

source of information

Planning

the official weekly journal of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)
NEWS in *Planning* – Issue 1624, June 24, 2005

RTPI NEWS

Network launched for water in the North West

The need for practical policies and programmes was stressed at the inception of the network, explains **Jenny Crawford**

Local authority planners and environmental managers discussed the implications of the water framework directive for their work in the North West at the launch of a three-year project funded by EU INTERREG IIIC in Manchester at the end of May.

There was a general consensus that planners need to move on rapidly from the theoretical consideration of integrating land-use and water planning and focus instead on integrating and implementing practical policies and programmes. The European Network of Municipalities and Rivers was welcomed as a valuable forum for enabling this process.

The project will build a network of local authorities in the five partner regions in England, Germany, Spain, Sweden and Latvia. The English partner organisations are the Mersey Basin Campaign (MBC) and the University of Manchester.

The cross-Europe perspective is expected to stimulate a sharing of experience and comparative approaches to what can be achieved through spatial planning and how planning practice will be affected by requirements to improve and maintain the quality of the water environment. Key outputs will include guidance for local authorities around the themes of spatial planning, the delivery of water services, tourism and economic development and rural land uses.

The seminar demonstrated local authority awareness of the interrelationships between land-use and water planning, as participants mapped out the range of plans and stakeholders involved and any issues for specific locations in the region. It also highlighted the need for more specific guidance for



Batey: emphasised scope of directive

The project will build a network in the five partner regions in England, Germany, Spain, Sweden and Latvia

the planning system at development management and control levels as well as policy levels. National guidance, good practice studies, model policies and the potential for supplementary planning guidance were called for.

In summing up the proceedings, Professor Peter Batey of the MBC emphasised the unprecedented scope and boldness of the directive in the field of environmental management and the opportunities that it raises for integration and citizen involvement. He suggested that it remains to be seen whether the updated system of spatial planning can deliver its potential contribution, but urged all those involved to aim high in response to the challenges of the legislation for both land and water planning.

Jenny Crawford is RTPI planning and research officer.