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UK CLIMATE CHANGE COALITION WINS PLANNING AWARD

The UK Planning and Climate Change Coalition,^[1] representing a cross-sector coalition of over 40 organisations – including leading planners, local authorities, private developers and environmental organisations – has won a prestigious RTPI (Royal Town Planning Institute) award^[2] for its contribution to planning. The Coalition has been supported by the European GRaBS (Green and Blue Space Adaptation in Urban Areas)^[3] project through its lead partner, the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA).^[4]

Speaking on behalf of the coalition, Dr Hugh Ellis, TCPA Chief Planner working for the GRaBS project said:

“At its heart, the GRaBS project is all about exchanging knowledge and promoting best practice in climate change adaptation. Therefore we are delighted to have won this planning award which recognises not just the hard work put in by the coalition partners, but shows how the wider planning community can come together in a cooperative and open way to tackle challenging policy issues and reach consensus on vital areas to the future of our communities.”

“With the radical devolution of planning powers to the local level in England, councils and communities will have both the responsibility and the opportunity to deal with climate change and in particular how we adapt our urban environments to cope with extreme weather. The Planning and Climate Change coalition’s guide shows how local communities can take action by encouraging community-based development and active participation.”

The coalition, which has been brought together by the TCPA and Friends of the Earth and has made detailed suggestions for improving the English planning process by making it fairer and ensuring that it plays its part in slashing carbon emissions and meeting the targets set out in the Climate Change Act.

The coalition also launched in November 2010, ‘*Planning and Climate Change Guide: guidance and model policies for local authorities*’.^[5] This guide is designed primarily for local authorities and the forthcoming Local Enterprise Partnerships who want to both tackle climate change and reap the benefits that renewable energy and effective adaptation can bring.

The GRaBS project has 14 partners across 8 European Union member states exchanging experience, knowledge and assistance on delivering adaptation through the use of green and blue infrastructure. The project kicked off in September 2008, recognising that adaptation was an integral part of the sustainable development agenda, and its outputs have been central to developing an understanding of the issues. See www.grabs-eu.org for further information about the project, including access to the online adaptation database and expert papers, which has been co-financed by the European Union Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and made possible by the INTERREG IVC Programme.^[6]

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Notes to Editors

1. The cross sector **Planning and Climate Change Coalition**, a joint initiative between the TCPA and Friends of the Earth, was formed in July 2009 and aims:
 - To make recommendations for new strategic planning guidance on climate change in England, building on the policy outlined in *Consultation on a Planning Policy Statement: Planning for a Low Carbon Future in a Changing Climate* (March 2010), which brought together and updated PPS1 (planning and climate) and PPS22 (renewable energy).
 - To build consensus amongst a wide range of stakeholders on the benefits of new guidance
 - To work with Government to ensure the fastest possible implementation of the new guidance
2. Please visit the RTPI website for more detail on their awards: http://www.rtpi.org.uk/events_awards_and_networking/awards/
3. **History of the GRaBS project proposal** - Working with the two initial partners in the early part of 2007, the TCPA developed an outline GRaBS project proposal, which was presented to UK local and regional government in order to gauge interest in and relevance of both the project idea and the proposed European wide exchange of experience and knowledge. The TCPA decided to offer to take on the Lead Partner role for the new project and together with the **University of Manchester**, the **City District Geuzenveld Sloterveer** (Amsterdam), the **London Borough of Sutton** and **Southampton City Council** began the process of extended European partner search. The aim was to find partners with a range of interests, cultures, experiences and needs, located in a range of climate zones. Towards the end of 2007 the **Province of Genova, Etnambiente**, the **University of Catania** (Italy), the **City of Malmo** (Sweden), the **Municipality of Kalamaria** (Greece), the **Regional Environment Centre for Eastern Europe** (Slovakia), the **Northwest Regional Development Agency** (NWRDA), the **Region of Styria** (Austria) and **CORPI** (Lithuania) joined the project as partners.
4. The **Town and Country Planning Association** (TCPA) is an independent campaigning charity calling for more integrated planning based on the principles of accessibility, sustainability, diversity, and community cohesion. The TCPA puts social justice and the environment at the heart of the debate about planning policy, housing and energy supply. We inspire government, industry and

campaigners to take a fresh perspective on major issues including climate change and regeneration. www.tcpa.org.uk

5. **The Planning and Climate Change Guide** is available to download from the TCPA website here: <http://www.tcpa.org.uk/pages/planning-for-climate-change-guide.html>
6. **INTERREG IVC Programme** – the INTERREG IVC Programme is financed through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), part of the European Territorial Cooperation Objective of the Structural Fund policies for the period 2007-2013. It aims, by means of interregional cooperation, to improve the effectiveness of regional development policies and contribute to economic modernisation and increased competitiveness of Europe.