

This house believes that
**Planning can't survive
without the Media**

Panel includes
Trudi Elliott, Peter
Hetherington,
Fiona Hore,
Andrew Whitaker
and Alexis Krachai



**On the 7th,
Media City**

**22nd October
5-8.30pm**

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In recent times there has been unprecedented media interest in the role of planning and of planners. Newspaper and television headlines have, amongst other issues, challenged the role of planning in the economic recovery of the UK and condemned Green Belt development. More recently the media has shone a light on the human face of planning in the documentary 'The Planners' and 'Permission Impossible: Britain's Planners', however it is uncertain whether this has actually helped the image of the profession.

Considering the breadth of media exposure, we are looking to explore the effects of the media on planning and those that work within it. Is the system viewed as a barrier to development? Or is it seen as a facilitator to a more sustainable future? And will it encourage new recruits into planning?

Trudi Elliott has been Chief Executive, Royal Town Planning Institute for over 4 years. She has a wide-ranging and in-depth knowledge of planning, where she has worked in one capacity or another for the past twenty years. As Director, Government Office for the West Midlands, Trudi had responsibility for advising on large and controversial planning applications, managed the national planning case work on behalf of all government offices and advised on all aspects of planning, housing, transport and regeneration as they affected communities across the West Midlands.

Trudi has experience of working across all sectors – public, private and voluntary. Her previous roles have included Chief Executive of Bridgnorth District Council and Chief Executive of West Midlands Regional Assembly and West Midlands Local Government Association. She has also worked as a lawyer in both the public and private sectors.

Peter Hetherington chairs the Town and Country Planning Association, the country's oldest housing and planning charity. He chaired a cross-party, TCPA-serviced Connecting England Commission, which called for a national development framework, and was lead author for a follow up TCPA report, published with the Local Government Association, Connecting Local Economies. He is a former (Manchester-based) northern and regional affairs editor of The Guardian and writes for The Guardian and other publications. He has broadcast regularly. He was a board member of the former Academy for Sustainable Communities and of the last government's former Urban Sounding Board.

Fiona Hore started her career, way back in the mists of time, as an appeals clerk, working for the now demised, Kennet District Council. She became fascinated by the world of planning, and through a series of happy accidents, graduated as a fully-fledged planner, whilst working for Newark and Sherwood District Council. She now finds herself in the role of Senior Manager for Planning and Strategic Transport at Cheshire West and Chester Council, and, despite the passage of time, still finds herself engrossed by the vagaries of the world of development planning.

Alexis Krachai is Executive Director at Counter Context, a communications company, based in Sheffield. Counter Context specialises in helping clients to consult, engage and promote. Their work builds understanding and trust in organisations, ideas and projects. Counter Context operates primarily in the built environment, helping clients to support infrastructure and development projects.

Alexis has 15 years' experience in communications, specialising in a range of topics including property development, energy, transport and social care. He advises some of the world's largest energy, property and healthcare companies on communications issues. Alexis joined Counter Context in 2006, initially working in a number of different roles. In 2010 he took on full responsibility for the company from his parents who founded Counter Context in 1994.

Andrew Whitaker is the Planning Director of the Home Builders Federation (HBF). Andrew, who joined the Federation as a regional officer in 1994, has over 30 years' experience as a town planner in both the public and private sector, specialising in the formulation and implementation of both planning and housing policy.

Having worked in both local government and private practice Andrew uses this cross sector experience to advise the house-building industry and liaise with central and local government through formal representations, sounding boards and working groups on a plethora of planning and housing issues.

Andrew is a member of the DCLG Planning Sounding Board and a number of other advisory groups. Most recently he was a team member of the Taylor Review of planning guidance and was included in Planning magazine's 2013 "Power 100" as one of the top 100 people with the greatest influence on planning policy and decision making.