

In many respects the Society has never been stronger. It is active in many areas of policy formation with the government departments and with the LGA and it has forged strong and significant ties with partner organisations such as the RTPI and PAS (IDeA). But it is not only in the field of strategic thinking that POS is hitting the mark; in its approach to delivery we are demonstrating that planners CAN do it, and do it well and in this the POS plays a key role in disseminating good practice and raising the bar above excellence.

And this is where the Society must continue to build its influence. As a Society all of us are trying to deliver services and outcomes in an increasingly complex planning system which sees it (quite rightly in my opinion) more and more closely integrated with a broader vision of economic and social wellbeing. We need to support the work of the Society's committees and Cabinet to ensure that the central role planning has in the corporate role of Councils is not only recognised, but suitably resourced. We will continue to press for the role of Chief Officer to be formally recognised as a position within Council's management teams, as the Council's role as community leader and place shaper becomes more established.

To really make a difference members need to recognise that as a Society we can only help each other by taking individual responsibility to support the work of the Society and it is for this reason that I see the growth and stability of a regional network to support the Society throughout the country as an objective for the next five years. All organisations are only as strong as their individual membership and it is important that we bring new people and renewed enthusiasm into the running of the Society. To be a leader, whatever your profession, you need to inspire and I know that from the senior planning officers who are involved in the Society there is tremendous confidence that as strong as we feel we have become, we can be stronger, we can be more influential and we can make a difference. This is because planning matters, and unlike Bob the Builder, who fixes things when they are broken, our task is to build sustainable communities; and we can deliver.

*Steve Quartermain, Senior Vice-President 2006/07.*