

# Recruitment & Retention of Planners: Towards addressing the need for planners in London

Report for the Association  
of London Government,  
the RTPI London Branch,  
and the Association of  
London Borough  
Planning Officers

April 2004

# Recruitment & Retention of Planners

Towards addressing the need  
for planners in London

Prepared by:

Tim Edmundson Planning Research

On behalf of:

Association of London Government  
Association of London Borough Planning Officers  
Royal Town Planning Institute- London Branch

21 April 2004

## **FOREWORD**

One of the major constraints to improving planning performance in London and taking advantage of the “New Dawn for Planning” is the difficulty Boroughs in particular have in recruiting suitably experienced and qualified staff. We are pleased to have funded this study which thoroughly explores the issue and makes some useful recommendations. The challenge for our organisations and for Boroughs is now to take forward the results of the research, which can be summarised as:

- Recruiting non-planning graduates and other staff and providing them with professional training.
- Working with training providers to expand provisions for day release and post-entry training.
- Provision of training for returners and retired staff, accompanied by flexible employment opportunities.
- Improving pay and conditions.
- Increasing the use and effectiveness of IT.
- Enhancing the roles of staff who currently have no accredited planning qualifications.

Many Boroughs will now have a significant Planning Delivery Grant allocation, and for those without, what better time is there to press for more resources to be devoted to planning? Our respective organisations will be working together to publicise the findings of this research and take these recommendations forward. As in most areas of planning we are confident that London planners will respond to the challenge and ensure that London is in the forefront of planning practice and expertise.

Finally, we would like to thank Tim Edmundson Planning Research for all his excellent work on the study.

**Caroll Ryall**

Chair, Royal Town Planning Institute- London Branch

**Steve Clark**

Chair, Association of London Borough Planning Officers

**Shirley Rodrigues**

Head of Policy, ALG Transport & Environment Division

# CONTENTS

|            |   |           |
|------------|---|-----------|
|            | <b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>                                    | <b>7</b>  |
|            | <b>INTRODUCTION</b>   | <b>20</b> |
| Section 1  | Introduction  | 21        |
| Section 2  | Methodology   | 23        |
|            | <b>THE EXTENT OF THE PROBLEMS</b>                           | <b>25</b> |
| Section 3  | The extent of the problems and their implications           | 26        |
|            | <b>THE CAUSES OF THE PROBLEMS</b>                           | <b>29</b> |
| Section 4  | The shortage of junior planning staff                       | 31        |
| Section 5  | The shortage of experienced staff                           | 41        |
|            | <b>RESPONSES TO THE PROBLEMS</b>                            | <b>44</b> |
| Section 6  | The use of temporary agency staff                           | 45        |
| Section 7  | The use of consultants                                      | 50        |
| Section 8  | The recruitment of non-planning graduates                   | 52        |
| Section 9  | The recruitment and training of recruits without degrees    | 57        |
| Section 10 | Recruitment from other sources                              | 60        |
| Section 11 | Enhancing the roles and/or promoting non-planners           | 63        |
| Section 12 | Changing structures and processes                           | 66        |
| Section 13 | Improving pay   | 69        |
| Section 14 | Improving working conditions                                | 72        |
| Section 15 | The provision of accommodation                              | 75        |
| Section 16 | Increasing numbers on accredited full-time planning courses | 77        |
| Section 17 | Responses in other professional areas                       | 83        |
|            | <b>CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>                      | <b>94</b> |
| Section 18 | Conclusions and recommendations                             | 95        |
| Section 19 | Action Plan   | 99        |
|            | Endnotes  | 103       |

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

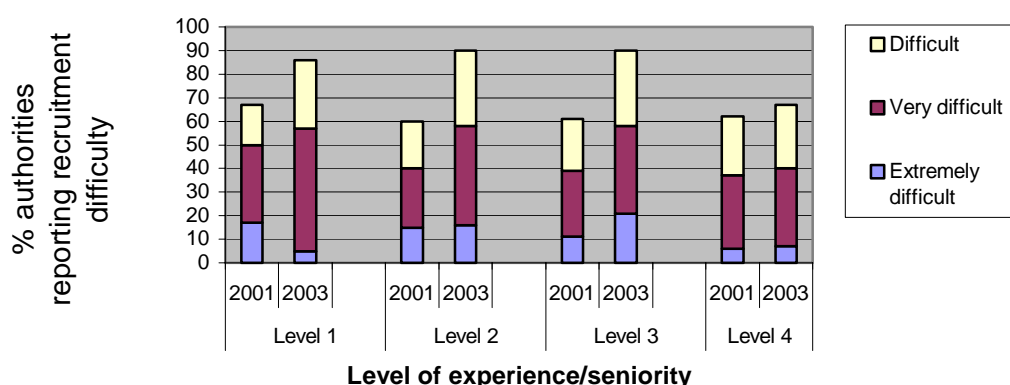
## E1 The project

- E1.1 This report sets out the findings of an investigation of the recruitment and retention problems affecting local planning authorities in London and current and potential measures to address these problems. The research was commissioned in December 2003 by the Association of London Government, the Association of London Borough Planning Officers and the London Branch of the Royal Town Planning Institute.
- E1.2 The research included a literature review, an email survey of all London Boroughs, interviews with officers in a small sample of London Borough Planning Departments, and discussions at seminars and meetings. Research and analysis was completed by the beginning of April 2004.

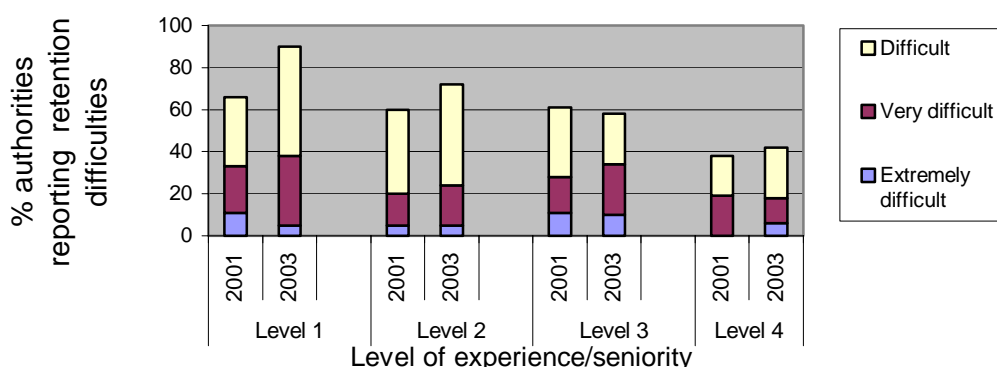
## E2 The extent of recruitment and retention problems

- E2.1 Planning, in common with many local public services,<sup>1</sup> is suffering severe staff shortages nationally, and particularly in London.<sup>2</sup> In a survey last year<sup>3</sup> 87% of local planning authorities nationally, and 94% in London, reported experiencing recruitment and retention problems that were affecting their ability to deliver an effective planning service. In London, turnover of local authority staff is higher than elsewhere<sup>4</sup>, and some London Boroughs have problems retaining planning staff.<sup>5</sup>

**Chart 1: Recruitment difficulties in London LPAs**



**Chart 2: Retention difficulties in London LPAs**



Source: ALG/LB Wandsworth (2004) Pay and Benefits Survey 2003. ALG: London

- E.2.2 These problems have been getting worse, and an ageing workforce, difficulties in attracting young people into public sector careers, and changing demographics mean that recruitment and retention problems are likely to intensify.
- E.2.3 Two-thirds of the twenty-one London Boroughs that responded to this study reported difficulties in recruiting experienced planners, and half had problems recruiting junior planners. One-third reported difficulties in recruiting planners at management level. The survey found that over 13% of planning posts were vacant.
- E.2.4 Authorities are receiving few applications and are having difficulties compiling short-lists. Re-advertisements are common, and in several cases authorities had been unable to fill senior or even management posts. DC posts are harder to fill than policy posts, and posts in enforcement and urban design are the hardest to fill. The lack of suitably qualified applicants to permanent posts has forced authorities to fill at least 17% of their posts with temporary agency staff.
- E.2.5 The research suggests that retention is a problem affecting the London market as a whole. Staff leaving London posts are often moving to jobs outside London or in the private sector. There appears to be little movement of experienced staff in the other direction, causing a decline in the availability of such staff in London. Retention of temporary staff is seen as a problem by some authorities, with staff moving on very quickly often as a result of head-hunting by agencies.

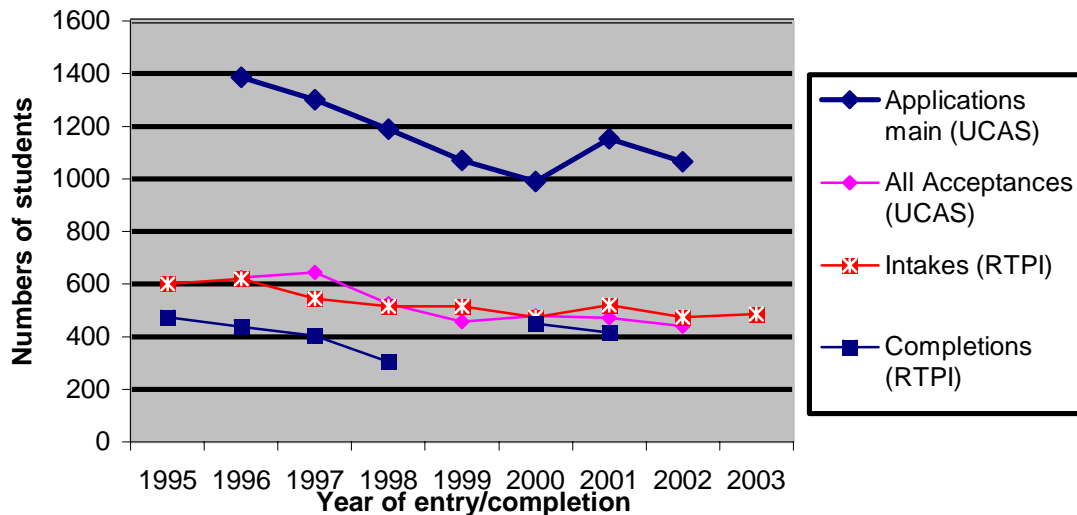
### **E3 The causes of the problems**

#### Junior levels – the national picture

- E3.1 Research for this and other projects indicates that local authorities are having difficulties attracting graduates with accredited planning qualifications. A recent RTPI report suggested that this was caused by an increase in demand for planning graduates in the last few years, and that the number of planning students completing courses had remained relatively stable<sup>6</sup>. However, for local authorities the picture on the supply side is worse than the completion figures indicate, as not all students completing accredited courses seek planning jobs, and those that do are not necessarily attracted to local authorities.
- E3.2 Many students completing undergraduate courses are tempted into other fields by the growth in demand for general graduates.<sup>7</sup> In addition, an increasing number of the students on RTPI accredited course are taking programmes jointly accredited with other disciplines. Most students completing these courses are unlikely to enter planning jobs.<sup>8,9</sup> Over a third of the students accepting places on RTPI accredited planning courses in 2002/03 were taking jointly accredited programmes.<sup>10</sup>
- E3.3 Although most students completing full-time postgraduate courses seek jobs in planning, the number completing such courses is small and has varied little in recent years. These students do not compensate for the decline in supply of undergraduates.
- E3.4 Those planning graduates who are seeking jobs in planning are not necessarily choosing local authority jobs. There has been a considerable growth in demand for planners from the private sector, and there is a perception that local authority jobs provide lower starting salaries and poorer prospects.<sup>11</sup> Jobs in the private sector are often considered more attractive than those in the public sector, and a quarter of planning graduates now go into the private sector.<sup>12</sup>

E3.5 Thus demand is increasing whilst the supply is decreasing. The trends in applications and entrants to undergraduate planning courses indicate that the situation is likely to deteriorate in the next few years (see Chart 3 below).

**Chart 3: Applicants, acceptances, entrants and completions RTPI full-time undergraduate courses**



Sources: RTPI Planning Schools Annual Returns;  
UCAS Data

E3.6 The decline in the number of applicants to undergraduate courses can be attributed to a range of factors:

- a lack of awareness of the subject, (rather than its “poor image,”) <sup>13,14</sup>
- a declining interest in vocational subjects
- a desire to keep career options open
- a general decline in interest in the built environment professions
- an association with, and attitudes towards, the public sector
- salaries and job prospects in planning (more relevant to potential postgraduates)
- Length of courses

Junior levels – the London picture

E3.7 This research indicates that the difficulties in recruiting planning graduates are more acute in London and the south-east than in the rest of the country, as a result of a combination of factors relating to supply and demand.

E3.8 On the supply side, there has been a considerable decline in the number of full-time students studying at Planning Schools in London and the south-east<sup>1</sup> (see Chart 4), and a consequent decline in the supply of graduates from this source. Of course London local authorities are not confined to recruiting from Planning Schools in the Region. However, many students seek their first jobs near to their universities. In addition, students studying elsewhere are deterred from seeking jobs in London because of the cost of living in the capital. In 2002 the cost of rented accommodation was two-fifths higher in London than elsewhere, while average mortgages were 50 per

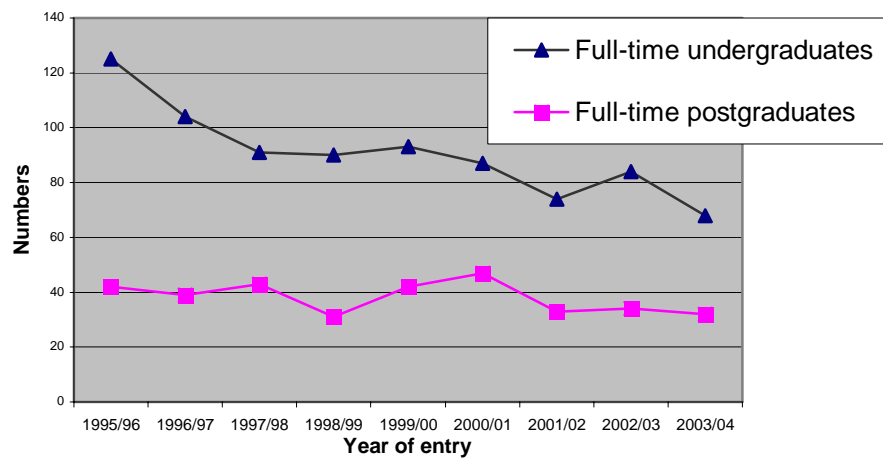
<sup>1</sup> The following five Universities offer RTPI accredited planning courses in London and the south-east: Oxford Brookes University; Reading University; London South Bank University; University College London; University of Westminster.

cent higher.<sup>15</sup> The salaries for junior posts in planning are amongst the lowest offered to local government professionals in London.<sup>16</sup>

E3.9 In terms of demand, an added difficulty London local authorities face in recruiting graduates, is the greater competition from the private sector; many of the major private sector planning employers are located in the capital.

E3.10 The decline in applicants to planning courses in London is a result not only of the factors listed above (see E3.6), but also the cost of studying in London. In London the cost of students accommodation is a third more than elsewhere.<sup>17</sup> “Being a full-time student in London may be becoming impossible for some.”<sup>18</sup>

**Chart 4: Student entry to RTPI accredited courses in London & SE**



Source: RTPI Planning Schools Annual Returns

#### Experienced staff

E3.11 The national shortage of experienced planners has been attributed in part<sup>19</sup> to the period of economic downturn in the late 1980s and early 1990s. A reduction in planning opportunities led to planning students and some experienced planners taking jobs outside planning, causing a “missing generation” of planners. This problem is compounded by an apparent net loss of experienced staff from local authorities in the capital to jobs outside London and in the private sector. Turnover may not have increased in individual authorities, but the net loss from London as a whole is causing recruitment problems to individual authorities. The age profile of planning staff suggests that the loss from retirement will also increase over the next few years.

E3.12 Arup’s study<sup>20</sup> found that planning staff are leaving the profession due to growing workloads, which contribute to poor staff morale and a poor image of the profession. Although this research found only limited evidence of staff leaving the profession, the buoyant jobs market and the growth of jobs in regeneration and other planning-related fields suggests that this may be occurring.

E3.13 Some experienced staff are leaving London due to their inability to get on the housing ladder, to purchase a larger property or, sometimes, because of a desire for a change of lifestyle. There is little evidence that experienced staff are moving in the other direction.

- E3.14 There appears to be a net loss, also, to the private sector. The proportion of RTPI Members working in the private sector rose from 18% to 24% between 1997 and 2001.<sup>21</sup> One housebuilder employed five planning staff in 1998 and now employs seventeen; it is likely that many of these staff were recruited from local authorities and that this picture is repeated in other organisations. Higher pay, the perception that private sector jobs are more exciting, as well (possibly) as a decline in the public service ethos amongst staff, may all have attracted planners to the private sector. Many of the major consultancies and developers are located in the capital, making competition for staff greater than elsewhere.
- E3.15 There are increasing concerns also about the “poaching” of staff between authorities.<sup>22</sup> Arup found that the higher than desirable level of turnover, was often the result of movements between nearby authorities.<sup>23</sup>

#### **E.4 Implications of shortages**

- E4.1 There are several implications of the shortage of planners. Most obvious are the difficulties and costs of maintaining the quality of service and the effect on the workload and morale of existing staff. These problems are likely to cause additional retention and, subsequently, recruitment problems.
- E4.2 The shortage of students will cause a continued shortage of planners, and this and the use of temporary staff will further reduce the numbers of experienced planners. In addition, the decline in student numbers could threaten the viability of Planning Schools and further reduce the supply of planners.

#### **E5 Responses to the shortages**

- E5.1 Individual authorities have adopted a variety of short-term and longer-term measures to deal with the problems. All have strengths and weaknesses.

##### Temporary agency staff

- E5.2 The main short-term response to shortages of junior and experienced staff has been the employment of temporary agency staff. 17% of posts in the London authorities responding to this research are occupied by such staff, and the true figure may be higher. The majority of these staff come from Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, however interviews for this research revealed a growth in the number of UK staff choosing to work through agencies.
- E5.3 Many of these staff are of a high quality and have planning qualifications and experience from their own countries. They also offer employers flexibility to cope with peaks and troughs in workloads. However, they are very expensive to employ - costing 20% or more than permanent staff, even after on-costs and recruitment costs are taken into account. In addition, many require considerable initial training and supervision, and often don't stay at one authority long enough to develop local knowledge of the social, economic, political and environmental context within which they are working.<sup>24</sup> This causes problems for the continuity of the service.
- E5.4 In the short-term there is often little alternative to employing such staff. However, *costs could be reduced, and recruitment processes and training improved by the creation of a not-for-profit employment agency.*

##### Consultants

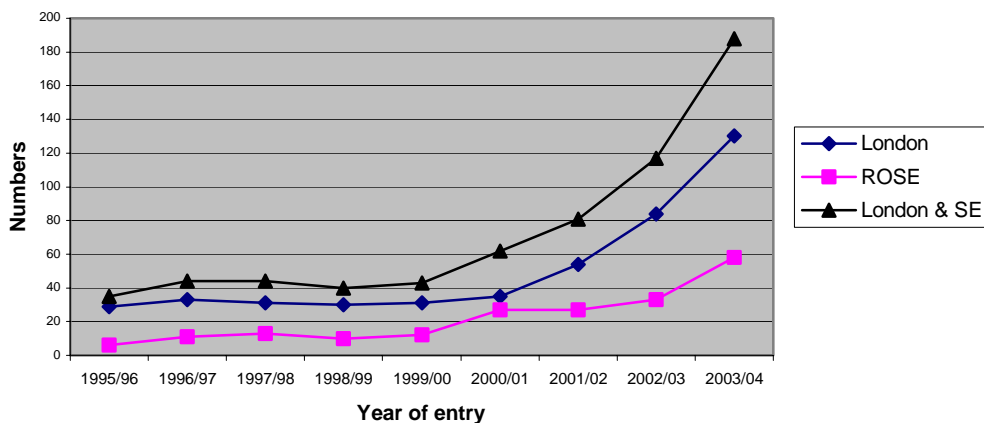
- E5.5 Many authorities employ consultants for specialist work or ad hoc projects for which they don't have the in-house expertise. A few authorities are also outsourcing some

of the more routine and continuous work to sole traders or small firms. Some of these staff are former officers recently retired from the authority. Estimates suggest that consultants increase overall costs by between 30 and 40%<sup>25</sup>, but provide expertise and experience not otherwise available. *Costs could be reduced by creating a public sector consultancy, unit or pool of experts.*

Employing non-planning graduates

- E5.6 Many local authorities nationally, and in London and the south-east, are not requiring new junior recruits to hold an RTPI accredited planning qualification. In London this is primarily a response to the shortage of applicants with such qualifications.
- E5.7 The growth in the number of such recruits has led to a massive growth in the number of students taking part-time postgraduate planning courses, particularly in London and the south-east. As many as 75 (or approximately 6%) of employees of London Boroughs may be taking such courses at present.

**Chart 5: Intakes to RTPI accredited part-time postgraduate courses in London and the south-east**



Source: RTPI Planning Schools Annual Returns

- E5.8 Most authorities have been able to recruit such staff more easily than planning graduates, largely from geography courses, and many are of a high calibre. The Tomorrow's Planners Initiative has enabled several authorities to recruit Black and Minority Ethnic graduates and address the under-representation of such staff in their authorities. *Extension of this initiative and greater take-up by local authorities could also help to address staff shortages.*
- E5.9 Recruiting non-planning graduates does have disadvantages. Such staff are studying away from the workplace for at least forty days annually and may require more initial in-house training and support than graduates of planning courses, as initially they lack knowledge of the statutory planning system. Balancing work and study imposes pressures on the staff, which can create retention problems. *Mentoring and monitoring can help staff to cope with such pressures.*
- E5.10 *Recruitment practices could be improved to increase the numbers of applicants to junior posts, with greater use made of the local press, the internet and direct contact with HEIs.*
- E5.11 A potential problem with the growth of this practice is the capacity of courses to accommodate the students. *There is an urgent need to discuss with HEIs, at a pan*

*London or wider level, the provision of places on courses and to reduce peaks and troughs in demand that cannot be accommodated by the training providers.*

Trainees without degrees

- E5.12 Some authorities nationally are enhancing the roles of internal staff without planning qualifications, and offering them training on sub-degree or degree level courses, providing them with a pathway to a planning qualification. Few authorities, however, appear to be recruiting school-leavers or others without degrees, to trainee posts that combine planning work with part-time undergraduate study. There are few students on part-time undergraduate degrees nationally or in London.
- E5.13 This practice was more common in the 1980s, and several respondents expressed an interest in resurrecting this practice. The growth in students living at home and having to work part-time and future changes in student funding suggests that there may be potential demand for such trainee posts. However, the shortage of available courses presents a major barrier. *Discussions with a range of stakeholders would be necessary to investigate the expansion and creation of sub-degree and degree level courses.*

Recruitment from other sources

- E5.14 Respondents to the research suggested a number of other sources of recruits. These were not examined in detail and require further investigation of their feasibility. One suggestion was the recruitment of staff back into the profession following career breaks, the undertaking of child-rearing or other caring responsibilities, or retirement. Although there are many examples of returners working for local authorities, there may be many who have been discouraged by perceptions that their skills and knowledge are out of date or by their inability to work full-time. *Providing returners' courses and flexible working arrangements could attract staff back, although there also needs to be an investigation of the best methods of contacting such potential recruits.*
- E5.15 Overseas planners from the enlarged EU may provide another potential source of recruits. Such staff have been recruited to the health service and teaching. *Discussions with EURES and professional bodies overseas would enable an assessment to be made of the feasibility, utility and best methods of recruiting planners from the EU.*
- E5.16 Most respondents felt that there was limited potential for more sharing of staff between Boroughs in relation to mainstream planning work. Few authorities have spare capacity and it was stressed that sharing staff does not overcome the fundamental problems of an overall shortage of staff. However there are successful examples of such practices outside London in environmental health, and in London in transport planning, and some legal and enforcement work. *Further investigation is therefore necessary of the potential for the sharing of staff undertaking some specialist functions.*

Enhancing the roles of internal staff without planning qualifications

- E5.17 Research for this and another project<sup>26</sup> indicates that many authorities have enhanced the roles of staff without accredited planning qualifications. The enhancement of roles has freed up planners from some of the less complex tasks they were undertaking. In addition, it has provided greater opportunities for progression and staff development and a fuller utilisation of the skills, abilities and ambitions of those members of the workforce who are not professional planners. Although promotion of such staff leaves a gap, it is generally easier to fill posts at this level than at the professional levels.<sup>27</sup>

E5.18 A barrier to the extension of such practices is the availability of training courses, particularly at sub-degree level, and the rigid pay structures of some authorities. *Discussions with a range of stakeholders would be necessary to investigate the expansion and creation of sub-degree and degree level courses, and authorities may need to consider introducing broader career bands to encourage staff to take enhanced roles.*

#### Changing structures and processes

E5.19 Many authorities across the country have changed their structures and processes in an attempt to minimise the effects of staff shortages. This has often been accompanied by the enhancement of the roles of staff without accredited planning qualifications, and the introduction of improved IT.<sup>28</sup> Many larger authorities have introduced minor applications or fast-track teams, set up customer liaison teams or roles and set up other teams undertaking a limited range of functions.

E5.20 The creation of customer service teams and roles appears to have been successful in freeing up experienced planners' time. Minor applications teams, often including staff without accredited planning qualifications, appear to have been widely successful in improving performance, but staff in such teams have expressed concerns about the initiative unless it has been accompanied by staff development opportunities, such as staff rotation. In smaller departments such specialisation has often been considered unfeasible. *Wider dissemination of the successful practices adopted by some authorities would enable other authorities to investigate the potential for changing structures and processes in their own authorities.*

#### Improving pay and conditions

E5.21 The introduction of broader career grades has been seen as successful by some authorities in improving the retention and recruitment of staff. Performance related pay has been introduced by some authorities, and other have introduced local supplements. These latter measures may prove successful to individual authorities, but have been criticised as creating a bidding war and increasing staff turnover, whilst doing little to address the underlying London-wide shortage of staff.

E5.22 The introduction of work-life balance measures has proved very successful in several authorities. One of the case study authorities was a pilot for the national initiative, and has introduced a range of flexible working arrangements. In this authority, these measures have improved morale, performance and recruitment and retention. Few negative effects were reported by respondents. This mirrors the findings of a large volume of other research.<sup>29</sup>

E5.23 Planners in London have been included as key workers on a trialed pilot basis in a new scheme designed to provide accommodation to key front line public service workers in London and the south-east.<sup>30</sup> The scheme may well help to attract junior planners to London, particularly as planners are eligible only in London. However, as staff only become eligible once they have a job, the availability of accommodation would have to be given prominence in recruitment literature.

E5.24 It might also help to retain planners with some experience who are at an early stage of their careers, who would otherwise have moved out of London due to their inability to purchase a first home. It is less likely that it will attract more experienced staff to London, or help to retain staff who are already in the housing ladder. Authorities will obviously need to publicise the scheme for it to be effective in improving the recruitment and retention of staff. *Wider dissemination of the success of broadening career bands and the introduction of work-life balance measures, and*

*of methods for enabling planners to take advantage of their key worker status would enable authorities to investigate and where appropriate adopt such measures.*

Increase the number of applicants with accredited planning qualifications

- E5.25 Students with accredited planning qualifications remain the main source of recruits to entry level jobs nationally, but the supply is not matching demand. In London the supply has declined dramatically to the concern of employers. To increase the supply of applicants there is a need not only to increase student numbers but also to attract those completing courses to jobs in London local planning authorities.
- E5.26 There have been a number of national and local initiatives – by the RTPI, its Branches, Planning Schools and employers - designed to raise potential students' awareness of planning. These range from web pages, brochures and resource packs to attendance at careers events, competitions, work experience and school visits. Evidence suggests that the national careers literature, web site information and course brochures will have limited effect, given the volume of such material sent to schools. Planning is rarely prominent on careers web sites, and is unlikely to be found unless specifically sought. Other initiatives may be more effective in raising the awareness of participants, but resources have dictated that they are intermittent, cover small numbers of students and are not co-ordinated or systematic.
- E5.27 To increase student numbers action is necessary to increase the awareness of planning amongst potential students and their advisers, and improve its image and the image of local government generally. *There is an urgent need for new initiatives and for greater coordination of efforts in London.*
- E5.28 The reduction of full-time postgraduate courses from two to one year full-time and the introduction of bursaries is likely to have a positive impact of postgraduate student numbers nationally and in London. However, London courses will be less attractive than others as the bursaries will not be weighted for London. Welcome though this initiative is, postgraduates make up only 20% of full-time planning students, and the likely increase will not dramatically change the numbers of full-time students studying in London and the south-east. There is no financial assistance for planning undergraduates, and the cost of four years' study is likely to remain a deterrent. The introduction of bursaries for some other undergraduate students will compound the relative disadvantage. *Some financial assistance to undergraduates would reduce this current barrier; top-up bursaries for postgraduates could increase applicants to London courses.*

Lessons from elsewhere

- E5.29 Measures to address the problems facing the public sector have been introduced by the Government and relevant organisations. In addition, actions have been taken to address the problems facing particular professions. Considerable efforts have been made nationally to attract people to training courses and jobs in teaching, social work, health and the police. These are much larger occupational areas than planning, but there have been initiatives, also, in smaller professions such as environmental health and transport. They provide some useful lessons for planning.
- E5.30 The recruitment and retention crisis in teaching led the Government to introduce a range of primarily financial initiatives. These included bursaries for students, a repayment of loans scheme, golden hellos, a fast-track programme, a returners' scheme and the starter homes initiative. These measures have proved successful in increasing student numbers and improving recruitment. Retention remains a problem, although the aforementioned measures and others such as the workload initiative are intended to address this.

- E5.31 In London, the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Unit has been created to tackle issues that could best be addressed at a pan London level, including supply agency issues, housing and transport costs, and the recruitment of overseas staff.
- E5.32 The Transport Planning Skills Initiative was established in 2001 to address the shortage of transport planners. The Initiative had a final budget of £350,000 – half from sponsors, including Government Departments, and half in pro bono contributions – to implement an Action Plan. The Plan aimed to raise awareness of the profession, improve careers guidance, provide work experience opportunities, identify gaps in sub-degree, undergraduate, postgraduate and CPD training provision, secure financial support for students, and the provision of a coordinated framework of qualifications describing entry and progression routes for both technicians and professionals.
- E5.33 The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health has also undertaken a considerable amount of work to raise awareness of the profession, improve careers guidance, and encourage the provision of work experience opportunities following the development of a marketing plan by consultants. Discussion with employers and Government Departments has now led to the establishment of a partnership of employers' organisations and professional bodies who have produced the Regulatory Services Partnership Action Plan. This is intended to raise the profile of environmental health, trading standards and health and safety work in order to improve recruitment to these services. Bursaries are available for students, and employers are funding students through full-time undergraduate courses.
- E5.34 Some of the above approaches could be utilised to improve recruitment and retention in planning. *There is a need for detailed investigation of these initiatives and to explore whether and how they could be usefully adopted in the field of planning.*

## **E6 Conclusions and recommendations**

### Reducing the cost of agency staff

- E6.1 Many of the responses of authorities to the shortages of planners at different levels of experience create their own problems. Whilst the employment of temporary agency staff presents some advantages, in terms of flexibility, the current proportion of posts occupied by such staff is unacceptably high. Temporary agency staff are expensive and cause problems of continuity for the service. In addition, they will rarely remain in London to progress to more senior posts.
- E6.2 Many of the other possible responses to the shortages of planners will make little immediate impact on the shortages of planners, and particularly experienced planners. Authorities will therefore have to employ such staff in the short-term. The cost of employing such staff could be reduced, however, and some of the recruitment and training problems reduced by **the establishment of a not-for-profit employment and recruitment agency.**

### Increasing applicants to junior posts

- E6.3 A range of other measures could be adopted to address the shortage of applicants with accredited planning qualifications. Many authorities are already recruiting non-planning graduates and some are offering opportunities to administrative or technical staff to undertake enhanced work and/or train to become qualified planners. Both measures can help to address the shortages, but potential barriers are presented by the availability and capacity of part-time and distance learning training courses at sub-degree, undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

E6.4 If local authorities were to offer **trainee posts for school leavers or others without degrees linked to places on part-time undergraduate planning courses** this may prove attractive to many potential students faced with the alternative of studying full-time whilst undertaking menial and low-paid work. Not only would this assist LPAs in their efforts to address longer-term recruitment and retention problems, an increase in the numbers of part-time undergraduates on planning courses would also help to retain the viability of full-time undergraduate courses and secure the future of London Planning Schools.

E6.5 In relation to both the above measures, there is a need for **urgent discussions between employers, employers' organisations, the RTPI and training providers to address issues relating to training provision (See E5.12).**

Increasing experienced applicants

E6.6 There is a need to investigate several other potential sources of recruits and explore means of attracting such staff. Recruitment of returners and retired staff could help to address the shortages of experienced staff; **the provision of training for returners and flexible employment opportunities** might help to attract such recruits.

Recruiting and retaining staff

E6.7 Measures relating to pay and conditions may improve recruitment and retention, and indirectly attract more students to planning courses. The majority of respondents to this research considered that performance related pay had more disbenefits than benefits, and research reveals mixed results.<sup>31</sup> In contrast respondents reported that the **introduction of broader career bands and improved progression opportunities** had had positive effects on recruitment and retention of staff. Very positive results were reported concerning the **introduction of work-life balance measures**, and respondents were hopeful that **publicising the inclusion of planners as key workers** would help to attract new recruits and retain staff with some experience.

Reducing the effects of shortages

E6.8 **Changing structures and processes, increasing the use and effectiveness of IT, and enhancing the roles of staff without accredited planning qualifications** can also reduce the effects of staff shortages.

E6.9 Many of the above measures will help to address the shortages of planners. It is unlikely, however, that recruiting trainees and internal staff, returners and retired staff will provide the number of staff necessary to overcome the problem. Although it would be possible to recruit non-planning graduates to entry level posts and allow full-time undergraduate courses in London to disappear, this would be a dangerous strategy as the training providers may not be able to provide the part-time undergraduate or even postgraduate courses necessary to train non-planning graduates.

Increasing student numbers

E6.10 A better solution would be to continue to recruit from a variety of sources, and attempt to support the provision of undergraduate courses by **providing a steady supply of entrants to part-time courses**, whilst supporting measures to increase numbers on full-time courses such as **raising awareness of planning** and the **provision of bursaries for full-time undergraduates, and supplementary bursaries for full-time postgraduates.**

### Implementation

- E6.11 The Employers Organisation<sup>32</sup> considered that many of the recruitment problems faced by authorities are shaped by local circumstances and are best answered by local solutions. Some local solutions, such as enhancing the roles of support staff or training internal support staff, will have no implications for other boroughs and may help to reduce the shortages of planners across London. However, other measures adopted by individual boroughs may not have such a benign effect on other authorities. The shortages of planners at all levels of seniority across London, suggests that while some measures adopted by individual authorities may address their local problems they will not solve the London wide problem of staff shortages, and some may merely increase the problems of neighbouring boroughs and increase staff turnover.
- E6.12 In addition, the cumulative effects of some of the measures adopted by individual boroughs – such as the implications for Planning Schools of the increased recruitment of non-planning graduates - will need to be addressed at a level wider than individual boroughs.
- E6.13 Many of the measures highlighted above could be introduced by local authorities immediately, but it is recommended that ALG convene urgent meetings involving LGA, Employers Organisation, GOL, ODPM, RTPi, London First, LDA, LSCs, and other relevant bodies to discuss the establishment, funding and composition of the following three (or two if the latter two are combined at a pan-London level) partnerships or units to co-ordinate or lead the introduction of the above measures:
- **A not-for-profit employment and recruitment agency**
    - To provide temporary staff at a lower cost and with better conditions than existing agencies
    - To provide initial induction training for overseas recruits
    - To provide technical interviews for all staff
  - **A pan London environmental/planning education unit**
    - To liaise with schools, universities, FE colleges, education departments, careers advisers, LSCs, RGS, RTPi and other relevant bodies to identify the most appropriate form and content of materials and initiatives to raise awareness of planning across London schools, college and universities
    - To develop new/enhance existing careers literature, teaching packs, and other material and initiatives in consultation with existing providers and the RTPi in the light of the above findings
    - To lead and coordinate the efforts of local authority planners, university staff, and other bodies undertaking planning education in schools colleges and universities
    - To coordinate the provision of work experience opportunities as part of vocational qualifications and independent of these
  - **A national planning recruitment and retention unit**
    - To investigate and ensure the provision of adequate training opportunities at sub-degree, undergraduate and postgraduate levels in consultation with providers and the RTPi
    - To investigate, secure funding for, and coordinate the delivery of bursaries for undergraduate students
    - To investigate the potential for introducing a repayment of students loans system for planning students entering the public sector

E6.14 It is possible that some of these issues could be addressed by the National Centre for Sustainable Communities Skills proposed by the Egan Review. However, some actions – such as the not-for-profit employment agency and the coordination of efforts to raise awareness of planning in schools - would be more effectively undertaken or coordinated at a pan London level.

## INTRODUCTION

Section 1 sets out the background to the research, explains its purpose, and explains the structure of the report.

Section 2 outlines the research methodology, explaining the reasons for the choice of sources used and the purpose of the primary research undertaken.

# Section 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Growing recruitment and retention problems in planning have been acknowledged and documented in a range of recent reports,<sup>33</sup> and evidence suggests that the problems in planning appear to be most acute in London and the South-East. These problems could threaten the improvement in service delivery that the Government's Planning Reform agenda is intended to deliver.
- 1.1.2 The Government has allocated extra resources to incentivise performance and almost £19 million of the Planning Delivery Grant has been allocated to the London Boroughs for 2004/05. However, the shortages of staff at all levels of experience across London, present barriers to the effective use of these and future resources.
- 1.1.3 Local authorities have responded to these problems in a variety of ways, including the employment of temporary staff, recruiting and training graduates and internal staff without accredited planning qualifications, and changing pay structures and conditions. The RTPI and Planning Schools have made attempts to increase the number of planning students.
- 1.1.4 The responses have often been ad hoc, however, and have not been based on any detailed evidence concerning the extent of the problems, their causes and the effectiveness of measures that have been and could be adopted to address the problems. Much of the existing evidence in relation to planning is partial or anecdotal.

### 1.2 The project

- 1.2.1 This research was commissioned by the Association of London Government, the Association of London Borough Planning Officers and the London Branch of the Royal Town Planning Institute in order to investigate in detail planning recruitment and retention problems in London Boroughs. The research involved a literature review, a survey of all London Boroughs and interviews with officers in a small number of London Borough Planning Departments.
- 1.2.2 The project was intended to provide a clear and up-to date picture of the extent and causes of the problems and a fuller knowledge of the nature and effectiveness of the measures currently being taken to address them. Its purpose was to identify potential measures that could help local planning authorities in London to achieve the ODPM objective of increasing staffing levels in local planning authorities. This was to include an indication of the perceptions of a sample of relevant officers of the current and potential measures.
- 1.2.3 The project was intended to produce a draft action plan outlining a range of possible actions for stakeholders to take to address the current problems. This action plan was intended to inform a seminar on the issues and to assist efforts to secure more funding for London authorities, provide evidence to inform current initiatives, enable better targeting of future efforts to address the problem, and enable better targeting of future research into the issues.

### **1.3 The structure of the report**

- 1.3.1 The report is divided into Parts and each part contains a number of sections. Part 1 of the report introduces the report in this Section, and explains the research methodology in Section 2.
- 1.3.2 Part 2 of the report then discusses the recruitment and retention problems that are leading to staff shortages in London planning authorities. Section 3 presents evidence concerning the extent of the problems, and describes briefly some of the implications.
- 1.3.3 If efforts to address the problems are to be successful then it is important to understand the causes of the current problems. These are examined in Part 4 of the report. Section 4 examines the causes of the decline in applicants to entry level posts from applicants with accredited planning qualifications. Section 5 then discusses the causes of the shortages of experienced staff.
- 1.3.4 Part 4 is divided into a number of sections, that examine the range of current and potential responses to the problems, discuss the issues relating to the measures and outline ways of addressing some of the problems associated with each.
- 1.3.5 Part 5 then sets out some conclusions and presents a draft action plan setting out the measures that the research has identified as most likely to have an impact over different time-scales, and tentatively suggests ways in which these measures could be implemented.

## Section 2

# Methodology

### 2.1 Literature Review

- 2.1.1 There have been many reports written about recruitment and retention problems in the public sector, and in planning nationally. Reports were identified from previous work undertaken by the author and from a web search of the sites of bodies such as ALG, Audit Commission, LGA, ODPM, RTPI, the POS, and individual Boroughs. A range of quantitative data from other sources, such as UCAS and the RTPI, was also examined and analysed. This material was examined in order to understand the context within which the problems of planning recruitment and retention in London are situated, to inform the study and to assist in the design of the research undertaken.
- 2.1.2 The review provided information on the extent of the problems in planning and other public sector professions, perceptions of their causes, the supply of planning and other graduates, routes taken into the profession, and the knowledge and attitudes of existing and potential recruits and of those working in the profession.

### 2.2 Questionnaire survey

- 2.2.1 An email questionnaire survey of all the London Boroughs had been initiated prior to the commencement of this project. The survey set out to discover the extent of the recruitment and retention problems at different levels of experience, levels of vacancies and the extent of use of temporary employment agency staff. 21 (64%) of the London Boroughs gave full responses to the survey. Two others provided partial responses. The results of the survey were analysed as part of this research project.

### 2.3 Case studies

- 2.3.1 In order to explore the issues in greater depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted in a small sample of London Boroughs, with Borough Planning Officers and some of their staff at different levels. These interviews were intended to provide a greater understanding of the nature and extent of the problems, current measures being used to address them, and of the feasibility of potential solutions.
- 2.3.2 The sample of 6 case study authorities was intended to represent the range of authorities in London in terms of geographical location and political control, and included Boroughs known to have introduced innovative measures to address the problems.
- 2.3.3 The material collected from the case study authorities was qualitative in nature. The results could not therefore be tested for statistical validity and did not necessarily accurately represent the views of all authorities. Nevertheless, they were supplemented by telephone calls to several other Boroughs, and together with the information from meetings and the questionnaire survey an indication of the views held across a wide range of authorities was obtained.

## **2.4 Meetings, informal interviews and presentations**

- 2.4.1 Interim results of the research were presented to two meetings of the ALG/ALBPO, and invitations for comments were invited at a joint meeting of the Planning Officers' Society/ALG. In addition, information was obtained from informal discussions with a wide range of planning officers and planning students.

## THE EXTENT OF THE PROBLEMS

Section 3 summarises some of the literature concerning the recruitment and retention problems facing local planning authorities, nationally and particularly in London. It identifies the problems at different levels of seniority, and then sets out the results of the research undertaken for this project.

## Section 3

### The extent of the problems and their implications

#### 3.1 Literature review

##### National problems

- 3.1.1 There are staff shortages in many of the professions; the problems are particularly acute in the public sector. The Audit Commission recently reported<sup>34</sup> that there are widespread reports of recruitment and retention problems affecting all local public services across all sectors and right across the country (see also Section 17).
- 3.1.2 The ageing workforce in local authorities and the “(d)ifficulties in attracting young people into public sector careers .....indicate the problems of recruitment and retention are likely to grow in the future.” From 2006 the number of people entering the workforce is predicted to start to fall, at the same time that large numbers of people are likely to be entering retirement.”<sup>35</sup> Research by the Employers Organisation found that only 6% of council staff are under twenty-five years old.<sup>36</sup> The implications of these trends for the public sector are that competition in the labour market is likely to increase and recruitment and retention problems intensify.
- 3.1.3 There is much evidence that planning is suffering severe staff shortages.<sup>37</sup> Recent research<sup>38</sup> into the supply of and demand for junior planning posts found that significant recruitment problems exist at this level. It found that application numbers are declining and only around 50% of employers stated that they were filling all posts at the first time of asking. The problems are more acute in the public sector and appear worse in areas with high living costs and, particularly, in rural areas. Authorities in regions with few planning schools also appear to be struggling with recruitment.
- 3.1.4 Recruitment problems are not confined to entry level posts, however, and there are retention problems as well as recruitment problems. An LGA survey last year<sup>39</sup> found that 87% of local planning authorities reported experiencing recruitment and retention problems in the last 12 months that were affecting their ability to deliver an effective planning service.
- 3.1.5 Staff retention problems have also been highlighted in other recent studies.<sup>40</sup> Arup’s recent DTLR commissioned study reported that planning staff are leaving the profession due to growing workloads, which contribute to poor staff morale and a poor image of the profession.<sup>41</sup>
- 3.1.6 The demographic profile of local planning authorities is similar to that in many other areas of the public sector. An ageing profile suggests that the recruitment and retention problems will not ease.

##### Problems in London

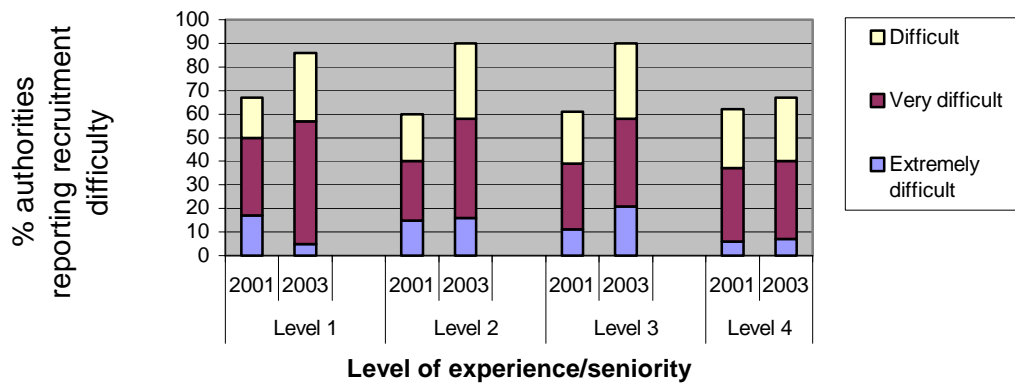
- 3.1.7 Although the problems affect many parts of the country, they are most acute in London and the South-East.<sup>42</sup> In an LGA survey in 2003<sup>43</sup> 94% of London Boroughs reported that they were experiencing recruitment and retention problems affecting

their ability to deliver services. Similar proportions of authorities reported experiencing skills shortages at all levels.

3.1.8 Recruitment problems in London have been reported in recent surveys by ALG. In 2001<sup>44</sup>, 67% of London Boroughs reported that they were finding it difficult to recruit to junior planning posts, with 50% finding it very or extremely difficult. Problems were reported also at other levels of seniority. Another 2001 survey<sup>45</sup> found that candidates for advertised posts have decreased significantly and that turnover is high and increasing. The 2002<sup>46</sup> and 2003<sup>47</sup> ALG Pay and Benefits Survey indicated that problems are not receding, and that the problems in planning may be increasing at more senior levels.

3.1.9 The results of the ALG 2003 survey indicated that the problems are worsening (see Diagram 1 below).

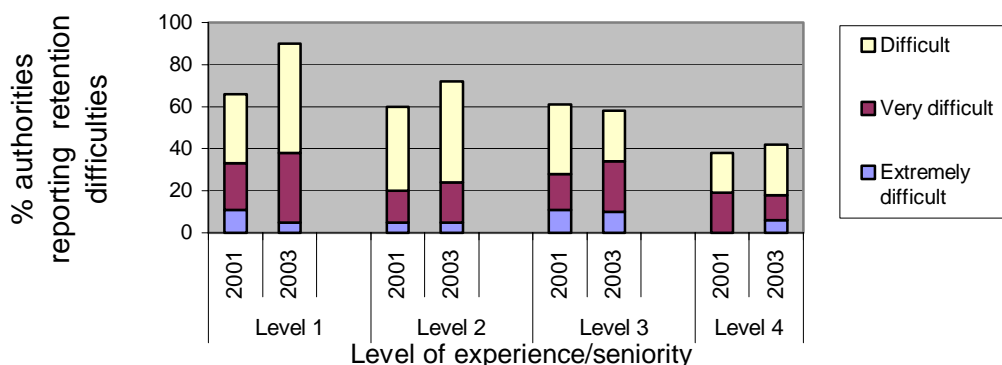
**Chart 1: Recruitment difficulties in London LPAs**



Source: ALG/LB Wandsworth (2004) *Pay and Benefits survey 2003*. ALG: London

3.1.10 Retention problems in London have been highlighted in other recent surveys. In London, surveys have found that turnover of local authority staff is higher than elsewhere<sup>48</sup>, and that some London Boroughs are facing problems in retaining planning staff.<sup>49</sup> Again, the ALG 2003 survey indicates that the problems at some levels are getting worse.

**Chart 2: Retention difficulties in London LPAs**



Source: ALG/LB Wandsworth (2004) *Pay and Benefits survey 2003*. ALG: London

### **3.2 Results of the current study**

- 3.2.1 A questionnaire survey of all the London Boroughs revealed that 13% of all the posts in the responding authorities were vacant, and that most were experiencing considerable recruitment problems. Two-thirds of the twenty-one Boroughs responding to the survey reported difficulties in recruiting experienced planners, and half had problems recruiting junior planners. One-third reported difficulties in recruiting planners at management level. The interviews with a small sample of Boroughs confirmed these findings, with all having considerable problems recruiting experienced staff.
- 3.2.2 None of the case study authorities had received more than twenty applicants for a post, and the typical number of applicants was less than five. Recent attempts to recruit to Principal Officer level posts at three of the authorities had resulted in fewer applicants than posts. Several respondents reported difficulties in compiling short-lists. Re-advertisements are common, and in several cases authorities had been unable to fill senior or even management posts.
- 3.2.3 There appear to be greater problems recruiting to some posts than others. Development control posts were considered harder to fill than policy posts, and posts in enforcement and urban design were the hardest to fill.
- 3.2.4 Several respondents suggested that turnover was not particularly high and that it was recruitment rather than retention that was the main problem causing shortages. However, the research suggests that retention is a major problem affecting the London market as a whole. Many of the staff leaving London posts are moving to jobs outside London, and some are moving to posts in the private sector. There appears to be little movement of staff in the other direction. This appears to be one of the main causes of the shortage of experienced staff.
- 3.2.5 Even at the level of individual authorities there are concerns that retention is starting to become a problem, particularly at more senior levels. In one authority six staff had left within the previous six months. The interviewee in this authority stressed that the problems are greatest at senior levels, with the borough facing particular problems in hanging on to more senior staff who have progressed from junior levels within the authority.
- 3.2.6 Retention of temporary staff is seen as a problem by some authorities, with staff moving on very quickly often as a result of head-hunting by agencies. Two Boroughs considered that temporary staff were moving on more quickly, and that the quality of overseas staff was declining, albeit from a relatively high standard. One outer London Borough reported that permanent staff were now being head-hunted by agencies, and that some staff were choosing to leave their permanent posts for agency work.

### **3.3 The implications of the shortages**

- 3.3.1 The shortage of applicants at all levels is causing vacancies, and inevitably causes difficulties in maintaining the quality of service provided. Almost all of the London Boroughs reported<sup>50</sup> that the problems were affecting their ability to deliver services (see 3.1.7).
- 3.3.2 The staff shortages also place pressure on existing staff, which may cause additional retention and, subsequently, recruitment problems.

- 3.3.3 To maintain the service authorities are employing temporary agency staff, engaging consultants to undertake routine as well as specialist work, and recruiting and training staff without accredited planning qualifications. Such practices all present their own problems in terms of cost and/or the quality of the service provided (see Part 4).
- 3.3.4 The most obvious effect of the recent and projected decline in numbers of students on full-time planning courses nationally, and particularly in London and the south-east, is the continued decline in this source of supply of potential recruits to planning posts in the capital.
- 3.3.5 A second potential implication is that the decline might threaten the viability of the Planning Schools. Courses at Strathclyde and Nottingham Universities were closed due to the level of entry qualifications of students compared with those on other courses, together with declining numbers of applicants. Declining applications to the undergraduate programme at the University of Westminster has led to the suspension of entry for 2003/04 and 2004/05. Numbers on the other courses remain relatively small.
- 3.3.6 Although the numbers on the part-time postgraduate courses are very large, students on such courses earn only half the income of full-time students. Without the income from an undergraduate programme, a fall in numbers could threaten planning education at the London Planning Schools. This in turn would cause a further decline in the number of potential applicants with accredited planning qualifications to London planning authorities.

## THE CAUSES OF THE PROBLEMS

The Audit Commission recently noted, “a complex interaction of economic, demographic, social and political factors impacts on demand for, and supply of, public sector staff.”<sup>51</sup> The current recruitment and retention problems in London appear to be the result of a steady growth in demand for planners at all levels and in different sectors, combined with a concurrent reduction in supply.

If attempts are to be made to develop potential measures to address recruitment and retention problems and to maximise the chances that they will succeed, it is important to understand the reasons for the current shortage of applicants and the reasons why staff are leaving.

Section 4 examines the reasons for the shortage of planners at entry level.

Section 5 discusses the factors causing a shortage of experienced staff.

## Section 4

### The shortage of junior planning staff

#### 4.1 Introduction

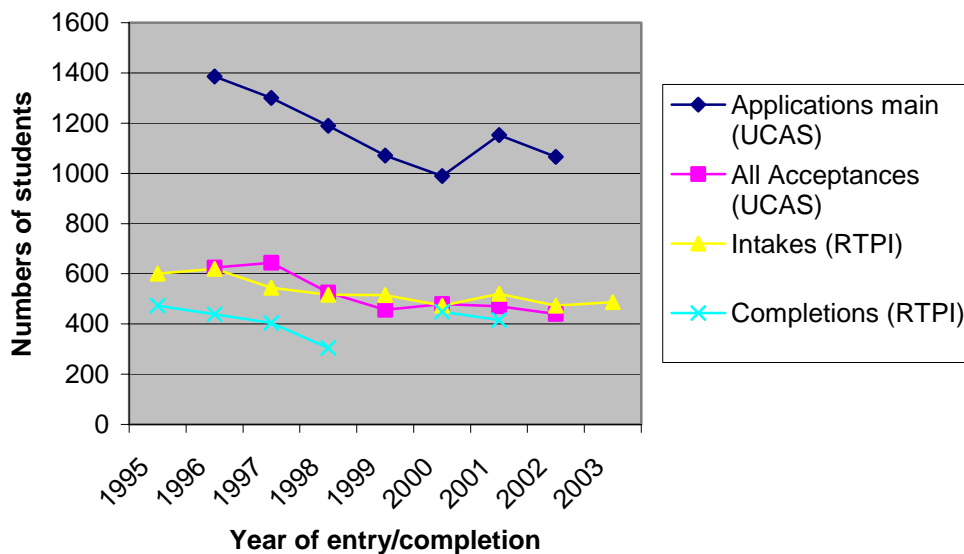
- 4.1.1 At entry level the main cause of shortages is perceived to be a lack of planning graduates, combined with growing demand. Graduates of full-time undergraduate and postgraduate accredited planning courses have traditionally formed the main source of supply to junior planning posts. Changes in the overall number of students entering and completing full-time planning courses will therefore inevitably affect the supply of applicants to planning jobs nationally and in London.
- 4.1.2 Whilst it is important to examine trends in the numbers of students on accredited courses, this doesn't provide a complete picture of the supply of applicants to local planning authorities. Not all of the students completing accredited full-time courses will enter the profession, and those that do will not necessarily choose to apply for jobs in London. To gain a fuller understanding of the supply of applicants, it is necessary therefore to examine the factors deterring such students from taking local authority planning jobs, and from taking such posts in London.
- 4.1.3 Shortages are of course affected by the level of demand as well as supply factors. To gain a complete picture of the problems, therefore, trends in demand need to be examined.

#### 4.2 Trends in the number of full-time undergraduate planning students

##### Student numbers nationally

- 4.2.1 A recent RTPI report stated that the overall numbers on accredited planning courses in 1996/7 were similar to those in 2001/02, although there were fluctuations over the period. According to the report, the number of students completing accredited courses has not changed dramatically in recent years, but that there has been a big increase in demand.<sup>52</sup>
- 4.2.2 The RTPI report relied on Planning School returns to draw the above conclusion about supply. The figures may not provide an entirely accurate picture, however, as the data collection methods differ between Schools and a full set of returns is not always obtained. UCAS data analysed for this research suggest that the picture, for London in particular, may be worse than the RTPI report indicates.
- 4.2.3 Nationally, "undergraduates still represent the majority of new entrants to the profession,"<sup>53</sup> so trends in admissions to and completions of such courses will have a major effect on the supply of applicants for junior posts.
- 4.2.4 Nationally, UCAS data<sup>54</sup> reveal a steady fall in applications and acceptances to full-time RTPI accredited undergraduate courses between 1996 and 2000. Applications fell by nearly 30% in this period and acceptances by nearly 25%. Although this trend was reversed in 2001, the downward trend resumed in 2002 (see Chart 3). Even the RTPI figures show that entrants to undergraduate courses declined steadily between 1996 and 2000, with a slight recovery since 2000.

**Chart 3: Applicants, acceptances, entrants and completions RTPI full-time undergraduate courses**



Sources: RTPI Annual Planning School Returns; UCAS.

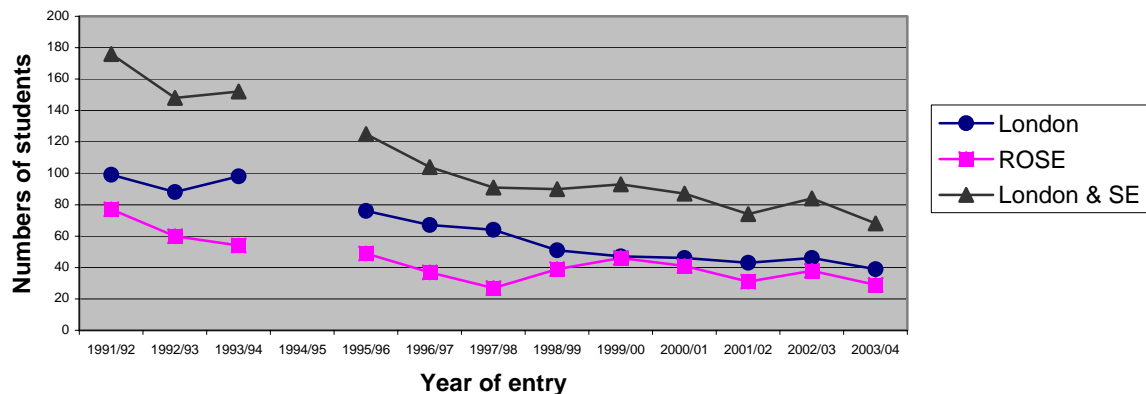
- 4.2.5 UCAS data shows that applications for 2002 are nearly 25% lower than in 1996, and acceptances are almost 30% lower. RTPI figures indicate that completions have remained fairly constant at around 400 students per year. However, the fall in entrants has yet to work its way through the system, and will lead to a fall in the numbers completing such courses in forthcoming years.
- 4.2.6 In spite of the above data, in August 2003, an article suggested that the recruitment crisis facing undergraduate planning courses appears to be abating,<sup>55</sup> following the initial encouraging results for recruitment to some planning schools in 2003/04. However, later figures released by the RTPI show that the total number of admissions to full-time undergraduate courses was slightly lower than for 2002/03.

#### Students studying in London and the south-east

- 4.2.7 Whilst there may not be a unanimous view on trends nationally, the picture in London and the south-east is clear. There has been a massive decline in the number of full-time undergraduate students studying at Planning Schools in London and the south-east.<sup>2</sup> This will have important implications for the supply of applicants to planning posts in the capital (see 4.6 et seq).

<sup>2</sup> The following five Universities offer RTPI accredited planning courses in London and the south-east: Oxford Brookes University; Reading University; London South Bank University; University College London; University of Westminster.

**Chart 4: Intake to RTPI accredited full-time undergraduate courses in London and the south-east**



Source: RTPI Planning Schools Annual Returns

### 4.3 Trends in the number of full-time postgraduate planning students

#### Student numbers nationally

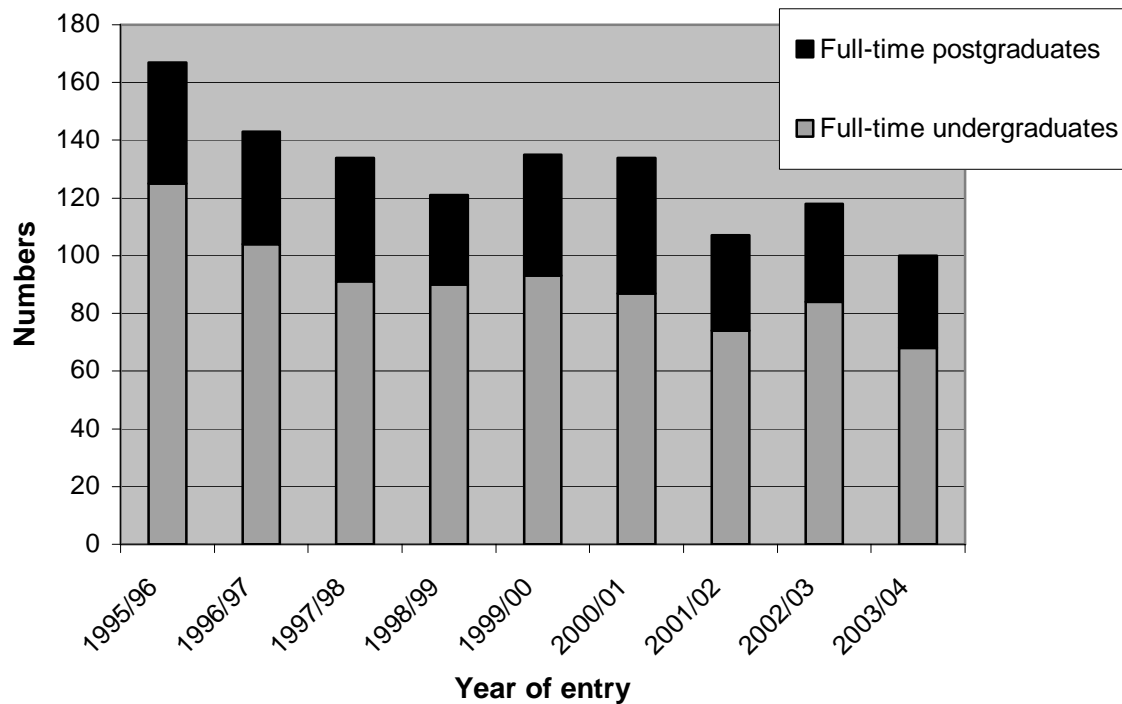
4.3.1 At first sight, the picture for full-time postgraduate courses portrayed by recent RTPI research is more positive than that for undergraduate courses. Numbers entering such courses have remained relatively stable – at between 200 and 260 - since 1996. The report shows that a decline in the number of students completing full-time postgraduate courses in the mid-1990s has been reversed since the late 1990s.

4.3.2 The basic figures, however, provide a misleading picture. Students studying at Hong Kong, Dublin and Belfast are included in the total, and comprise more than half of the total students entering full-time postgraduate courses in 2003/04. Only 109 students commenced full-time postgraduate courses on mainland Britain this year, and full-time postgraduates account for less than 20% of the students completing full-time courses.

#### Student numbers in London

4.3.3 Less than 30 full-time postgraduate students entered Universities in London and the south-east in 2003/04. Although numbers have fallen since 1996, the numbers entering courses in London and the south-east has never been significant when compared with the numbers on full-time undergraduate courses. The greatest number on such courses since 1996 has been 45.

**Chart 5: Entry to RTPI accredited full-time courses in London & SE**



Source: RTPI Planning Schools Annual Returns

#### 4.4 Reasons for declining numbers of full-time planning students

4.4.1 If efforts are to be made to increase student numbers, it is important to understand and address the underlying reasons for the trends.

##### Image and awareness

4.4.2 One of the most frequently expressed opinions amongst planners<sup>56</sup> is that the poor image of planning, and of many other built environment professions, is responsible for the decline in applications to undergraduate courses in planning and related areas. The decline of applications, coupled with the growth in applications to other subjects, such as business and media, is taken as conclusive evidence that planning has a poor image amongst those eligible to apply for planning courses. There appears, however, to be an absence of anything other than anecdotal evidence – often based on social conversations with peers rather than evidence from potential undergraduates - to support this view.

4.4.3 Recent empirical evidence suggests it is a lack of awareness of the subject rather than its “poor image” that is more likely to be affecting application levels. A questionnaire survey<sup>57</sup> of over one hundred and fifty part-time postgraduate planning students studying at the University of Westminster revealed that more than two-thirds did not know about planning as a career or an undergraduate degree before commencing their undergraduate courses. If a sample of students with such a high level of interest in the subject area were ignorant of town planning, there is likely to be even less awareness of planning in the wider population of potential students. Another survey of planning students revealed similar results.<sup>58</sup>

- 4.4.4 Surveys of school and VI Form College students add support to the above conclusion. A survey of school students last year<sup>59</sup> found that 70% of pupils surveyed did not know or were unsure of what Town Planning was. This figure is supported by the fact that 51% of pupils had never received any information on Town Planning, with only 3% considering this as a career. Another survey<sup>60</sup> revealed similar results, whilst in one survey<sup>61</sup> only one in forty students had heard of planning.
- 4.4.5 There may be a number of reasons for the lack of awareness. The small size of the profession compared with others and the massive growth of many other courses may play a part. The lack of awareness of many teachers and careers advisers may also contribute. Those respondents to the surveys of VI form students and postgraduate students who were aware of planning prior to university, often cited a family member or friend rather than a teacher or careers adviser as the source of their knowledge.
- 4.4.6 The decline in numbers taking GCSE and A Level geography since 1996, may also be affecting the awareness of planning, as geography is the school subject most closely associated with planning, and the most commonly taken A level by planning undergraduates. The massive growth of other university courses and the growth in popularity of courses such as media studies and psychology may be further reducing the visibility of planning.
- 4.4.7 More positively, the introduction of citizenship into the curriculum may increase interest in local environmental concerns. In addition, over a third of the sample of postgraduate students<sup>62</sup> stated that they would have liked to have studied town planning at undergraduate level. This may apply also to other students who have chosen not to study planning, and indicates that the market for such undergraduate courses may be greater than current figures suggest if awareness could be increased.
- 4.4.8 At postgraduate level, research indicates that postgraduate planning students who took geography or related degrees developed an awareness of planning primarily from modules and tutors on their undergraduate courses. As few other degree subjects have modules relating to planning, it seems likely that other undergraduate students' awareness of planning, or postgraduate planning courses, will be no greater than it was at school. Thus the majority of students eligible for places on postgraduate planning courses are likely to be unaware of their existence.

#### Decline of interest in vocational subjects

- 4.4.9 A second major reason for the decline in applications to full-time RTPI accredited undergraduate courses appears to be an increasing desire amongst applicants to university to keep their career options open. There has been a decline in applications to many vocational undergraduate courses in recent years. The Teacher Training Agency said that this was a major reason for the drop of 50% of teacher training undergraduates between 1992-93 and 2001-02.<sup>63</sup>
- 4.4.10 Surveys of over 150 part-time postgraduate planning students studying at the University of Westminster<sup>64</sup> found that approximately half of the respondents chose not to take a vocational degree as they wanted to keep their career options open or study an "academic" degree subject.

#### Attitudes towards and interest in the natural and built environment

- 4.4.11 In a speech delivered in 2000, Cliff Hague argues that a major reason for the decline in applications to planning courses is that the image of the built environment and public sector professions is poor, at a time when image and consumer choice are far more important than ever before.

4.4.12 Hague argues that there have been very important changes in the attitudes of young people,<sup>65</sup> noting that a survey reported in the Guardian, found that there has been a decline in the environmental and ethical concerns of under 35s.

4.4.13 A more recent survey,<sup>66</sup> suggests that the outlook may not be as bleak as is often thought, as it revealed that schoolchildren in the UK are deeply concerned with the environment. The problem may be one of sustaining this interest and converting this concern to an awareness of the opportunities to work in this field, and in planning in particular, and a desire to do so.

#### Association with the public sector

4.4.14 There is limited evidence to suggest that potential undergraduate students associate planning with the public sector; but if they do, evidence about the image of the public sector suggests that this might deter them from choosing to study planning. One recent survey of young people<sup>67</sup> found that almost half of the young people surveyed said they would not like a job in the public sector, although half of those surveyed would presumably consider working in the public sector.

4.4.15 Other surveys have found much lower proportions of graduates to be seeking jobs in the public sector. As students on undergraduate degrees are much more likely than prospective undergraduates to have some knowledge of planning, and to associate it with the public sector, such attitudes may be a major factor deterring students from applying for full-time postgraduate planning courses.

#### Salaries and job prospects

4.4.16 Low starting salaries and poor prospects are often considered<sup>68</sup> to be deterring graduates from entering the profession. Although it is possible that these factors may also influence applicants to undergraduate planning courses, research into the main factors influencing applicants' choices of courses at universities suggest that salaries and job prospects are not cited explicitly as the main factors influencing decisions.<sup>69</sup>

4.4.17 These factors are likely to have a much greater influence on students considering postgraduate study, particularly when the length of the full-time postgraduate course is taken into account.

#### Length of courses

4.4.18 RTPI accredited undergraduate town planning programmes require four years of full-time study rather than three. Given the financial pressure facing many students this may be a further deterrent to potential applicants. Connor et al (1999) found that higher education applicants from low-income families were far more likely those from high-income families to opt for shorter courses in response to the cost of higher education.<sup>70</sup>

4.4.19 Throughout the nineties the proportion of students on the full-time planning course at Westminster who stayed on for the fourth year decreased. Increasing numbers left after the third year due to a combination of financial pressures and the buoyant jobs market. Although a proportion gained planning posts, many did not. In addition, many of those completing the four year programme did not enter planning jobs. Thus the number of students completing planning courses may not provide a good indication of the numbers seeking posts in local planning authorities.

#### London

4.4.20 Many of the above factors may deter students from studying on RTPI accredited full-time courses in London and the south-east. There are, however, additional factors

that may account for the greater fall in the numbers at Universities in this region compared with elsewhere.

- 4.4.21 Research published in 2002<sup>71</sup> reported that students studying in London had significantly higher housing costs - paying on average a third more than students out of London. London universities charged rents averaging £1,807 over the year compared with £1,309 charged by universities outside the capital. Average rents were two-fifths higher in London than elsewhere (£2,047 compared with £1,433) while average mortgages were 50 per cent higher (£2,257<sup>3</sup> compared with £1,509).
- 4.4.22 These housing costs are deterring students from coming from other regions to London to study, thus reducing the pool from which London Planning Schools can recruit. An increasing proportion of full-time students studying in London are recruited from the region. This is indicated by the higher proportion of undergraduate students in London who are living at home, compared with those studying elsewhere. In 1998/99 24% of students studying at London Universities lived at home, compared with 17% at other universities outside the capital.<sup>72</sup> By 2002 the percentage of students at London's universities who were living at home had increased to 40%.<sup>73</sup>
- 4.4.23 The changing profile of students on the undergraduate course at the University of Westminster between 1990 and 2002 illustrates that this trend is occurring on planning courses. At the start of this period, a large proportion of the student body originated from outside the south-east and did not live at home. Since 2000, however, all except the overseas students on the course were recruited from London and the south-east, and lived at home.
- 4.4.24 According to Callender et al (2002) "being a full-time student in London may be becoming impossible for some. It is now so expensive, compared with studying outside London, that those from poorer backgrounds who are unable to live with their parents and/or who are debt averse may be being priced out of studying in London. Consequently, only students from more affluent backgrounds will be able to afford to study in London."<sup>74</sup> This suggests that the pool of students from which London planning schools can draw may be less than for schools in other regions.

#### **4.5 The decline in applicants to entry level planning jobs**

- 4.5.1 More than half of the respondents to a recent survey<sup>75</sup> of planning employers stated that over two-thirds of their new recruits had come from RTPI accredited planning courses. In addition, the majority of authorities were expecting to fill posts with such applicants. Full-time planning courses therefore remain the main source of supply for local planning authorities nationally, with undergraduate courses a much larger source of supply than postgraduate courses. Trends in the numbers of students entering and completing full-time planning courses nationally will obviously affect the numbers of applicants for planning jobs
- 4.5.2 Whilst there may be some doubt about these trends (see 4.2), it is clear that at best there has been a constant supply of graduates from planning courses over the last 10 years. During this period there has been a massive increase in demand for planners. Thus nationally, demand is outstripping supply.
- 4.5.3 Whatever the trends in the numbers of students on full-time courses nationally, the trends for students on full-time courses in London and the south-east are very clear.

---

<sup>3</sup> This figure should be treated with caution, as the numbers involved were small

There has been a massive decline in the number of students on such courses in the last 10 years.

- 4.5.4 At first sight this may not seem an important finding, as graduates can be recruited to planning jobs in London from any University in the country. However, an increasing number of full-time students do not move away from home to study and seek their first jobs near to their University. The high living costs in London are likely to present an additional deterrent to many students who have studied away from London from seeking jobs in the capital, and may deter students who have studied in London from seeking work in the capital. Thus the small numbers on courses in London and the south-east has serious implications for the supply of potential applicants for entry level planning jobs.
- 4.5.5 Some students who moved away from London to study may return to their parents' homes to live, and may seek their first posts in London. It is very unlikely, however, that an increase in the numbers of such students will compensate for the decrease mentioned in the previous paragraph.
- 4.5.6 The trends in the numbers of students entering full-time courses in London and the south-east courses provide a partial explanation of the decline in applicants from such sources to entry level jobs in London. These figures do not however provide the full picture. Examination of other data paints an even bleaker picture in relation to the likely supply of applicants.
- 4.5.7 Entry statistics don't provide a precise indication of the numbers completing such courses. In addition, not all of those completing the courses, will seek jobs in planning. Those that do may not choose to work in London or in the public sector.
- 4.5.8 Examination of the admissions and completion statistics from the RTPPI suggests that less than 75% of entrants to undergraduate planning courses since 1995 have completed the four year programme. Anecdotal evidence from several universities suggests that the proportion continuing for the fourth year may be considerably less than this, and declining, primarily as a result of financial pressures facing students.
- 4.5.9 Changes to the funding of undergraduate students, and the costs of studying in London and the south-east, may further discourage students from undertaking a fourth year of study. It is likely, therefore, that there will be a decline in completions over the next few years.
- 4.5.10 Some students are leaving after three years to gain planning jobs, and may continue their professional planning education by joining a part-time postgraduate planning course. Others, however, are leaving to take jobs outside planning, and are lost to the profession.
- 4.5.11 Traditionally a proportion of the students completing accredited courses have chosen not to seek planning jobs. An association of planning with the public sector, low starting salaries and poor prospects are often considered<sup>76</sup> to be deterring graduates from entering the profession. Research amongst all graduates found that only 22% want to work in the public sector, citing low salary and poor career progression as reasons.<sup>77</sup> In addition, a buoyant general jobs market and the greater attraction of jobs in private sector, is attracting those completing planning courses to jobs other than those offered by local planning authorities.
- 4.5.12 The changing nature of some of the accredited courses suggests that this proportion may increase. Since 2000, the RTPPI has jointly accredited several courses with the

RICS and RIBA; students on such courses are included in the totals for students on accredited courses. Although some of the students on jointly accredited courses may seek planning jobs upon completion of their degrees, most do not.<sup>78</sup> These courses attracted almost half of the applicants and one third of the acceptances to RTPI accredited courses in 2002/03.<sup>79</sup> Thus the figures for entrants to and completions of accredited planning courses may over-represent the likely supply of applicants to planning jobs.

- 4.5.13 Salary levels are another deterrent. A national survey of over two hundred employers found that the median national graduate starting salary is expected to outstrip inflation, increasing to £21,100.<sup>80</sup> In contrast the starting salaries for planning graduates are normally less than £20,000 nationally, and rarely climb far above this in London, even after the inclusion of the London Weighting Allowance.
- 4.5.14 A survey by ALG<sup>81</sup> revealed that the salaries for junior posts in planning are amongst the lowest offered to local government professionals in London. Only home care workers, residential social workers and council tax and benefits officers were offered lower salaries. Average salaries for junior posts in other professions such as environmental health and transport were often several thousand pounds more.
- 4.5.15 Housing costs in London may also deter graduates from universities in other regions from seeking posts in London. Research published in 2002<sup>82</sup> reported that the cost of rented accommodation was two-fifths higher in London than elsewhere, while average mortgages were 50 per cent higher.
- 4.5.16 All of these factors may deter graduates from seeking jobs in local planning authorities in London. The increase in the demand for planning graduates and for graduates generally, will also affect the numbers applying for junior posts in London planning authorities.

#### 4.6 Changes in demand

- 4.6.1 A recent RTPI report states that there has not been a dramatic change in the supply of planning students in recent years. Whether or not this is an accurate picture (see 4.2) and whether or not completions give an accurate representation of the numbers seeking local authority planning jobs, the report noted that there has been a big increase in demand. The report concludes that demand was considerably more than supply.
- 4.6.2 The report stated that since 1997, the demand for junior planners has increased substantially. The figures below (see Table 1) show the number of junior planning posts advertised in Planning. There was a dramatic increase between 1997 and 2002, and casual observation suggests that the demand continues to grow.

**Table 1: Junior planning posts advertised in Planning**

| Survey period         | Junior posts advertised |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1997                  | 798                     |
| 1998                  | 700                     |
| July 2000 – June 2001 | 939                     |
| July 2001 – June 2002 | 1307                    |

Source: Shaw, T., Pendlebury, J, and Mawson, J. (2003)<sup>83</sup>

- 4.6.3 The figures given in the above table are national and may underestimate the level of growth of junior planning posts over the last few years. A few years ago most posts were advertised in Planning. This and previous research has found that over the last few years, and particularly in London, many authorities are recruiting staff from agencies, without placing a formal advertisement. The growth in demand has, therefore, probably been considerably greater than the figures above indicate.
- 4.6.4 The RTPI research<sup>84</sup> indicates that demand by local authorities for junior planners is likely to increase. Fourteen of the twenty-eight London Boroughs responding to the survey thought that their authority would need more junior planners over the next five years, whilst only two thought that they would need less.
- 4.6.5 There has also been an increase in the demand for junior planners from the private sector. A recent survey of planning graduates found that a quarter went into the private sector.<sup>85</sup>
- 4.6.6 In their attempts to recruit graduates, local planning authorities face competition also, from employers in other areas of employment. "The number of vacancies for graduates is forecast to rise by nearly 12% in 2004 (8% in London), compared with a drop of 6.5% in 2002 and 3.5% last year."<sup>86</sup>
- 4.6.7 In a period of growing demand, the recent and projected decline in supply will exacerbate the current recruitment difficulties facing London local planning authorities.

## Section 5

### The shortage of experienced staff

#### 5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The current research indicates that there is now a severe shortage of experienced planners in London. This shortage is the result of a large increase in the demand for planners over the last few years, coupled with a reduction in supply.

#### 5.2 Factors causing the current shortage

##### The “missing generation”

- 5.2.1 One study<sup>87</sup> suggests that the shortage of experienced planners nationally is in part a result of the reduction in planning opportunities that accompanied the economic slump of the late 1980s and early 1990s. Students completing accredited planning courses at that time, as well as some experienced planners, took jobs outside planning and were lost to the profession. The study suggests that there is a missing generation of planners from the period of downturn.

##### Net loss of staff from London

- 5.2.2 The problems resulting from this “missing generation” are compounded, in London particularly, by an apparent net loss of experienced staff from local authorities in the capital. The number of experienced staff leaving London local authorities appears to be far in excess of the number joining from elsewhere.
- 5.2.3 Some respondents to this research reported that the problems in their authorities were more of recruitment than retention, as turnover of permanent staff was not felt to have increased significantly in their own authorities. However, this view ignores the situation in the wider market. The net loss of staff from London local planning authorities is one of the main causes of the recruitment problems faced by individual authorities.

##### Reasons for leaving jobs

- 5.2.4 Staff are leaving posts in London planning authorities for a variety of destinations. Some are moving to other Boroughs, but many are not. Some staff are leaving to retire, and the age profile of planning suggests that this is a not insignificant number. Others are leaving the capital, leaving the public sector, or leaving planning altogether.
- 5.2.5 Arup's recent national study reported that planning staff are leaving the profession due to growing workloads, which contribute to poor staff morale and a poor image of the profession.<sup>88</sup> Vacancies increase workloads which leads to further departures, and so on.
- 5.2.6 Little evidence was obtained from this research to suggest that large numbers of staff are leaving the profession. However, interviews were held at only a small sample of authorities, and there may be such movement from other authorities. The buoyant jobs market and the growth of jobs in regeneration and other planning-related fields suggests that the opportunities are there.

5.2.7 Respondents to the research reported that some experienced staff were leaving their authority to take jobs outside the capital. After gaining a few years experience some planners are leaving London due to their inability to get on the housing ladder. At more senior levels some staff are leaving in order to purchase a larger property and, sometimes, because of a desire for a change of lifestyle. All of the case study authorities provided examples of staff undertaking such moves.

#### Few staff entering London market

5.2.8 The high cost of accommodation and other living costs appear to deter experienced staff from authorities outside London from moving to authorities in the capital, and there were few examples of experienced staff from outside London and the south-east being recruited to the case study authorities. Thus there appears to be a net migration of experienced planners from the capital.

#### Loss of staff from the public sector

5.2.9 Some experienced staff are leaving public sector planning entirely. The Audit Commission<sup>89</sup> found there were six key factors in people's decisions to leave public sector jobs.

- Bureaucracy, paperwork and targets: Half of the sample of former public sector workers identified this as the most important factor in their decision to leave
- Insufficient resources, leading to unmanageable workloads.
- Lack of autonomy.
- Feeling undervalued by managers, government and the public (68% said the image of their former profession would discourage new recruits).
- Pay that is not "felt fair" compared with that of people doing similar work;
- A change agenda that can feel imposed and irrelevant.

5.2.10 Some staff in the case study authorities were reported to have left local government for private sector planning jobs. There has been a growth in private sector jobs over many years, and higher pay, the perception that private sector jobs are more exciting, as well (possibly) as a decline in the public service ethic amongst staff, may all have attracted planners to jobs in the private sector.

5.2.11 A survey in 2001 revealed that the proportion of RTPI Members working in planning consultancies, multi-disciplinary consultancies and development firms rose from 18% to 24% between 1997 and 2001.<sup>90</sup> Many of the major private sector employers are based in London, and provide considerable competition for staff. One housebuilder employed five planning staff in 1998 and now employs seventeen. It is likely that many of these staff were recruited from local authorities and that this picture is repeated in other private sector organisations.

5.2.12 Although reports of moves to the private sector were less common than moves to other local authorities, there were few examples of staff being recruited to the case study authorities from the private sector. The loss of such staff from London local authorities to the private sector, compounds the net loss caused by migration (see 5.2.2).

#### Problems in outer London

5.2.13 London Weighting Allowances may also be contributing to the recruitment and retention problems facing authorities in outer London (as well as in the home counties), as some staff are attracted to the higher salaries offered in inner London. Outer London authorities also appear to be having some difficulties recruiting experienced temporary staff due to their location away from central London.

Retention in individual authorities

5.2.14 Although turnover of staff was not high at most of the case study authorities visited, there were concerns that retention is starting to become a problem in some individual Boroughs particularly at more senior levels (see 3.2.5).

“Poaching” of staff

5.2.15 In planning there are increasing concerns also about the “poaching” of staff between authorities.<sup>91</sup> Arup found that the higher than desirable level of turnover, was often the result of movements between nearby authorities.<sup>92</sup>

## RESPONSES TO THE PROBLEMS

Local planning authorities have taken a number of measures to address the recruitment and retention problems. The Sections in this part of the report examine and assess current practices and the issues these raise, and discuss some potential measures for addressing the issues.

Sections 6 and 7 examine authorities' use of temporary agency staff and consultants. Section 8 discusses the recruitment of non-planning graduates. Section 9 examines and training of staff without accredited planning qualifications. Section 10 looks at other potential sources of recruits.

Sections 11 and 12 examine measures taken to enhance the roles of existing staff without planning qualifications and changes to processes and structures. Sections 13, 14 and 15 assess the measures taken to change pay and conditions.

Chapter 16 examines attempts to increase the numbers of students on full-time accredited planning courses.

Chapter 17 looks at some of the responses to recruitment and retention problems in areas other than planning.

## Section 6

### The use of temporary agency staff

#### 6.1 Current practice

- 6.1.1 Over the last few years most London Boroughs have been employing temporary agency staff to fill many of their vacancies. These staff are recruited largely to junior planning posts, but also to posts requiring some planning experience.
- 6.1.2 In 2001 there may have been as many as 200 temporary agency staff working in planning in London,<sup>93</sup> and the results of a recent survey<sup>94</sup> indicate that numbers may now exceed 250. 17% of the planning posts in the twenty-one authorities responding to the survey were occupied by temporary agency staff, and in several authorities over a quarter of all staff were employed by agencies.
- 6.1.3 This, and previous, research revealed that such staff are recruited primarily because of the poor level of response authorities have had to formal advertisements. This is felt to be a result of a general shortage of planning graduates and experienced planners in the London jobs market.
- 6.1.4 Some authorities are recruiting from employment agencies because of the ease of recruiting staff through this means, and because of the flexibility it offers. Lengthy procedures for the appointment of staff can be avoided, and staff can be taken on quickly to respond to peaks and troughs in the workload.
- 6.1.5 Interviews for this and previous research indicates that the majority of these staff originate from Australia, South Africa and New Zealand. Many have planning qualifications and, often, some planning experience from these countries. Such staff tend to be visitors to this country, and stay for a limited period of between one and four years. This period is determined not only by choice, but by the type of visa they hold.
- 6.1.6 Some of these staff have a Right of Abode, which imposes no restrictions on the duration of their stay. Most, however, have either an Ancestry Visa, or a Working Holiday Visa which are available to Commonwealth citizens. The former entitles the holder to stay in this country for up to four years; the latter provides the right to stay for two years. Restrictions on the type of employment the holder of Working Holiday Visas may undertake were removed in August 2003; thus planners are now entitled to work within their own profession.
- 6.1.7 The contracts for agency staff are normally of three months duration. The period of notice is normally a week.
- 6.1.8 The wages paid for temporary agency staff vary according to the level of experience of the staff. This research found that authorities were normally paying approximately £16 per hour (£26,640 p.a.) for staff with some overseas, but no UK, experience. Some authorities were paying such amounts for overseas graduates without formal planning qualifications.
- 6.1.9 Once staff had gained some UK experience, agencies required a higher payment. Most of the case study authorities were paying between £18 and £22 per hour

(£29,970 to £39,960 p.a.) for temporary staff with some experience. One authority was paying £28 - £30 per hour (£46,620 to £49,920 p.a.) for two temporary UK qualified staff with between ten and fifteen years experience.

- 6.1.10 Typically, the agencies were taking between £4 and £6 per hour from the gross local authority payment, for administrative services to the authority and the employee. The employee took the remainder of the payment. The temporary staff often work through their own limited companies, and this can boost their net pay by between 10% and 25%.
- 6.1.11 Should the employer wish to employ the agency member of staff directly on a permanent contract, then the agency will normally require the payment of a fee. This can be as much as £3,500, although one of the case study authorities has negotiated an arrangement whereby no fee is payable, and imminent changes in the law will remove agencies' right to charge such fees after the agency employee has been working for one employer for more than two months.
- 6.1.12 Although the majority of agency staff are temporary residents of this country, this research found that there has been a recent increase in the numbers of such staff who are UK trained and domiciled. Some of these staff consider that seeking work via an agency has become necessity as many authorities appear to be attempting to fill many of their vacancies only through agencies.
- 6.1.13 The large number of junior planning posts advertised in London recently suggests that this is a false perception. However, over the last few years posts have not always been advertised formally, and one of the case study authorities now recruits primarily through agencies. The poor level of responses to formal advertisements, and the costly requirement for repeat advertisements,<sup>95</sup> has caused many other authorities to recruit many of their staff through agencies.
- 6.1.14 Not all staff are signing on with agencies because they perceive it to be necessary to secure work. A growing number appear to be doing so because the temporary posts attract a higher rate of pay than permanent posts. Junior staff may earn £25,000 or more if working through an agency, compared with £16,000 to £20,000 as a permanent member of staff. They may be willing to trade poorer conditions such as the lack of employer pension contributions, for the flexibility and higher wage offered by such posts. Rewards for agency staff compared with permanent staff at senior levels are substantially greater. Whilst such jobs are less secure than permanent posts, this is not considered to be prohibitive because of the buoyant state of the planning jobs market.

## **6.2 Issues relating to current practice**

### Supply

- 6.2.1 Staff are recruited from the many employment agencies that operate across planning and a wide range of other professions. Most respondents expressed general satisfaction with the quality of staff. However, some Boroughs have noted that recently the quality of some staff supplied by agencies appears to have declined. Some respondents felt that it is becoming more difficult to attract good quality agency staff. The number of such staff employed across London and, increasingly, the south-east, has increased to such an extent that good staff with overseas planning qualifications and experience are becoming more difficult to find. Some authorities are now having to appoint non-planning graduates of overseas courses.

6.2.2 Many of the respondents to this research expressed some dissatisfaction with the service provided by the agencies. The staff supplied by agencies are not always suitable for the jobs of which they are notified, and agencies do not currently assess the technical ability and interests of staff by means of interview. Dissatisfaction was widespread amongst the agency staff themselves as well as being expressed by a number of the managers within the planning departments.

#### Cost

6.2.3 Agency staff are far more expensive to employ than permanent staff with equivalent levels of experience, even after the on-costs of employing permanent staff are taken into account. They normally cost at least 20% more than permanent staff, but some junior agency staff are costing as much as 50% more. In addition, many respondents – managers and agency staff – considered the amount taken by the agencies to be disproportionate to the services they offer.

6.2.4 Many agencies are taking between £4 and £6 an hour from the gross payment by local planning authorities. Calculations based on the research undertaken for this and previous studies suggests that London local planning authorities are probably paying well in excess of £6 million a year for agency staff. More than £2 million of this is taken by the employment agencies.

#### Effect on service delivery

6.2.5 Most respondents to this research considered that most of the staff recruited via employment agencies were of a high quality. However, there are a number of service delivery problems caused by the employment of such staff.

6.2.6 Agency staff from overseas are usually unfamiliar, initially at least, with the legislative and policy framework within which the service operates, and may require considerable initial training and supervision. This is a particular problem for some of the case study authorities which are unable to recruit agency staff with experience to junior posts because of their location way from central London.

6.2.7 An additional problem is that, although some staff were reported to stay in the same Borough for periods of a year or more, many stayed for six months or less. Again this appears to be a problem for Boroughs in particular locations. Planning officers report that this often means that they don't stay long enough to develop local knowledge of the social, economic, political and environmental context within which they are working, and don't know the background to contentious issues.<sup>96</sup>

6.2.8 The turnover of such staff appears to be increasing as agencies compete for their services and attempt to lure staff away from their posts to more lucrative posts elsewhere. This causes problems of continuity and consistency. The peripatetic nature of many of the staff means that they may not have to take responsibility for the implications of their decisions, and consequently may feel little "ownership" of the decisions they take.

6.2.9 A longer term problem is that many of the agency staff remain in London for only a few years. This means that whereas the experience developed by permanent staff will often be utilised as such staff progress to more senior posts, the experience gained by agency staff from overseas is lost to local planning authorities. The more junior posts that are held by such staff, the smaller will be the number of staff progressing to become the next cohort of experienced planners.

6.2.10 Many of the managers contacted during this research expressed concerns about this issue. They felt that there were dangers of employing too high a proportion of

temporary staff and not having enough staff with experience and local knowledge. This was felt to be unavoidable in some cases, due to the shortage of applicants for permanent posts. However, there were concerns that an unbalanced staffing profile would ultimately lead to a reduction in the quality of the service.

- 6.2.11 Most of the permanent planning staff interviewed for this research recognised the benefits of employing overseas temporary staff. Not least, they considered that if such staff weren't employed, the posts they occupy would be vacant and result in increased workloads. They also recognised that the temporary staff often brought energy and new ideas to the department.
- 6.2.12 Some concerns were, however, raised by permanent staff about the burdens placed on them by the turnover of temporary staff. These include repeatedly having to undertake informal induction and providing guidance and advice to new staff. In addition, concerns were expressed about the need to take on work that had been started but not completed by temporary staff.
- 6.2.13 An Audit Commission report<sup>97</sup> stated "given that these employees will often work in close proximity with in-house staff, differences in their terms and conditions, whether better or worse, may cause disruption, anxiety and possibly a lowering of morale and motivation at the workplace."
- 6.2.14 Many of the permanent staff were unaware of the costs of employing temporary staff, and were unaware of the wages received by such staff. Those permanent staff who were aware of these matters expressed some resentment that they were often being paid considerably less than their temporary colleagues.
- 6.2.15 A final concern was raised by potential job applicants. They expressed some concerns that the increasing use of agency staff was reducing the number of permanent posts advertised and that posts were being filled with little regard for equality of opportunity.

### **6.3 Assessment**

- 6.3.1 The vast majority of respondents stated that the main reasons for employing such staff were recruitment difficulties - the lack of permanent or suitably qualified applicants to posts. Four authorities cited the flexibility of employing staff on temporary contracts as the main reason
- 6.3.2 The difficulties in recruiting permanent qualified planning staff at all levels means that the recruitment of temporary agency staff is essential for most authorities. In the short-term it is likely that authorities will continue to rely on temporary agency staff to fill many of their vacancies.
- 6.3.3 Whilst most of the staff are of a high quality, and offer employers greater flexibility in responding to peaks and troughs in the workload, there are a number of problems with the practice.
- 6.3.4 Some of the adverse effects of employing temporary staff – such as the morale of permanent staff and the lack of continuity – could be overcome only by measures to increase the long term supply of planning graduates, and retain experienced staff within the London employment market. Measures to address these issues are set out in other sections.

- 6.3.5 Other problems could be addressed more immediately. There is a perception that the cost of agency staff must be reduced, that recruitment procedures could be improved, that the burdens placed on permanent staff by the repeated need to provide advice to new agency staff should be reduced, and that an over-reliance on these staff must be avoided.

#### **6.4 Recommendations**

- 6.4.1 There are two main alternative means of addressing the issues of concern to employers and agency staff. Setting up a preferred supplier list or setting up a not-for-profit agency.
- 6.4.2 Whilst setting up a preferred supplier list and a single point of contact may be effective in reducing costs to the local authorities and the staff employed, greater reductions may be achieved by setting up a pan-London not-for-profit recruitment and employment agency for planning. Such an agency would also have the potential to match staff to posts more effectively by improving the initial recruitment process, and provide or procure induction training for its staff. Such a body would be easier to create and operate in planning than many other fields such as teaching, due to the scale of such an operation.

#### **6.5 Recommendations**

##### **Recommendation 6.1**

##### **To set up a pan London not-for-profit employment and recruitment agency**

###### Reason

To improve supply, reduce costs and improve service delivery.

###### Delivery mechanism

LGA/ALBPO/RTPI/GOL to investigate the feasibility of setting up such an agency, and discuss its scope and form with potential partners.

## Section 7

### The use of consultants

#### 7.1 Current practice

- 7.1.1 Some authorities are addressing their staffing problems by making increasing use of consultants. They are sometimes used to undertake major projects or studies for which the LA does not have the required expertise in-house. Some authorities are contracting out more of their routine work which might otherwise be done by permanent staff.<sup>98</sup>
- 7.1.2 In one of the case study authorities, and in at least one other authority in London, former officers of the Council have been employed as consultants to undertake work that would normally be undertaken in-house. In the case study authority the former officer was involved in major development schemes, and was employed because of the difficulty in recruiting experienced staff. In another authority in London, former staff have been engaged to deal with minor applications.
- 7.1.3 Partnering with the private sector has usually involved the contracting out of service delivery. Councils can increase their capacity by contracting out parts of their operation to partners in the private, public or voluntary sectors.<sup>99</sup>

#### 7.2 Issues relating to current practice

##### 7.2.1 Supply

There seems to be no shortage of private sector firms and individual consultants with the required expertise to undertake specialist work for local planning authorities. For ad hoc contracts or for longer-term engagements local authorities can invite tenders for undertaking the work. It is unclear what level of interest there would be amongst consultants to undertake more routine work over longer time scales,

- 7.2.2 Many local authorities have investigated and rejected outsourcing of routine work, due to the additional costs and the difficulties in day to day management of work which often has political implications, or may require negotiations with neighbours or applicants on behalf of the Council.

##### Cost

- 7.2.3 The cost of employing consultants is a major issue associated with this practice. One respondent to the recent Arup study, stated that consultants increase overall costs by 30 – 40%.<sup>100</sup> This has effects on the quality of other planning functions.

##### Service delivery

- 7.2.4 Whilst consultants may provide a level of technical expertise that is not available from in-house staff, they often lack detailed knowledge of the local context. If they are employed for short-term projects, they will rarely have to suffer the consequences of their actions, other than the potential economic damage caused by a loss of reputation.

### **7.3 Assessment**

- 7.3.1 For many specialist projects – such as Impact Assessments or Masterplanning exercises - authorities often have inadequate in-house expertise to undertake the work. In such cases there is often no alternative but to outsource the work to planning consultancies. It is likely that this practice will continue for the foreseeable future.
- 7.3.2 It might be possible to reduce costs if a pan London public sector unit was created to undertake work that occurs infrequently in individual boroughs, but regularly across London – such as Retail Impact Assessments. However, the form, location, and funding arrangements for such a body would require detailed investigation.
- 7.3.3 The examples of the use of consultants to undertake more routine work or specialised work involving longer-term relationships with the Council, appear to have been successful. However, this research did not investigate whether there had been detailed assessments of these arrangements. In both examples the consultants were ex-officers of the Council, and in one case the Council work was the only work being undertaken by the consultant. This is a rather different arrangement from inviting tenders from consultants with no connection with the Council, and the arrangement is more akin to efforts to recruit returners to the Council (see below).

### **7.3 Recommendations**

#### **Recommendation 7.1**

**To investigate the feasibility of creating a pan London planning unit to provide consultancy or advice on specialist areas of work**

Reason

To reduce the costs of outsourcing specialist work to consultants

Delivery mechanism

LGA to undertake research into the feasibility and form of such a body.

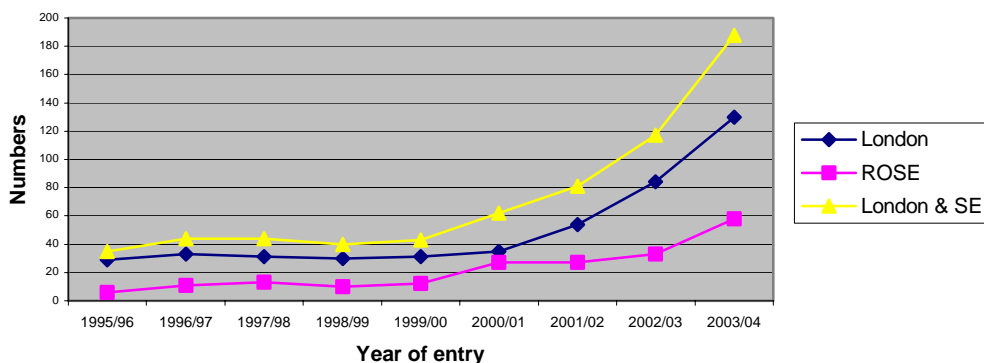
## Section 8

### The recruitment of non-planning graduates

#### 8.1 Current practice

- 8.1.1 Recent research<sup>101</sup> indicates that planning authorities nationally are recruiting significant numbers of staff without accredited planning qualifications. Half of local authorities nationally, and 46% of London authorities, responding to a recent survey stated that they were not specifying a RTPI qualification as a prerequisite for junior planning posts. Most of the recent advertisements in *Planning* for junior posts in London have not specified accredited planning qualifications as an essential requirement.
- 8.1.2 The RTPI research suggested that this practice might sometimes be a response to recruitment problems, but was more often thought to be for positive reasons - for example the need for more specialist qualifications. In contrast, research for this report suggests that in London the main reason for recruiting such staff *is* the absence of qualified planning graduates. Most respondents said that although they might prefer to appoint planning graduates, few applications were received to posts specifying this requirement. As a result there were increasingly recruiting non-planning graduates.
- 8.1.3 Such non-planning graduates are normally sent on part-time postgraduate planning courses and the growth of such courses provides another clear indication of the growth in the recruitment of non-planning graduates.
- 8.1.4 Approximately 400 students entered part-time postgraduate planning courses in 2003/04. Although there have been significant increases in the numbers of students on part-time postgraduate planning courses in Birmingham, Leeds and Bristol, the majority of the increase is accounted for by the growth in numbers on courses in London and the south-east.

**Chart 6: Intakes to RTPI accredited part-time postgraduate courses in London and the south-east**



Source: RTPI Planning Schools Annual Returns

- 8.1.5 Not all of the students on these courses are employed by London planning authorities, however the numbers from London Boroughs have increased in recent

years. Currently 30 of the 120 students on the course at University of Westminster are from twenty-two different London Boroughs. If the proportions are similar on the two other London courses, then as many as 75 employees of London Boroughs may currently be studying on part-time postgraduate courses. This is probably more than 6% of staff.

- 8.1.6 Most of the non-planning graduates recruited by local authorities have studied geography or a discipline related to planning. 80% of the students on the part-time postgraduate course at the University of Westminster had taken such degrees.

## **8.2 Issues relating to current practice**

- 8.2.1 Several issues were raised concerning the employment of non-planning graduates in the case study authorities. Respondents pointed out that the recruits often have little knowledge of the statutory planning system, and initially require more in-house training and supervision than would planning graduates. In addition, most staff will be sent on, or given the opportunity to attend, part-time postgraduate planning courses. Not only does this require the payment of fees and expenses, it also means that the staff work for the authority for only four days a week during the academic term and places an increased burden on other staff.
- 8.2.2 Some authorities give such staff a similar workload to staff not undertaking day release study, but this practice places considerable stress on the staff concerned and is likely to lead to reduced performance, and ultimately to retention problems. Even in the majority of authorities that do not adopt this practice, staff shortages may place considerable pressures from attempting to balance part-time study with a job. On occasions this leads to the staff leaving the course or the job. Careful management of these staff and their colleagues who may face additional burdens is therefore vital to the success of this measure.
- 8.2.3 For most authorities recruiting non-planning graduates to posts that did not require a RTPI accredited planning qualification had not proved too difficult, with advertisements usually attracting an adequate number of good quality applicants. However, some authorities had had difficulties attracting the required quality and quantity of applicants.
- 8.2.4 A number of authorities have recruited non-planning graduates through the Tomorrow's Planners initiative. This initiative was introduced by The Planning Inspectorate and utilises Section 37 of the Race Relations Act 1976 to address the unrepresentative nature of the planning profession.<sup>102</sup> There are currently twenty former non-planning students employed through this programme, with twelve in London Boroughs. It is hoped to place forty applicants next year, with over half in London. This scheme not only addresses the under-representation of BME groups within the profession, but also provides authorities with additional staff at a subsidised cost.
- 8.2.5 Most of the non-planning graduates attend part-time postgraduate planning courses. This is generally considered necessary in order to complete their education and training, and to provide the staff with the qualification that is normally required in order for them to progress. Employers are generally satisfied with the education provided.
- 8.2.6 The intake to these courses at London Planning Schools has increased dramatically over the last few years, however, and the capacity of the Schools to expand their intake is not infinite.

### 8.3 Assessment

#### Service delivery issues

- 8.3.1 Most respondents to this research considered that recruitment of non-planning graduates to planning posts was a very effective means of addressing the shortage of junior planners. Many considered that it had been an essential response to the recruitment problems arising from the supply and demand mismatch relating to planning graduates.
- 8.3.2 Most respondents declared themselves satisfied with the quality of non-planning graduates recruited to their authority, and received an adequate number of responses to job advertisements.
- 8.3.3 There were some concerns that employing such staff placed pressure on training budgets, on the staff themselves, and on managers and other staff. Several managers stressed the need to avoid un-balancing the staffing profile of the service by recruiting too high a proportion of such staff, as this puts a burden on existing staff and managers. Given the shortage of experienced staff, however, it is difficult to see how this could be achieved.
- 8.3.4 Some concerns were raised by staff that they are being given a workload that fails to take account of their absence for one day a week, and the pressures of attempting to balance part-time study with a job. Others felt that they were not receiving adequate supervision, guidance or mentoring. The RTPI has initiated a mentoring service which is delivered by its Branches. This would not provide a substitute for good management of the new staff, but would provide complementary support.

#### Supply

- 8.3.5 In the short-term it is likely that authorities in London and the south-east will continue to rely on such recruits to fill many junior posts. The continued success of this measure depends on the ability of authorities to continue to attract such staff. It is important therefore that the most effective recruitment methods are used in order to maximise the number of applicants to posts.
- 8.3.6 Most authorities were receiving enough applications from non-planning graduates to enable them to fill posts. Not all were, however. The number of applicants received by some authorities suggests that they may not be using the most effective methods to advertise posts. Many were using a single source: Planning magazine.
- 8.3.7 Although the courses, and other sources, developed students interest in planning, a survey of postgraduate students<sup>103</sup> revealed that when looking for a job, two-thirds of the students were not looking specifically for a planning post. It revealed also, that use of the internet has grown rapidly in the last few years to overtake national newspapers and the trade press as the main source of information when looking for a job.
- 8.3.8 Despite the importance of the internet in students' job searches, few students had learned about their posts from this source. Almost one quarter of the students had heard about their posts through local newspapers - approximately the same as the proportion who learned about them from the trade press (probably Planning magazine). An even greater proportion of respondents heard about their jobs through word of mouth or a personal contact, but this is not something that can be addressed directly by local authorities.

- 8.3.9 Advertising in the local press and on the internet - through jobsgopublic and other more general graduate recruitment websites - could improve recruitment for those authorities that don't currently use such means. Contacting local Universities with relevant courses could also prove beneficial. Offering work placements in holiday periods, or as part of work-based placement modules might prove another effective way of attracting future applications.

Training provision

- 8.3.10 In addition, it is important that such staff are able to attend training courses. Given the rapid growth of entrants to part-time postgraduate courses over the last few years, and the limits on the capacity of planning schools, it is important that employers liaise with Planning Schools to ensure that there is adequate provision of places on courses over the next few years.

## **8.4 Recommendations**

### 8.4.1 Service delivery issues

#### **Recommendation 8.1**

**Local authorities should review their methods of managing junior staff who are undertaking part-time training courses and ensure that adequate support and staff development opportunities are provided. Encouragement should be given to staff to take advantage of the RTPI mentoring scheme.**

Reason

To assist the development of its staff and improve retention.

Delivery mechanism

Local planning authority managers.

### 8.4.2 Supply

#### **Recommendation 8.2**

**To investigate the most effective advertising and recruitment methods to attract applications from non-planning graduates**

Reason

To improve the quality and quantity of applications from non-planning graduates.

Delivery mechanism

LGA/ALBPO to undertake or commission research to investigate the most effective advertising and recruitment methods or set up a pan London environmental/planning education unit to undertake or lead such work (see below).

### 8.4.3 Ensuring the availability of training

#### **Recommendation 8.3**

**To create a forum of relevant stakeholders to discuss the provision of places on part-time postgraduate planning courses, and the potential for creating partnerships between Schools and consortia of local authorities**

Reason

To ensure continuity in the provision of sufficient places on part-time postgraduate planning courses

Delivery mechanism

LGAs/ALBPO to undertake urgent discussions with ODPM/RTPI/GOL/LGA/EO/HEI Planning Schools concerning the levels of provision with Planning Schools. This work could be led by a pan London environmental/planning education unit to undertake or lead such work (see below).

8.4.4 General

**Recommendation 8.4**

**To set up a pan-London body to promote Planning/Environmental Education and liaise with education providers concerning the provision of planning education**

Reason

To raise awareness of planning and increase applications to sub-degree, undergraduate and postgraduate planning courses, and ensure that there is adequate capacity on courses to cater for demand.

Delivery mechanism

LGAs/ALBPO to initiate a meeting with ODPM, ALG, EO, RTPI, HEIs, FECs, and other interested parties, to discuss the proposal and to undertake or commission research to investigate the feasibility, form and funding for such a body.

## Section 9

### The recruitment and training of recruits without degrees

#### 9.1 Current practice

- 9.1.1 There are small numbers of students taking sub-degree level qualifications. Even smaller numbers are taking part-time undergraduate degrees - less than 20 commenced courses in 2003/04.<sup>104</sup> This indicates that very few authorities nationally, or in London, recruit staff without degree level qualifications to trainee posts.
- 9.1.2 Some authorities nationally have recruited staff from within the planning workforce to undertake new roles with titles including: trainees, customer services assistants and technicians. These staff are then offered the opportunity to take certificates, NVQs, or other sub-degree level courses that provide a qualification in themselves or lead to an accredited course (see Table 2). Few authorities, however, appear to recruit externally from school leavers or other local people without degrees, to trainee posts that combine planning work with part-time undergraduate study.
- 9.1.3 The current picture contrasts with that in the 1970s and 1980s when there were a considerable number of trainee planners in London local authorities undertaking part-time undergraduate degrees. Many of these students have progressed to senior planning posts.
- 9.1.4 At a number of recent meetings, local authority managers have expressed an interest in resurrecting the practice of employing school leavers or others without degrees as trainees. They envisage that these staff would undertake sub-degree qualifications, or part-time undergraduate courses. They see this as a longer-term response to the shortage of planners in London.

#### 9.2 Issues relating to current practice

- 9.2.1 Currently, the vast majority of students with the minimum required entry qualifications go on to full-time undergraduate courses. On the face of it, there would not therefore appear to be a large potential supply of trainees at this level. However, the increasing tendency for students to live at home while studying (see 4.4.22), the increasing number of students who are having to work (see 9.2.2), and the future increases in tuition fees suggest that this may change.
- 9.2.2 An increasing number have to take part-time work during their degrees<sup>105</sup>. This is usually in unskilled jobs unrelated to their degrees or future careers. Recent research has revealed that this adversely affects their results<sup>106</sup>. Already, undergraduate students leave universities with large debts and these debts will increase for many when tuition fees rise. Many students contemplating becoming full-time undergraduates - and particularly those who would be living at home - may consider that taking a trainee planning post presents an attractive alternative.
- 9.2.3 A trainee planning post would offer part-time undergraduate study and work related to this. These would lead to a professional qualification. In addition, the trainees would not acquire the debt that full-time students will face. The only differences

between trainees' experiences and those of full-time students studying from home would be generally positive ones. Trainees would not necessarily gain the broader student educational experience that full-time students living away from home are often considered to benefit from. However, this opportunity is available to a decreasing number of students and, whatever the disadvantages of this, changes to the funding arrangements for Higher Education are likely to accelerate this trend.

### 9.3 Assessment

- 9.3.1 It is clear that few local authorities are recruiting trainee planners at sub-degree level. The evidence above suggests that there could be potential demand for such posts, particularly in the light of changes to student funding arrangements. Evidence from previous decades suggests that the practice has been successful, and that many trainees were retained in the host authority for many years, and progressed to professional posts.
- 9.3.4 One potential barrier to any large increase in the number of authorities offering trainee posts is the availability of courses for such trainees to attend. In London there is currently only one part-time undergraduate planning course available.

| Planning School              | Location      | Mode              | Under-graduate | Postgraduate 2* or 3**year |
|------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| University College London    | London        | Part-time         |                | ✓**                        |
| University of Westminster    | London        | Part-time         |                | ✓**                        |
| London South Bank University | London        | Part-time         | ✓              | ✓*                         |
| Oxford Brookes University    | Oxford        | Part-time         | ✓              | ✓*                         |
| University of Reading        | Reading       | Part-time         |                | ✓*                         |
| Distance Learning Consortium | (Bristol UWE) | Distance learning | ✓              | ✓                          |

- 9.3.5 It is unclear whether the Planning Schools have the capacity to expand the intake of their courses, should there be a sudden growth of demand for part-time undergraduate education linked to traineeships. Targets for courses are set in advance, and universities are penalised for exceeding these targets; so the short-term flexibility is often limited. In addition, there has been a rapid recent expansion of part-time postgraduate courses, and this and the expected growth in demand for full-time courses will place a further strain on limited teaching resources.
- 9.3.6 At lower educational levels there are distance learning courses and NVQs available in planning, but the capacity of these courses to expand is unclear. The RTPI is currently reviewing NVQ provision. There are currently no day release courses available in London or the south-east, and no Foundation Degrees or Modern Apprenticeships available in planning. A list of available courses available for those ineligible for undergraduate courses is set out in the Table below.

| College and course   | Location     | Mode                                 | Length                                      | Entry   | Progress to corporate courses               | Technical Membership                      |
|--|--------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Manchester College of Arts & Technology (MANCAT) Town & Country Planning Foundation Course | (Manchester) | Distance Learning                    | Flexible                                    | Experience                                    | Enables entry to bridging course & then PG  | ✓   |
| Manchester College of Arts & Technology (MANCAT) Town & Country Planning Foundation Course | Manchester   | Day Release                          | 2 years                                     | One A Level or equivalent/ Experience         |   | ✓   |
| University of West of England Certificate in Professional Development                      | Bristol      | Day Release                          | 2 years                                     | One A Level or equivalent/ Experience         | Enables entry to Level 6 of UG/PG programme | ✓   |
| University of Central England Certificate of Professional Studies                          | Birmingham   | Day release and/or Distance Learning | 1 Year Part-time/flexible distance learning | HNC Planning/ HNC plus experience/ Experience | Provides bridge to PG courses               |   |
| Sheffield Hallam University Certificate in Planning Studies                                | Sheffield    | Day Release                          | 2 years                                     | 2 A Levels or equivalent or experience        | Enables entry to Level 6 of UG/PG programme | ✓   |
| ABBE NVQ Level 3   | (Birmingham) | Work based                           | Varies                                      | Experience                                    |   | ✓   |
| Trevor Roberts Associates Certificate of Continuing Education in Planning Enforcement      | (Cambridge)  | Distance learning & block attendance | Varies                                      |   |   | With 1 module of MANCAT Foundation Course |

## 9.4 Recommendations

### 9.4.1 Supply

#### **Recommendation 9.1**

**To investigate the potential for the expansion of sub-degree level trainee posts and the most effective advertising and recruitment methods to attract applications from people without degrees**

#### Reason

To improve the quality and quantity of applications from applicants without degrees.

Delivery mechanisms

LGA/ALBPO to initiate meetings with ALG, ALBPO, RTPI, ODPM, LGA, EO, HEIs, LSCs to discuss the possibilities of expanding this entry route to the profession and undertake or commission research to investigate the most effective advertising and recruitment methods or set up a pan London environmental/planning education unit to undertake or lead such work (see below).

**Recommendation 9.2**

**To create trainee planner posts available for staff without degrees (following recommendation above)**

Reason

To address future projected shortages of staff with accredited planning qualifications

Delivery mechanisms

Local planning authorities with assistance from and following discussions with Planning Schools.

9.4.2 Ensuring the availability of training

**Recommendation 9.3**

**To create a forum of relevant stakeholders to discuss the expansion of existing provision and/or the creation of new courses at sub-degree level and the potential for creating partnerships between Schools and consortia of local authorities**

Reason

To ensure continuity in the provision of sufficient places on part-time postgraduate planning courses

Delivery mechanism

LGA/ALBPO to undertake urgent discussions with ODPM/RTPI/GOL/LGA/EO/HEI Planning Schools concerning the levels of provision with Planning Schools. This work could be led by a pan London environmental/planning education unit or a national planning recruitment and retention unit.

9.4.3 General

**Recommendation 9.4**

**To set up a pan-London body and a national planning recruitment and retention unit to promote Planning/Environmental Education and liaise with education providers concerning the provision of planning education (see above)**

Reason

To raise awareness of planning and increase applications to sub-degree, undergraduate and postgraduate planning courses, and ensure that there is adequate capacity on courses to cater for demand.

Delivery mechanism

LGA/ALBPO to initiate a meeting with ODPM, ALG, EO, RTPI, HEIs, FECs, and other interested parties, to discuss the proposal and to undertake or commission research to investigate the feasibility, form and funding for such a body.

## Section 10

### Recruitment from other sources

#### 10.1 Current practice

10.1.1 A number of suggestions were made by respondents to the research concerning ways of addressing staff shortages that have not been investigated as part of this research due time constraints.

##### Recruiting staff back to the profession

10.1.2 There are many instances of planners who have returned to work on a part-time or full-time basis following a career break or early retirement. Many of the latter do so as individuals, although one organisation - Local Government Services Ltd - supplies several such planners on a contract basis to local authorities.

##### Recruiting staff from overseas

10.1.3 In London there are already large numbers of planners from overseas working in local planning authorities (see Section 6). Most of these staff come from the southern hemisphere, however, and there is little evidence of staff being recruited from other European countries.

##### Sharing of staff between Boroughs

10.1.4 Some authorities are seeking to address recruitment difficulties through forming strategic service delivery partnerships with other local authorities. Some share key staff, such as traffic engineers and planners, while others share common services like internal audit and are looking at similar approaches for building control, environmental health and trading standards. Some authorities have formed an advertising consortium, using their purchasing power to reduce advertising costs in order to mount more effective recruitment campaigns for hard to fill occupations.<sup>107</sup>

10.1.5 In London, there are a number of examples of staff from different authorities working together on cross-boundary issues and schemes, and examples of staff undertaking specialised areas of work in neighbouring authorities. Several respondents gave examples of Boroughs successfully sharing staff or undertaking specialist activities for neighbouring Boroughs, in planning and planning related services, for example in enforcement, transport planning and legal services relating to S106 Agreements.

#### 10.2 Issues relating to current practice

##### Recruiting staff back to the profession

10.2.1 There is a perception that there may be many potential recruits who have not returned to work because of the perceived barriers to re- entry, such as perceptions that their knowledge is out of date or concerns about the ability to balance work with other responsibilities.

##### Recruiting staff from overseas

10.2.2 There was no evidence of this practice in relation to the recruitment of European planners. However, the NHS worked closely with the European Employment Service (EURES) in order to recruit over 700 nurses from Spain in the last two years,<sup>108</sup> and schools have also recruited from Europe. The main issue relating to this initiative

would be the differences between the planning system of the UK and most other European countries.

Sharing of staff between Boroughs

- 10.2.3 Several respondents suggested that such initiatives had not always been successful. When one authority has spare capacity in a particular area of expertise, the arrangement can be a successful one. But some respondents gave examples of initiatives that had not worked as both authorities lacked the spare capacity necessary for the initiative to work. One respondent argued that such arrangements merely patch things up; they don't solve the basic problem of a shortage of qualified and experienced staff across London.

### 10.3 Assessment

Recruiting staff back to the profession

- 10.3.1 One respondent suggested that qualified planners either not currently working or not currently working in planning could provide a very important source of staff. There may be considerable numbers of planners who left paid employment to undertake caring or family responsibilities, or to take early retirement, who might be interested in returning to work on a part-time or full-time basis. There may also be planners who pursued a different career path who may be interested in returning to the profession.
- 10.3.2 The perceived barriers to the re-entry to the profession of many potential staff could be reduced by training and by the greater adoption of work-life balance practices by employers. The success of the returners scheme in teaching - which included training courses, childcare assistance and financial incentives (see 18.6.3) – suggests that there may be an untapped resource in planning.
- 10.3.3 It is unclear how the potential returners would be identified or notified of any such scheme, as it is unlikely that the resources available for the teaching initiative would be available for a small profession such as planning. Nevertheless, the idea and methods of attracting/recruiting such staff merit detailed investigation.

Recruiting staff from overseas

- 10.3.4 There may be potential to recruit planners from overseas, notwithstanding the differences in our planning systems. Further investigation is necessary.

Sharing of staff between Boroughs

- 10.3.5 Evidence from current practice suggests that there may be some areas in which there is potential for sharing of staff, but that there are others areas in which it is inappropriate. Further investigation of the potential for this initiative is necessary.

### 10.4 Recommendations

10.4.1 **Recommendation 10.1**

**To investigate the potential of the above initiatives more widely, and the methods of implementing them.**

Reason

To assess whether the above measures could help to address staff shortages.

Delivery mechanism

LGA/ALBPO to undertake or commission research, or lobby for the establishment of a national planning recruitment and retention unit to undertake such research.

## Section 11

### Enhancing the roles and/or promoting internal staff without accredited planning qualifications

#### 11.1 Current practice

- 11.1.1 Research for this and another project<sup>109</sup> indicates that many authorities consider that they have enhanced the roles of staff without accredited planning qualifications. The motivation for the enhancement of roles has often been the growing difficulties in recruiting and retaining planners, and the need to maintain or improve service delivery.
- 11.1.2 Many such staff are undertaking tasks that would traditionally have been undertaken by planning officers. It is clear, also, that some authorities have developed this potential to a greater extent than others.
- 11.1.3 Some authorities have appointed new staff to undertake these enhanced roles, but many have been able to appoint existing staff. The enhancement of roles has freed up planners from some of the less complex tasks they were undertaking. In addition, it has provided greater opportunities for progression and staff development and a fuller utilisation of the skills, abilities and ambitions of those members of the workforce who are not professional planners.
- 11.1.4 Most efforts appear to have been directed towards the enhancement of the roles of staff in the development control process. The creation of hybrid customer liaison posts appears to have been particularly successful in freeing up the time of development control planners. In some authorities such staff have responsibility for all written enquiries, including permitted development enquiries. Some have been given opportunities to develop beyond this and to have small case loads of minor applications.
- 11.1.5 The creation of customer services roles has also assisted policy planners. Other policy and research tasks that are being undertaken by non-planners include development monitoring, consultation work, database and graphics involving IT/GIS, survey work. Some of these tasks are not routine tasks that were traditionally undertaken by planning officers, but are tasks that require specialist knowledge and expertise. They do, however, free up time for professional planning officers.
- 11.1.6 In some authorities outside London the undertaking of enhanced roles was the first stage of a career development programme that could lead ultimately to such staff becoming fully qualified planning officers. In authorities in London, several staff had been promoted to assistant planner or technician posts and been funded to take a postgraduate planning qualification.

#### 11.2 Issues relating to current practice

##### Training and career development

- 11.2.1 In all authorities that had enhanced the roles of staff without formal planning qualifications, the importance of appropriate training was recognised. Those undertaking enhanced roles are normally provided with in-house training, and may be

offered funding to attend external courses. Such training may comprise attendance at ad hoc short courses, part-time day release courses or undertaking an NVQ.

- 11.2.2 Whilst the opportunities given for training were generally good in most of the case study authorities visited for other recent research<sup>110</sup>, the shortage of available courses (See Section 4), and the lack of awareness of such courses in some of the authorities present some barriers to the provision of such training. These barriers are particularly apparent in London. Although distance learning courses and work based NVQs are available, there are no sub-degree level day release training courses in planning. Thus staff preferring this mode of study are unable to take courses that would enable them to develop their academic qualifications, and progress to undergraduate or postgraduate courses.
- 11.2.3 The opportunities to attend such courses are often limited by budgetary constraints. This may mean that staff are not provided with opportunities to attend courses unless they are directly relevant to their day-to-day activities. Thus staff in administrative and technician posts may not be permitted to attend part-time professional or technical planning courses.
- 11.2.4 In addition, although several of the authorities were sending technicians and administrative staff on courses designed to enable technical membership of the RTPI or courses providing access to professional courses, several were not.
- 11.2.5 The geographical distribution of courses presents problems for many authorities or individuals. For example, although one authority was paying less than £2,000 in fees for one member of staff to attend a postgraduate part-time course, travelling expenses raised the cost to £5,000. In addition, the family or caring commitments of the staff may make attendance on such courses difficult or impossible.

### **11.3 Assessment**

- 11.3.1 Training staff without accredited planning qualifications to undertake enhanced roles and/or to become planners, will not solve the recruitment and retention crisis in planning in London. It can, however, increase the capacity of the department by either providing additional planning officers or, if such staff have neither the desire or potential to become planning officers, to freeing up planning officers' time.
- 11.3.2 The potential for enhancing the roles of existing staff will obviously vary according to the characteristics of the staff in each authority. In two of the case study authorities it was considered that staff did not have the potential to deal with many of these tasks. In others, non-planning staff deal with only the first type of task. In several authorities, however, non-planners were undertaking many additional activities with few concerns about the quality of the work. Staff in these authorities considered that there was potential for such practices in many authorities with the appropriate support tools, training, career development opportunities and management.

### **11.4 Recommendations**

#### **11.4.1 Supply**

##### **Recommendation 11.1**

**To identify and train appropriate staff to undertake enhanced roles and/or train to become planners, and offer a career progression framework for progression.**

Reason

To free up planners from tasks that could be undertaken by less experienced staff

Delivery mechanisms

Local planning authorities.

11.4.2 Service delivery and training

**Recommendation 11.2**

**To create a forum of relevant stakeholders to discuss the expansion of existing provision and/or the creation of new courses at sub-degree level and the potential for creating partnerships between Schools and consortia of local authorities**

Reason

To ensure continuity in the provision of sufficient places on part-time postgraduate planning courses

Delivery mechanism

LGA/ALBPO to undertake urgent discussions with ODPM/RTPI/GOL/LGA/EO/PEA/HEI Planning Schools concerning the levels of provision with Planning Schools. This work could be led by a pan London environmental/planning education unit or a national planning recruitment and retention unit.

## Section 12

### Changing structures and processes to reduce the effects of shortages

#### 12.1 Current practice

##### Changing structures

- 12.1.1 There is considerable evidence<sup>111</sup> that many authorities across the country are changing the structure of their planning departments in an attempt to improve performance. This appears to be a response also to the problems of recruitment and retention.
- 12.1.2 Many authorities, and particularly larger authorities, have organised their departments into teams that each undertake a narrow range of functions. Such teams include minor applications (or fast-track) teams, major applications teams, appeals teams, central administrative teams and customer liaison teams. Nationally many authorities have also set up Council-wide customer service teams to act as a first point of contact for a range of services.
- 12.1.3 Minor applications teams in some authorities contain staff without accredited planning qualifications, but often with considerable experience, as well as recent planning and non-cognate graduates.
- 12.1.4 In London, none of the authorities studied had set up minor applications teams, although several had created customer liaison teams or posts, and had created registration/validation teams.
- 12.1.5 Setting up minor applications teams was not a possibility in many of the smaller authorities, as staffing levels require multi-tasking and prevent such functional separation. Some authorities that have not set up minor applications teams, have attempted a degree of functional specialisation. They have set up separate teams to deal with registration and validation, and customer enquiries. Even in the smaller authorities the administrative function of registering applications is usually separated from the planning applications teams. Many authorities have also removed administrative staff from forward planning teams, to provide a central administrative team.
- 12.1.6 Customer services teams, or posts, have been set up to provide the first point of contact with the public in relation to planning and, sometimes, related functions such as building control. Such teams have been set up separately from, and sometimes in addition to, Council-wide contact teams.
- 12.1.7 Staff in such teams normally deal with general planning enquiries, provide advice on completing planning application forms and the development plan process. In one authority the team provides advice on permitted development or even basic pre-application advice on minor applications. In one authority the staff in this team also deal with written permitted development enquiries and minor applications, though their case-loads are small and flexible to prevent any adverse impact on the execution of their principal duties.

Information Technology and other tools

12.1.8 The PARSOL project is intended to assist in the introduction of on-line services to planning and regulatory services. The Project Overview Document states that the “more effective introduction of ICT within all planning authorities could revolutionise their ability to respond to these pressures (processing planning applications and the production of development plans) using the limited amount of professional skill available for more high-level work than on the extensive process elements that are currently absorbing time.”

12.1.9 Examples of the material produced include:

- On-line forms and guidance notes
- Web based advice
- Scripted responses for front-house staff

12.1.10 Recent research revealed that the uptake of applications amongst planning authorities is “sporadic”<sup>112</sup> and the case studies revealed considerable variations in the use of on-line systems to support the enhancement of roles or the removal of routine tasks from planning officers. Examples of systems that have assisted authorities include those enabling electronic identification of consultees and neighbours to notify about planning applications. Use of the Planning Portal was variable.

12.1.11 Some authorities had developed paper based guidance to help customer liaison staff to deal with routine planning enquiries, or checklists to assist in the validation process. Several authorities had developed custom designed forms for permitted development enquiries to ensure that the necessary information was obtained from customers, and to improve the ease and speed of response.

Joint procurement of services

12.1.12 Some authorities nationally have combined to jointly procure certain services, for example IT and legal services.

**12.2 Issues relating to current practice**

Changing structures

12.2.1 Managers and planning officers were generally very sceptical about the benefits of multi-service contact and call centres. They felt that these tended to act as little more than switchboards, as those staffing such services did not have, and could never have, the necessary range of knowledge about the wide range of Council services to deal with anything other than the most basic of enquiries. They did not feel that such services increased the capacity of the planning service, and in some cases had retained or re-introduced a separate planning enquiry service for general planning enquiries.

12.2.2 The main issue relating to the creation of customer liaison teams or posts was that adequate training is required. In other research<sup>113</sup> the central issue relating to the creation of minor applications teams was that staff would suffer from boredom, isolation and demotivation unless they were given opportunities to transfer to other teams or progress to other posts.

## 12.3 Assessment

### Changing structures

- 12.3.1 The creation of customer service teams and minor applications teams has often been heralded as a major factor in improving the development control performance, and reducing the effects of staff shortages. In one large authority outside London, the customer liaison team deals with all searches, general planning enquiries, completion of applications and basic permitted development enquiries. It is estimated that this has led to a 10% increase in the capacity of professional planning officers. All phone calls now pass through this team, which is able to deal with queries about the progress of applications as well as the general enquiries.
- 12.3.2 Whilst the principle of the one-stop shop approach to customer services was seen as a good thing in principle, and provided some benefits for the customer, to operate successfully it required staff with service specialist knowledge. In smaller authorities it was not always easy to provide this especially if the service centre was remote from the planning department.

### Information technology and other tools

- 12.3.3 The availability of on-line material to front house staff and to the public has greatly assisted many authorities in their initiatives to enhance the roles of support staff. These had proved effective in assisting the staff involved and improving performance.

### Joint procurement of services

- 12.3.4 The joint procurement of services – for example IT and legal services - has proved a successful means of reducing costs by some authorities. In London there may be scope for the development of a broader or even pan London approach to the procurement of some services. The example of the procurement of temporary staff is an example discussed elsewhere in the report, but there may be other areas where such an approach could present savings.

## 12.4 Recommendations

### **Recommendation 12.1**

**Local authorities should continue to investigate the expediency of and where appropriate introduce the above measures**

Reason

To address the problems of staff shortages and improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Delivery mechanism

Local authorities

## Section 13

### Improving pay

#### 13.1 Current practice

- 13.1.1 Salaries and living costs in London remain major disincentives to students completing accredited planning courses contemplating planning careers. The latest studies of graduate salaries and pay in London local authorities indicates that newly qualified planners can expect to be paid less than many of their peers entering other professions in London (see 4.6.6).
- 13.1.2 Authorities have introduced a number of pay-related initiatives in an attempt to address the recruitment and retention problems arising from London's high living costs and from competition from other professions and the private sector. Many authorities have a career grade system that allows staff to progress to higher salaries without waiting for vacancies to arise. Some authorities have recently introduced such a system in an attempt to address recruitment and retention difficulties.
- 13.1.3 Some authorities have regraded existing posts or introduced a pay supplement to some or all posts if the pay levels in their authorities are considered uncompetitive with others in London, or in order to raise pay levels above their competitors. In some authorities junior staff have been promoted very quickly to fill more senior vacancies. There are now some considerable variations in the levels of pay of staff undertaking similar duties, or with similar levels of experience, in different authorities.
- 13.1.4 A small number of authorities have introduced Performance Related Pay packages, in an attempt to address their recruitment and retention difficulties. This practice had been introduced by only three out of twenty-five authorities responding to the 2003 ALG Pay and Conditions Survey, however, and most of the authorities contacted for this research had rejected this approach.
- 13.1.5 One authority's package enables staff to earn a performance related supplement of up to 15% of basic pay, provided the overall cost of the supplements does not exceed 10% of the overall budget.

#### 13.2 Issues relating to current practice

##### Career grades

- 13.2.1 Staff and management in several authorities stated that salaries for planners were lower than for comparable professions in the public sector and for planning posts in the private sector. Recent surveys support this contention (see 4.6.9 et seq). It was noted at one authority that Environmental Health Officers were appointed at PO2 straight from college, and in other authorities the pay of several comparable professions such as transport and building surveying was noted to be higher. Relative levels of pay were a cause of some resentment. The introduction of career grades and regarding were, not surprisingly, welcomed by most staff.
- 13.2.2 One concern raised about career grades, was that it could eventually lead to a department with all staff at the top of their career grades and discourage a desirable level of turnover. This was considered unlikely by most respondents in the current

jobs market. Of greater concern amongst some managers was the possibility that some junior staff were being promoted too rapidly and might not be able to undertake the duties of their post.

- 13.2.3 Together with the cost of living in London pay levels were felt to be a factor discouraging people from entering the profession, from applying for jobs in London and causing retention problems. However, although questions about pay are amongst the most common at careers events, research indicates that pay is not the main factor determining most students' choices of undergraduate degree subject.<sup>114</sup> It may, however, have considerable influence on a graduate's choice of career. For those that choose to enter planning, levels of pay and the cost of living in London may well deter some from applying for jobs in London.
- 13.2.4 The introduction of career graded posts and the regarding of staff could therefore have some influence on the level of applications to planning posts in London, and seems to be having a positive effect on retention of staff. It seems less likely that such measures would influence people's choice of career.

#### Performance related pay

- 13.2.5 Staff and management interviewees from most authorities were opposed to the introduction of PRP schemes, considering them to be divisive. They felt that the subjective or selective nature of the performance measurement process caused general concern amongst staff. They were also sceptical about the positive effects on motivation that are claimed for such schemes. Those who were not rewarded were demotivated, whilst the small percentage increase in their total salaries of those gaining rewards has a marginal motivational effect.
- 13.2.6 Even in one authority that had introduced a PRP scheme, there was some scepticism that it would have much effect on staff motivation, performance or retention. It was felt that many of those gaining the rewards would have stayed anyway, and that the rewards were not great enough to retain those wishing to leave.

### **13.3 Assessment**

- 13.3.1 The introduction of a career grade structure appears to have a positive effect on retention. Prior to its introduction in one authority, staff had to leave the authority in order to progress to a higher level post. The introduction of career grade posts had led to much better retention of staff with some experience.
- 13.3.2 Staff interviewed in other authorities considered that the career grade structure had encouraged them to remain with the authority. Not surprisingly, staff who had been regraded or promoted rapidly also expressed their satisfaction with such measures.
- 13.3.3 PRP schemes are not viewed positively either in terms of their effects on performance or their impact on recruitment and retention. Salary supplements and across the board regradings could also cause bidding wars, with problems in the short-term for authorities unable or unwilling to compete with their neighbours in terms of pay and conditions.
- 13.3.4 In terms of the London jobs market as a whole, the introduction of such measures by some authorities "is likely to create a growing split between those workplaces that are fully staffed and can look after their employees better and those workplaces with shortages, where it is more difficult to manage employees' workload and reduce stress."<sup>115</sup> To assess the effectiveness of increasing salaries and paying supplements, it would be useful to investigate the affect that such measures have had

on the recruitment and retention of staff in professions that have had such measures in place for some time.

13.3.5 If authorities cooperated in the setting of pay scales then the problems could be reduced. However, this is most unlikely to happen as authorities would be unwilling to lose their competitive advantage in recruiting staff in a market with severe shortages. Also, in some authorities planning has a higher status than in others. Those affording planning a higher status will be more willing to pay more.

13.3.6 In the longer-term, increasing pay levels and introducing career grade systems for staff in some authorities may force others to follow suit in order to attract and retain staff. This may have the effect of raising pay levels across the London local authority planning jobs market, and may help to address some of the problems of retaining experienced planners within London. It may also improve the attraction of London planning jobs to graduates of planning and non-planning courses. It seems unlikely, however, that it would have a major effect on levels of applications to planning undergraduate courses.

#### **13.4 Recommendations**

##### **Recommendation 13.1**

**Local authorities should consider introducing broader banding of career grades.**

##### Reason

To improve the attraction of local authority planning posts and improve retention rates.

##### Delivery mechanism

Local authorities

## Section 14

### Improving working conditions

#### 14.1 Current practice

14.1.1 Some employers have developed a range of work-life balance options, in order to help staff combine work with their other responsibilities or aspirations. These generally involve flexible working arrangements and flexible benefit packages. Examples of some of the measures include:

- flexi-time
- staggered hours
- time off in lieu
- compressed working hours
- shift swapping
- self-rostering
- annualised hours
- job-sharing
- term-time working
- working from home
- tele-working
- breaks from work
- flexible and cafeteria benefits<sup>116</sup>

14.1.2 Provisions brought in under the Employment Act 2002 give parents of children under six and parents of disabled children under 18 the right to apply to work flexibly. Employers have a duty to seriously consider their requests. The Act also introduced paternity and adoption leave and pay. Many employers have introduced a wide range of other measures.

14.1.3 One of the case study authorities was a pilot authority in the Government's Work Life Balance initiative. They introduced: flexible working hours, job share, hourly leave, flexi-time and career break into one section of the Planning Service. As the section did not operate a frontline/public service interface, and received few external phone calls maximum flexibility was trialed.

14.1.4 The measures were introduced in part in an attempt to improve the retention and recruitment of staff. Their introduction was seen as a positive approach to these problems, and an alternative to PRP, which was felt to have negative effects on motivation and morale, and which didn't necessarily attract "the right type of staff."

14.1.5 The framework includes a working day of 7 am to 7 pm, with no set core hours. Staff were able to work on Saturdays, Until voicemail was introduced staff cover was organised during normal working hours. The contracted working hours of 140 hours in a four-week period were maintained and staff are able to take flexi leave in hours or days if this is exceeded. There are job share opportunities for most posts.

14.1.6 This scheme has now been introduced into other sections of the planning service, tailored to meet the different demands of each function. It is intended to introduce a

limited opportunity for home working in most sections once the IT necessary to provide home links is in place.

- 14.1.7 Other case study authorities offered a number of the measures in their organisations. There were many examples of job sharing, even between staff at management level.

## **14.2 Issues relating to current practice**

- 14.2.1 Previous studies have highlighted the benefits to both employers and employees of the introduction of flexible working practices such as fewer sick days and a more content workforce (Dex et al., 2002, 2003)<sup>117</sup>
- 14.2.2 In recent research<sup>118</sup> into the views of employers, some concerns were raised about sections being left short-staffed. Some concerns were raised in some of the case study authorities with few of the practices, that the measures were inappropriate for front-line services and their introduction would impose considerable burdens on managers.
- 14.2.3 Investigation of those authorities that had introduced a range of practices, suggested that these fears are mistaken. Various practices were introduced to ensure adequate cover was in place, with diaries being kept in prominent positions and in/out boards used effectively. The key to success was the development of trust and responsibility, which had been improved by the very introduction of the work-life balance options. In the authority that had introduced the most measures and allowed the most flexible working arrangements, managers considered that managing the system was “easy.”
- 14.2.4 The employer research<sup>119</sup> also revealed concerns amongst employers that the introduction of some of the measures was unfair to some staff. In the case study authorities visited for this research there was no evidence of resentment from staff who were ineligible for some of the options, or who felt no need to take advantage of others. They could see the benefits to their colleagues and often, to the organisation and indirectly themselves.
- 14.2.5 In the case study authority that had been the pilot for the Government initiative, the measures were felt to have had positive effects on the motivation of staff. It was felt that the introduction of these measures had played a large part in the significant improvement in performance. They felt that the availability of the work-life options was a major factor in the retention of staff, and had helped the authority to recruit staff, particularly from authorities without such schemes. The number of applications received for some posts, and the levels of turnover appear to support this view.
- 14.2.6 Further support for these views is provided by the results of the national research. Many employers considered that work-life balance practices had a positive effect on labour turnover, productivity and recruitment as well as employee relations, staff motivation and commitment.

## **14.3 Assessment**

- 14.3.1 National research and research for this project indicates that the introduction of work-life balance measures generally has a positive effect on the organisations and authorities that have introduced such measures. There appear to be clear benefits in terms of the retention and recruitment of staff, which has had some effect in reducing staff shortages.

14.3.2 It is important that there are arrangements in place to enable adequate cover for front-line services. The use of IT, home phone links and customer services staff or teams – with their own opportunities for flexible working arrangements - can all assist the introduction of more flexible working patterns.

14.3.3 Of course if all authorities in London introduced such practices the competitive advantages in relation to recruitment and retention of staff, which are currently enjoyed by some local authorities, would disappear. However, it is possible also that more staff would choose to stay working in London local planning authorities, rather than leaving London or the public sector.

#### **14.4 Recommendation**

##### **Recommendation 14.1**

**Local authorities should introduce more work-life balance measures.**

##### Reason

To attract and retain junior and experienced staff and encourage returners

##### Delivery mechanism

Local authorities

## Section 15

### The provision of accommodation - key worker housing

#### 15.1 Current practice

15.1.1 Planners working in London have been included as key workers on a trialed pilot basis in a new scheme designed to provide accommodation to key front line public service workers in London and the south-east.<sup>120</sup> The £690 million Key Worker Living scheme offers equity loans of up to £50,000, shared ownership and intermediate renting options.

#### 15.2 Issues relating to current practice

15.2.1 The ALG response<sup>121</sup> to the latest proposals noted that they did not appear to be based on evidence of key worker housing needs and aspirations, and may not therefore be effective in meeting these needs and aspirations. Criticisms of previous key worker housing programmes such as the Starter Homes Initiatives have focused on the way that homes available do not match key worker needs in terms of affordability, location and size.

15.2.2 The response argues that “the proposal to allocate mainly 1-bed flats to key workers will not address the housing needs of many key workers. The Keep London Working report identifies one of the main reasons why key workers move out of London as the point when they start a family. Indeed the government has recognised the role of affordable housing in retaining more experienced key workers who need larger homes.”<sup>122</sup>

15.2.3 The scheme is unlikely to attract planners with considerable experience to London from elsewhere, as most such staff will already have their own home, and would see no advantage in the scheme. The cost of accommodation in some parts of the capital may present a further barrier to the success of the scheme, as the loans offered may not be able to secure staff a home in some parts of the capital.

#### 15.3 Assessment of current practice

15.3.1 The current scheme follows the Starter Homes Initiative. This scheme will have successfully housed over 10,000 key workers by the end of April 2004. Planners were not included as key workers in that scheme.

15.3.2 As the scheme has only just been introduced it was not surprising that no examples were found of planning staff taking advantage of this new initiative. However, an example was found of one junior planner being provided with rented accommodation by her authority in the south-east of England. She emphasised that she would not have been able to take her current job without this.

15.3.3 The scheme may well help to attract junior planners to London. It might also help to retain planners with some experience who are at an early stage of their careers,

who would otherwise have moved out of London due to their inability to purchase a first home.

- 15.3.4 Key worker status applies only to planners working in London, so the scheme will provide London authorities with an advantage over other authorities in the south-east in their efforts to recruit and retain junior planners.

## 15.4 Recommendations

### **Recommendation 15.1**

**Local authorities to examine the problems encountered by other professions in the Starter Homes Initiative.**

Reason

To help to identify any barriers to the successful application of the scheme to planners.

Delivery mechanism

ALG

### **Recommendation 15.2**

**Local authorities to publicise more widely the availability of the scheme to existing staff and job applicants.**

Reason

Research indicates low awareness of the initiative

Delivery mechanism

Local authorities

## Section 16

### Increasing the numbers of students on accredited full-time planning courses

#### 16.1 Introduction - the case for increasing numbers on accredited courses

- 16.1.1 More than half of the respondents to a recent survey<sup>123</sup> of planning employers stated that over two-thirds of their new recruits had come from RTPI accredited planning courses. In addition, the majority of authorities were expecting to fill posts with such applicants.
- 16.1.2 The case studies undertaken for this research suggests that, that a much lower proportion of new recruits in London have accredited planning qualifications, but that this a matter of necessity rather than choice. Most respondents to the current project would prefer to recruit graduates of RTPI accredited courses, but they consider that there simply aren't enough planning graduates available.
- 16.1.3 In a national survey<sup>124</sup>, 69% of employers considered themselves very happy, happy or mostly happy with new recruits. Although 66% of respondents expressed worries about the quality of new recruits from planning schools, this was felt to be largely a result of the quality of entrants to planning schools and to universities. If more students are attracted to planning courses, the quality will increase.
- 16.1.4 Despite the recent decline in supply, full-time planning courses are likely to remain as the main potential source of supply for local planning authorities nationally, with undergraduate courses a much larger source of supply than postgraduate courses. Most employers appear broadly happy with the quality of the students produced and their main wish is for this source of supply to increase. Without an increase in this source it is likely that recruitment problems will get worse.
- 16.1.5 Increasing the number of students on full-time accredited courses in London and the south-east will not ensure an increase in the supply of such students to planning jobs in London, as not all of those completing courses will enter planning, or choose to work in London local authorities. To attract these students, other measures – concerning pay, conditions and accommodation - are necessary to increase the attraction of such posts. Many of these measures will affect the recruitment not only of staff from this source, but also the recruitment and retention of experienced staff. They are discussed in subsequent sections.

#### 16.2 Current practice

- 16.2.1 In order to increase the numbers on full-time planning courses, it is necessary to address the reasons for the recent decline in applications and entrants to undergraduate courses and the low numbers entering postgraduate courses. These were discussed above (see 4.4), and are:
- The low awareness of planning courses and the planning profession, particularly amongst potential undergraduates, but also amongst potential postgraduates
  - The poor image of local government, the public sector and (possibly) planning

- The length of planning undergraduate and postgraduate courses relative to others
- Low salary levels relative to other professions – most relevant to potential postgraduates
- The high cost of studying in London and the south-east

16.2.2 It would be difficult to overcome potential students' and their advisers' perceptions of the public sector, as they may have developed as a result of twenty-five years of negative rhetoric from politicians and the media. Nevertheless measures to increase potential students' awareness of and interest in planning, and to promote planning as a positive and interesting activity and career might reduce negative perceptions of the public sector.

Raising interest and awareness of planning in schools

16.2.3 Information on planning courses and careers is distributed to all schools and colleges by the RTPI and by Planning Schools in the form of brochures. Planning magazine produces a supplement each year that is sent to all schools and colleges. There is also information available on the RTPI and Universities' websites.

16.2.4 Planning, however, is only one of hundreds of disciplines/professions that send out information or publish material on the web. It is very small relative to many other disciplines, and there are relatively few Higher Education courses in the subject. Much of the information on planning will be seen by prospective students only if they are aware of planning and are looking for courses and careers in planning. There is little chance of a prospective student learning about planning by chance, or because of an interest in the broad subject area. Visits to schools provide support for this hypothesis.

16.2.5 A student would be most unlikely to find out about planning from surfing general careers websites; these contain few if any links that take you to town planning from other subject areas or a general enquiry. The Connexions website, for example, has careers booklets informing students about working in specific sectors. The booklet on working in Building and Construction makes no reference to planning. Websites such as that of the Royal Geographical Society contain no information on planning careers.

16.2.6 The difficulties that some Planning Schools have had in recruiting to their undergraduate courses has led to a number of innovative outreach initiatives by Planning Schools, local authorities and RTPI Branches to promote town planning as a potential career and undergraduate course.

16.2.7 The RTPI produced a draft three to five year strategy in November 2000,<sup>125</sup> which set out to "raise the profile of Town Planning as a career choice, in order to attract sufficient numbers of bright, committed, enthusiastic young people into the profession." The strategy listed the many activities undertaken by the RTPI, its Branches and Planning Schools. Some examples include:

- Birmingham City Council's Planning Department has devised a variety of ways to engage Young People in planning. They have produced a resource pack
- RTPI Southern Branch of distributed copies of "Plan Your Planet" to all schools in its area
- Yorkshire Planning Schools and the Yorkshire Branch of the RTPI run annual recruitment events with schools
- The North West Branch has produced a brief guide for teachers on how planning and planners can be of assistance.

- The South West Branch has produced an environmental education guide for school teachers
- The RTPI is intending to publish a Manual for Schools to be sent to all schools in the UK in the near future

16.2.8 There has been limited monitoring of the success of these initiatives in increasing the number of applicants to undergraduate town planning courses.

16.2.9 In London, although the Planning Schools and some local authorities undertake school visits and attend recruitment fairs, these activities had been intermittent and poorly resourced. There are two current initiatives that are intended to raise the interest and awareness of school pupils:

- Career First – a pilot project involving a competition for school pupils in London
- Designing your community – a competition for school pupils in Brent

#### Raising awareness of planning and postgraduate courses to undergraduates

16.2.10 Information about full-time planning postgraduate courses degrees is distributed to Universities by the RTPI and Planning Schools. Planning Schools often send posters to universities and material to careers departments. Planning magazine distributes a supplement each year to Universities containing details of postgraduate courses. Information is available on websites, and surfing the Prospects and Grad websites could lead a prospective student to planning, particularly if s/he was a geography student.

#### Addressing the costs of courses

16.2.11 The majority of full-time postgraduate planning courses will be reduced in length from two academic years to one calendar year. This will remove the cost disadvantage that such courses had when compared with other postgraduate courses. In addition, the ODPM is likely to be giving more than one hundred bursaries to students studying on these courses.

16.2.12 The undergraduate programme will remain at four years, and this will remain as a disincentive to studying planning at this level. There has been little attempt to provide any financial assistance to undergraduate planning students.

16.2.13 The introduction of the one-year postgraduate course may also discourage students from taking an accredited planning degree. Instead they may decide to take an academic subject or a broader degree, in the knowledge that this would provide them with more flexibility and still provide them with the possibility of completing an accredited planning qualification in four years. Research into the ways that students choose undergraduate degrees suggests, however, that it is unlikely that the one-year course would have much effect on applications to undergraduate planning courses.

### **16.3 Assessment of current efforts to increase student numbers**

#### Initiatives to raise awareness

16.3.1 The school projects described above could prove effective in raising the awareness of planning amongst participants. They are ad hoc and relatively small scale, however, and are unlikely to have a major effect on the visibility or image of town planning other than in limited geographical areas and amongst a limited number of potential applicants. Many initiatives have taken a considerable time to come to fruition been

heavily reliant on the efforts of volunteers – the RTPI Teacher Pack, for example, has taken several years to produce.

- 16.3.2 The current initiatives in London may prove very effective in raising awareness amongst participants. However, they will reach only a small proportion of the school pupils in London, and would need to be replicated more widely if they are to succeed in raising awareness and promoting an interest in planning amongst the interest of in planning across London. The projects are expensive, however, and replicating them more widely would require funding.
- 16.3.3 The RTPI Teacher Pack may prove effective in raising awareness in schools and colleges, but it may have a limited effect unless backed up by promotional measures and liaison with schools. The pack might prove more effective if adapted to local circumstances, by including local case studies, and if the links to the curriculum were made explicit in personal communications to teachers.
- 16.3.4 The visits of some planners and university staff to schools to participate in lessons or careers events may be effective in raising awareness and interest. However, once again these are ad hoc and rely on the individual, and sometimes voluntary, efforts of staff. There is no generally available promotional or educational material to assist in the preparation for and delivery of such initiatives. General promotional material is available from the RTPI, but this is designed for the national market and is not designed for use in many of the more informal events in schools.

Raising awareness of planning and postgraduate courses amongst undergraduates

- 16.3.5 A recent survey of 154 students on one part-time postgraduate course indicates that most of the undergraduate students who find out about planning probably do so through their studies on geography and related courses.<sup>126</sup> Over 80% of the students had studied geography or a planning-related subject at university, and it was the content of the courses they studied that had directed most of them towards planning.
- 16.3.6 Few respondents to the survey developed an initial interest in the subject from careers and course material. Students in disciplines other than geography and planning related disciplines would be much less likely to find out about opportunities related to planning, and there is limited effort made to inform them.
- 16.3.7 In the longer term general awareness of planning could be raised by initiatives in schools. But it is doubtful whether this awareness and interest will be retained by students taking undergraduate degrees. More proactive efforts – for example, liaison between Planning Schools or local authorities and geography and other humanities departments, or the production of web based teaching materials for use in undergraduate courses – might prove effective in attracting more applicants to postgraduate planning courses. Such measures would require adequate resourcing.

Reducing costs of study

- 16.3.8 The future changes to the structure and funding of full-time planning postgraduate courses will remove a major barrier facing prospective students. The introduction of bursaries should also help to increase applicants; applications to teacher training courses increased substantially after the introduction of £6,000 bursaries (see 16.5).
- 16.3.9 There are currently no financial incentives for undergraduates studying planning. The introduction of bursaries and/or the removal of the fee for full-time undergraduate courses or for the fourth year of the four year programme could encourage students to enter and remain on the four year planning programmes. No such bursaries

currently exist, although the author has had initial discussions about this possibility with one local authority.

16.3.10 A number of Universities and some professional bodies have announced that they will be setting up bursary schemes.<sup>127</sup> These schemes are intended not only to attract students from disadvantaged backgrounds, but also to attract more applications to some science courses which are struggling to fill places. The Institute for Electrical Engineers is working with employers and universities to offer bursaries; the Institute of Physics also has a scheme. The crisis in maths in schools, colleges and universities has led to a government inquiry recommending that students taking maths at university should have their fees waived.<sup>128</sup> Although this recommendation was subsequently rejected, it may provide an indication of future measures.

16.3.11 There are a number of schemes for graduates entering teaching and the health professions. Universities will be prohibited from charging tuition fees for nursing and other health courses under new contracts being hammered out with the Department of Health.<sup>129</sup> The attraction of entering a teaching course in an eligible subject is enhanced by the prospect of £4,000 golden hellos and the pilot Repayment of Teachers Loans Scheme.<sup>130</sup> These schemes tie the beneficiaries into employment,

## 16.4 Recommendations

### Raising awareness

16.4.1 If the current laudable but ad hoc and poorly resourced efforts to raise awareness of planning are to prove more effective, efforts need to be made to coordinate existing efforts, produce promotional and teaching materials that could be adapted to local circumstances. This would require a pan-London body to be set up and adequately funded. Coordination of the efforts of Boroughs and Planning Schools would be more effectively undertaken at a London-wide level, rather than nationally.

#### **Recommendation 16.1**

##### **Set up a pan-London Planning Education Unit**

###### Reason

To coordinate efforts to raise awareness of planning amongst potential applicants to planning courses and jobs

###### Delivery mechanism

ALG

### Reducing costs of study

16.4.2 In the light of changes to student funding and initiatives by other professions, there is a need to investigate and introduce additional bursary schemes for postgraduate and undergraduate planning students. Efforts to introduce and coordinate the provision of bursaries would require one agency to take the lead. This could be done across London (following the model for the Teaching Recruitment and Retention Unit) or at a national level.

#### **Recommendation 16.2**

##### **Set up a London-wide or national Planner Recruitment and Retention Unit**

###### Reason

To liaise with training providers, employers and other relevant bodies to secure the provision of adequately funded training opportunities at different levels

Delivery mechanism  
ALG in consultation with other relevant bodies

## Section 17

### Responses in other professional areas

#### 17.1 Introduction

- 17.1.1 Recruitment and retention problems affect many of the professions, and in the private sector as well as the public sector. A recent report by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) noted “with the labour market overall staying tight, weaker economic conditions in 2002 and 2003 offered no respite from recruitment and retention pressures. Nine in ten organisations attempting to fill vacancies reported difficulties – a sharp increase on the 2002 figure of three-quarters – with almost 72% also reporting retention difficulties.”<sup>131</sup>
- 17.1.2 The CIPD report stated that the most common reasons for recruitment difficulties are skills shortages and finding applicants with suitable experience. These were cited as reasons by over half of the respondents. Difficulties in filling vacancies were evident across all sectors, with 96% of manufacturing organisations reporting recruitment problems, 95% in the not-for-profit sector, 94% in the public services sector and 90% in private sector services. Around two-thirds of manufacturing and private sector service organisations reported retention problems compared with over 80% in the public and not-for-profit sectors.<sup>132</sup>
- 17.1.3 Measures to address the problems facing the public sector have been introduced by the Government and relevant organisations. In addition, action has been taken to address the problems facing particular professions. Some of the problems and the initiatives are discussed below. Some of the initiatives might be applicable to planning, and the potential to adopt some of the measures is discussed in the concluding section.

#### 17.2 Generic responses in the public sector

- 17.2.1 The ODPM/LGA Capacity Building Programme is intended to create the future capacity of local government to deliver improved public services. This includes a range of measures, including some - such as the National Graduate development Programme – that are intended to address recruitment and retention problems.
- 17.2.2 A Society of Personnel Officers (SOCPO) and EO working group has been leading the development and implementation of a national strategy to tackle recruitment and retention issues in local government.
- 17.2.3 The Pay and Workforce Strategy for Local Government<sup>133</sup> sets out the priorities and some of the measures for tackling the problems. With SOCPO, the EO is providing advice encouraging all authorities to modernise their recruitment processes. Priorities for future EO action to improve recruitment and retention are:
- Developing and promoting guidance on succession planning in an equal opportunities context;
  - Promoting local authority uptake of Modern Apprenticeships;
  - Undertaking more research on job redesign;
  - Encouraging more regional and national recruitment activities (such as the Surrey Partnership scheme – see below).

- 17.2.4 In order to enable a comprehensive and strategic approach to all the recruitment and retention issues facing authorities, the ODPM and the EO have agreed to set up a Skills Shortages Planning Group, with other government departments being invited to attend. The Group will review all the action being taken to address skill shortages in local government.
- 17.2.5 Some of the initiatives already introduced by the ODPM, LGA and EO, include working with councils to improve the public image of the sector, and encouraging councils to engage with young people. A recent campaign involving both central and local government has successfully promoted social work as a career.<sup>134</sup> Other prominent national campaigns have been aimed at attracting more people to pursue careers in teaching, nursing and the police.
- 17.2.6 The Pay and Workforce Strategy suggests that “improving the image of working in local government through initiatives such as recruitment campaigns, positive messages from central government, positive media coverage and continued professional development would complement initiatives from other government departments to raise the profile and attractiveness of particular professions such as social workers, environmental health and teachers.”<sup>135</sup>
- 17.2.7 The role of the EO in these and other initiatives often involves publicising the existing successful practices of local authorities. An example of this approach is the compilation of a database of workforce initiatives in public protection services. Some of the initiatives in these service areas are listed below. The EO report also identifies the Welsh Assembly’s “Grow Your Own” protocol amongst Welsh authorities. This encourages authorities to develop social workers and social care staff from within their existing resources and prohibits poaching staff from other authorities.
- 17.2.8 Other national initiatives designed to promote local government careers include:
- running a local government careers website (lgcareers.com) and a local government recruitment website (lgjobs.com)
  - distributing brochures, CD Roms and games about local government careers to schools, colleges and universities
  - a campaign to promote the image of local government, including promoting it as a ‘First Choice Employer’ and promoting local government careers as part of Local Government Week, which takes place in October each year.
  - Overseas recruitment project
  - A national bursary scheme for students on public protection courses
- 17.2.9 Another initiative referred to in the report is the ODPM and the Housing Corporation jointly run Starter Home Initiative (SHI), which aims to help up to 10,000 key workers to buy homes in areas where the high cost of housing is undermining recruitment and retention.<sup>136</sup> This is soon to be replaced by the Key Worker Living Scheme which includes planners in London as key workers.
- 17.2.10 At a national level, the main initiative relating to planning has been the provision of the Planning Delivery Grant, which is intended to incentivise authorities to invest in recruitment, retention and training. There has been little guidance given to local authorities or coordination of their efforts to spend this money to improve recruitment and retention, and little work undertaken to raise awareness of planning, attract more undergraduate students to professional courses or ensure that there is adequate training capacity. Some valuable work has been undertaken to provide bursaries for postgraduate courses, investigate the potential for enhancing the roles of support

staff, and examine the skills base of the planning system. These appear to have been the only measures taken at national level, however, and the resources devoted to these initiatives contrasts markedly with those devoted to the Transport Planning Skills Initiative (see below).

### **17.3 Local and strategic initiatives**

17.3.1 In addition to these national schemes designed to address problems in local government as a whole, and some of the services within it, there have been a number of strategic or local initiatives.

17.3.2 The ODPM/EO report<sup>137</sup> draws attention also to a strategic partnership of over sixty public sector partners in Surrey, including the county council, the district councils, the police authority, further and higher education bodies and voluntary organisations. The aim of Surreyjobs.info is to tackle the difficult problems of public sector staff recruitment and retention in an area of high housing costs and easy access to the London job market.

17.3.3 In London the ALG has begun working towards a recruitment and retention strategy for London local government, in recognition of the particular problems faced by authorities in the capital. Although the initial report<sup>138</sup> suggested the need for a three year strategy, it suggested also that there may be some immediate actions that could be taken, including the sharing of information on existing actions and identifying pan London initiatives.

17.3.4 The action proposed by ALG includes:

- Improved data collection
- A major PR campaign to improve the image of local government in London
- Links with Further and Higher Education and the professional bodies to ensure adequate capacity is available on courses
- Sharing good practice

17.3.5 The ALG considers that the main funding requirements will be for the publicity campaign to improve the image of local government, and that this will require between £150,000 and £200,000. It is unclear whether the focus of the campaign will be local government as a whole, or individual professions/occupations within local government (see below).

### **17.4 Transport**

17.4.1 Surveys conducted by the ILT,<sup>4</sup> the NMPT EF<sup>5</sup> and the ICE<sup>6</sup> in 2001 and 2002 revealed that there is a serious shortage of trained transport planners and that this threatens the delivery of the Ten Year Transport Plan, and the complimentary Local Transport Plans.<sup>139</sup>

17.4.2 The surveys found that 81% of consultants and 68% of local authorities had experienced “significant” or “serious” difficulty in recruiting professional transport planners over the last year. The main difficulties were in recruiting staff with experience. These problems were expected to get worse as the demand for transport planners was expected to increase by 50% over the next three years.

---

<sup>4</sup> Institute of Logistics and Transport

<sup>5</sup> Employers Forum of the National Master Training Package in Transport

<sup>6</sup> Institute of Civil Engineers

- 17.4.3 In response to these problems the Transport Planning Society approached the Transport Minister who encouraged the preparation of an Action Plan to address the needs of the transport planning profession. The TPS established the Transport Planning Skills Initiative, and a Management Group to prepare an Action Plan focusing on “the professional and technical skills needed to develop and commission surface transport policies and programmes over the next ten years.”<sup>140</sup>
- 17.4.4 The Action Plan suggested a budget of £350,000 for the Initiative, although the final budget was closer to £400,000 – almost half of this was in contributions in kind. The funding came from Government Departments and Agencies, employers, professional bodies and other stakeholders.<sup>141</sup>
- 17.4.5 The objectives of the Initiative were:
- To increase the size of the skills pool (quantity)
  - To increase the range and level of skills (quality); and
  - To raise awareness of the profession among the public at large, and among opinion formers (image).
- 17.4.6 The research<sup>142</sup> found some similarities with planning concerning the causes of the shortages. Investment cycles had caused the loss of experienced staff in downturns, leading to the same problems of a “missing generation” experienced in planning (see 5.2.1).
- 17.4.7 The research<sup>143</sup> found that all except 5% of the employers took some action in response to the recruitment difficulties. These actions were similar to some of those used by planning employers, they included:
- Using consultants for specific contracts (57%)
  - Recruiting staff with less experience (52%)
  - Recruiting staff with a less relevant skill set (46%)
  - Increasing recruitment activities (36%)
  - Improving pay and conditions (31%)
- 17.4.8 A set of tasks was identified by the Action Plan to address the shortage of transport planners and achieve the objectives set out above (16.2.5). These are described below.
- 17.4.9 A publicity and communications programme was implemented by a communications agency. This aimed to create brand consistency to raise awareness of the transport planning profession and build a positive image. A brochure aimed at school leavers and graduates was created and a consistent style applied to all TPSI marketing material such as posters, the website and leaflets. A media relations campaign has established dialogue with journalists in an attempt to increase media coverage.
- 17.4.10 A second task was the improvement of careers guidance. This was informed by an investigation of existing careers guidance and the methods used by students to select courses and careers. At a schools level, attempts have been made to raise awareness of transport through plays and linking web-based material to lessons, as well as attempting to inform the teaching profession through presentations. At undergraduate level, a new brochure has been prepared, and improvements made to the routing within a major careers website. Careers Fairs have also been attended, with events targeted at second-jobbers proving very successful.

17.4.11 The third task compared existing training provision with future needs. This identified geographical gaps in undergraduate and postgraduate provision, and a general shortage of sub-degree level education and training. The promotion of structured work experience was considered as a means of encouraging people into transport planning careers, and a successful pilot scheme will be continued making greater use of a website.

17.4.12 Transport planning is substantially a graduate profession and, despite the growth of part-time study, full-time postgraduate study is the principal entry route to the profession. Fear of debt was found to be a major disincentive to Masters level study, and the continuity and expansion of the main sources of funding for postgraduates - EPSRC and Charitable bodies - was considered vital if the need for substantial growth in transport planners was to be met. Such funding has not been available to planning postgraduates.

17.4.13 Providing CPD and training were also considered vital to enhance the skills base of the profession, particularly as the shortage of Masters graduates is causing more employers to recruit people from undergraduate courses or career changers. Not only was there a need for a web-based database of training availability, but there was also a need for additional provision.

17.4.14 The final task in the Action Plan was the provision of a coordinated framework of qualifications describing entry and progression routes for both technicians and professionals across a profession currently covered by several professional bodies. Work on this and the other tasks is continuing.

## **17.5 Environmental Health and Trading Standards**

17.5.1 In 2001, the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health warned that “the health of the public is at threat” unless the alarming fall in applications to environmental degree courses is reversed.<sup>144</sup> Average applications to accredited courses fell from 300 to 50 per course between 1996 and 2001, and two university courses closed, leaving only 12 universities running accredited courses.

17.5.2 In response to these problems, the CIEH appointed consultants to develop a marketing plan, and introduced a number of measures<sup>145</sup>:

- A new careers pack and support materials for speakers and trainers
- Redesigning the careers section on the CIEH website
- Encouraging councils to provide work experience and careers training
- A helpline for recruitment enquiries
- Re-examining the core curriculum and training pathways
- Discussing recruitment issues with government, councils and members.

17.5.3 In a workforce survey in 2002,<sup>146</sup> 61.8% of the 212 respondents reported recruitment difficulties and 37.7% retention difficulties. Recruitment and retention difficulties for Environmental Health Officers were 53.3% and 30.7% respectively. The most commonly reported reasons for Environmental Health Officers were general lack of suitably qualified applicants (75.0%), pay (53.2%) and competition from other authorities (47.6%). There was little variation in the reasons given between Environmental Health Officers and Environmental Health Technicians.

17.5.4 Another survey<sup>147</sup> last year indicated that the problems are getting worse. The research found that 89% of the local authorities surveyed, reported that they had a problem recruiting suitably qualified staff; and nearly as many (77%) reported a

problem with staff retention. All of the remaining ten environmental health BSc courses are now classed at risk.

17.5.5 There are similar difficulties in the recruitment and retention of trading standards officers, with over a third of authorities in a 2002 survey reporting recruitment difficulties. In addition, 100 new trading standards officers are needed each year to replace natural turnover, but only 48 students started on an accredited degree course in 2002/03.

17.5.5 In response to these problems, LACORS<sup>7</sup>, the LGA and the Employers' Organisation (EO), together with a range of other partners<sup>8</sup>, have launched an initiative to address the recruitment and retention crisis and raise the profile of the essential work of local authority regulatory services officers.

17.5.6 The regulatory services partnership Action Plan is intended to develop and encourage local authorities to invest in recruitment and retention, and to inspire young people to want to work in local authority regulatory services.

#### The regulatory services partnership Action Plan

- Lobby for external funding from government, including:
  - Funding top-sliced from the revenue support grant to continue and enhance the bursary scheme for EHO graduates.
  - Gain additional and sustained funding to introduce new national initiatives to assist local authorities recruit and retain staff.
  - ODPM Capacity Building fund for leadership development in respect of regulatory services and strengthening cross professional skills as an aide to retention.
  - The DTI for a continuation of the Trading Standards Modernisation fund TSO training scheme.
- Develop and maintain a resource of best practice recruitment and retention case studies and make this readily accessible through a single website.
- Request and encourage every local authority in England and Wales to make a public commitment to the importance of a recruitment, development and retention strategy for regulatory services, reflecting both national expectations and local needs.
- "TSI and CIEH will in partnership review future opportunities for the closer integration of their range of professional qualifications and explore the viability of joint arrangements facilitating professional competence in public protection".
- Develop advice and guidance to help councillors when scrutinising regulatory services, reflecting a broad vision for those services.
- Engage with politicians and officials across central government departments to enhance their awareness of the role and value of regulatory services and the contribution they can make to national economic and social policies.
- Seek out champions and ambassadors from local authority councillors, chief executives and directors to promote the value of regulatory services.
- Identify, share and promote good practice illustrating where regulatory services have made a contribution to broader agendas like community safety, economic vitality and healthier communities.
- Carry out research to benchmark the views of key local authority opinion formers about regulatory services and gather their views about service improvement.
- Maintain a website to demonstrate the progress of the campaign and enable wider participation.

<sup>7</sup> Local Authorities Coordinators or Regulatory Services

<sup>8</sup> the Welsh Local Government Association; the Improvement and Development Agency; the Trading Standards Institute and the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health

17.5.7 Many of the local authorities in the most recent survey<sup>148</sup> are already implementing a range of measures in environmental health to try and address the recruitment difficulties, including offering apprenticeships or training (83%), improving remuneration packages (66%), taking on less qualified staff (38%) with a view to training them for the work, and having fast-track schemes for graduates (31%).

17.5.8 Building control departments are suffering from competition from staff from the private sector, and some authorities have introduced a range of practices to improve recruitment and retention problems caused by this. Some successful examples of these innovative measures, and those introduced in environmental health and trading standards are set out in the database of innovative practice<sup>149</sup>, and are summarised below:

- **Work-life balance** - LB Southwark and Wokingham District Council have both reported improved performance and improved recruitment and retention of staff in public protection services as a result of a range of measures.
- **Shared resources** - Rutland CC and South Kesteven DC have shared staff successfully across different environmental health services.
- **Outsourcing** - Swale BC has outsourced understaffed services through successful partnerships and closer working practices with the private sector, that have reduced costs and improved efficiency.
- **Performance management and review** - Stockport MBC has introduced a system that has enabled staff to progress their careers and improved staff retention in environmental health. In addition the authority has re-introduced paid placements for students, and offers of market supplements and opportunities for rotation in the department to new recruits have proved successful. Cardiff CC has introduced a scheme that links job performance to career and pay progression in trading standards.
- **Staff progression and development** - Birmingham City Council has successfully introduced a range of initiatives to address their recruitment problems in building control and other services. It has recruited and trained partly qualified staff from underrepresented groups, provided fast track training, offered career progression opportunities, and transferred administrative staff to technical roles.
- **Career grades** - Sefton MBC has introduced a career grade system in building control that has improved retention and poaching of staff by increasing job satisfaction. Hampshire CC restructured its trading standards service and introduced a career grade system.
- **Work placements** - Guildford BC Environmental Health Department has introduced work placements to raise 15-16 year old secondary pupils' awareness of environmental health and counter the difficulties of recruiting trainees. The authority also supports student environmental health officers.
- **Training initiatives, APEL and Partnerships with colleges and HEIs** – Fife UC and East Sussex have both made use of APEL schemes for trading standards staff to become DTS qualified and Fife has developed links with local colleges to improve training provision.
- **Modern Apprenticeships** – Waveney BC has recruited a local A-level student who progressed to a junior building control post within a year.
- **Recruiting retired staff** - North Cornwall DC has successfully addressed peaks and troughs in building control staffing levels and workloads by recruiting a pool of external retired staff.
- **Incentives** - Basingstoke and Deane BC has improved the retention of building control staff by offering lease cars. Nottingham CC has introduced

market supplements and work-life balance measures for its building control officers to reduce poaching from the private sector.

17.5.9 Many other individual authorities have introduced initiatives to address the recruitment and retention problems in regulatory services. Nottingham CC<sup>150</sup> and South Norfolk DC<sup>151</sup> both emphasise the importance of programmes of student training and professional development.

17.5.10 Nottingham CC has established processes to grow its own Environmental Health Practitioners. It recruits two new student EHOs each year and has eight students following the conventional thick sandwich route, who gain practical experience during their placement but also at other times. These staff progress to EHO positions at the end of their training. This programme is assisted by the close links between the Council and training providers. South Norfolk also sponsors students from the start of their training providing them with a bursary and practical experience.

17.5.11 Officers from both authorities are critical of the efforts of other authorities. The Food Control Manager of South Norfolk DC notes how few authorities provide training places for student EHOs, and suggest that had others followed their example, there might not be a shortage of qualified officers. He notes that earlier in the year, the Food Standards Agency invited local authorities to bid for two student EHO placements that it would fund. South Norfolk Council was one of only 23 local authorities that responded.

17.5.12 The Nottingham CC officer suggests that many authorities could do a lot more by working in partnership with neighbouring districts and other agencies to share the costs and responsibilities of training new staff. He suggests that the establishment of regional training centres based strategically around the country would offer the best chance of progress.

17.5.13 The South Norfolk officer also argues for more efforts from other authorities, and suggests investigating the possibility of establishing training partnerships with other authorities or the private sector. He suggests also that the Regulatory Services Partnership should include planning and building control in the Action Plan, as these services are suffering similar problems to those of the regulatory services. In building control South Norfolk has agreed a Partnership with three other Councils – Breckland, Broadland and Norwich – which is intended to help staff retention.

## 17.6 Teaching

### Recruitment

17.6.1 In August 2000, teaching unions warned of the worst recruitment crisis ever to grip British classrooms. Schools had high levels of vacancies and were reliant increasingly on supply teachers – often recruited from abroad. The problems were particularly acute in London. In January 2000, according to the Department for Education and Employment, there were 1,020 teacher vacancies - the highest on record.

17.6.2 In response to these problems the Government introduced a range of measures, including:

- an extra £4m grant to double the number of places for prospective teachers to train "on the job" – the Graduate Teacher Programme or the Registered Teacher Programme
- £250m Starter Homes Initiative providing housing help for key public service workers, including teachers

- A returners scheme aimed at persuading qualified teachers to return to the profession, including training courses, childcare assistance and financial incentives
- £6,000 training 'salaries' for students starting postgraduate courses
- The Fast Track Teaching Programme provides a £5,000 bursary for accepted candidates, in addition to the PGCE bursary of £6,000 (£3,000 at the start of training and £2,000 on taking up the first teaching post).
- Repayment of student loans for teachers in shortage subjects (pilot 2002/03, 2003/04 and 2004/05)
- A Golden Hello to teachers of shortage subjects of £4000 taxable income

17.6.3 The £6000 training bursaries had an immediate impact, leading to “a huge increase in applications for these courses, ”<sup>152</sup> in addition, in 2001/02, 13,000 teachers returned to the classroom.<sup>153</sup> The growth in numbers training to become teachers has continued since then, with training providers funding 6000 more places in 2003/04 than they funded in 1999/2000, <sup>154</sup> and 50% more people starting teacher training this year than started five years ago.<sup>155</sup>

17.6.4 There are now 25,000 more teachers than there were in 1998.<sup>156</sup> “In the four years since training bursaries and Golden Hellos were introduced, the sector’s efforts have raised recruitment to teacher training courses by over 30 per cent. There have been especially large increases in priority areas like maths and science that had previously been hard to shift from stubbornly low recruitment levels.”<sup>157</sup>

#### Retention

17.6.5 Despite the sustained success of these measures to attract more people into teaching, retention has continued to be a major problem in schools. A report published in 2001 found that 40% of the teachers enrolled into teacher education institutes, drop out of their course, 15% move into another branch of education and 10% leave after just three years of teaching. Hence, on average, only about one third remain in teaching as a full-time career.<sup>158</sup> A survey of teachers in Autumn 2002 found that over half felt morale was lower than when they started in the profession, and 17% were contemplating leaving the profession in the next five years for reasons other than retirement.<sup>159</sup>

17.6.6 A number of national initiatives have been introduced to tackle retention issues. The Charity Teacher Support Network established Worklife Support and the Teacher Support Line in 1999. The former has set up the Well-Being Programme which aims to ensure that schools have a positive and proactive approach to the well-being of staff. It operates in over 300 schools and LEAs.

17.6.7 In 2003 the Government signed an agreement with the employers and all of the Unions, except the NUT, designed to reduce teacher workload by transferring many administrative and clerical duties from teachers to support staff.

#### London

17.6.8 Housing and other living costs, a tight labour market and a range of other factors mean that London’s schools face particular recruitment and retention problems. On his appointment, in early 2003, the first London commissioner of schools said he believes recruitment is the single biggest problem facing London’s education.<sup>160</sup> Although vacancy levels in London’s schools fell from 3.5% in January 2001 to 2% in September 2003, 3.3% of teaching posts were temporarily filled.<sup>161</sup>

- 17.6.9 Because of the particular problems facing schools in London, in April 2002 the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Unit was created to investigate issues affecting the recruitment and retention of teachers. Funding was provided by the DfES and based at GOL. It is guided by a Steering Group consisting of the Department for Education & Skills (DfES), Chief Education Officers, Teacher Training Agency (TTA), Association of London Government (ALG), Greater London Authority (GLA) and Government Office for London (GoL).
- 17.6.10 The primary aim of the Unit is to offer strategic solutions on four areas: supply agencies, overseas trained teachers, affordable housing and subsidised transport. The Government will not provide funding for subsidised travel for teachers, and is concentrating resources on key worker housing and other initiatives.
- 17.6.11 Teachers were included as key workers in the Starter Homes Initiative which ends in 2004, and are to be included in its replacement, the Key Worker Living Programme. The TRRU has been involved in the development of several housing schemes designed to provide different forms of affordable housing to teachers.
- 17.6.12 In relation to supply teaching agencies, the Pan-London Teacher Supply Agency Preferred Supplier List (PSL) was set up to run as a pilot scheme for eighteen months from January 2004. It provides a list of agencies that are recommended to schools on the basis of the quality of their teachers, their training provision and value for money. The ALG/Association of London Chief Education Officers initiative is supported by the TRRU. Discussions between Greater London Enterprise and a supply agency to set up a borough owned pan-London supply agency were unsuccessfully concluded.
- 17.6.13 The overseas recruitment initiative was intended to provide a more co-ordinated approach to the recruitment of overseas teachers, and reduce the need for individual boroughs to make overseas recruitment trips. Two pilot overseas recruitment drives have taken place to Australia and Canada. The assessment of these has not yet been completed.

## **17.7 Other services and professions**

- 17.7.1 Many other services have suffered recruitment and retention problems nationally and in London, and some continue to do so. The police and the health service have both suffered severe difficulties in the past. A wide range of measures – from pay adjustments and housing provision, to training bursaries and promotional campaigns – have been introduced to address the problems. In nursing large numbers of staff have been recruited from overseas. Many of the initiatives have had considerable success.

## **17.8 Conclusions and recommendation**

- 17.8.1 There have been a wide range of initiatives introduced in an attempt to address the recruitment and retention problems that exist across many public sector services. National and pan London measures to address the problems across the public sector – such as housing initiatives, the creation of jobs websites, improving the image of local government - may have some impact on recruitment and retention problems in planning.
- 17.8.2 A brief review of the problems facing other professions and services and of the efforts made to address them, shows many similarities with the situation in planning. Many of the problems are similar, and are more marked in London, and many measures taken by individual authorities are similar to those taken by local planning authorities

in London and elsewhere. Many of the examples of successful practices adopted in other service areas and by individual authorities could be adopted within planning.

- 17.8.3 Many of the national initiatives relating to teaching – such as bursaries, golden hellos and loan repayment schemes- appear to have been successful in increasing the numbers of people training to be teachers, and entering and returning to the profession. Similar proposals could prove effective if applied to planning.
- 17.8.4 Retaining staff in teaching appears to be a more difficult issue to address. Reports on the effectiveness of the Well-being initiative suggest that addressing the conditions at work have been successful. Indications from case study authorities in this research suggest that addressing work-life balance issues can be successful.
- 17.8.5 Many of the London initiatives relating to teaching are in their infancy, and an assessment of their success is not yet possible. The unsuccessful attempt by GLE to set up a borough owned pan-London supply agency for teaching bodes ill for any proposal to set up such an agency for planning. However, the reasons for the failure of the discussions needs to be investigated before dismissing this possibility. Even if such a proposal is not feasible for planning, this does not rule out the possibility of setting up a preferred list of agencies.
- 17.8.6 Initiatives by employers in the fields of transport planning and regulatory services, could also be adopted in planning. Some authorities have already adopted some of the measures such as introducing work-life balance measures, growing you own planners, outsourcing services, restructuring processes, providing career grading and progression opportunities.
- 17.8.7 What appears to distinguish the efforts in these and other professions from those in planning, however, is that the other professions have set up partnerships or specific units in an attempt to encourage, guide and coordinate the efforts of individual local authorities and other stakeholders to address the problems. These bodies have also taken responsibility for efforts to raise the awareness and improve the image of the relevant professions, disseminate good practice and other tasks. They have received considerable resources to undertake this work.
- 17.8.8 In planning, the Planning Delivery Grant has provided additional funding for local authorities to spend on recruitment and retention initiatives, but there is no body responsible for providing guidance on how this money might be used more effectively to address the current and future staffing shortages that face planning authorities.

## 17.9 Recommendations

### 17.9.1 Recommendation 17.1

**To undertake a detailed investigation of the effectiveness and appropriateness to planning of the measures adopted in other areas to address recruitment and retention problems.**

Reason

To enable planning to adopt good practice in other areas

Delivery mechanism

ALG with appropriate partners

# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## Section 18

### Conclusions and recommendations

#### 18.1 Introduction

- 18.1.1 The survey revealed high vacancy levels and continuing reports of difficulties in recruiting staff in order to maintain an adequate level of service. What seems clear from the survey of authorities is that many of the responses of authorities to the shortages of planners at different levels of experience have their own problems, and this and the scale of the problem suggests that it will require a wide variety of measures to begin to tackle the current shortages of planners in London.
- 18.1.2 The problem is one that affects the London market as a whole, and whilst the current responses by individual Boroughs address their own problems, they do little to address the pan London problems; some may even increase the problems of other Boroughs. This suggests that there is a need for a more co-ordinated approach to the problems backed by improved targeting of funding.

#### 18.2 Employing temporary agency staff

- 18.2.1 Whilst the employment of temporary agency staff presents some advantages, in terms of flexibility, the current proportion of posts occupied by such staff is unacceptably high. Temporary agency staff are expensive and cause problems of continuity for the service and will not remain in London to progress to more senior posts.
- 18.2.2 Many of the other possible responses to the shortages of planners will make little immediate impact on the shortages of planners, and particularly experienced planners. Authorities will therefore have to employ such staff in the short-term. The cost of employing such staff could be reduced, however, and some of the recruitment and training problems reduced by **the establishment of a not-for-profit employment and recruitment agency.**

#### 18.3 Recruiting non-planning graduates, internal staff and trainees

- 18.3.1 Many authorities are already **recruiting non-planning graduates** and some are **offering opportunities to administrative or technical staff to undertake enhanced work and/or train to become qualified planners.** Both measures can help to address the shortages, but potential barriers are presented by the availability and capacity of part-time and distance learning training courses at sub-degree, undergraduate and postgraduate levels.
- 18.3.2 If local authorities were to offer **trainee posts for school leavers or others without degrees linked to places on part-time undergraduate planning courses** this may prove attractive to many potential students faced with the alternative of studying full-time whilst undertaking menial and low-paid work. Not only would this assist LPAs in their efforts to address longer-term recruitment and retention problems, an increase in the numbers of part-time undergraduates on planning courses would also help to retain the viability of full-time undergraduate courses and secure the future of London Planning Schools.

18.3.3 In relation to both the above measures, there is a need for **urgent discussions between employers, employers' organisations, the RTPI and training providers to address issues relating to training provision (See 4.4.)**

#### 18.4 Other potential sources of recruits

18.4.1 There is a need to investigate several other potential sources of recruits and explore means of attracting such staff. Recruitment of returners and retired staff could help to address the shortages of experienced staff; **the provision of training for returners and flexible employment opportunities** might help to attract such recruits.

#### 18.5 Improving pay and conditions

18.5.1 Measures relating to pay and conditions may improve recruitment and retention, and indirectly attract more students to planning courses. The majority of respondents to this research considered that performance related pay had more disbenefits than benefits, and research reveals mixed results. In contrast respondents reported that the **introduction of broader career bands and improved progression opportunities** had had positive effects on recruitment and retention of staff. Very positive results were reported concerning the **introduction of work-life balance measures**, and respondents were hopeful that **publicising the inclusion of planners as key workers** would help to attract new recruits and retain staff with some experience.

#### 18.6 Changing structures and processes

18.6.1 **Changing structures and processes, increasing the use and effectiveness of IT, and enhancing the roles of staff without accredited planning qualifications** can also reduce the effects of staff shortages.

#### 18.7 Increasing the supply of applicants with accredited planning qualifications

18.7.1 Many of the above measures will help to address the shortages of planners. It is unlikely that recruiting trainees and internal staff, returners and retired staff will provide the number of staff necessary to overcome the problem. Although it would be possible to recruit non-planning graduates to entry level posts and allow full-time undergraduate courses in London to disappear, this would be a dangerous strategy as the training providers may not be able to provide the part-time undergraduate or even postgraduate courses necessary to train non-planning graduates.

18.7.2 A better solution would be to continue to recruit from a variety of sources, and attempt to support the provision of undergraduate courses by **providing a steady supply of entrants to part-time courses**, whilst supporting measures to increase numbers on full-time courses such as **raising awareness of planning** (see E5. ) and the **provision of bursaries for full-time undergraduates, and supplementary bursaries for full-time postgraduates**.

#### 18.8 Delivery mechanisms

18.8.1 The EO<sup>162</sup> considered that many of the recruitment problems faced by authorities are shaped by local circumstances and are best answered by local solutions. Some local solutions, such as enhancing the roles of support staff or training internal support staff, will have no implications for other boroughs and may help to reduce the shortages of planners across London. However, other measures adopted by individual boroughs may not have such a benign effect on other authorities. The

shortages of planners at all levels of seniority across London, suggests that while some measures adopted by individual authorities may address their local problems they will not solve the London wide problem of staff shortages, and some may merely increase the problems of neighbouring boroughs and increase staff turnover.

18.8.2 In addition, the cumulative effects of some of the measures adopted by individual boroughs – such as the implications for Planning Schools of the increased recruitment of non-planning graduates - will need to be addressed at a level wider than individual boroughs.

18.8.3 Many of the measures highlighted above could be introduced by local authorities immediately, but it is recommended that ALG convene urgent meetings involving LGA, Employers Organisation, GOL, ODPM, RTPI, London First, LDA, LSCs, and other relevant bodies to discuss the establishment, funding and composition of the following three (or two) partnerships or units to co-ordinate or lead the introduction of the above measures:

- **A not-for-profit employment and recruitment agency**
  - To provide temporary staff at lower costs than existing agencies
  - To provide initial induction training for overseas recruits
  - To provide technical interviews for all staff
  
- **A pan London environmental/planning education unit**
  - To liaise with schools, universities, FE colleges, education departments, careers advisers, LSCs, RGS, RTPI and other relevant bodies to identify the most appropriate form and content of materials and initiatives to raise awareness of planning across London schools, college and universities
  - To develop new/enhance existing careers literature, teaching packs, and other material and initiatives in consultation with existing providers and the RTPI in the light of the above findings
  - To lead and coordinate the efforts of local authority planners, university staff, and other bodies undertaking planning education in schools colleges and universities
  - To coordinate the provision of work experience opportunities as part of vocational qualifications and independent of these
  
- **A national planning recruitment and retention unit**
  - To investigate and ensure the provision of adequate training opportunities at sub-degree, undergraduate and postgraduate levels in consultation with providers and the RTPI
  - To investigate, secure funding for, and coordinate the delivery of bursaries for undergraduate students
  - To investigate the potential for introducing a repayment of students loans system for planning students entering the public sector

## 18.9 Implementation

18.9.1 Funding would be required for research to investigate the feasibility of these initiatives, the form such partnerships or bodies would take, where they would be located, and the way in which they would operate. If such research were to provide positive results, funding would be required to develop the bodies. Funding could be sought from a range of national and local public sector organisations, for example: the ODPM, GOL, ALG, LGA, LDA.

18.9.2 One potential danger of the creation of a not-for-profit agency is that, if it proves effective in recruiting temporary staff, it may lead to an initial period of considerable instability and mobility amongst existing temporary staff. This could be very disruptive for many authorities, and particularly those most reliant on temporary staff. It would therefore be advisable for the agency to develop slowly at first. This potential short-term problem would, however, be considerably outweighed by the longer-term benefits in terms of reduced costs, improving recruitment practices and providing training and improved conditions for staff.

## Section 19

### Action Plan

| Recommendation   | Reasons  | Action  | Possible funding sources  |
|--|--|---|---|
| To set up a pan-London not-for-profit recruitment, employment and training agency                            | <p>To reduce the cost of employing temporary employment agency staff</p> <p>To improve the quality of recruitment processes and training provision for temporary staff</p> | <p>ALG to seek funding to undertake or commission research into the feasibility of setting up an agency and to develop a model</p> <p>ALG to seek start-up funding if research results positive</p>   | <p>ODPM, GOL, LDA, GLA, LBs, ALG</p> <p>ODPM, GOL, LDA, GLA, LBs, ALG</p> |
| To set up a planning/environmental education unit to raise awareness of planning in schools and universities | To increase the future supply of planning graduates and the future supply of staff   | <p>ALG to develop a unit in discussion with GOL/ODPM, LBs, LGA, EO, RTP, RGS, DfES, HEIs and other stakeholders</p> <p>The unit would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare or adapt existing training packs for schools</li> <li>• Co-ordinate and prepare material for school and university visits, environmental education projects, competitions etc</li> <li>• Undertake promotional visits and attend career fairs to schools and universities</li> <li>• Liase with graduate recruitment agencies and careers services, Planning Schools etc</li> </ul> | <p>ALG, ODPM, GOL, LDA, GLA, LBs, RTP</p> <p>I</p>                        |

| Recommendation   | Reasons  | Action   | Possible funding sources   |
|--|--|--|--|
| To set up a national Planning Recruitment and Retention Agency   |  | <p>ALG to initiate discussions with ODPM, LBs, LGA, EO, RTPI, RGS, DfES, HEIs and other stakeholders</p> <p>The RRU to:<br/>                     Seek funding for, and coordinate the delivery of bursaries for undergraduates<br/>                     Ensure availability adequate level and distribution of education and training courses<br/>                     To produce or procure good practice guides for local authorities to assist their efforts to improve recruitment and retention</p> | ODPM   |
| To secure the continued provision of adequate capacity on part-time postgraduate planning courses to meet demand | To improve recruitment and retention, and ensure adequate training for unqualified staff | <p>ALG to discuss with HEIs the provision of places on part-time postgraduate planning courses</p> <p>ALG to discuss with HEIs the possibility of entering partnerships to enable a regular supply of students to HEIs and a regular supply of places</p>  | <p>ALG, HEIs</p> <p>ALG, HEIs</p>  |
| To encourage LBs to introduce more work-life balance practices   | To improve staff retention and improve recruitment                                       | <p>ALG to synthesise existing research into the benefits of work life balance practices and undertake new research across London Boroughs if necessary</p> <p>ALG to disseminate the results of the research and produce a best practice guide or toolkit</p>  | <p>ALG, ODPM, GOL, LDA, GLA, LBs,</p> <p>ALG, ODPM, GOL, LDA, GLA, LBs</p> |
| To encourage LBs to increase basic levels of pay for junior staff and introduce career grades                    | To improve staff recruitment and retention   | ALG to investigate and provide guidance on different models  | ALG  |

| <b>Recommendation</b>   | <b>Reasons</b>   | <b>Action</b>   | <b>Possible funding sources</b>  |
|---|--|---|--|
| To encourage LBs to introduce structured staff development programmes involving training and rotation of duties   | To improve retention of junior staff   | ALG to investigate staff development models in LBs  | ALG, ODPM, GOL, LDA, GLA, LBs  |
| To encourage LBs to include planners in their key worker living programmes  | To improve the retention of junior planners and planners with experience within the London jobs market<br><br>To improve the recruitment of junior planners to London authorities from elsewhere | ALG to promote the scheme to LBs  | (ODPM)   |
| To encourage LBs to introduce trainee posts at sub-degree level, linked to part-time study  | To increase the supply of qualified planners in the future   | ALG to encourage LBs to create trainee posts at sub-degree level<br><br>ALG to discuss the creation and/or expansion of broad based planning-related part-time Foundation or Undergraduate courses in planning urban management with HEIs<br><br>ALG to discuss setting up partnerships with HEIs to develop the courses and ensure a regular supply of students and places.<br><br>ALG and HEIs to discuss with professional bodies the accreditation of such courses and/or progression to accredited courses | ALG<br><br>ALG, HEIs<br><br>ALG, HEIs<br><br>ALG, GOL, HEIs, RTPi, IHT and related professional bodies |
| To encourage LBs to provide training and career development opportunities to enable those members of the planning workforce without planning qualifications (administrative | To develop fully the potential of all staff and increase the supply of qualified planners  | ALG to investigate and develop career development models for administrative and other support staff<br><br>ALG to disseminate details of these models and publicise the availability of distance  | ALG<br><br>ALG, LBs  |

|  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| and support staff) to undertake courses leading to technical or corporate membership of the RTPI.                                    |   | learning courses, NVQs and day release courses<br><br>ALG to lobby ODPM to provide funding to investigate the need for additional provision and to fund an increase in the capacity of existing courses and/or develop new courses if necessary  | ALG, ODPM, existing training providers |
| To set up a database of qualified planners not currently working in planning but seeking part-time or full-time employment in London | To increase the pool of experienced planners from which London Boroughs can recruit | ALG to discuss with the RTPI the possibility of using its database of members to invite non-working members to register on the database<br><br>To encourage LBs to offer flexible employment opportunities to such staff   | ALG                                    |
| To investigate the potential for recruiting planners from Europe   | To identify other potential sources of recruits to London LPAs                      | ALG to commission or undertake research into the availability of planners in the EU  | ALG                                    |
| To improve recruitment methods currently employed by LBs   | To increase the level of applications to jobs at all levels                         | ALG to undertake or commission research, and synthesise existing research, into the effectiveness of current recruitment methods used in London and elsewhere<br><br>The research would require questionnaire surveys of employees, managers and HR Departments in LPAs to discover information sources, and views on different types of jobs, advertisements, pay and conditions and material supplied by the Boroughs to candidates. | ALG, GOL, LDA                          |

## Endnotes

- 
- <sup>1</sup> Audit Commission (2002) Recruitment and Retention. Audit Commission: London
- <sup>2</sup> See for example: Arup Economics & Planning with the Bailey Consultancy (2002) *Resourcing of Local Planning Authorities*. DTLR: London; House of Commons Transport, Local Government & the Regions Select Committee (2002) *Thirteenth Report of 2001-2002 Session – The Planning Green Paper* The Stationery Office Ltd: London; EO & Provincial Employers Organisations (2001) *Local Government Recruitment and Retention Survey.*; Chapman,R. (2001) *Recruitment and Retention of Planning Staff: Association of London Government Circular TEC01/46*. London: ALG; RTPI (2003) *The supply and demand for qualified town planners – fifth report*: London: RTPI
- <sup>3</sup> LGA (2003) *Planning Reform – A Survey of Local Planning Authorities*. London: LGA
- <sup>4</sup> ALG (2002) *ALG Employee Turnover Survey 2001/02*. ALG; London; ALG (2001) *ALG Employee Turnover Survey 2000/01*. ALG; London
- <sup>5</sup> Chapman,R. (2001) *Recruitment and Retention of Planning Staff: Association of London Government Circular TEC01/46*.
- <sup>6</sup> Shaw,T., Pendlebury,J, and Mawson,J. (2003) *The Supply and Demand for Qualified Town Planners*. London: RTPI
- <sup>7</sup> Tysome, T. (2004) Graduate pay is on the up. *Times Educational Supplement*. 30 January
- <sup>8</sup> Niven,R. (2004) Bridging a professional gap. *Planning* 20 February p.20
- <sup>9</sup> Interview with Course Leader of combined course.
- <sup>10</sup> UCAS (2003) Data supplied to the author for PINS funded research project
- <sup>11</sup> Arup Economics & Planning with the Bailey Consultancy (2002) op cit
- <sup>12</sup> Claydon,J. et al (2001) op cit
- <sup>13</sup>; Edmundson, T. (2003) Unpublished surveys of MA Town Planning students at the University of Westminster.
- <sup>14</sup> PINS (2003) unpublished survey of students at Student Planners Conference, Birmingham.
- <sup>15</sup> Callender, C. & Kemp, M. (2002) **Students studying in London** An analysis of data from the student income and expenditure survey 1998/99 London: Mayor of London
- <sup>16</sup> ALG/LB Wandsworth (2004) *Pay and Benefits survey 2003*. ALG: London
- <sup>17</sup> Callender, C. & Kemp, M. (2002) **Students studying in London** An analysis of data from the student income and expenditure survey 1998/99 London: Mayor of London
- <sup>18</sup> Callender, C. & Kemp, M. (2002) **Students studying in London** An analysis of data from the student income and expenditure survey 1998/99 London: Mayor of London
- <sup>19</sup> Durning,B. & Glasson,J. (2004) *Skills Base in the Planning System. Volume 1 Literature Review*. Oxford: Oxford Brookes University.
- <sup>20</sup> Arup Economics & Planning with the Bailey Consultancy (2002) op cit
- <sup>21</sup> RTPI (2001) *Members Survey 2001: “How can the RTPI deliver its vision for planning?” commentary on the findings of research undertaken by Priority Research Ltd.*  
<http://www.rtpi.org.uk/resources/publications/survey2001/commentary.html>
- <sup>22</sup> Informal conversations with Chief Officers from Essex and London.
- <sup>23</sup> Arup (2002) op cit
- <sup>24</sup> Watson,J. (2001) op cit
- <sup>25</sup> Arup (2002) op cit
- <sup>26</sup> Edmundson,T. (forthcoming) *The potential role of planning technicians and planning support staff in enhancing service delivery in a reformed statutory planning system*. London: ODPM
- <sup>27</sup> Audit Commission (2002) op cit
- <sup>28</sup> <sup>28</sup> MORI (2003) *PARSOL Survey of Planning and Regulatory Authorities. Draft Report*  
<http://www.parsol.gov.uk/documents/MORIBaselineSurveyReport.pdf>
- <sup>29</sup> Dex, S., & Smith, C. (2002), *The Nature and Pattern of Family-Friendly Employment Policies in Britain*, Bristol: The Policy Press. Dex, S., (2003), *Families and Work in the Twenty-First Century*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Referred to in Stevens,J et al (2004) op cit

- <sup>30</sup> Key Worker Living Website <http://www.keyworkerliving.co.uk/news/> accessed on 2 April 2004
- <sup>31</sup> See for example Gould, M. (2004) The carrot crunch. Guardian Society April 21
- <sup>32</sup> Vernalls, J. (2003) op cit
- <sup>33</sup> See for example: Arup Economics & Planning with the Bailey Consultancy (2002) *Resourcing of Local Planning Authorities*. DTLR: London; House of Commons Transport, Local Government & the Regions Select Committee (2002) *Thirteenth Report of 2001-2002 Session – The Planning Green Paper* The Stationery Office Ltd: London; EO & Provincial Employers Organisations (2001) *Local Government Recruitment and Retention Survey.*; Chapman, R. (2001) *Recruitment and Retention of Planning Staff: Association of London Government Circular TEC01/46*. London: ALG; RTPI (2003) *The supply and demand for qualified town planners – fifth report*: London: RTPI
- <sup>34</sup> Audit Commission (2002) Recruitment and Retention. Audit Commission: London
- <sup>35</sup> Audit Commission (2001) op cit
- <sup>36</sup> Employers Organisation (2003) Engaging with Young People. London: Employers Organisation. Accessed via the World Wide Web at <http://www.lg-employers.gov.uk/publications/fullpublications/ewyp.html> on 30 March 2004
- <sup>37</sup> See for example: Arup Economics & Planning with the Bailey Consultancy (2002) *Resourcing of Local Planning Authorities*. DTLR: London; House of Commons Transport, Local Government & the Regions Select Committee (2002) *Thirteenth Report of 2001-2002 Session – The Planning Green Paper* The Stationery Office Ltd: London; EO & Provincial Employers Organisations (2001) *Local Government Recruitment and Retention Survey.*; Chapman, R. (2001) *Recruitment and Retention of Planning Staff: Association of London Government Circular TEC01/46*. London: ALG; RTPI (2003) *The supply and demand for qualified town planners – fifth report*: London: RTPI
- <sup>38</sup> Mawson, J. & Pendlebury, J. (2003) The Supply of and Demand for Qualified Town Planners. Sixth Report. London: RTPI.
- <sup>39</sup> LGA (2003) Planning Reform – A Survey of Local Planning Authorities. London: LGA
- <sup>40</sup> Arup Economics & Planning with the Bailey Consultancy (2002) op cit
- <sup>41</sup> Arup Economics & Planning with the Bailey Consultancy (2002) op cit
- <sup>42</sup> See for example National Employers Organisation/Provincial Employers Organisations (2003) National Recruitment and Retention Survey. EO; London; ALG/LB Wandsworth (2001) Pay and Benefits survey 2001. ALG: London; ALG Transport and Environment Committee (2001) Retention and Recruitment of Planning Staff 14 December.
- <sup>43</sup> LGA (2003) op cit
- <sup>44</sup> ALG/LB Wandsworth (2001) Pay and Benefits survey 2001. ALG: London
- <sup>45</sup> ALG Transport and Environment Committee (2001) Retention and Recruitment of Planning Staff 14 December.
- <sup>46</sup> ALG/LB Wandsworth (2002) Pay and Benefits survey 2001. ALG: London
- <sup>47</sup> ALG/LB Wandsworth (2004) Pay and Benefits survey 2003. ALG: London
- <sup>48</sup> ALG (2002) ALG Employee Turnover Survey 2001/02. ALG; London; ALG (2001) ALG Employee Turnover Survey 2000/01. ALG; London
- <sup>49</sup> Chapman, R. (2001) *Recruitment and Retention of Planning Staff: Association of London Government Circular TEC01/46*.
- <sup>50</sup> LGA (2003) op cit
- <sup>51</sup> Audit Commission (2002) Recruitment and Retention. Audit Commission: London
- <sup>52</sup> RTPI (2003) op cit
- <sup>53</sup> Mawson, J. & Pendlebury, J. (2003) op cit
- <sup>54</sup> Data examined during preparation of a report for PINS - Edmundson, T. & Simpson, I. (2003) *BME Representation in Planning*. Bristol: PINS
- <sup>55</sup> Baker, C. (2003) Schools report student recruitment successes *Planning* 29 August <http://www.planningresource.co.uk/pp/news/index.cfm?fuseaction=FullDetails&articleUID=33476785-71f7-44ad-9073-47e0f8e21f62>
- <sup>56</sup> Dewar, D. (2001) The image needs polishing *Planning* 19 October p14
- <sup>57</sup>; Edmundson, T. (2003) Unpublished surveys of MA Town Planning students at the University of Westminster.
- <sup>58</sup> PINS (2003) unpublished survey of students at Student Planners Conference, Birmingham.
- <sup>59</sup> Vandermeer, K. (2003) Survey undertaken for London First and the Non-violence Foundation
- <sup>60</sup> Edmundson, T. (2002) Unpublished survey of VI Form students at St. Francis Xavier College, Clapham; .
- <sup>61</sup> Dhillon, M.K. (2003) Planners: A Dying Breed? Planners: The Extinction of a Profession. Unpublished MSc Dissertation, University College London

- <sup>62</sup> Edmundson, T. (2003) op cit
- <sup>63</sup> Anon (2001) Fall in first-degree trainers The Times Higher 9 November p.2
- <sup>64</sup> Edmundson, T. (2001) Survey of University of Westminster part-time postgraduate students. unpublished
- <sup>65</sup> Hague, C. (2000) Vision for Planning Education, a paper for CHOPS/RTPI Meeting 3 October
- <sup>66</sup> Ashthana, A. (2004) Move over Becks – King is kids' hero. *The Observer*. Feb 29
- <sup>67</sup> LGA (2001) Working in the Public Sector – A Survey of Young People London: LGA
- <sup>68</sup> Arup Economics & Planning with the Bailey Consultancy (2002) op cit
- <sup>69</sup> Connor H, Burton R, Pearson R, Pollard E, Regan J (1999) *Making the Right Choice: How Students Choose Universities and Colleges*. London: CVCP/Universities UK.
- <sup>70</sup> Connor H *et al* (1999) *ibid*
- <sup>71</sup> Callender, C. & Kemp, M. (2002) **Students studying in London** An analysis of data from the student income and expenditure survey 1998/99 London: Mayor of London
- <sup>72</sup> Callender, C. & Kemp, M. (2002) **Students studying in London** An analysis of data from the student income and expenditure survey 1998/99 London: Mayor of London
- <sup>73</sup> Goddard, A. (2004) Students shun pricey London THES 12 March reporting the findings of an imminent GLA research report by Callender, C.
- <sup>74</sup> Callender, C. & Kemp, M. (2002) **Students studying in London** An analysis of data from the student income and expenditure survey 1998/99 London: Mayor of London
- <sup>75</sup> Mawson, J. & Pendlebury, J. (2003) op cit
- <sup>76</sup> Arup Economics & Planning with the Bailey Consultancy (2002) op cit
- <sup>77</sup> The Solutions Consultancy (2003) Graduates and the Public Sector Bernard Hodes Group reported in Vernalls (2003) Towards a Recruitment and Retention Strategy for London. ALG Leaders' Committee 9 September Item 9
- <sup>78</sup> Niven, R. (2004) Bridging a professional gap. *Planning* 20 February p.20
- <sup>79</sup> UCAS (2003) Data supplied to the author for PINS funded research project
- <sup>80</sup> Tysome, T. (2004) Graduate pay is on the up. *Times Educational Supplement*. 30 January
- <sup>81</sup> ALG/LB Wandsworth (2004) Pay and Benefits survey 2003. ALG: London
- <sup>82</sup> Callender, C. & Kemp, M. (2002) **Students studying in London** An analysis of data from the student income and expenditure survey 1998/99 London: Mayor of London
- <sup>83</sup> Shaw, T., Pendlebury, J. and Mawson, J. (2003) The Supply and Demand for Qualified Town Planners. London: RTPI
- <sup>84</sup> Mawson, J. & Pendlebury, J. (2003) op cit
- <sup>85</sup> Claydon, J. *et al* (2001) op cit
- <sup>86</sup> Tysome, T. (2004) Graduate pay is on the up. *Times Educational Supplement*. 30 January
- <sup>87</sup> Durning, B. & Glasson, J. (2004) Skills Base in the Planning System. Volume 1 Literature Review. Oxford: Oxford Brookes University.
- <sup>88</sup> Arup Economics & Planning with the Bailey Consultancy (2002) op cit
- <sup>89</sup> Audit Commission (2002) Recruitment and retention; A public sector workforce for the twenty-first century. London: Audit Commission.
- <sup>90</sup> RTPI (2001) Members Survey 2001: "How can the RTPI deliver its vision for planning?" commentary on the findings of research undertaken by Priority Research Ltd.  
<http://www.rtpi.org.uk/resources/publications/survey2001/commentary.html>
- <sup>91</sup> Informal conversations with Chief Officers from Essex and London.
- <sup>92</sup> Arup (2002) op cit
- <sup>93</sup> ALG (2001) Responses to Circular to Borough Planning Officers October 12 & Edmundson, T. (2001) Informal telephone interviews with officers in 10 London Boroughs
- <sup>94</sup> Edmundson, T. (2003) Survey of recruitment problems and the use of employment agency staff in London (ongoing)
- <sup>95</sup> ALG (2001) Responses to Circular to Borough Planning Officers October 12
- <sup>96</sup> Watson, J. (2001) op cit
- <sup>97</sup> Audit Commission (2001) Specification for a Project on recruitment and retention into local public services.
- <sup>98</sup> Watson, J. (2001) Letter dated 12 November (in response to Recruitment and Retention of Planning Staff: Association of London Government Circular TEC01/46)
- <sup>99</sup> Office of the Deputy Prime Minister/Employers' Organisation (2003) Pay and Workforce Strategy for Local Government. Version 1 – September 2003 accessed via the World Wide Web at [http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm\\_localgov/documents/page/odpm\\_locgov\\_025628.hcsp](http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_localgov/documents/page/odpm_locgov_025628.hcsp) on 29 March 2004

- 
- <sup>100</sup> Arup (2002) op cit
- <sup>101</sup> Mawson, J. & Pendlebury, J. (2003) op cit
- <sup>102</sup> Only 1.7% of RTPI members are from BME communities, compared with 8.9% of the population. The profession is not representative of the communities it serves. (Edmundson, T. & Simpson, I. (2003) *BME Representation in Planning*. Bristol: PINS) Nor are several of the other core professions.
- <sup>103</sup> Edmundson, T. (2004) unpublished results of a survey of part-time postgraduate students at the University of Westminster
- <sup>104</sup> RTPI (2003) Unpublished Planning Schools Returns.
- <sup>105</sup> See for example UNITE/MORI, (2002), *The Definitive Study of the Student Experience*, UNITE/MORI, <http://www.unite-group.co.uk/scripts/site/studentlivingreport.htm>; Tagney, S. (2002) *Students' Part Time Work Patterns And The Effects On Course Work And Skills Development* [http://www.uwic.ac.uk/uwicnet/studserv/U\\_UWIC/report\\_on\\_survey.htm](http://www.uwic.ac.uk/uwicnet/studserv/U_UWIC/report_on_survey.htm); Metcalf, H (2001), *Increasing inequality in higher education: the role of term-time working*, National Institute of Economic and Social Research, <http://www.niesr.ac.uk>
- <sup>106</sup> Ward, W. (2004) Working during term time can lower degree result. *Guardian* February 26 reporting a study by the Institute for Employment Studies, on behalf of the DfES. Accessed via the World Wide Web at <http://education.guardian.co.uk/print/0,3858,4866940-111226,00.html> on 1 March 2004
- <sup>107</sup> Office of the Deputy Prime Minister/Employers' Organisation (2003) *Pay and Workforce Strategy for Local Government*. Version 1 – September 2003 accessed via the World Wide Web at [http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm\\_localgov/documents/page/odpm\\_localgov\\_025628.hcsp](http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_localgov/documents/page/odpm_localgov_025628.hcsp) on 29 March 2004
- <sup>108</sup> Office of the Deputy Prime Minister/Employers' Organisation (2003) *Pay and Workforce Strategy for Local Government*. Version 1 – September 2003 accessed via the World Wide Web at [http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm\\_localgov/documents/page/odpm\\_localgov\\_025628.hcsp](http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_localgov/documents/page/odpm_localgov_025628.hcsp) on 29 March 2004
- <sup>109</sup> Edmundson, T. (forthcoming) *The potential role of planning technicians and planning support staff in enhancing service delivery in a reformed statutory planning system*. London: ODPM
- <sup>110</sup> *ibid*
- <sup>111</sup> Edmundson, T. (forthcoming) op cit
- <sup>112</sup> MORI (2003) *PARSOL Survey of Planning and Regulatory Authorities*. Draft Report <http://www.parsol.gov.uk/documents/MORIBaselineSurveyReport.pdf>
- <sup>113</sup> Edmundson, T. (forthcoming) *The potential role of planning technicians and planning support staff in enhancing service delivery in a reformed statutory planning system*. London: ODPM
- <sup>114</sup> Connor H, Burton R, Pearson R, Pollard E, Regan J (1999) *Making the Right Choice: How Students Choose Universities and Colleges*. London: CVCP/Universities UK.
- <sup>115</sup> EO & Provincial Employers Organisations (2001) *Local Government Recruitment and Retention Survey*.
- <sup>116</sup> Stevens, J., Brown, J., Lee, C. & MORI (2004) *The Second Work-Life Balance Study: Results from the Employers Study*. Employment Relations Research Series No.27. dti: London accessed from the World Wide Web at <http://www.dti.gov.uk/er/emar/errs27.pdf> on 1 April 2004
- <sup>117</sup> Dex, S., & Smith, C. (2002), *The Nature and Pattern of Family-Friendly Employment Policies in Britain*, Bristol: The Policy Press. Dex, S. (2003), *Families and Work in the Twenty-First Century*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Referred to in Stevens, J et al (2004) op cit
- <sup>118</sup> Woodland, S., Simmonds, N., Thornby, M., Fitzgerald, R., McGee, A. & MORI (2003) *The Second Work-Life Balance Study: Results from the Employers Study*. Employment Relations Research Series No.22. dti: London accessed from the World Wide Web at <http://www.dti.gov.uk/er/emar/errs22MainReport.pdf> on 20 March 2004
- <sup>119</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>120</sup> Key Worker Living Website <http://www.keyworkerliving.co.uk/news/> accessed on 2 April 2004
- <sup>121</sup> Macklin, G. (2004) *Key Worker Housing ALG Housing Steering Group Item 6 February 27* [http://www.alg.gov.uk/upload/public/Files/1/Key\\_Workers\\_Housing\\_Steering\\_Gp\\_Feb\\_04.doc](http://www.alg.gov.uk/upload/public/Files/1/Key_Workers_Housing_Steering_Gp_Feb_04.doc)
- <sup>122</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>123</sup> Mawson, J. & Pendlebury, J. (2003) op cit
- <sup>124</sup> *ibid*
- <sup>125</sup> Catran, M. (2000) *Careers Activities- A Three to Five Year Strategy (Draft)* London: RTPI
- <sup>126</sup> Edmundson, T. (2004) unpublished results of a survey of part-time postgraduate students at the University of Westminster

- <sup>127</sup> Curtis, P. (2004) Race is on as universities launch bursary scheme. London: The Guardian Jan 28 accessed from the world wide web at <http://education.guardian.co.uk/print/0,3858,4846667-108229,00.html> on 29 January 2004
- <sup>128</sup> Woodward, W. (2004) Plan to waive fee for maths degree. *Guardian* 24 February 2004
- <sup>129</sup> Sanders, C. (2004) NHS deal set to ban fees for nurses. *Times Educational Supplement*. 30 January
- <sup>130</sup> Teacher Training Agency (2004) Funding while training. London: DfES Accessed from the World Wide Web at [http://www.useyourheadteach.gov.uk/training/about\\_teacher\\_training/funding\\_while\\_training.html](http://www.useyourheadteach.gov.uk/training/about_teacher_training/funding_while_training.html) on 31 March 2004
- <sup>131</sup> Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2004) Overview of CIPD Surveys 2003-04 accessed via the World Wide Web at <http://www.cipd.co.uk/NR/rdonlyres/DB538729-4075-40E8-8A0B-AE2EE851B898/0/surveyofsurveys.pdf> on 14 April 2004
- <sup>132</sup> Ibid
- <sup>133</sup> Office of the Deputy Prime Minister/Employers Organisation (2003) Pay and Workforce Strategy for Local Government. Version 1 – September 2003 accessed via the World Wide Web at [http://www.lg-employers.gov.uk/documents/pay\\_and\\_workforce/pw\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.lg-employers.gov.uk/documents/pay_and_workforce/pw_strategy.pdf) on 23 March 2004
- <sup>134</sup> Ibid
- <sup>135</sup> Ibid
- <sup>136</sup> Ibid
- <sup>137</sup> Ibid
- <sup>138</sup> Vernalls, J. (2003) Towards a Recruitment and Retention Strategy for London. Leaders' Committee Item 9 September 9
- <sup>139</sup> Richards, M. (2002) Quantifying the Need for Transport Planners – Report on Initial and Planned Surveys. Transport Planning Skills Initiative: .
- <sup>140</sup> Transport Planning Skills Initiative (2003) The Transport Planning Skills Initiative: progress and achievements April 2002 – November 2003. London: TPSI
- <sup>141</sup> Ibid
- <sup>142</sup> Ibid
- <sup>143</sup> Ibid
- <sup>144</sup> CIEH (2001) Shortage of EHOs will threaten public health. CIEH Press Release April 23. Accessed via the World Wide Web at <http://www.cieh.org/news/press/cpr2001/cpr2001012.htm> on 5 March 2002
- <sup>145</sup> Environmental Health News (2002) CIEH drive to lure students. EHN January 25. Accessed via the World Wide Web at <http://www.ehn-online.com/cgi-bin/news/news1/EpEEAyVFekTAYPuGEQ.html> on 5 March 2002
- <sup>146</sup> Employers Organisation/Society of Environmental Health Officers (2002) Environmental Health Workforce Survey 2002. London: Employers Organisation
- <sup>147</sup> LGA/LACORS (2004) 'Who Cares, Wins: A Survey of the Importance of Regulatory Services in Local Government' accessed via the world wide web at [http://www.lacots.com/pages/trade/PressRelease.asp?R\\_ID=78](http://www.lacots.com/pages/trade/PressRelease.asp?R_ID=78) on 14 April 2004
- <sup>148</sup> LGA/LACORS (2004) 'Who Cares, Wins: A Survey of the Importance of Regulatory Services in Local Government' accessed via the world wide web at [http://www.lacots.com/pages/trade/PressRelease.asp?R\\_ID=78](http://www.lacots.com/pages/trade/PressRelease.asp?R_ID=78) on 14 April 2004
- <sup>149</sup> Employers' Organisation for local government (2004) Public protection workforce initiatives. Accessed via the World Wide Web at <http://www.lg-employers.gov.uk/recruit/initiatives/index.html> on 14 April 2004
- <sup>150</sup> Dowling, S. (2003) Investing in Environmental Health Practitioners; A Paper to the Environmental Health Conference, Belfast, Waterfront Hall, September 24 accessed via the World Wide Web at <http://www.cieh.org/events/conference2003/pdf/StephenDowling.pdf> on 14 April 2004
- <sup>151</sup> South Norfolk District Council Food Control Manager (2003) Raising the Profile of Regulatory Services. Cabinet Meeting Item 10 September 15. Accessed via the World Wide Web at [http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/south-norfolk/council.nsf/bfa5d133c51e615480256a1c0059f20c/a32e30581731624380256d9d0047fa9a/\\$FILE/Agenda%20item%2010%2015-09-03.pdf](http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/south-norfolk/council.nsf/bfa5d133c51e615480256a1c0059f20c/a32e30581731624380256d9d0047fa9a/$FILE/Agenda%20item%2010%2015-09-03.pdf) on 14 April 2004
- <sup>152</sup> Smithers, R. (2000) Schools hit by teacher recruitment crisis. The Guardian Wednesday August 30, accessed from the World Wide Web at <http://education.guardian.co.uk/print/0%2C3858%2C4056737-48726%2C00.html>

---

on 14 April 2004

<sup>153</sup> Teacher Training Agency (2004) Returning to teach accessed via the World Wide Web at [http://www.useyourheadteach.gov.uk/returning\\_to\\_teach/index.html](http://www.useyourheadteach.gov.uk/returning_to_teach/index.html) on 14 April 2004.

<sup>154</sup> DfES (2003) More training places recognise teacher recruitment success. DfES Press Notice accessed via the World Wide Web at [http://www.dfes.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn\\_id=2003\\_0259](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2003_0259) on 14 April 2004

<sup>155</sup> Teacher Recruitment and Retention Unit (2004) Newsletter March 2004 accessed via the World Wide Web at [http://www.go-london.gov.uk/education/downloads/trru\\_newsletter\\_march2004.pdf](http://www.go-london.gov.uk/education/downloads/trru_newsletter_march2004.pdf) on 14 April 2004

<sup>156</sup> DfES (2004) Clarke congratulates Teacher Training Agency and announces enhanced role. DfES Press Notice March 29. accessed via the World Wide Web at [http://www.dfes.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn\\_id+2004\\_0046](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id+2004_0046)

<sup>157</sup> Ibid

<sup>158</sup> Robinson and Smithers (2001) Teachers leaving. Centre for Education and Employment Research

<sup>159</sup> Griffiths, M. (2003) Recruitment and Retention. Report to ALG Education Panel Item no.7 12 February.

<sup>160</sup> ALG (2003) Making the education connections. London Bulletin: Issue 21 January/February 2003 accessed via the World Wide Web at <http://www.alg.gov.uk/doc.asp?doc=8702> on 14 April

<sup>161</sup> Griffiths, M. (2003) Teacher Recruitment and Retention. Education Steering Group Item 7, October 13

<sup>162</sup> Vernalls, J. (2003) op cit

---

#### **Association of London Government**

Contact: Emille van Heyningen  
59 ½ Southwark Street  
London SE1 0AL  
Email: [emille.vanheyningen@alg.gov.uk](mailto:emille.vanheyningen@alg.gov.uk)  
Tel: 020 7934 9649  
[www.alg.gov.uk](http://www.alg.gov.uk)

#### **Association of London Borough Planning Officers**

Contact: Steve Clark  
Head of Planning & Public Protection  
London Borough of Merton  
Merton Civic Centre  
London Road  
Morden  
Surrey SM4 5DX  
Tel: 020 8545 3052  
[www.merton.gov.uk](http://www.merton.gov.uk)

#### **Royal Town Planning Institute- London Branch**

Contact: Roger Chapman  
PO Box 669  
Uxbridge UB10 9NN  
Tel: 01895- 255774  
Email: [londonbranch@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:londonbranch@rtpi.org.uk)  
[www.rtpi.org.uk](http://www.rtpi.org.uk)

#### **Tim Edmundson Planning Research**

Contact: Tim Edmundson  
15 Nimrod Road, London SW16 6SZ  
Tel: 020 8769 4467  
Email: [tim.edmundson@btinternet.com](mailto:tim.edmundson@btinternet.com)

Association of London Government  
59<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> Southwark Street  
London SE1 0AL  
T: 020 7934 9999  
F: 020 7934 9991  
[info@alg.gov.uk](mailto:info@alg.gov.uk)  
[www.alg.gov.uk](http://www.alg.gov.uk)

ISBN: 1 85494 140 2  
Price £20