
Town & Country Planning **Editorial Advisory Panel**

Terms of Reference September 2024

1 About the TCPA

The TCPA's vision is for homes, places and communities in which everyone can thrive. Our mission is to challenge, inspire and support people to create healthy, sustainable and resilient places that are fair for everyone. We do this by shaping policy and practice internationally, nationally, locally and through working with communities. The TCPA is a charity that works across the UK and beyond.

2 The relationship between *Town & Country Planning* and the TCPA

Publication of *Town & Country Planning* (known within the TCPA as 'the journal') supports the TCPA's mission. The views expressed in the journal do not necessarily reflect the policies of the TCPA: it has a degree of editorial independence. In line with our mission, the journal should be 'challenging and inspiring' and it should provide insight and information that 'supports people to create healthy, sustainable and resilient places that are fair for everyone'. In line with the TCPA's values, it should be: inclusive, collaborative, practical, creative and bold.

3 About *Town & Country Planning*

The journal has been published, in a range of forms, for more than 100 years. Older issues are available free of charge on the TCPA's website, here: [Town & Country Planning Journals - Town & Country Planning Association \(tcpa.org.uk\)](http://www.tcpa.org.uk). An archive of more recent issues is available on the members-only section of the TCPA's website, here: [Journal - Town and Country Planning Association \(tcpa.org.uk\)](http://www.tcpa.org.uk) The journal is sent to all TCPA members and is the most tangible membership benefit. (The default for members, other than those with a student membership, is that they receive a hard copy.) It is also available by subscription and many universities and other institutions, in the UK and around the world, subscribe to it. It is currently published six times a year.

In terms of tone and content, the journal is unusual in that it is pitched somewhere between an academic journal and a magazine. The TCPA's board of trustees is keen to widen the readership by making it more accessible to a broader audience. This might be achieved by commissioning more diverse types of article, eg photo essays, creative responses etc, as well as a wider range of contributors. Topics such as climate change and poverty should be tackled from a wide range of perspectives.

However, the board also recognises that many readers value the journal for its in-depth policy analysis and research-informed articles. So, a balance needs to be struck to ensure that as a wider range of types of article is commissioned, the journal does not completely lose some of its more technical and analytical content.

The journal should appeal to range of people with an interest in the built environment including, but not limited to, planners. It should appeal to students, community groups, and people such as those working in public health who are interested in the built environment but not built environment professionals.

Contributors are not paid, which, in practice, limits the pool of potential authors. It also requires considerable skill, diplomacy and persuasion on the part of the editor to ensure the quality of contributions remains high.

4 The role of the Editorial Advisory Panel

The role of the Editorial Advisory Panel (EAP) is to offer support and guidance to the editor. This could include:

- helping identify suitable themes for issues of the journal;
- identifying topics for articles;
- helping the editor find suitable authors and widening the pool of contributors;
- helping the editor broaden the appeal of the journal to new and more diverse readers;
- providing technical advice and checking complex text for accuracy;
- advising and supporting the editor to achieve the highest quality content;
- promoting the journal among colleagues and networks;
- providing feedback on the development of the journal.

5 Members of the panel

The panel will consist of around four to eight people, with a range of relevant interests and experience. Members should have an interest in the way the built and natural environment is planned, designed, maintained and used and should support the TCPA's vision and mission. Members should be sympathetic to the TPCA's roots in the Garden City movement and its understanding that the planning system has potential to transform places and people's lives for the better, and recognise that the 'art and science' of planning goes way beyond the formal planning system.

Collectively, the panel should include a range of interests, knowledge, skills and experience. It should reflect the fact that everyone lives somewhere – so the views and experiences of non-professionals can sometimes be just as insightful as those of built environment professionals. The panel will include at least one qualified planner, but also others such as architects, landscape architects, academics, journalists, community activists, and students. It should include people drawn from different age groups and cultures and locations in the UK. It is likely that at least one member of the panel will be drawn from the TCPA's Board of Trustees or Policy Council. A list of current members of both can be found [here](#).

Once appointed, members of the panel will be expected to join the TCPA if they have not already done so. The TCPA's staff with responsibility for the journal, and the publishers, are ex officio members.

6 Diversity, equity and inclusion

The TCPA has adopted an [Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Equity strategy](#). In line with this, the TCPA is keen that members of the panel represent a diverse cross-section of society. This will be reflected in the recruitment process for the panel (see below).

7 Chair of the panel

The chair will be appointed by the chief executive of the TCPA, in consultation with the editor. The chair will be the key point of contact between the editor and the panel as a whole, and will chair panel meetings. The TCPA's chief executive will meet the chair once a year to discuss the TCPA's strategy and projects to ensure the panel remains aware of, and broadly aligned with, its work. In addition to the panel objectives listed in paragraph 4, the chair will be responsible for ensuring that the panel as a whole meets these objectives.

8 Panel meetings

Panel meetings will be held virtually up to four times a year. Members will also be expected to be available occasionally by email or phone to help support the editor.

9 Remuneration

Unfortunately, the TCPA is not able to pay panel members for their time. It is not expected that panel members will incur any out-of-pocket expenses as meetings will be held online.

10 Term

Members of the panel will usually be expected to contribute to the panel for up to three years, but can apply for a second term, giving a maximum of six years. However, when the panel is first set up some members will be given shorter terms to avoid all members coming to the end of their terms simultaneously.

11 Appointment process

Recruitment to the panel will be advertised on the TCPA's website [here](#). In line with the TCPA's Equality, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity strategy, applicants will complete two short forms:

1. Name, address and contact details.
2. A short statement explaining why they want to join the panel and what relevant experience, and qualifications (if any), they will bring to it. Although the panel will include at least one planner, we aim to include a wide range of skills and experience and recognise that people may have relevant experience drawn from outside work.

Applications will be reviewed 'blind' so that the personal information will not be seen by whoever reviews the statements to avoid unconscious bias.

12 Review of these terms of reference

These terms of reference will be reviewed after two years (in 2026).
