

# Who to speak to at your local authority

Putting the pieces together



# 1 Who to speak to at your local authority

Your local planning authority has a key role in neighbourhood planning. It has responsibilities that include making decisions on applications for a neighbourhood area to be [designated](#) all the way through to funding the [independent examination of a plan](#). The organisation, of which the planning team is a part, has a wide range of responsibilities with a number of other departments. These can be a good source of advice, information and support. For example 'other' departments may be able to provide you with valuable evidence to support the policies in your plan. Others such as the estates department may talk to you as a landowner.

Understanding what these 'other' departments are and what they are responsible for can be challenging, especially as structures can vary between different organisations. The structure of local government can also vary between areas and you may wish to use this website to help you [understand how your council works](#).

Your named contact within your local planning authority may be able to assist in identifying other relevant departments and may even be able to talk to them on your behalf.

To get you thinking about the wider organisation we have identified some of the other departments besides the planning department that you may wish to engage with. It is important to note that the list provided is by no means exhaustive.

It is recommended that you read [How to engage and work constructively with your local planning authority](#) alongside this template. This resource provides further information on how to engage constructively with your local planning authority and addresses the following:

- the role of the local planning authority in neighbourhood planning
- how to work constructively with your local planning authority

## Contact:

Planning Aid England  
Royal Town Planning Institute  
41 Botolph Lane  
London EC3R 8DL  
Tel. 020 3206 1880  
E-mail: [info@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk](mailto:info@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk)

For further information please visit [rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid](http://rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid)

Registered Charity Number: 262865  
Scottish Registered Charity Number: SC 037841



# LOCAL AUTHORITY FUNCTIONS

## HOUSING TEAM:

- Affordable housing waiting lists and data on housing need
- Social housing providers in your local area

## DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT OFFICERS:

- responsible for determining planning applications
- Evaluate the emerging policies and provide tips on how they can be strengthened
- Advise on how they would interpret the policies when making decisions on planning applications
- Suggest alternative wording to ensure it reflects your intent

## EDUCATION:

- Advice on future strategy and programme of works with regards to schools and education providers
- Advice on catchment areas and capacity of education facilities

## PUBLIC HEALTH:

- Advice on future strategy and programme of works with regards to health providers e.g. GPs and hospitals
- Advice on catchment areas and capacity of existing health facilities

## REGENERATION:

- Advice on potential areas of regeneration and development
- Advice on future regeneration initiatives and economic development projects

## PLANNING POLICY TEAM:

- responsible for producing the Local Plan
- Identify the strategic policies
- Sources of evidence and information
- Advice on the use of maps and provide blank maps for annotation
- Advice on whether the emerging neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions
- The local planning authority may also be a landowner

## DEMOCRATIC SERVICES:

- Provides details of Councillors in your area and a general steer on the advice and information that may be provided
- Advice on committee meeting dates

## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH:

- Promotion and protection of public health and the environment
- Information and advice on air quality, contamination, housing standards, noise pollution and water standards

## LEISURE AND PARKS:

- Future strategy and programme of works with regards to play areas, open space, leisure and recreation
- Information on provision within the area

## ESTATES DEPARTMENT:

- Information on sites available for development
- Information and contact details of landowners and developers
- The local planning authority may also be a landowner

## ELECTORAL TEAM:

- Arrange the neighbourhood planning referendum

## HIGHWAYS:

- Future strategy and programme of works with regards to walking and cycling routes
- Traffic management schemes and congestion hotspots.
- Car park standards

## BIODIVERSITY AND ECOLOGY:

- Advice on areas of ecological interest and particular species or habitats of importance

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICERS:

- Techniques for engaging with communities and residents
- Details of community groups and hard to reach groups