geometric grid and the Beaux arts architectural style; single land use zoning; the relocation of shops, businesses and residential area; and, in order to facilitate comprehensive redevelopment, the transfer of

landownership from freehold to leasehold. The process of implementation of the plan led to significant compromises and, ultimately, there was a mismatch between the original vision and the reality that was delivered.

There is no doubt that the post-war reconstruction of Plymouth along such radical lines was, nevertheless, a remarkable achievement, especially given the number of hurdles that this undertaking faced in an era of austerity and embryonic legislation. However, the legacies of the post-war reconstruction plan continue to influence the contemporary development and planning of the city centre, especially in light of competition from retail decentralisation and internet shopping. These legacies include the legibility, permeability and size of the city centre; issues related to natural surveillance after retail hours from the single land use zoning; and an increasing appreciation of the conservation value of one of (if not) the most complete Abercrombie townscapes in the world. These issues were not addressed until David Mackay's 'A Vision for Plymouth' in 2003, which formed the basis of the city's approach in its Local Development Framework (2007) and Joint Local Plan (2019).



Jonathan Bell (Plymouth City Council) presenting his paper on Plymouth's planning story: a philosophy of planning?

In the second of the host city presentations, **Jonathan Bell**, Head of Development Planning (Plymouth City Council), took participants on a personal journey reflecting on the last 30 years of planning in both Plymouth and the UK. Highlighting Plymouth's 'proactive, positive planning' philosophy, it was demonstrated how planning can be a hugely positive force for change and making a better future for citizens and the planet. Having a clear philosophy about the rationale and practice of planning is in sharp contrast to the negative way in which planning has been portrayed nationally in the UK as regulatory and negative. In reviewing the various periods of 'tinkering' with the planning system, the way forward was to be clear about the outcomes from planning; being 'fleet of foot' and adapting to changing national contexts; taking risks with a particular value placed on strategic planning and tactics; and always keeping the overall goal in mind despite a relentless focus on delivery.

**Keynote speaker: Professor Ronald Waterman**  
**SUSTAINABLE COAST AND DELTA ZONE DEVELOPMENT VIA BUILDING WITH NATURE**

*Chair & Rapporteur: Joris Scheers (ECTP)*



Professor Ronald Waterman making his keynote address about the Sustainable Coast and Delta Zone development via 'Building with Nature'.

The biggest challenge of the 21st century is the implementation of urban development that strengthens the economy and improves the environment, while making optimum



use of the available space. In the coastal zone, where 80% of the world's largest cities will be located by 2025, the sustainability of production and consumption processes should achieve a minimal global footprint. The concept of 'Building with Nature' focuses on three spatial solutions for the scarcity of space. Starting from the yin/yang symbol, Professor Waterman explained the idea of the flexible integration of land in water and water in land; and the utilisation of existing materials, forces and interactions present in nature as the basis of the reclamation of land from the sea and long-term coastal protection against sea level rise. Using different examples from The Netherlands and the United Arab Emirates, he explained how this approach had been successfully implemented. He also introduced the idea of 'aquapuncture', where inland waterways and waterfronts can be revitalised to offer flood protection, water storage and water regulation. Finally, he highlighted the advantages of a solid and long standing interaction between multiple stakeholders, incorporating both the public and private sectors as well as the general public.

**Keynote speaker: Bernie Foulkes (LDA Design)**

**PLANNING ON THE EDGE – PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY AS AN INFLUENCER**

*Chair & Rapporteur: Joris Scheers (ECTP)*



Bernie Foulkes (LDA Design) presenting his keynote lecture entitled 'Planning on the Edge: physical geography as an influencer'.

Physical geography has an enduring influence on the ideology and outlook of cities. It affects how cities see themselves and how cities define their relationships with other places. The jeopardy of life in places at the edge often created special qualities, such as a sense of adventure, independence and direction in citizens that, in turn, forged a city's future. Bernie Foulkes discussed three examples of cities with a common physical geography: namely coastal locations on the western edge of the European land mass - Liverpool, Kaliningrad and Plymouth. They shared some history and characteristics, such as trading ports or naval dockyards, but are also very different in many ways. Each is in the process of shaping its future and proposed that the ongoing influence of physical geography on that process had potential to inspire fresh thinking in regeneration projects.

In Kaliningrad, there were aspirations to create a European city by using its naval assets to make connections to other Baltic cities. In Liverpool, the so-called 'Baltic Triangle' area of the city, based on trade and migrants through the port, was becoming the centre of a new digital and creative hub. The old street layout was being reconnected in regeneration frameworks to repair the disconnections created by the imposition of new road networks in the 1960s. In Plymouth, the Second World War blitz had halted the creation of a new city, which is only beginning to re-start through reconnecting the city to its waterfront, especially with a new boulevard to the old Millbay docks. These cities on the edge had a special spirit, which drove their ambitions for regeneration.



The Civic Reception was held at the Ocean Studios in the Royal William Yard, Stonehouse, Plymouth.

The first day concluded with a Civic Reception at the Ocean Studios in the Royal William Yard, Stonehouse. The Royal William Yard was a former Naval Victualling Yard, built to the 1820s designs of Sir John Rennie. The redevelopment of this former military site on the waterfront was started by the Plymouth Urban Development Corporation (PUDC), 1993-98, which had the objective of regenerating areas through land assembly, provision of infrastructure and simplified planning to a point where the private sector would be willing to invest. The main challenge faced by PUDC achieving a careful balance between the demands and needs of any new uses and the protection of the architectural and historic integrity of the listed buildings. In 1999, the site was taken on by the South West Regional Development Agency, who reached an 'exclusivity agreement' in November 2003 with Urban Splash, a company specialising in the innovative redevelopment of historic buildings. This company proceeded to redevelop the buildings in a historically sensitive and innovative way, including residential apartments, restaurants, office space and art galleries. Its transformation is on-going.

Tuesday, 12 September, 2019

**Keynote 3: Vincent Goodstadt (Member of UK 2070 Commission)  
CHANGING PERSPECTIVES**

*Chair & Rapporteur: Richard Blyth (RTPI)*



Vincent Goodstadt (UK2070 Commission) making his keynote presentation on the main findings so far of the 'Inquiry into Regional Inequalities: towards a framework for action – rebalancing the UK economy'.

The issue of peripherality is often presented as the endemic European challenge, causing poor connectivity, access to services and economic potential. Such conditions had created longstanding divisions in society in the UK, with disparities of wealth between the prosperity of the South and the deprivation experienced in the North, Wales and Scotland. Despite a long history of interventions to fix the problem, the disparities continue to deepen: to the extent that it has been argued that the UK economy is 'decoupling'. The UK is more spatially unequal than all but two of the 28 OECD countries and is also unusual in having no national plan to deal with this inequality.

In 2018, a 'UK2070 Commission' was launched by Lord Bob Kerslake, formerly Head of the UK Civil Service, to inquire into the regional inequalities and propose a framework to rebalance the UK economy. This Commission has found, for example, that the UK also has the highest level of regional disparities in labour productivity and also high levels of disparity on the Index of Multiple Deprivation. The life chances of a poor person in a

poor region are less than those of a poor person in a rich region. The concentration of growth in limited areas puts undue pressure on the natural assets in those regions, especially water resources. The high level of spatial inequality means that the UK is also characterised by lost production. Resolving this lost production would increase national GDP. Important elements of a new policy to rebalance the economy needed to incorporate: (a) a greater commitment to devolution; (b) find ways to harness under-used assets, such as designating other 'golden triangles' such as the London-Oxford-Cambridge region; (c) higher education; (d) formulate a national spatial plan to join up the patchwork of initiatives, such as the Northern Powerhouse and the Midlands Engine; and (e) invest in the periphery, as existing initiatives do not favour places on the edge. The narrative has to be transformed: (a) the problems of inequalities are very much the problems of the edge; (b) the problems of the periphery cannot be solved in isolation; and (c) the periphery is the key to rebalancing the nation. The UK has the means to challenge this situation. Examples from Vincent's own practice in the Glasgow City Region were discussed.

## **SESSION A POLITICAL BORDERS**

*Chair & Rapporteur: Richard Blyth (RTPI)*

**Vit Řezáč** (CTU Prague) presented the outcomes of research into planning law in Central Europe, which focused on the relationship between public and private stakeholders in the process of planning and permissions for development. After almost 30 years of democracy in the region, there is permanent legislative uncertainty in the construction industry. This uncertainty depreciates private savings and diminishes the competitiveness of some Central European countries. Vit showed that the transition of planning was constrained by an unfavourable political context, which often confused spatial planning with the totalitarian control of the economy and, consequently, a society characteristic of the past. There were many attempts to address these issues in different ways, but a stable resolution still seems to evade policy makers. In the Czech Republic, in particular, there are high and increasing delays required to obtain permits to build. Nevertheless, there are attempts of legislative interventions or examples of creating spatial plans in unconventional way, which enrich the planning discussion.

**Vivian Ko and Jeffrey Ng** (West Berkshire Council, formerly of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government) described the consequences of planning at different spatial scales. Whilst normally planners would welcome the use of higher, city-region, levels of planning, in the case of the Pearl River Region, China, the implications are rather different. Considering the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region as part of the wider Pearl River Delta, including Guangzhou and Shenzhen, has radically different technical and political implications. For example, it has led to the construction of three bridges across the Pearl River Delta. It has also caused the relocation of a village for the construction of the Guangzhou – Hong Kong rail link, where the views of villagers have been subordinated to the wider super-regional process.

A former railway station at Canfranc between France and Spain in the Pyrenees is an example of transport-led regeneration in a border area. The station was constructed in the early twentieth century to an elaborate design. However, the railway between France and Spain was closed after the Second World War. A comprehensive restoration of the magnificent station building has been completed. **Beatriz Santos and Raquel Aragón** (Government of Aragón) outlined proposals to capitalise on the restored station and the potential reopening of the railway in a locality of high, but limited realised, potential for active tourism.

**Louis Wildenboer** (Downey Planning, Ireland) has been working on a Project of Common Interest (PCI) between European Member States, called Project CAES (Compressed Air Energy Storage) in Larne, Northern Ireland. It is a 330MW Renewable Energy Power Station proposed at the coastal town of Larne, Islandmagee, Northern Ireland. The facility would be a massive compressor to store excess energy from the national grid, by converting excess electric energy to compressed air, which is then stored in large underground geological storage caverns and later released as potential kinetic energy to generate electricity when supply is low. The scheme involves both terrestrial and marine EU Habitats and so tested the integration of marine and terrestrial spatial planning procedures. Even the mapping used for these different planning regimes (marine charts or standard maps) differed. As is fitting under EU procedures, the regimes required consideration of alternatives, which resulted in modifications to the scheme.

## **SESSION B: PUBLIC SECTOR IN COASTAL REGENERATION**

*Chair & Rapporteur: Dr Stephen Essex (University of Plymouth)*

**Petter Wiberg** (Head of Department of Planning and Building, City of Bergen, Norway) argued that, despite the richness of oceans for resource use, the understanding and resource management of the oceans globally was not satisfactory. Coastal communities faced many of the resulting issues in terms of implications for the local economy, including the depletion of fish stocks on employment opportunities in the fishing industry or the wider implications of marine pollution. Global environment change and poor management of coastal and marine resources had significant implications for social justice in coastal communities. Short-term, neoliberal approaches to coastal development ignore much needed perspectives on ecology, resources and sustainability; the marginalisation of some regions; growing social and economic inequalities; the need for new knowledge and how to apply it; and the need for coherent and integrated rules and practices locally and globally. The paper called for a more holistic understanding of the global interconnectedness of coastal and marine issues; the interactions with nature; and the nature of coastal communities. Petter called for planners to have a better understanding of business decisions of coastal and marine activities, and to articulate local experience, needs and requirements on the national and global arena. The job of the planner was to observe, understand and communicate these connections to influence policy.

**Peter Geraghty** (Director for Planning and Transport, Southend Council) outlined the regeneration strategy for Southend, a seaside resort on the Thames estuary of the Essex coast. The resort possessed an inflated housing market caused by being within commuting distance of London, experiencing competition from holiday homes and having development restrictions from the Green Belt designation. Local populations therefore needed more affordable housing, along with more non-tourism employment opportunities to address long-term unemployment, pockets of social deprivation, low educational attainment and a narrow skills base. The area also suffered high density of development, traffic congestion and poor broadband connectivity. The 'Southend 2050' strategy, based on extensive public and stakeholder consultation, is working towards a Joint Strategic Plan to deliver affordable housing, employment provision (especially in the technology and creative sectors), cultural venues and events, education, transport and wider 'liveability' across neighbouring local authority areas (South Essex Joint Strategic Plan).

**Alaa Hasanen and Emilia Kopec** (Masters students at Ecole Polytechnique de l'universite de Tours, France) outlined the issues being faced to encourage industrial development and urban densification on the site of a former airport site at the urban edge of Tours in France. The site presented an opportunity to reconnect the site into the urban fabric as well as reinforcing the urban edge. As a project by Masters' students, three options had been proposed: (1) an eco-mix city with a low carbon district; (2) a growth scenario utilising the principles of sustainable development and energy efficient technologies; and (3) diversification involving a multi-modal platform, green corridor and educational/cultural development. The importance of re-establishing greenery on the edge of the city was highlighted in all options.

**Mat White** (University of Exeter Medical School), **Jemma Sharman and Zoe Sydenham** (Plymouth City Council) explained the impact of a small-scale urban design intervention, based on the concept of urban acupuncture and blue health, for a deprived coastal community at Teats Hill, Coxside, Plymouth. An underutilised site on the water's edge was transformed into an open-air theatre, based on consultation and co-creation with the local community. The scheme was a partnership between Plymouth City Council, Devon Wildlife Trust (DWT) and Public Health and funded by the Big Lottery Fund's Reaching Communities programme and Section 106 planning obligations (£419k). The impact of the development was monitored as part of an EU-funded research project. The results indicated that visits to the site increased by 130%, despite access restrictions caused by the closure of a bridge across the lock gates to Sutton Harbour. Visit duration increased from 56% of visitors staying for more than 30 minutes before the intervention to 64% post-intervention. The benefits to the community's physical and mental health, which were quantified, through willingness-to-pay values, as £8 per household (overall £17K pa). The project also acted as a catalyst for the formation of a new community group for local residents as well as additional community-led improvements to enhance the space and community-led events and activities around the amphitheatre.

**Robert Bedner** (Director of Architecture, CURA Design Limited, Plymouth Science Park) emphasised the importance of incorporating nature into the design of buildings through a biophilic approach. He had recently started a new company called CURA with two other

Directors to focus on biophilic projects. Biophilic design endeavours, first, to protect and enhance nature and biodiversity wherever a project is being built and, second, to increase human well-being through a better connection with nature and surroundings. He illustrated this approach through a number of his own architectural projects completed in Plymouth. These projects included the reconfiguration of Union Corner in Union Street, which involved the creation of a community space and community garden in an abandoned building close to the city centre. The scheme involved opening up building facades and becoming inhabited with nature and people to create places to sit and talk. In this way, the edge between the private space of the garden and the public space of the pavement was reclaimed by the local residents. Another project discussed was the conversion of old changing rooms in Devonport Park into the Stillethin Children's Theatre. The 180-seater amphitheatre, with its outside space linked to the interior, encourages connection to its setting. The entrances are significant reminders of the past use of the building and are the first element that visitors will come in direct contact with when visiting the theatre. The existing water tower element was exposed and expressed in the design as a mini-fly tower for scenery changes and lighting with the stage below. In many ways, this design will continue to provide the 'life force' or 'raison d'être' of the building, but in an entirely new way and with a new spirit. This biophilic approach is essential for physical well-being, spiritual well-being, and for the present and future well-being of the planet.

## **SESSION C: URBAN-RURAL FRINGE 1**

*Chair: Ignacio Pemán (ECTP President) and Rapporteur: Alejandro Hornero*

**Dr Ute Knippenberger** (Landeshauptstadt Wiesbaden) reviewed the effect of urban containment and nature conservation policies on urban regeneration within the built environment of cities in Germany. He proposed that these policies would accentuated housing shortages and affordable accommodation by preventing development at the urban fringe. He provided a review of the policy in Germany undertaken by local governments to provide affordable households after the privatisation of land in the 1990s under the paradigm of 'Innen-vor Aussenentwicklung'. He analysed German legislation to repurchase lands, freeze land prices and build households (Exploration Area Ostfeld) to encourage urban redevelopment.

**Charlotte Morphet and Oliver Norman** (London Borough of Waltham Forest) analysed the contradictions of the England's National Planning Policy Framework for Green Belt policy. The policy was formulated at a national scale, but administered at a local level with restrictive parameters for when development could be allowed in the Green Belt. The designation had five objectives: to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas; to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another; to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land. The paper discussed whether the designation continues to fulfil its purpose, its effects and whether it should be reformed. Through an analysis of the changing characteristics and pressures experienced in London's outer



edge in the London Borough of Waltham Forest, a case for thinking regionally and relationally with respect to addressing the key issues facing the city today was proposed.

**Karla Santos Zambrano** (Consultant Planner) approached the edge as a preservation mechanism for any given territory. The Wardian case was the inspiration for the cities with rivers and a need for flood protection to preserve the heritage of the built environment along fluvial edges, especially with climate change. Heavily engineered flood protection schemes, such as the public works on the River Lee in Cork City, were used as an example. Here public opposition by the 'Save Cork City' group was aroused as an attempt to alleviate possible impacts of engineering schemes that did not work with the environment. A three point plan was developed to control of flooding using a downstream tidal barrier; to restore the historic quay walls; and to introduce a combination of upstream catchment management measures. In contrast, in the Netherlands, the 'Room for the River' project has relied on collaborative efforts through a mutual sharing of knowledge and achieve a balance between nature, people and the built environment.

**Barbara Kostanjšek** (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia) evaluated how visual impact assessment can improve current spatial planning models and policies in the rural-urban fringes of southwest Ljubljana experiencing pressure from greenfield development as economic zones. Here a visual impact assessment method had been proposed using four attributes: vegetation (cover, diversity, quality), land use (type, intensity, range), modifying elements (structure, form, colour) and view (extent, distance and visibility of the area). Four types of landscapes had been identified using this method: landfill, industrial area, commercial area and residential. Current spatial planning models can be improved through visual impact assessment as it reveals the deficiencies in the consideration of aesthetics in plans and development decisions, which are not represented in environmental impact assessment procedures and environmental protection. Planning measures for the prevention and mitigation of visual degradation of urban-rural edges by economic zones might include: a focus on brownfield land; reducing the visibility of economic zones; higher designs standards; and greater participation of local inhabitants.

**Charles Goode** (University of Birmingham) analysed the attitudes of planners and campaigners towards green belts in a period of changing governance in planning. In the past, the designation of green belts was planned alongside growth points under regional planning. With the demise of regional planning, a locally-led planning system has proved to be less effective in managing areas of growth and protection. From interviews, many planners argued that, rather than Green Belts being reformed significantly as a policy, the governance of the Green Belt should return to a more strategic, regional and longer term planning approach.



The foyer of the Sherwell Centre was used for exhibits, refreshments and lunches during the conference.

## **SESSION D: URBAN SPACES ON THE EDGE**

*Chair: Ignacio Pemán (ECTP President) and Rapporteur: Alejandro Hornero*

**Aleksandra Dordevic, Mladen Pešić and Milica Milojevic** (University of Belgrade) discussed the case of three Mediterranean touristic cities in the former Yugoslavia as an example of planning on the edge and crossroads of countries. Dubrovnik (Croatia), Kotor (Montenegro) and Trebinje (Bosnia-Herzegovina) are located in cross-border locations, and have experienced similar patterns of development related to general processes of globalisation, particularly tourism. These processes have created socio-demographic and spatial functionality effects for these cities, including uncontrolled urbanisation and the growth of cruise liner tourism, which has begun to threaten the cultural landscapes designated as a World Heritage Area. Despite the spatial proximity of these cities, spatial connections and networks between them remain underdeveloped, partly because of the capacity of border controls and visa regimes, but also as a result of historical instability and distrust. These divides have constrained the formulation of planning policies and initiatives to address the emerging pressures on the landscape.

**Ksenija Krsmanović** (University of Valladolid and Blekinge Institute of Technology) examined the riverfront regeneration of Savamala, a creative district creation in Belgrade. This discussion was set within the historical context of the industrialisation,

deindustrialisation and post-industrial regeneration of riverside locations. It focused on the extent to which cities can create economically viable, socially just, environmentally sustainable and liveable mixed-use regeneration. The case study represented an example of regeneration from different approaches (social, economic and cultural), including the establishment of an urban incubator. International participants and funds from UAE enhanced its economy and broader appeal to inward investment, but arguably at the expense of the local involvement of the general public and professional groups. The new district created was almost an alien urban environment within the existing fabric of the city ('extra-territoriality'). The case study testified the complexity of urban challenges and demands in a local context.

**Andrea Pandolfo** (RTPI Research Assistant) provided a theoretical approach for immaterial boundaries in the cities. Immaterial boundaries can be used as analytical tools to study how citizens understand urban environments. The concept can be used to understand the thin line that divides the cities between different areas; to understand the social experience of neighbourhood and places; and the perception of new cities challenges, such as the phenomena of touristification and gentrification. This approach allows to construct a typology of boundaries and thresholds, which provides discrete units of analysis that can be used for qualitative analysis (comparison, non-statistical correlation, categorisation), statistical descriptions (frequency, average and median) and mapping (of density, patterns and overlaps), or combined with other indicators to allow advanced statistical elaborations.

**Michaela Winter-Taylor** (Gensler) analysed the problem of land shortages to build new houses need in UK over the next 12 years. Particular attention was paid to the situation in London, where the shortage of building land had fueled a rise of property prices in the region. One solution was to build upwards, with taller buildings. An alternative proposal was to develop coastal towns, with good services and connections to the main cities and employment hubs, as well as reclaim new land from the sea. Land reclamation – making new land from the sea – can be an important part of the solution to the UK's land crisis and there is a rich history already.

## **SESSION E: MARINE PLANNING**

*Chair: Dr Stephen Essex (University of Plymouth).*

*Rapporteur: Scott Wilson (MSc Planning student, University of Plymouth)*

This session began with a comparative analysis of marine governance across the UK, undertaken by **Dr Linda McElduff and Dr Heather Ritchie** (Ulster University). The theme of the analysis was the inherent problems faced in the Irish Sea, where England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Ireland all hold an interest in the management of the marine environment. As a result, an administrative battleground had ensued from the conflict of interests between stakeholders involved in the management of the marine environment and coastal areas. The session covered the primary marine legislation, such as the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MCCAA 2009) and delved further

into the marine spatial plans, their stages of implementation and vision of the devolved governments of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The session concluded that the core of the problem was the disjointed spatial policies of the various stakeholders, their timescales and visions, and the lack of co-ordination, especially in cross-border integration and a holistic approach to terrestrial and marine planning. However, the situation for resolution today was much improved with the establishment of a marine evidence base, an increase in public awareness and the implementation of some Marine Plans, which will provide a momentum for others.

**Joe Smithyman** (Marine planner, Marine Management Organisation) explored the two adopted Marine Plans in England and the four remaining Plans entering final drafts in the North West, North East, South West and South East. The focus was on how Local Authorities have adapted their own Local Plan policies and strategies in coastal areas and how Marine Plans are being implemented whilst raising awareness. There was an exploration of digital accessibility, including online launches of the remaining Marine Plans, and the automation of planning and licencing processes. There was also an emphasis on seeking to join up inter-tidal and terrestrial decision making and what a future integrated approach might look like.

**Jim Claydon** (planning consultant and marine planning specialist) and **Anne-Michelle Slater** (School of Law, Aberdeen University) discussed approaches to marine planning, its integration with terrestrial planning and the promotion of the blue economy. The focus was on offshore wind and aquaculture and explored the differences in approach to marine planning of the Scottish and English authorities. The Planning Act 2008 promoted an integrated approach to marine based infrastructure and the land-based connections and substations in England and Wales, resulting in substantial renewable energy generation, the creation of jobs, and the stimulation of the economy in coastal areas. In contrast, Scotland's planning is divided between terrestrial and marine regimes, which has raised questions relating to the jurisdiction and the application of land use and marine policy. The main findings of the research were that: (1) policies were stated in general terms and lacked spatial or quantitative specificity; (2) there was limited understanding of how the policies achieve marine plan objectives; and (3) the legal and administrative structures were subverted by implementers through negotiation. There had been few refusals of marine developments, so the policies had not been tested in case law.

The final presentation was by **Marijana Zlodore** (Zagreb, Croatia) and was entitled 'Planning on the edge of existence: case study of Velo Grablje, Island of Hvar'. The presentation focused on the ancient settlement, its physical limits due to its internal location, poor road links and dwindling population (from about 500 in the twentieth century to just seven inhabitants today). The question explored was how to retain the unique ancient features lost to tourist developments on other parts of the island, whilst encouraging the local economy and improving the prospects for inhabitants through the reconstruction of social infrastructure. The principles for spatial planning on the island were proposed as developing cultural heritage; protecting existing natural values;

identifying spaces for infrastructure; public spaces; and an economy based on agriculture, traditional crafts and tourism.

## **SESSION F URBAN FRINGE 2**

*Chair & Rapporteur: Richard Blyth (RTPI)*

**Juan Luis de las Rivas** (University of Valladolid) demonstrated how over-allocation of land around cities in Castilla and León in the period leading up to the real estate crash of 2008 had led to a proliferation of land marked out with streets and plots, but with housing construction still not commenced. In 2001–11, there were 270,000 homes completed. In contrast, in 2011-17, only 27,000 homes were completed, despite the existence of multiple urbanizations laid out and awaiting development. For example, in Ávila, a city with an existing urban area of 12 million m<sup>2</sup>, an additional 5 million m<sup>2</sup> is allocated for development, which could accommodate over 16,000 homes. However, only 2,000 homes were built in the period 2006-14. He shared case studies from Castilian cities, which illustrate the potential of innovative planning visions on the urban edges: such as the performance of periphery of the city of Valladolid, in the environs of Duero river; the recreation of urban edges along Chico river in Ávila; and the quality of urban landscape preservation in the Eresma valley in Segovia. The current scenario of climate change and resilient planning suggest a complete reconsideration of the pre-crisis development decisions, and a deep revision from a renewed city-countryside relationship. In that sense, new approaches in the technical discipline of planning should be considered in the oncoming revision of urban plans: especially, the incorporation of an ecological understanding with efficient green urban infrastructures, a full introduction of water based design and a renovated introduction of agricultural spaces in urban landscapes.

The paper by **Pablo de la Cal Nicolás** (Spanish Association of Technical Planners, AETU) complemented the previous presentation by further exploring the collapse of the housebuilding and urbanisation boom in Spain following the real estate crash of 2008. While many urbanised plots remained without buildings at the edge of cities ('ghost neighbourhoods'), many cities have focused on the regeneration of vulnerable neighbourhoods in peripheral districts (such as Madrid, Barcelona and Vitoria). Strategic growth and urbanisation in Zaragoza has been related to transformations prompted by the staging of the International Exhibition in 2008, as well as the development of the high speed rail line, external ring road and airport. Since 2001, Zaragoza has built more than 40,000 dwelling units, although the Master Plan has capacity for 90,000, which is sufficient for a further 90 years of land supply. Three problems had emerged: (1) the aspirations for expansion in the Master Plan involved the loss of agricultural land; (2) the location of the new developments were not as envisaged in the Master Plan; and (3) the city council does not have the resources to continue to development of the private 'ghost neighbourhoods'.

**Giulia Maroni and Marta Ducci** (ECTP Young Planners) focused on the need to include flood risk protection measures in urban regeneration projects in close proximity to rivers. Whilst historically rivers were appreciated by citizens as a source of life and wealth, they have increasingly become a source of danger. In Italy as a whole, around one quarter of cities are exposed to hydrogeological risk. Only a few cities have tried to rebuild a new relationship with their rivers to take account of these new circumstances. In the development of its General Town Plan (PRG), the Municipality of Messina has decided to focus particularly on a sustainable urban dimension for a city to regenerate without consuming new soil. A fundamental point of the plan is the elimination of the building projects in the hydrogeological risk areas. These policies hope to avoid any increase in the risk and territorial pressure to which the area is already subjected.

Wednesday was concluded with a boat trip from the Mayflower Steps across Plymouth Sound to the Orangery in the Mount Edgumbe Country Park, Cornwall for the conference dinner.



Paul Barnard (Plymouth City Council) welcoming delegates onto the boat trip across Plymouth Sound



The conference dinner at the Orangery in Mount Edgcumbe Country Park, Cornwall.



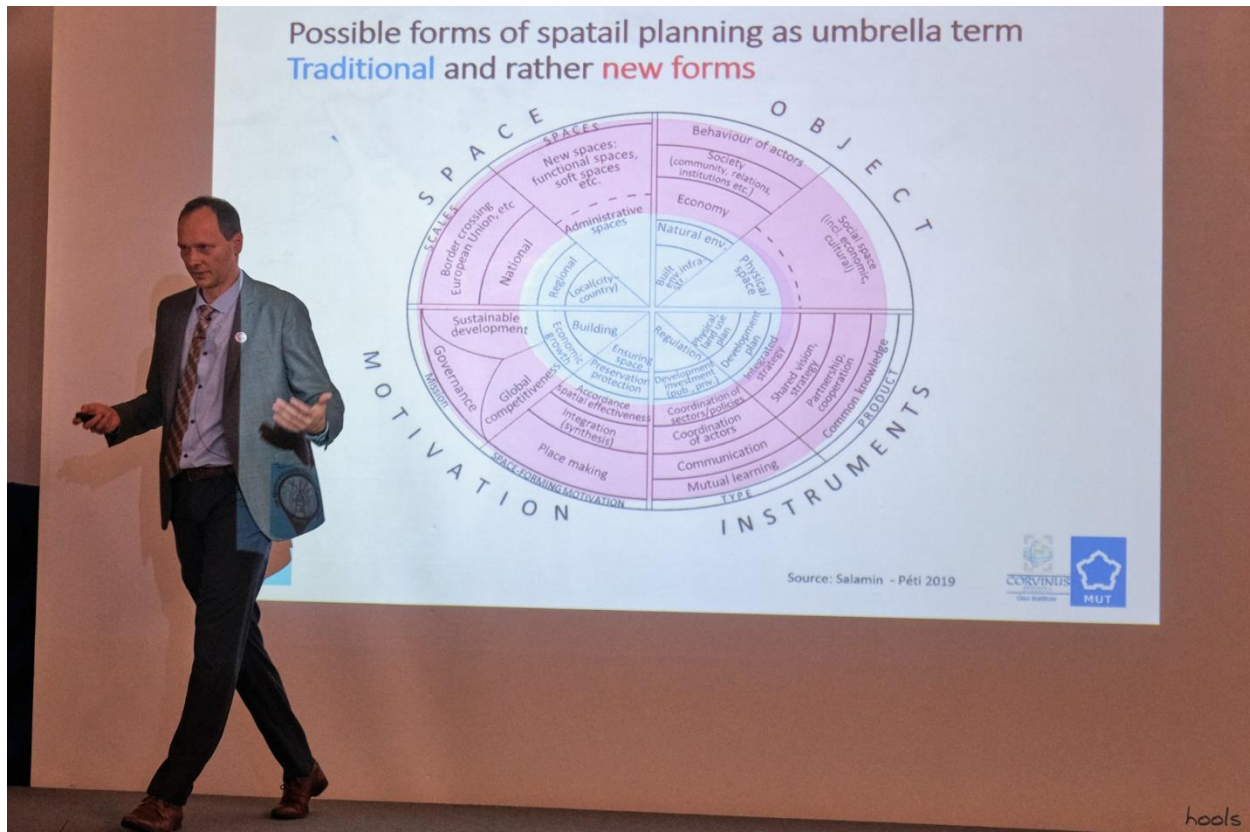
Ian Tant, President of the Royal Town Planning Institute, and Ignacio Pemán, President of the European Council of Town Planners, in the Italian Gardens of Mount Edgcumbe Country Park.

Friday, 13 September, 2019

## RECENT RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENTS AND KEY NOTE SPEAKER

Chair & Rapporteur: Joris Scheers (ECTP)

## EUROPEAN TRENDS IN PLANNING - LESSONS FROM A SURVEY ON CHANGES OF SPATIAL PLANNING



Géza Salamin presenting his paper about trends in European planning.

**Géza Salamin** (President of the Hungarian Society for Urban Planning, Deputy Head, Institute of Geography, Geoeconomy and Sustainable Development, Budapest Corvinus University) introduced the results of a recent empirical research by the author on the European transformation in (public) spatial planning carried out in 2017-2018 with professional support of the ECTP. The pilot research attempted to measure the emergence of the so-called EUropean trends in the changes of planning practices of 30 European countries. Based on the review of a profuse literature dealing with the Europeanisation of spatial planning as well as on the analysis of messages adaptable from European-level planning and development strategies for the use of national-level planning systems, the changing trends encouraged by policy discourses in the European Union were used to develop a theoretical-conceptual framework for the 'EUropean' Model of Spatial Planning (EMP). EMP defines the synthesised consequences of this new EU paradigm - described in the literature - to member states in five various dimensions:



1. Topics and priorities of EU policies appear in the plans;
2. A more comprehensive understanding of planning;
3. New spaces of planning-development emerge;
4. The instruments of planning change, particularly the soft and integrated instruments become more important (as opposed to regulations);
5. The process of planning transforms, what increasingly become the form of cooperation and coordination of different actors, while new forms of territorial governance come to existence.

Results of the empirical analysis, which measured the changes in the last 15 years and the current situation at the end of 2017, proved that, to different extents, all five dimensions exist in the transformation of planning systems in most of the countries. The most Europeanised planning systems are the north-western states. The post-socialist member states were encouraged partly by the instruments of the cohesion policy, and partly by common learning attitude for fast adaptation of the western European patterns. At the same time, there are signs which indicate a resistance to the dynamics of Europeanisation of planning, such as the spread of soft strategic planning forms and governance. The most common spatial unit of planning was the city region. In many cases, the trends in European planning reflected a strengthening of role of developers, NGOs and citizens, while the role for planners had changed and becoming more about the practice of democracy in and participation of local communities.

## **PLYMOUTH MARINE NATIONAL PARK**

Kat Deeney, Head of Environmental Planning and Councillor Sue Dann, Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene (Plymouth City Council)

The waters of Plymouth Sound are unique and have been instrumental in shaping not just the city's and nation's heritage, culture, wealth and security, but that of America, Europe and many other parts of the world. It is a place where people have met the sea since time immemorial. The waters of Plymouth Sound are a place of extraordinary and inspiring natural beauty, where local people enjoy sailing, swimming, fishing and countless other leisure activities and where adventurers from around the world have set out on global voyages. The waters are already home to a complex and diverse mix of uses – from the Navy and the port to commercial fishing and diver training as well as the marine leisure industry. These uses thrive alongside some of the most highly protected areas designated for wildlife in the UK.

Stakeholders across the City have signalled their support for the idea of celebrating the unique features of the Sound and are encouraging further use and enjoyment by developing the UK's first National Marine Park. Both the Councillor and the Head of Environmental Planning explained the developed and approved vision for a National Marine Park. It supports and connects thriving businesses, communities and inspires

visitors. The speakers explained the development of the concept and the proposed benefits of the National Marine Park for Plymouth and the UK.



Cllr Sue Dann and Kat Deeney (Plymouth City Council) announce the vision for the UK's first national marine park in Plymouth Sound.

**Keynote speaker: Lord Taylor of Goss Moor**  
**WHY CREATE NEW GARDEN TOWNS AND VILLAGES?**

At the start of 2016, Lord Matthew Taylor published the new Garden Villages and Towns policy, which the Government adopted as policy in the 2016 Budget. The stimulus for this policy was as a response to the poor quality and damaging effects of infill developments within existing rural villages and towns. Small-scale infill development was having a double negative effect on existing rural settlements: namely (1) through the erosion of the character and 'green setting' of these places; and (2) through the introduction of poor quality new housing units. The objective of new garden villages and towns was to create entirely new settlements with high design standards made possible by developing at a larger scale. Such development was also much easier for planners and developers to negotiate with one big owner of a new site rather than having to deal with several small owners in an existing settlement. He explained why this policy is being actively promoted by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local

Government and Homes England and how the New Towns Act has been effectively re-launched and modernised under this initiative for Garden Towns and Villages.



Lord Taylor of Goss Moor presents his keynote lecture about Garden Towns and Villages.

## **SESSION G: WATERFRONT REGENERATION**

*Chair and Rapporteur: Paul Barnard (Plymouth City Council)*

**Victoria Pinoncely** (Ecole Normale Supérieure, Paris Sciences Lettres) opened the waterfront regeneration session by presenting emerging work from her doctoral thesis, which is exploring the shrinkage of port cities with a focus on path dependency – its spatial manifestations and social, economic and environmental implications. Drawing upon historical and contemporary perspectives to understand emerging patterns from three cities on the edge – Le Havre, Liverpool and Genoa - the research highlighted that 40% of European port cities experienced some degree of shrinkage between 1960 – 2005. Causes included economic, demographic, political and urban/spatial changes resulting in population loss (the ‘hollowing out’ of inner city areas and migration to the suburbs), the closure of shops, increased housing vacancies and community facilities being removed. The research took a temporal approach comparing structural resilience to change alongside national and local policies and governance structures. Final conclusions were still emerging, but how cities can develop a greater urban resilience in

the face of globalisation, social polarisation and deindustrialisation remains to be seen given inevitable inter-city competition for inward investment.

The second waterfront session focussed in detail on the large seaport of Marseilles, the first French port to achieve 'environmental excellence' as an essential component of a strategic master plan covering 2019 – 2023. **Frederic Dagnet** (Director, Port of Marseille Fos Authority) set out how Marseille, now the sixth largest European port, is being designed as a 'smart port', reflecting its designation as a multi-modal strategic axis for long distance transit. The organisation for the transport of products to their final destination is an integral part of the overall port strategy and the terrestrial planning of the wider regional and sub-regional area. Innovations, such as offshore wind, photovoltaic installations, the use of geothermal energy from two power plants, and electric powered port boats, had been introduced at the port as a basis of its environmental excellence. In addition, a 'Brain Port Community' had been established to enable the port authority to work with academics to undertake collaborative research. New ideas were being explored through a 'Smart Port Challenge' for open sourced innovations, as a response to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The third session, by **Eleni Gklinou** (Architect/Urban Design, Columbia) entitled 'Shifting the Narrative: The Case of the Athenian Riviera', explored the approach of the Greek national and local governments to a long-term process of investment in infrastructure within this region of Greece. Historically, there had been a fragmented approach to planning, which had delivered essentially small scale, piecemeal developments, which were largely indifferent to large-scale infrastructure issues. The previous property swap system changed with the advent of EU structural funds for infrastructure investment and the awarding of the 2004 Olympic Games. This change heralded a focus on mega-events that facilitated a privatised development approach and a controller versus facilitator dichotomy for state actors. Drawing upon examples of coastal regeneration projects at Faliro Bay, Hellinkon Airport and the Asteras mixed use development at the Acropolis, the powerful forces of tourism-led coastal development and the highly contested implications for local communities and funding were explored.

**Javier Tobias Gonzalez** (Architect/Urbanist) presented the concluding session on waterfront regeneration with an analysis of regenerative flows associated with post-war urban developments, with a particular emphasis on Saragossa, Spain. The paper drew out themes of vulnerability, the importance of the circular economy, the need for integrated urban regeneration and the overriding importance to communities of place, identity and attachment. Some fundamental paradigmatic divides in conceptualisation were exposed, which questioned whether the perceived similarities in processes and results from these post-war developments were truly replicable. The contention was that most municipalities do not take a coordinated and integrated 'neighbourhood to neighbourhood' approach and ultimately ended up forgetting the main issue – namely the need to avoid these developments becoming spatially and socially excluded. Often these developments had been designed simply as housing estates – as containers for people - with little mixed use, open spaces, connectivity and building variety. The importance of the cultural identities of the original inhabitants and subsequent new

incoming generations to transform the liveability of the neighbourhoods was being overlooked.

## **SESSION H: CLIMATE CHANGE AND PLANNING ON THE COAST**

*Chair and Rapporteur: Dr Olivia Wilson (University of Plymouth)*

This session focused on how planners can respond to the challenges of sea-level rise, coastal change and the development of offshore renewable energy. As more scientific information about risks and opportunities becomes available, a focus on how that knowledge can be translated into more effective policy- and decision-making in planning as well as communicated to communities living on or near the coast. The presentations covered a range of perspectives and examples of ways to enhance decision-making at the coast.

**Andrew Coleman** (University of Brighton) and **Michael Tucker** (Brighton and Hove Council) reported on the findings of research into the integration of national planning policy and Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs) into Local Plans in England. SMPs are non-statutory plans prepared by coastal local authorities together with the Environment Agency. SMPs set out proposals for sustainable coastal change management over a long timescale (about 100 years). Many sensitive land uses at the coast are at risk of severe damage or loss from coastal change, including housing, infrastructure and valued coastal habitats. SMPs divide the coastline into four options for future management: advance the line, hold the line, no active intervention or managed realignment. The aim is for the proposals for coastal policy in the SMPs to be translated into planning policies in local plans to guide development over the local plan timescale of 15 – 20 years. Alongside SMPs, national planning policy in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework and planning practice guidance requires coastal planning authorities to adopt integrated coastal zone management practices and to define Coastal Change Management Areas (CCMAs) for areas at risk of coastal change. SMPs are identified as the primary source of evidence for defining CCMAs.

The research reported that, out of 94 coastal authorities in England, 65% of the local plans did not refer to SMPs and few have defined CCMAs. The incorporation of evidence on coastal change and flood risk in local plans is therefore slow, with the danger that problems will build up in the future. In this research, five coastal Local Planning Authorities were studied in depth to examine how the SMP recommendations for their areas were being reflected in planning policies. The research found that, in general, SMP policies were not being given much 'weight' in local plans, which meant that effective long-term planning for coastal change could be reduced in these authorities. However, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which has set out national planning policy on coastal change since 2012, is having more impact on the development of policies in Local Plans, although there is no evidence of Integrated Coastal Zone Management being implemented. Planning Policy Guidance that supports

the NPPF does now state the SMPs should be a primary source of evidence to inform coastal planning.

The research concluded that the current approach to coastal management in England is unsustainable in the face of climate change. There is an urgent need for planners to understand the importance of coastal change and to adopt sustainable policies in their plans. However, the research recognises that the policies in the SMPs are not costed, and that there is a lack of public funding available to build or maintain coastal defences along all of the coastline identified currently as 'hold the line'. At present, only about £500 million is spent per annum in England on flood defences (both river and coastal), which is only sufficient to maintain defences for a small fraction of the coastline. There is also a wider need to communicate long-term risks of coastal change to the wider public to gain public acceptance of coastal change, and a need for a more joined-up approach to coastal policy at national as well as local level.

**Corine Dyke** (Lead Adviser, Strategic Planning, Natural England) and **Amanda Newsome** (Lead Adviser, Sustainable Development, Natural England) set out what Natural England (the Government's advisory agency for the natural environment) is trying to achieve in coastal areas to support the development and implementation of sustainable solutions to coastal change. Natural England works with other stakeholders, such as local authorities or landowners, either in an advisory role or in partnership.

There are many statutorily protected areas on the coast (either European or UK designations), based on their biodiversity value or landscape value, but many of these areas are under threat from sea-level rise or from coastal erosion. The coast path is also under threat in places. The availability of information on climate change and risk is improving, which helps decision-making, but there is still a general lack of awareness of coastal risk and many challenges in addressing it.

The Government's 25 year Environment Plan (A Green Future - published in 2018) calls for all policies to require developments to take account of climate change and seek to provide net environmental gain, not just for biodiversity but for wider ecosystem services. In relation to the coast, this approach means working with natural processes rather than installing artificial defences. For example, Natural England seeks to encourage approaches that work with coastal processes to create natural defences, structural diversity and contribute to landscape character.

The presentation reported on one example of 'managed realignment' of the coast at Happisburgh (Norfolk), where sea defences have been removed and some houses and a caravan park have been relocated further inland. This project has provided benefits to nature as well as for the community in the form of improved facilities. Another example is Branscombe in Devon, where beach chalets at the back of the beach are at risk of being destroyed by storm damage. A compromise has been reached with the owners whereby the chalets have been granted a temporary ten-year planning permission, after which time they will be removed.

Natural England also supports the development of planning policies for the coast and the establishment of Coastal Change Management Areas (CCMAs). These should take account of biodiversity and landscape designations when being identified. The presentation reported on the SWEEP (South West Partnership for Environmental and Economic Prosperity) project between Natural England and the University of Plymouth. SWEEP is supporting Local Planning Authorities to designate CCMAs in Local Plans in Torridge, North Devon and East Devon Districts that allow for natural coastal processes and that complement the conservation objectives of protected sites and species. These pilot projects can then act as models of good practice for other authorities.

**Amani Becker** (Applied Coastal Scientist, National Oceanography Centre) presented a paper about the role of science in the planning of coastal protection. In the UK, £150 billion of assets and four million people are at risk from coastal flooding. There are 3,200 kilometres of defended coastline to maintain. The National Oceanography Centre (NOC) is a scientific research organisation and is involved in a number of research projects to develop and test practical measures to support planning for coastal change, both in the UK and worldwide.

The presentation reported on C-RISe (Coastal Risk Information Service) which provides satellite derived data on sea level, winds, waves and currents to partners in Mauritius, Mozambique and Madagascar. It can provide very detailed local and short-term sea level rise predictions using GPS tide gauges to supplement longer-term climate change forecasts. This service helps to understand and address a wide range of issues, from coastal erosion and impacts on mangrove and coral reef ecosystems to port design and navigation and shrimp fisheries. Wirewall is another technology developed by NOC to measure overtopping of waves and wave action. It is a relocatable overtopping measuring system, used to collect field observations of wave-by-wave overtopping velocity and volumes. It can provide site-specific data to inform the design of cost-effective sea defences.

At Dungeness in Rye Bay, where the coastal policy is to 'advance the line', the NOC has modelled options for beach building design to find the most effective and sustainable option. NOC also provides modelling of long term future sea level rise (over 500 years) to inform the design of flood defences for large national infrastructure projects such as Hinckley Point.

**Sybil Berne** (Planning Consultant, MacCabe Durney Barnes, Dublin) presented a review of social acceptance of a marine and renewable energy demonstration site. In 2019, Ireland published a Climate Action Plan which sets out a target of decarbonising Ireland's energy supply by 2030. Much of the decarbonised supply will come from offshore marine energy projects, guided by the National Marine Planning Framework and Marine Planning Policy Statement 2019. The detailed planning of offshore projects comes under the Marine Planning and Development Bill 2019.

The research presented a case study of a renewable marine energy demonstration site off the coast of County Galway, An Spidéal marine and renewable energy

demonstration site. In 2016, the operators submitted a foreshore license application to redevelop the site with a 35m offshore floating wind turbine. The research examined the levels of public engagement with the proposed development during the consultation process.

Despite lying 1.3 km offshore and already being established as a demonstration site, a large number of public objections were received. The main concern was the visual impact of the proposed wind turbines, and the perception that the applicant had underestimated the visual impact in their application. The research considered how the planning process could promote transparency and trust in decision-making. One of the complaints from the public was that the decision was made by a minister at national level rather than at the local level. Another concern was that the decision-making process failed to give sufficient consideration to people's feelings of threat to their sense of place and identity, focusing instead on technical studies such as the EIA. Cultural sensitivities were also overlooked. For example, the publication of technical documents had not been produced in the Irish language.

A number of recommendations for improved public consultation were made in the research, including providing more local involvement in decision-making and recognising emotional attachments to place as well as technical studies. Information submitted for similar schemes should be presented in non-technical, accessible ways. There was also a suggestion that the local community should be given a stake in similar projects to demonstrate local as well as national benefit, such as through community contributions.



Ignacio Pemán, President of the European Council of Town Planners, with delegates during the conference.



## SESSION I: WALKING TOURS OF CITY

The walking tours were sponsored by English Cities Fund, a joint venture set up by three partners – Homes England, Legal & General and Muse Developments <http://englishcitiesfund.co.uk>.

Three walking tours of the city were completed:

- The post-war legacy and recent modernisation of Plymouth city centre: Stuart Wingfield (Strategic Growth Manager, Plymouth City Council) and Stephen Essex (University of Plymouth)
- The redevelopment of Millbay: Katherine Graham (Planning Officer, Plymouth City Council) and Simon Martin (Muse).
- Barbican: Matt Coombe (Urban Designer, Plymouth City Council) and Chris Robinson (Plymouth historian)



Conference organisers, Rebecca Miller (Plymouth City Council) and Leon Thompson (University Events Team), taking a break during the event.

## PLYMOUTH PLANNING FRINGE EVENT

*Chair and Rapporteur: Sarah Foqué, Natural Infrastructure Officer, Strategic Planning & Infrastructure, Plymouth City Council*

This event was sponsored by LHC Design [www.lhc.net](http://www.lhc.net)

As a precursor to the 13th European Biennial of Towns and Town Planners 2019, Plymouth City Council organised the Plymouth Planning Fringe. The aim of the fringe event was to act as an independent forum into the issues that the city of Plymouth will face now and in the future; to actively engage the general public and associated professions with the purpose of the planning profession; and to create a greater diversity in the people involved in planning.

The Fringe was opened by a welcome from **Cllr. Sue Dann**, who gave an overview of the bold initiatives that Plymouth City Council is undertaking to address the challenges of the future, such as the adoption of the Plan for Trees, the Plan for Plastic, and the declaration of the Plymouth Sound as the UK's first National Marine Park.

**Graham Devine**, Director of LHC Design, provided the introduction to the Fringe by setting out the challenges that planning will face in the future:

- By 2050, 68% of the global population will be urban, which requires more compact cities with high quality urban places;
- The need to engage communities more effectively in an age of social media;
- The degradation of the ability of experts to drive change in the face of rising populism;
- The problem of communicating the complexity of planning to the public;
- The need for global solutions to address the current climate crisis and emergency;
- What would sustainable cities look like? The concept of 'slow cities' is emerging, which encourage long-term and slower decision-making.
- The adoption of electric vehicles is constrained by the capacity of infrastructure and the need for phased change; and
- The strategies and options to make our cities healthier, with recognition to the links to mental well-being, social isolation and access to green spaces.

To tackle the above challenges, bold long-term thinking was needed rather than quick wins, with planners taking the role of experts.

Graham's introduction was followed by **Finn Williams**, co-founder & CEO of Public Practice, who spoke about the contemporary challenges facing planning as a discipline and professional practice. Planning practice in the public sector had been affected by a number of significant changes, which had changed its professional basis. It has become more based on inter-disciplinary collaboration, which had caused disciplinary fragmentation. A presumption for outsourcing specialist expertise had undermined in-house capacity. A total of 94% of London Boroughs meet their capacity needs using agency staff, with significant implications for costs, continuity and accountability. Local Authorities were therefore experiencing a growing skills gap as well as leaking staff,

knowledge and institutional memory. The trust of local communities and loss of faith in experts was also being affected. These were significant issues at a time when planning was perceived as a barrier to housing delivery. Only 17% of local authorities in the UK have planners on their senior executives. Most significantly, planning lacked a public profile and advocates for public planning. Public Practice is a consultancy, which works to place passionate professionals from multiple disciplines into local councils, usually on a temporary basis, to help address the skills gaps and to create additional capacity within the public sector.

**Sophia de Sousa**, Chief Executive of The-Glass-House Community Led Design, provided an interactive talk about reconnecting people with planning. The average citizen saw planning as a confusing, confrontational and regulatory process, while planners appeared to be terrified about engaging with the community, which was often regarded as a regulatory hurdle or a tick-box exercise. Proper community engagement can break down barriers and create a common vocabulary to discuss the future shaping of places. It can create local champions to mobilise positive action.

The next talk was delivered by **Tom Armour**, Global Landscape Architecture Lead at Arup, who discussed approaches to tackle the current climate crisis. These approaches required bold collaborative thinking, with planning bringing together the different professions. Tom explored the ideas of nature-based solutions, multifunctional green infrastructure and large-scale strategies and visioning. These solutions will need to be embedded within the design process to enable delivery of projects which will address the current crisis.

The final speaker, **Robin Smale**, Director of Vivid Economics, explored the economic drivers for the delivery of natural capital solutions. He argued that more green and healthy spaces close to where people live were needed to enable the social and economic benefits of green spaces to be delivered fully. He also argued that the current development model does not take account of the long-term benefits of green infrastructure.

The session ended with a panel discussion instigated by questions raised by the attendees.

## **Acknowledgements and thanks**

The conference organisers would like to take this opportunity to thank a number of people for their invaluable help and cooperation in organising this event. Thanks to the ECTP-CEU Secretariat (especially Ignacio Pemán and Joris Scheers) for trusting us with the conference, together with the support of the RTPI in London and in the South West (especially Victoria Hills, Richard Blyth, Michele Vianello, Hannah Armstrong and Charlotte Daborn), Destination Plymouth (especially Amanda Lumley and Alison Bartlett), Plymouth City Council (especially Rebecca Miller, Helen Collingbourne and Nicki Evans) and the University Events Team (especially Deborah Moss and Leon Thompson).

