



The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) is the largest professional institute for planners in Europe, representing some 23,000 spatial planners. RTPI Cymru represents the RTPI in Wales, with 1,100 members. The Institute seeks to advance the science and art of spatial planning for the benefit of the public. As well as promoting spatial planning, the RTPI develops and shapes policy affecting the built environment, works to raise professional standards and supports members through continuous education, training and development.

We welcome the opportunity to provide a submission in response to the above call for evidence. Our response focuses on the planning sector and profession. This response has been formed drawing on the expertise of the RTPI Cymru Policy and Research Forum which includes a cross section of planning practitioners from the private and public sectors and academia from across Wales and RTPI members more widely.

Planning as a profession is highly international in its outlook. UK exports of 'construction services', including architecture, surveying and planning, were £2.73 billion in 2014. By 2030 the global marketplace for such services is estimated at over £200 billion, representing a huge potential for UK firms and professionals. The RTPI's 23,000-strong membership spanning over 80 countries reflects this, with many members based in the UK working on projects abroad. The RTPI accredits planning schools across the world, our Chartered Membership is a brand recognised and respected internationally.

RTPI Cymru considers the top priorities in relation to planning and the profession likely to be affected by the exit of the UK from the European Union (EU) to be: impact on major projects, employment and skills, university research opportunities, the range of funding to support regional development and research, including the European Structure Funds and research funding, partnership opportunities, and the impact of uncertainty on development.

The result of the EU referendum has created financial uncertainty, and this creates doubt over the future of major infrastructure projects. However, it is difficult to speculate on the impact that the exit of the UK will have on the future of specific projects. The loss of structural funding for infrastructure provision and regeneration projects, highlights the need for alternative funding/borrowing mechanisms, for example through the devolution of business rates and additional borrowing powers for Welsh Government. On matters such as this it is important to refer to the Wales Bill as it makes its journey through parliament. It will also be important to recognise the need to replace Structural Funds in Wales, which on a long term basis were addressing economic, social and environmental structural needs from long term decline in industry and the need to address poverty.

Uncertainty and change have historically slowed down development. Whatever the current economic uncertainty it is imperative we all work to ensure we continue to invest in infrastructure and development to relieve the housing crisis, ensure economic growth and create great places.

Richard Cowell at Cardiff University has written a number of articles on the UK leaving the EU and the potential implications, with a focus on environmental dimensions - <http://environmenteuref.blogspot.co.uk/p/publications.html>. Cowell will publish further articles on this subject, but notes in his article on planning and the environment after the referendum that "EU membership makes weakening certain environmental policies more difficult".

RTPI Cymru raises concern regarding the future of research collaboration and funding with other partners in the EU. A summary of implications for Universities, both students and research is available <http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/brexit/Pages/brexit-fags.aspx> Whilst we understand that current Horizon 2020 (<https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/what-horizon-2020>) arrangements remain intact, there will be obvious uncertainties in the run up to Article 50 being triggered, which could have a significant impact in the field of research in Wales.

The RTPI has joined a coalition of professional bodies representing the construction and built environment sectors in warning Brexit Minister, David Davis, that the UK's construction skills crisis could severely worsen, if the Government does not take steps to ensure access to a skilled workforce during its post-referendum negotiations. The RTPI, the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), and the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) have written to David Davis outlining their concerns around skills, as well as five other priorities that the UK Government should focus on in light of the UK's vote. The six priorities are: access to skills, common standards, research excellence, infrastructure investment, devolution commitment, and community development. The full letter is available on our website, http://www.rtpi.org.uk/media/1946175/brexitjointstatement_september2016.pdf and was also published in the Financial Times. RTPI Cymru will be holding a housing conference in 2017, where we expect many of these issues to be discussed.

The RTPI has recently responded in depth on the impact of the UK leaving the EU on planners and planning across the UK. Our position on the UK impact is available on our website: <http://www.rtpi.org.uk/briefing-room/news-releases/2016/july/rtpi-brexit-update-what-does-brexit-mean-for-planning-and-planners/> The influence of the EU on planning practice has been through Directives which are transposed into legislation within the UK nations. These remain law unless the UK parliaments/assemblies remove them. Concern has been expressed about some environmental legislation. As regards wildlife the UK had strong legislation before 1973 and has strong lobbies in support of this. The situation around climate change is arguably more complex.

In his speech at the Planning Convention in June, RTPI President Phil Williams said: "The issues that many people expressed during the EU debate relating to migration and population growth, unaffordable housing, the pressure on health and educational services, the need for economic growth...require planned solutions. In addition, the referendum results highlight the great divisions between the different nations of the UK and the regions of England in terms of their needs and unfulfilled aspirations...".

These issues also highlight the need for strategic spatial planning in Wales, as proposed by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015. Strategic planning enables an approach which can cover a

wide range of areas of public policy and encourages effective cooperation for planning across boundaries. The general principles of strategic planning are a useful focus at a time when there are many uncertainties, requiring us to consider environmental objectives, long term economic benefits, as well as the need for a high quality of life, which are all key contributors to economic competitiveness.

If you require further assistance, please contact RTPI Cymru on 029 2047 3923 or e-mail Roisin Willmott at walespolicy@rtpi.org.uk

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Willmott', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr Roisin Willmott FRTPI

Director
RTPI Cymru