



Planning Aid **Wales**
Cymorth Cynllunio **Cymru**

Annual Report 2018/19

We support

community engagement

in planning in Wales

www.planningaidwales.org.uk

Charity Number 1000115

Company Number 2526875 (Wales)



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Cymorth Cynllunio **Cymru**

About Planning Aid Wales

Planning Aid Wales promotes and facilitates meaningful community engagement in the planning process in Wales.

Meaningful community engagement can:

Give people a voice and build their skills, confidence and capacity to influence decisions affecting their local area.

Improve the quality, appropriateness and relevance of new development.

Increase pride in and sense of ownership of the built environment.

Foster collaboration between developers, planners and communities, resulting in better schemes.

Improve the quality and relevance of planning policy by taking local knowledge into account.

Reduce conflict, speed up and reduce costs in the development management process.

As the community engagement organisation in planning, our role is to build understanding of the planning system, support better engagement in local planning and encourage collaboration between communities, planning authorities and developers.

By giving people a voice in the planning system, we help create a more equal Wales with more cohesive communities.

More information about our strategy is contained in our current Business Plan 2017-2020:

www.planningaidwales.org.uk/about-us-2/key-documents-and-policies/business-plans/

Planning Aid Wales a registered charity and company limited by guarantee. We are core funded by Welsh Government but retain a high degree of freedom to act independently on behalf of communities.

Registered charity 1000115. Company limited by guarantee 2526875 (Wales)



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Lywodraeth Cymru
Funded by
Welsh Government

Our Services



Our core-funded services include delivering planning training to a range of audiences, developing easy read planning guidance and a free planning advice Helpline.

We also undertake projects and commissions on behalf of Welsh Government, Local Planning Authorities and Community and Town Councils.



Training

Planning Aid Wales can deliver informative and engaging training courses for elected members, community and town councils, community groups and organisations across Wales. Topics include *An introduction to the planning system*, *Responding to planning applications & pre-application consultations* and *An introduction to Place Plans*.



Community Engagement Services

As an independent third party organisation, we have found time and again that communities are willing to engage with us, even where Local Planning Authorities have encountered barriers to engagement in the past. As part of our process, we encourage active collaboration between local planning authority staff and community groups, thereby building better relationships for future engagement.



Our community engagement services include community engagement strategy development, consensus building training workshops, seldom-heard groups engagement and Place Plan support, including training and Place Plan development.



Guidance Development

Planning Aid Wales has developed a number of 'easy-read' planning guidance documents on behalf of Welsh Government and Local Planning Authorities. Examples include *placeplans.org.uk* and *Flintshire LDP: Easy-read Strategic Options guide*.



282 trainees

received more than 2.5 hours detailed planning training at our Welsh Government funded events:

89 community councillors attended our annual programme of 8 planning courses across Wales.

122 community councillors and planners attended our annual programme of 4 network events.

71 community councillors attended 4 extra Welsh Government funded planning policy and development management courses



We helped

5,672



4,741 people

accessed our easy to read planning guidance and planning news updates:

3,356 unique visitors read the planning guidance pages on our website

631 unique visitors read the guidance on our Place Plans website

754 newsletter subscribers received 5 of our planning newsletters over the year

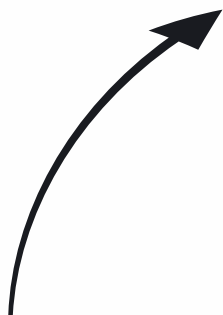




428 people

received training and engagement support from project commissions:

- 143** people attended 5 Place Plan engagement events commissioned by Newtown Town Council
- 112** people participated in LDP engagement and training workshops commissioned by 3 local planning authorities
- 60** representatives from a diverse range of faith groups participated in faith and planning dialogues delivered in partnership with Cardiff University and RTPi Cymru
- 47** community councillors participated in 5 workshops commissioned by North Monmouthshire Liaison Committee
- 35** people engaged in preparation of Gypsy and Traveller guidance commissioned by Welsh Government
- 31** community councillors attended in 2 bespoke training events commissioned by community councils



people

to engage with planning matters in Wales during 2018/19.



221 Helpline callers

received one to one telephone and email advice from staff and volunteers:

- 87** people received up to one hour of telephone advice
- 17** high eligibility individuals and groups received ongoing advice and support
- 58** hours of telephone advice provided by volunteers



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Some highlights from the past year

40 years of Planning Aid Wales

Planning Aid Wales reached its 40th anniversary in November. Founded in November 1978 by a group of committed volunteers and the Royal Town Planning Institute, over one hundred South Wales Planning Aid Service volunteers provided telephone advice to thousands of people worried about planning matters during its first decade.



Over the years, the organisation has broadened its services into preparing easy read guidance on the planning process, delivering training courses to community groups and Community and Town Councils as well as providing expert advice on community engagement to local planning authorities.

A celebration event to mark the 40th anniversary will be held in the Senedd in 2019.



Newtown Place Plan

Building on the success of our Place Plans guidance (see placeplans.org.uk), Planning Aid Wales (PAW) began supporting Newtown Town Council to develop its first Place Plan in November 2018.

Working in partnership with Place Studio, Planning Aid Wales facilitated a series of stakeholder and community engagement events in order to identify needs and provide a platform for evidence gathering. During the year, we engaged 143 people across a series of 5 engagement events.

Work will progress on the Place Plan throughout 2019.

For more information about our Place Plan support services, visit: www.planningaidwales.org.uk/our-services-2/place-plan-support/



Farming and the planning system

As part of our core funding, Planning Aid Wales delivers four 'network' events per year – these mini-conferences bring together representatives of local planning authorities, community and town councillors and developers to network and discuss topical planning issues. Topics this year included two Section 106 events, a Place Plan event and Farming and the Planning System event, which was held in Llandovery on 12 February 2019.



The farming event included contributions from the two national farming and rural organisations, NFU and CLA, which identified the changes and issues facing agriculture and how the planning system affects these. Other contributions included how the planning system is currently operating, presented by a planning consultant and a local planning authority. The event concluded with a presentation by the Small Farms and Gardens organisation which explained the needs and issues of small enterprises. The event was well received with 40 attending, comprising the 5 speakers, 32 delegates and 3 PAW representatives.

Faith and planning dialogues

60 representatives of a diverse range of faith groups participated in three 'Faith and Planning Dialogue' events as part of a project led by Cardiff University and supported by RTPI Cymru and Planning Aid Wales.

The events explored how planners and faith groups can engage with each other to ensure faith group needs are met, while maintaining consistency and quality in the application of, planning policy and principles.



Dr Richard Gale, organiser of the research said:

'I am very happy to be working with Planning Aid Wales and RTPI Cymru on these important issues. These two organisations have a wealth of expertise in assisting communities in their interactions with planning and being able to bring their perspectives into these Dialogues is proving hugely beneficial for all parties concerned, including faith groups.'

Volunteers

We rely on our network of around 30 volunteers. Volunteers help out with a wide range of activities, including providing advice to members of the public, delivering training and developing accessible guidance. More information on volunteering is here: www.planningaidwales.org.uk/volunteer

Management Board

For more information about the Management Board, visit our webpage here: www.planningaidwales.org.uk/our-people/management-board/

Financial information

Planning Aid Wales is core funded by Welsh Government. We also generate additional income through commissioned project activities.

Each year the Management Board reviews the financial position and sets an annual budget against its Medium Term Financial Strategy. Through this process, the Board aims in general to balance the books or, where necessary, to seek to achieve a small surplus to build up the charity's reserves for future investment and for mitigating against financial risk. Risk management and reserves policies are set out in the Director's Report which accompanies the final Accounts 2018/19:

www.planningaidwales.org.uk/about-us/key-documents-and-policies/

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