



Planning Aid Wales Business Plan 2009 to 2012

Including Year 1 Action Plan for April 2009 to March 2010

Working towards a fairer planning system

Registered Charity (no. 1000115)

Company Limited by Guarantee (no. 2526875 - Wales)

Supported by the Welsh Assembly Government
and Royal Town Planning Institute Cymru



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1. Planning Aid Wales Business Plan 2009 to 2012

1.1 Planning Aid Wales is an independent, charitable organisation helping individuals and communities across Wales to participate more effectively in the planning system. This Business Plan sets out a strategic framework for growth over the three year period April 2009 to March 2012.

1.2 In the course of our work to date we have identified a significant but unmet demand for more planning aid. Recently introduced planning reforms suggest a more strategic and proactive role for planning aid services. We aim to help meet this unmet demand and to respond to future challenges by building our organisational capacity. An Action Plan for the period April 2009 to March 2010 details the range of activities and outputs required over the coming twelve months to lay a solid foundation for sustainable organisational growth into the future. A Fundraising Strategy 2008-11 (set out in full in Annex 1) sets out how we aim to achieve the financial dimensions of our proposals.

1.3 The principle of planning aid continues to enjoy cross-party political support in Wales. All sectors of the planning profession recognise its fundamental importance in the context of increasing community participation. Planning Aid Wales currently receives funding from the Welsh Assembly Government and Royal Town Planning Institute Cymru to deliver its core services.

1.4 There is enormous scope for more community involvement in the planning system. However, we believe that many people do not have the necessary knowledge or resources to participate, or are simply unaware of the opportunities for more meaningful participation. Planning reforms introduced in Wales in 2005 offer significant opportunities for people to get involved in the early, strategic stages of plan-making. The general public needs to be made more aware of these new opportunities. Disadvantaged and marginalised groups need help to gain a voice in planning the future of their environments. Planning Aid Wales is uniquely placed to work with partner organisations to help make this happen.

1.5 This is the fifth revision of the business planning framework for Planning Aid Wales. The review process builds on the momentum achieved since a major review of planning aid provision in Wales was undertaken in 2003. The review resulted in an annual £100,000 core grant funding allocation to Planning Aid Wales from the Welsh Assembly Government. This has allowed us to improve the spread and quality of our casework service, build the volunteer network, deliver high quality planning training to a variety of audiences, and broaden the reach and impact of our outreach activities.

1.6 Preparation of this business plan has been informed by an Away Day for Planning Aid Wales Directors and staff, held in early February 2009. This considered Planning Aid Wales's future development with a particular focus on managing organisational risk, governance, strategy planning and prioritising key actions for the coming twelve month period.

2. Our vision, values and key aims

Our vision

2.1 Planning Aid Wales' vision is for the people of Wales to fully and effectively participate within a fair, transparent and responsive planning system.

Our values

2.2 Planning Aid Wales will develop its activities and work with partner organisations to realise this vision. In expressing our vision and in all the work we do to realise it, we are guided by the following core values:

- **Charitable:** We are a charitable, not-for-profit organisation.
- **Volunteering:** We use our network of professional, fully qualified planning volunteers to provide advice and support.
- **Free of charge:** We offer our information, advice and support services free of charge to eligible groups and individuals (Annex 3 explains our criteria for assessing eligibility).
- **Independent:** The information and advice we provide is impartial.
- **Improving understanding:** We work with people to develop the knowledge and skills they need to engage more effectively with the planning system.

Our key aims

2.3 We will work towards our vision for a fairer, more responsive and participatory planning system by:

- increasing awareness and understanding of the town and country planning system, particularly among disadvantaged and marginalised groups who would otherwise be denied equal access to the planning system. We can help to make their views heard in the planning process, and encourage decision makers to take them into account;
- ensuring that all the people of Wales have access to impartial information on land use planning issues;
- supporting individuals and community / voluntary groups with limited resources or who have difficulty in understanding the complexities of the planning system, and;
- identifying and removing barriers to the involvement and participation of people and groups in the Welsh planning system.

3. Core services and activities

3.1 To achieve our charitable aims, Planning Aid Wales currently provides a range of services and activities. These include:

- **Training**

Planning training specifically targeted to meet the needs of a range of audiences including Community and Town Councils, members of Community First Boards, community groups and the general public.

- **Advice, information and support**

Information, advice and support for eligible groups and individuals via a telephone / email Helpline service, and sometimes by referral to a qualified planning volunteer. Eligibility criteria (see Annex 3) ensure that our limited resources are directed to those people who most need them.

- **Publications**

A range of user-friendly guides and leaflets provide easily accessible information about the Welsh planning system and advice on how the public can get more effectively involved in planning issues.

- **Outreach work**

We work with target communities to build their capacity to participate in the planning system. We select target communities according to the degree to which we consider them to be prevented from effective involvement in planning issues due to discrimination, prejudice or disadvantage.

- **Developing policy**

We submit responses to national planning policy consultations, based on our experience of dealing with planning situations referred to us by members of the public. We also develop policy responses on behalf of specific target communities.

4. Strategic opportunities for Planning Aid Wales

A role in better plan-making

4.1 Each local planning authority in Wales needs to prepare a Local Development Plan (LDP) for its area. Under the reformed plan-making system, local communities and other stakeholder groups need to be involved from the very earliest stages of LDP preparation. The planning authority prepares a Community Involvement Scheme to explain how it will work to make it happen.

4.2 Planning Aid Wales is uniquely positioned to act as independent intermediary in this process – working with planning authorities and communities, we can deliver the knowledge, skills and encouragement necessary to generate meaningful community engagement during the early stages of LDP preparation.

Addressing social inclusion

4.3 For whatever reason, some communities have a difficult or remote relationship with the planning system. Other communities have very specific needs from the planning system which are not being fully met. Planning Aid Wales targets communities which traditionally have not participated in planning issues and we work with these communities to help them engage more effectively. We aim to improve understanding of the planning system by taking the perspective of particular target communities and preparing user-friendly, relevant guidance. We also respond to national policy consultations with the aim of advancing specific community interests.

Engaging with communities

4.4 We define good planning as planning which enjoys broad public support and confidence. But the energy of local communities needs to be harnessed to generate public support for planning, and public confidence is dependent on communities having a clear understanding of what the planning system is able to achieve. We are working to increase community engagement in local planning issues through a comprehensive training programme for Community and Town Councils. This is raising awareness of the new opportunities for local councils in early stages of LDP preparation. It also provides a range of tools, techniques and training materials which communities can use to engage more effectively in forward planning and development management.

Helping change the culture of planning

4.5 Planning aid has a fundamental role in delivering the aims of the new planning system. It also helps deliver wider reform agendas such as community engagement, social inclusion and revitalising local democracy. This role is being

acknowledged by government across the United Kingdom, with increased core funding allocations for planning aid services in both England and Scotland.

4.6 Planning reform has streamlined the forward planning process, aiming to increase public confidence in a more open, fair and accessible planning system. Reform gives people better opportunities to influence the early, strategic stages of the plan-making process, and also provides a clearer framework for understanding how planning applications are decided.

4.7 We believe that a shift in planning culture is needed before the aims of reform can be fully realised. Planning professionals in all sectors need to hone their public participation skills in order to work more closely with local communities and harness local energies. On the flip-side, community groups, organisations and individuals need to realise the benefits of getting involved in the early stages of forward planning.

4.8 Planning aid is helping to bring about a change of culture by:

- building the capacity of local communities to engage with the planning system through awareness-raising and training;
- supporting people and groups who cannot afford professional planning advice;
- undertaking outreach projects with 'hard-to-reach' groups to help them plan for the future of their areas;
- working through a network of qualified volunteer planners from the public and private sectors;
- working with planning authorities and developers to encourage more effective public engagement with development planning issues, and;
- informing the development of national planning policy by providing a community perspective.

Helping deliver wider public service reforms

4.9 Planning aid provides an important pathway for increasing public participation in local democracy. It supports broader government agendas aiming to empower local councils and communities.

4.10 With £100,000 annual core grant funding from the Welsh Assembly Government since 2004, Planning Aid Wales has been able to develop a range of quality services covering all of Wales. Over the previous twelve months, we have responded to over four hundred planning enquiries. We anticipate that as

our public profile grows, the numbers of people seeking assistance and support in the future will increase.

4.11 We deliver training for Community and Town Councils and community groups to increase their capacity to understand and influence planning decisions. We target our outreach activities on marginalised communities and deprived geographical areas, aiming to include people who might otherwise be passed by.

The case for more planning aid in Wales

4.12 Planning Aid Wales is currently a small organisation with considerable unrealised potential. We have built a motivated staff team and a respected Management Board. We have established a good reputation for quality work and demonstrated demand for our services. However, we see evidence daily of the demand for more planning aid.

4.13 Given the financial and staff resources currently available to us, we can continue to meet existing demand for our core advice and information services. However, demand for our planning training services is steadily increasing and we are unlikely to be able to continue meeting demand without compromising core advice and information services. There is also strong evidence of a substantial hidden demand for further planning aid services, much of it arising from people who simply do not know that we exist. All the trends indicate a continuing increase in demand for our services into the future.

4.14 Unless the process of building organisational capacity begins now, we believe that Planning Aid Wales in its current form is likely to struggle to continue satisfying the anticipated growth in demand for planning aid services. If this were to happen, it would significantly constrain the potential impacts of our valuable outreach, training and project development work.

4.15 With a relatively modest but sustained increase in core funding over the three year business plan period to 2012, we propose to extend significantly the reach and impact of our public engagement, planning training and community outreach activities. We intend to direct additional resources towards particular geographic areas (such as Communities First locations and areas where nationally significant infrastructure projects are identified in National Policy Statements), to helping meet the planning needs of marginalised target communities, and to providing a sustained, Wales-wide programme of public awareness raising and training.

5. Planning Aid Wales organisational structure

5.1 Planning Aid Wales is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee. This is reflected in our governance arrangements and organisational structure. The diagram on page 13 shows our existing organisational structure (shaded boxes) as well as proposals to grow the staff team over the three year business plan period (planned posts are unshaded).

5.2 Our services are delivered by a small team of paid staff overseen by a Management Board, working with a Wales-wide network of dedicated volunteer planners.

Management Board

5.3 Planning Aid Wales is governed by a Management Board made up of fifteen trustee directors. The Board meets formally four times each year and is accountable in charity and company law for making sure that we adhere to our charitable objectives and for the effective financial management of the organisation. Board directors represent a broad cross-section of planning and related interests and are drawn from a number of different sectors, including local government, consultancy, academia and affiliated planning and environmental organisations. One director is nominated by the Royal Town Planning Institute Cymru. Directors participate in committees and working groups.

5.4 Directors come from locations across Wales. While the majority of are currently based in South Wales, we are working to increase representation on the Board from other parts of Wales to reflect our Wales-wide remit.

Staff team

5.5 The Planning Aid Wales staff team is led by a Chief Executive who is responsible to the Management Board for sustaining and managing the organisation and its staff.

5.6 A Planner and Case Manager is responsible for managing the Helpline caseload, including referrals to volunteers, and for developing the Wales-wide volunteer network.

5.7 A Development Worker is employed on a part-time basis to develop our outreach work programme with local communities and marginalised groups. To increase the profile and impact of Planning Aid Wales' activities beyond South East Wales, where activity has tended to be focused in the past, the

Development Worker is based in North Wales and must be a fluent Welsh speaker.

5.8 The Chief Executive and other staff are supported by a part-time Administration and Finance Officer.

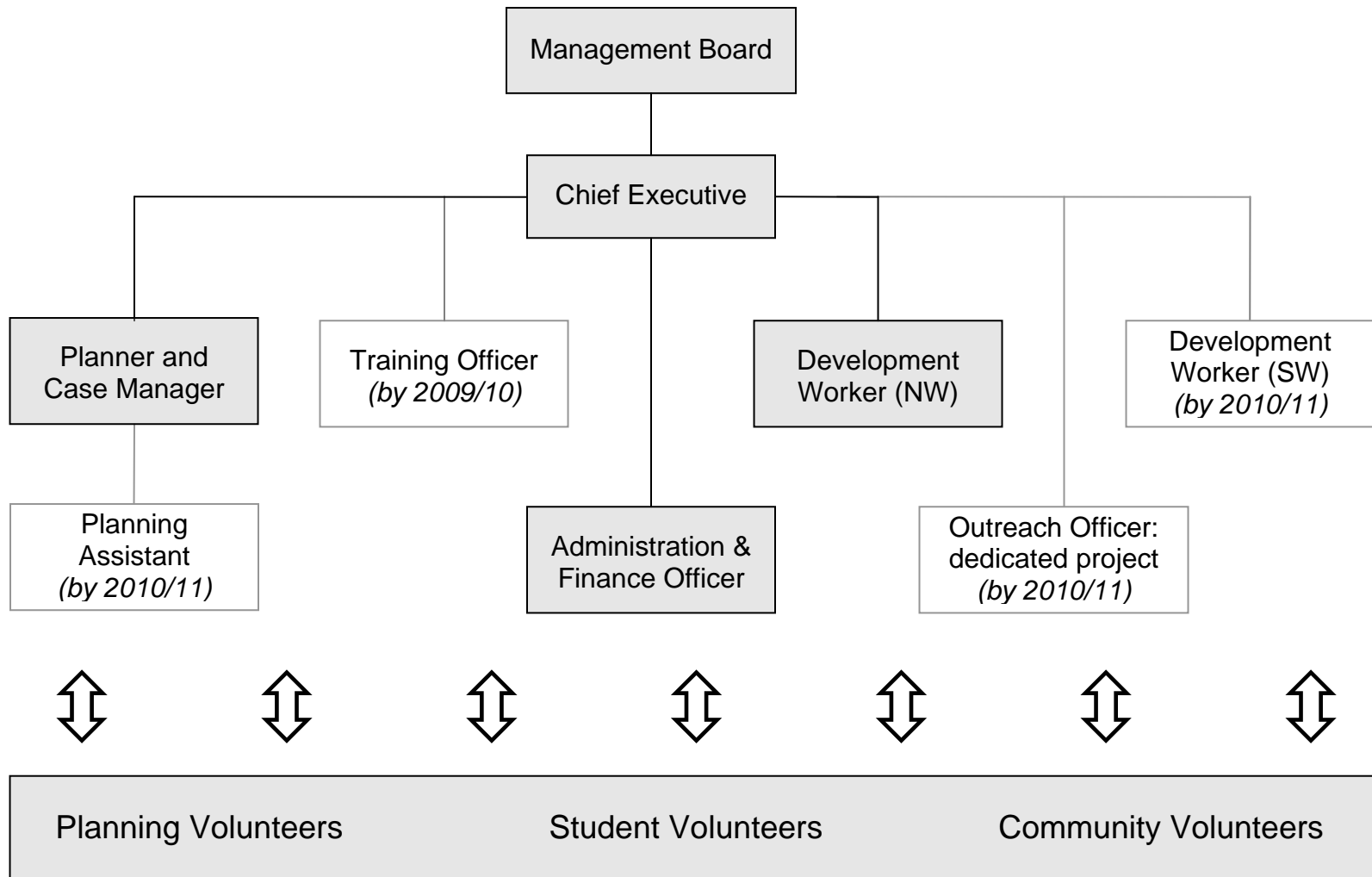
Volunteers

5.9 Casework referrals are undertaken by a Wales-wide network of volunteers, most of whom are experienced and qualified planners. Volunteers also assist across the range of our activities, including preparation of guidance publications, helping deliver training and assisting with commissioned project work. The volunteer network has grown considerably over recent years, and a new category of community volunteer has helped to bring in new people with community development and other relevant skills. The volunteer network currently consists of around ninety volunteers (representing a 100% increase over the previous two years), with the majority working in local government. We intend to further develop the network to draw in volunteers from other sectors (particularly private consultancy), to increase the range of skills available, and to achieve better geographical distribution and coverage, particularly in rural areas.

Building the staff team

5.10 We anticipate further development of our staff team structure over the business plan period. The envisaged 2012 staff team structure (illustrated on the following page) includes four new posts (shown unshaded). These are: a Training Officer; a South Wales Development Worker; a dedicated Outreach Project Officer; and a Planning Assistant. The financial resource implications of these additional posts are detailed in Annex 2 (see page 37).

Planning Aid Wales organisational structure, 2012



6. Current context and activities

6.1 Planning Aid Wales continues to receive core funding from the Welsh Assembly Government of £100,000 each year. We also receive £8,000 each year from Royal Town Planning Institute Cymru. This has allowed us to build our capacity as an organisation and to improve our services. We are now well-placed to consolidate our existing services to provide the solid foundation needed to develop into new, more proactive areas of activity.

6.2 The Board of fifteen directors is drawn from a balanced geographic representation from across Wales and provides a wide range of skills and experiences. A series of working groups, with membership made up of directors and staff, tap into the wealth of knowledge and skills offered by directors. The groups assist with strategic development across five broad topic areas (staffing and audit; policy and research; volunteer network development; fundraising; and marketing) They help ensure that commitments made in the annual Action Plan are implemented.

6.3 Our capacity to undertake proactive outreach work with marginalised communities is increasing, and we plan to develop new and innovate outreach activities over the business plan period.

6.4 Each year we receive hundreds of enquiries to our telephone Helpline service. While a significant proportion of the enquiry caseload is currently dealt with by Helpline staff, we have put in place new procedures to ensure a greater proportion of cases are referred on to volunteers. We have reviewed and developed our eligibility criteria to make sure we are meeting the needs of those people who most need our help. A referral strategy is in place, one aim of which is to increase the number and proportion of calls to the Helpline we receive from higher eligibility clients.

6.5 Our network of qualified and experienced planning volunteers is growing. We continue to provide useful training and networking opportunities for volunteers in locations across Wales via an annual volunteer training programme.

6.6 We are delivering a targeted planning training programme and preparing a supporting suite of distance learning materials for Community and Town Councils across Wales. To give an indication of demand for our training services, over the previous twelve months we have delivered forty separate training sessions, workshops or talks for a combined audience of more than six hundred people.

6.7 With grant funding from the Welsh Assembly Government, the Planning Aid website (www.planningaidwales.org.uk / www.cymorthcynlluniocymru.org.uk) has been hugely improved to improve public accessibility to information and advice about the planning system and related issues. For instance, the new site

gives people access to valuable information about forward planning in their local authority areas, creating better opportunities for genuine participation in plan-making. The website serves as a portal to the array of online planning information available, organising and simplifying to make the planning system accessible to all. The vast majority of our publications, guidance and training materials are available to download from the website at no cost.

6.8 We have published three revised guidance booklets to provide information and advice on key planning issues (*What to do when faced with a planning application; Planning enforcement; and Rights to light*). We are reviewing the range of our existing publications to ensure they remain relevant and useful.

6.9 We have been commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government to work with a range of project partners to prepare a user-friendly guidance booklet on Access Statements, which are now required to support the majority of planning applications. We aim to build on this work by initiating a partnership project with Disability Wales aiming to make the planning system more responsive to the needs of people with mobility and sensory impairments.

7. Strategic development to 2012

Information and advice services

7.1 This business plan period will see Planning Aid Wales continue to consolidate and improve the delivery of its casework, information and advice services. These are core activities for Planning Aid Wales, providing us with a unique role and perspective on the planning system in Wales. We plan to develop our casework and advice services in innovative ways to meet the varied needs of diverse communities. The Action Plan for the coming twelve months (see page 22) provides aims and targets for priority aspects of this work. It focuses particularly on strengthening referral procedures to allow the proportion of casework undertaken by volunteers to increase without any reduction in the quality of assistance provided.

Volunteer network development

7.2 Our casework services will be supported by training and networking activities designed to build a thriving volunteer network. We will continue to audit volunteer skills and to fill identified skills-gaps through targeted recruitment. We will improve the level of support provided to volunteers, including structured annual training programmes, introduction of a mentoring scheme to allow less experienced and unqualified volunteers to gain valuable casework experience, and continuation of regular email network bulletins.

Outreach work

7.3 We will continue to develop our outreach capabilities, aiming to engage with more of the marginalised communities and groups which traditionally have not been involved in planning issues. Given the huge scale of the task and our limited staff resource, we will work wherever possible with partner organisations and agencies to achieve mutual aims. We will build awareness of our services and encourage partnership-building through a quarterly update bulletin sent to a wide range of affiliated referral and partner organisations. Opportunities to attract project funding for targeted outreach work will be pursued.

Delivering planning training

7.4 We will capitalise on the training programme for Community and Town Councils as a means of building our capacity to deliver focused, relevant planning training to other groups and target communities. Examples of this happening include the training / capacity building programme for Community and

Town Councils undertaken for the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority in early 2008, and more recent work with Carmarthenshire County Council which raised the capacity of key stakeholders to engage in the early, strategy-setting stages of preparing a Local Development Plan for the county.

7.5 Opportunities to attract project funding to provide 'good practice' training to specific groups will be pursued. Particular emphasis will be given to delivering high quality training for our planning volunteers, planners working in local authorities, planning committee members, and local community and voluntary groups. We aim to appoint a Training Officer by mid-2009 to drive this ambitious programme.

Developing partnerships

7.6 We can achieve our strategic aims more effectively by working with other organisations and agencies. We will develop partnerships which are reciprocal, delivering on aims which are common to both organisations. Planning Aid Wales will offer the planning and community engagement dimensions to help a partner organisation achieve its aims, while the partner contributes ideas, project support, funding and / or facilities to assist us in progressing our strategic aims.

7.7 We identify a range of potential partners, operating at different levels of influence, across different geographical and subject areas, and offering a range of partnership benefits to Planning Aid Wales. We therefore find it useful to define our partners as being either 'strategic partners', 'programme partners', or 'project partners':

7.8 Our **strategic partners** include:

- Welsh Assembly Government
- Royal Town Planning Institute Cymru

7.9 Our **programme partners** include:

- Welsh Local Government Association
- Wales Council for Voluntary Action
- Community Housing Cymru
- Communities 1st

7.10 Our **project partners** include:

- Other UK Planning Aid services
- One Voice Wales
- Local planning authorities

- Design Commission for Wales
- Disability Wales
- Organisations supporting Gypsies and Travellers
- Environmental organisations, etc

Policy development and research

7.11 Planning Aid Wales has demonstrated its potential to engage creatively with the policy development process. We are uniquely positioned to draw together and submit comments on draft policy on behalf of the general public and specific groups. We aim to build our policy response and research capabilities over this business plan period. We will carefully select those activities which align with our strategic aims, but which will not overstretch our capacity to deliver. We will investigate opportunities to attract project funding for appropriate research and policy development work.

Governance

7.12 We will continue to expand the range of skills and experience offered by the Planning Aid Wales Management Board, looking particularly to attract new directors who can bring community, commercial, legal or fundraising skills. We will continue to strengthen our governance arrangements by developing our auditing and risk management frameworks.

Financial sustainability

7.13 A three year Fundraising Strategy for Planning Aid Wales provides the financial underpinning for business plan aspirations for organisational growth. The strategy is an integral element of this business plan and is contained in full as Annex 1.

7.14 In essence, the Fundraising Strategy has three key aims:

- To continue generating income from commissioned project work during business plan Year 1;
- To provide a financial framework for anticipated stepped core funding increases in business plan Years 2 and 3;
- To build a more sustainable funding mix.

8. Key business plan aims, 2009 to 2012

Information and advice services

- 8.1 Implement quality assurance, case management and user diversity systems to ensure that advice provided to clients is consistent, professional, timely and appropriate.
- 8.2 Monitor the eligibility of people and groups receiving advice.
- 8.3 Combine casework administration, referral and quality assurance systems within one Integrated Content Management Database.
- 8.4 Maintain the Planning Aid Wales website so that it continues to provide an easy-to-navigate entry portal to a comprehensive online compendium of accessible and relevant planning information, training materials and links.
- 8.5 Develop the range of Planning Aid Wales publications.

Volunteer network development

- 8.6 Annually audit the volunteer network to identify skills shortages, and recruit new volunteers from across the different sectors to provide the required skills.
- 8.7 Increase the proportion of cases referred on to volunteers.
- 8.8 Deliver an annual Wales-wide volunteer training programme.
- 8.9 Implement a volunteer development programme to increase and promote the benefits of volunteering
- 8.10 Work towards achieving the Investing in Volunteers standard.
- 8.11 Introduce a volunteer mentoring scheme.
- 8.12 Recruit volunteers from other professions and sectors.
- 8.13 Continue to produce a bi-monthly volunteer network bulletin.

Outreach work

- 8.14 Provide targeted information and advice to help marginalised communities and groups participate more effectively in plan-making.
- 8.15 In partnership with other organisations, help disadvantaged groups to achieve better representation in the planning process.
- 8.16 Engage traditionally excluded groups in local planning issues by working with a small number of partner local planning authorities.
- 8.17 Access grant funding for full-time Development Worker posts in North and South Wales.
- 8.18 Access dedicated project funding to employ an outreach Project Officer.

Delivering planning training

- 8.19 Develop training packages tailored for specific audiences.
- 8.20 Build our volunteers' capacity to help deliver high quality, in-house training.
- 8.21 Provide training for volunteers and local government planners to support the agenda for better public engagement in plan-making.
- 8.22 Develop a Wales-wide public training programme.
- 8.23 Access funding to employ a Training Officer.

Developing partnerships

- 8.24 Develop effective partnership and information sharing arrangements with the organisations listed under paras. 7.6 to 7.10 above.
- 8.25 Engage with local planning authorities to implement the Concordat agreed between the Welsh Local Government Association, Planning Officers Society Wales and Planning Aid Wales Concordat.

Policy development and research

- 8.26 Working with other UK planning aid services, demonstrate through research our collective 'added value' to the planning system.
- 8.27 Influence the formulation of new planning policy by responding to relevant consultation opportunities, working with partners where appropriate.

Governance

- 8.28 Adopt performance indicators which enable comparison with other planning aid services.
- 8.29 Develop the Planning Aid Wales Management Board to provide the full spectrum of skills and perspectives required to achieve our Business Plan aims.
- 8.30 Continue to develop risk management frameworks to safeguard Planning Aid Wales's future reputation as a respected, independent and effective organisation.
- 8.31 Keep under review the effectiveness of the working group structure.

Financial sustainability

- 8.32 Secure an increase in the level of long-term financial support for our core planning advice and information services.
- 8.33 Access new sources of funding to expand our outreach, training and research activities.
- 8.34 Implement the Fundraising Strategy 2009-12 (see Annex 1, page 29), aiming to achieve a more balanced and sustainable funding mix.
- 8.35 Generate income by assisting individual local planning authorities to devise and implement community engagement programmes.
- 8.36 Seek sponsorship for publications, events and other activities.

9. Action Plan for April 2009 to March 2010

Key:	
✓	= development work ongoing
☑	= development work complete
⇒	= continuing implementation / maintenance
◇	= review

Action	1 st Quarter	2 nd Quarter	3 rd Quarter	4 th Quarter	Responsibility
Casework, information and advice services					
Develop quality assurance and user diversity monitoring systems	✓	☑	⇒	⇒	Planner / Volunteer w.g. Planner
Consolidate all aspects of current volunteering procedures and practices	✓	☑			Planner / Volunteer w.g.
Monitor eligibility criteria	⇒	⇒	◇	⇒	Planner
Preparation for employing a year-out Planning Assistant			✓	☑	Planner / CEx

Develop and maintain the website	✓	☑			NWDW / Planner / CEx / Marketing w.g. Planner / NWDW
Review publications range	✓	☑			Planner / CEx
Implement Handbook sales strategy	⇒	⇒	⇒	⇒	Planner
Developing the volunteer network					
Develop volunteering policies and protocols	☑		⇒	⇒	Planner / Volunteer w.g. / NWDW Planner / NWDW
Develop volunteer induction pack and procedures	☑		⇒	⇒	Planner / Volunteer w.g. Planner
Audit the volunteer network		✓	☑		Planner
Recruit volunteers to address identified skill shortages	⇒	⇒	⇒	⇒	Planner / CEx / NWDW
Increase proportion of casework referrals	⇒	⇒	⊕	⇒	Planner
Provide programme of networking and training events for volunteers	⇒	⇒	⇒	⊕	Planner / NWDW / Volunteer w.g.

Develop volunteer mentoring scheme and implement	✓	☑		⇒	⇒	Planner / Volunteer w.g. Planner
Develop volunteer retention initiatives	✓	☑		⇒	⇒	Planner / NWDW / Volunteer w.g.
Outreach work						
Seek project funding to assist access and other disabled groups achieve better representation				✓	☑	NWDW / CEx
Prepare guidance on Access Statements, with partners	✓	✓		☑		NWDW / CEx
Implement Referral Strategy to increase proportion of high eligibility cases	⇒	⇒		⊕	⇒	NWDW / Marketing w.g.
Support Communities First area Bowydd a Rhiw (Blaenau Ffestiniog) to develop strategic community input to LDP preparation	✓	✓		☑	⇒	NWDW / CEx / volunteers
Delivering planning training						
Complete suite of training materials for community and town councils, and market	✓	☑		⇒	⇒	CEx / Planner / NWDW
Secure funding, recruit and appoint Training Officer	✓	☑				CEx / Staffing and Audit Committee

Developing partnerships						
Adopt statement of Planning Aid Wales aims / philosophy / ways of working, and market to partners.	✓	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		⇒	⇒	CEx / Board Marketing w.g. / staff
Implement WLGA Concordat roll-out strategy with LPAs				⇒	⇒	CEx / Board / experienced volunteers
Develop a marketing strategy to improve links with strategic partners and implement	✓	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		⇒	⇒	Marketing w.g. / CEx CEx / Board / experienced volunteers
Develop LPA Corporate Friends scheme				✓	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Fundraising w.g / CEx
Policy development and research						
Respond to relevant policy consultation documents	⇒	⇒	⇒	⇒	⇒	CEx / Planner P and R w.g.
Develop lobbying strategy and implement	✓	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		⇒	⇒	CEx / P and R w.g. CEx / Board / experienced volunteers

Governance					
Recruit new Directors	✓	☑	⇒	⇒	Chair / CEx
Update staff employment handbook and policies	✓	☑	⇒	⊠	Staffing and Audit Committee / CEx
Implement risk management mitigations	☑	⇒	⇒	⊠	CEx / Staffing and Audit Committee
Assess Board training needs and implement	✓	☑	⇒	⇒	Board / CEx
Develop staff and Director's area of website	✓	☑	⇒	⇒	CEx / Chair
Financial sustainability					
Implement Fundraising Strategy	⇒	⇒	⇒	⊠	CEx / Fundraising w.g.
Lobby officials and AM's for a stepped increase in WAG grant	✓	☑	⇒	⇒	CEx / Board
Lobby for increased core funding from RTPI	✓	☑	⇒	⇒	CEx / Board
Develop a proposal to RTPI Cymru for £5K project funding	☑				CEx

10. Budget for financial year April 2009 to March 2010

INCOME	BUDGET 2008/09	BUDGET 2009/10	
WAG core grant	100,000.00	100,000.00	
RTPI Cymru core grant	8,000.00	8,000.00	
Project grant			
RTPI project	2,000.00	1,000.00	net
CTC training grant (Phase 2)	4,000.00	(2,000.00)	net
Brecon Beacons training	9,000.00	0.00	
Gypsy and Traveller project	1,500.00	0.00	net
Carmarthenshire LDP project	4,000.00	5,000.00	net *
Access Statement project	6,000.00	6,000.00	net *
LPA LDP & new WAG projects	0.00	8,000.00	net
Revenue income			
Misc. training & presentations	0.00	3,000.00	
Handbook sales - CTC	1,000.00	0.00	
Handbook sales – Public	1,000.00	0.00	
Donations	2,000.00	2,000.00	
Quiz night, etc	0.00	300.00	
Other income	0.00	0.00	
Interest received	500.00	200.00	
TOTAL	139,000.00	131,500.00	

(* same project / income)

EXPENDITURE	BUDGET 2008/09	BUDGET 2009/10
Chief Executive	40,000.00	36,700.00
Planner & Case Manager	32,000.00	33,800.00
Development Worker	13,500.00	13,800.00
Administration & Finance Officer	9,000.00	9,800.00

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Locum	1,000.00	0.00
Training Officer	0.00	9,100.00
Professional fees	400.00	500.00
North Wales office	2,500.00	2,000.00
Directors' expenses	1,000.00	1,000.00
Staff expenses	4,500.00	4,000.00
Volunteer expenses	800.00	500.00
Volunteer recruitment & training	1,500.00	2,000.00
Staff training	1,000.00	1,300.00
Audit and legal	1,000.00	800.00
Insurance	1,000.00	2,000.00
Postage	300.00	300.00
Venues / video conferencing	500.00	500.00
Office equipment	500.00	1,000.00
Stationery	1,000.00	700.00
Marketing / publicity leaflets, etc	2,000.00	1,500.00
Cardiff office costs	8,000.00	8,000.00
Phone / internet	3,000.00	3,000.00
Subscriptions / books	1,000.00	1,000.00
Outreach / network events	1,000.00	1,000.00
Website / IT	8,000.00	4,000.00
Recruitment	0.00	500.00
Annual Report	1,500.00	1,500.00
Reprint three guidance leaflets	2,700.00	1,200.00
Welsh Language Scheme	4,000.00	2,000.00
Summer school / other event	0.00	1,000.00
Incentive for online submission	(100.00)	(100.00)
TOTAL	142,600.00	144,400.00

Annex 1: Fundraising Strategy, 2009 to 2012

1. Introduction

1.1 Planning Aid Wales wishes to increase its income in order to be able to improve the quantity and quality of service it provides. This fundraising strategy provides a framework for action over the period 2009 to 2012 to achieve this aim.

1.2 Sources of income for a charity are considered under four headings:

- **Donations:** Income given without any explicit expectation of receiving something material in return. This provides funds with no restriction on their use.
- **Grants:** Normally given to the organisation / charity by a funder to be spent on specified activities.
- **Projects:** Payment for goods (for example, commissioned publications) or services (for example, training) to be supplied to a purchaser on terms agreed in advance of their provision.
- **Open market trading:** Sale of goods and services produced with purchasers usually not known at the time of production. This income is unrestricted.

1.3 These four categories of income are used to frame the discussion of funding needs and opportunities below.

2. Planning Aid Wales's funding needs

2.1 At present Planning Aid Wales employs four staff (two full-time and two part-time) to deliver its services. A third part-time post (South Wales Development Worker) has been frozen since 2006. The revenue costs of providing our core information and advice service (salaries, accommodation, phone, etc) were approximately £120,000 over the preceding financial year 2008/09. Over this period, Planning Aid Wales received a total of £108,000 core grant (£100,000 from WAG and £8,000 from RTPI Cymru) to spend on these costs.

2.2 The gap between core income received and expenditure was met by other income generation such as commissioned project work and trading where a financial surplus is achieved through an activity which provides additional income. There is little opportunity to reduce expenditure in a way that would

significantly address the funding gap although ways of ensuring that 'best value' is derived from expenditure are continually under review.

2.3 Planning Aid Wales aims to expand its range of services to better meet its charitable objectives. We also aim to pursue outreach project work which we consider to be of the highest priority. This strategy provides a framework for realising the income necessary to achieve our aspirations for the next three years.

2.4 This fundraising strategy is an integral element of the Planning Aid Wales Business Plan; together they provide guidance on how the Management Board wish the service to evolve over the next three years. Annex 2 provides detail of the forecast cost of building the organisation's capacity over each of the next three years.

2.5 To implement the provisions of the Business Plan, Planning Aid Wales will need to secure additional income to pay the following additional staffing costs (all costs given at current prices):

- Year 1 additional staff costs: £18,000
- Year 2 additional staff costs: £60,500
- Year 3 additional staff costs: £107,500

2.6 The diagram on page 13 illustrates the envisaged shape of the organisation by April 2012, with all staff posts shown being full-time equivalent. Annex 2 (see page 37) provides a detailed breakdown of forecast additional staff costs.

3. Fundraising opportunities

Donations

3.1 The principal opportunity for donations arises from clients assisted by the service. It is recognised, however, that due to the nature of the services Planning Aid Wales provides many of its clients do not wish or cannot afford to make a donation. However, a proportion of the 500 plus individuals and groups assisted each year can realistically be considered as potential donors.

3.2 In recent years donations income has not exceeded £500 per annum. Donation income of this level was sometimes achieved when Planning Aid Wales was a much smaller organisation prior to receiving core funding. Although the amount raised from this source is unlikely ever to exceed £10,000 per year, a

more systematic approach to requesting donations should deliver an income of over one thousand pounds per year.

3.3 An opportunity to increase donations will arise when the new website is launched in summer 2008, providing a means for receipt of electronic payment. For this to be effective, new procedures will need to be introduced to inform potential donors (primarily clients who have received assistance) of the opportunity to donate. Planning Aid Wales is registered to reclaim Gift Aid for donations, increasing their value by 25% when received from a basic rate taxpayer.

3.4 We also benefit from money raised by activities such as the quiz nights organised by staff and volunteers. These activities are welcome as they provide opportunities for volunteers to socialise, but they can involve significant staff and volunteer time to organise and run. Income generated from this source is unlikely to be significant over the strategy period. It is also assumed that Planning Aid Wales would not be able to generate any significant donated income from sources such as door-to-door collections and legacies.

Grants

a) Welsh Assembly Government

3.5 Since 2004, the Welsh Assembly Government has provided core grant funding of £100,000 per year. This has allowed us to make a step change in the quality and range of services we provide. The Assembly Government grants the Planning Aid Wales Management Board a high degree of independence to shape the service as it considers appropriate. Quarterly monitoring meetings ensure officials are kept updated on progress and provide a forum for discussing future opportunities and activities.

3.6 Assembly Government officials are not able to provide assurance as to the continued availability of the £100,000 annual core grant into the longer term. However, it seems likely that a similar level of support will be available for Planning Aid Wales until at least April 2011. Continued payment of the grant at its current level seems reasonably assured over the business plan period. The grant is not index linked, which effectively means it buys less each year as a result of inflation.

3.7 Assembly officials have advised that there is a significant budgeting time lag (one to two years) between laying down markers indicating need for future funding and possible future funding allocations being made. In the short term (2009 to 2010), Planning Aid Wales should therefore continue to seek funding for individual projects (see below) to help cover the funding deficit. Lobbying for an increase in core grant funding from April 2010 onwards should commence in tandem and without delay.

3.8 While the potential for additional project funding is welcome - it helps broaden our reach, develop new skills and generates income - it is often difficult to integrate the additional work into core work programmes and is a draw on staff resources. Also, funding for discrete projects does not provide the flexibility or economies of scale that increased core funding would.

3.9 It is also noted that core funding (i.e. not project based) allocations for the planning aid services in Scotland and England have increased significantly (to £350,000 in Scotland and £4,500,000 in England for the 2009/10 financial year). We consider that there is a similar case for increasing the core public grant for the planning aid service in Wales.

3.10 In order to support our organisational objectives for the three year business plan period, we will be seeking a stepped increase in the annual core revenue grant received from the Welsh Assembly Government. We propose that the current £100,000 core grant allocation remains constant for Year 1 (April 2009 to March 2010). From April 2010, a step change occurs with core grant for Year 2 increasing to £150,000. From April 2011, a further lift in funding will occur with core grant for Year 3 increasing to £200,000.

3.11 The lobbying and public relations activity necessary to gain support for the proposed allocations needs to commence in early 2009 with a view to a possible first stage increase of core funding from April 2010.

b) RTPI Cymru

3.12 RTPI Cymru currently provides Planning Aid Wales with an annual grant of £8,000 to support our core services. In addition, a grant of up to £5,000 was available in 2008/09 towards a pre-agreed project or activity.

3.13 The value of the administrative and management support which the RTPI provides towards the delivery of the planning aid service in England is difficult to quantify. However, it is likely to increase markedly over the next three years as a result of a three-fold increase in central government funding for the English service. This suggests an opportunity for Planning Aid Wales to request an increase in its annual core funding from RTPI Cymru to ensure that the Institute's direct and indirect expenditure on planning aid per head of population in Wales and Scotland is similar to that in England.

3.14 We consider it unlikely that another grant source can be found that will provide core funding towards Planning Aid Wales's revenue costs in providing its all-Wales service. However, at a local level it is considered possible that local planning authorities may be willing to fund our general information and advice service if we can provide a minimum level of service provision in return. Planning Aid Scotland has established a 'corporate friends' option for supportive Scottish

planning authorities. This provides an agreed package of service in return for an annual payment, and has been fairly successful to date. The opportunity for support of this type will need to be explored when visits are made to LPAs in 2009/10 as part of the implementation of the WLGA Concordat.

Projects

3.15 This term is used to refer to the provision of goods or services for a client within a specified period. Project income has provided the most important source of funding to supplement the core grant from Welsh Assembly Government since 2004. In general, funding for discrete projects is easier to obtain than revenue funding for the core service. Project funding has two benefits. First, Planning Aid Wales is able to provide a focused service tailored to the needs of the organisation commissioning the project. Second, a financial surplus may sometimes be generated from the staff time component of project work, which can be used to help cover Planning Aid Wales's revenue costs.

3.16 Recent commissioners of project work have included Welsh Assembly Government (production of Gypsy and Traveller consultation package, CTC training programme, Access Statements guidance, etc), individual planning authorities (LDP engagement training for Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and Carmarthenshire County Council), and Communities First Boards (CwmNi training programme).

3.17 We consider that project work will continue to be an important generator of income for Planning Aid Wales. The challenges for project work in 2009/10 are considered to be:

- Project content: Planning Aid Wales has tended to bid for and undertake project work in response to opportunities identified by or with a third party. This has the advantage of the funding being available for the work and it also broadens our reach and skills. But it also results in work being undertaken which may not be of the highest priority in terms of the charity's objectives. Planning Aid Wales should identify its own high priority projects and then seek funding from charitable trusts and work with other planning aid services to carry them out. This is recognised as likely to be more time consuming, but will pay benefits in terms of diversified project funding and better alignment with our charitable aims.
- Project commissioning: Planning Aid Wales should seek to reduce its financial dependence on one single project funding stream, namely the proportion of projects which are funded from the Welsh Assembly Government planning budget line. Future potential streams of project income include funding secured from local planning authorities, other

affiliated partner organisations, and other non-planning Assembly budget lines (e.g. equality, housing, education).

- Projects to build the capacity of Planning Aid Wales: Recent project work has related to delivering services which help meet our charitable objectives. Project funding may also be available for initiatives to improve the ability of Planning Aid Wales to function as an effective charitable organisation. An example is the lottery grant received in 2004 to prepare a marketing strategy. A review should be undertaken in 2009 to determine whether grant funding should be sought for project work relating to improving our operational efficiency.
- Sponsorship: While it would not be appropriate (or feasible) to seek a commercial sponsor for the entire service, opportunities may arise for payments to be received from other organisations for discrete outputs with which the sponsor may wish to be associated, thereby indicating support for the charity as a whole. For example, sponsorship of publications such as the Annual Report or marketing materials would save the cost of production being paid from revenue expenditure.

Open market trading

3.18 Income from this source is unrestricted, meaning it can be used in any way that Planning Aid Wales wishes. The sale of publications has been the principal type of trading carried out to date. If income produced by trading became a significant source of income, a separate non-charitable company would need to be established to undertake its trading, with the company gifting its annual profit to Planning Aid Wales. It is not considered that the level of trading income is likely to reach this level in the three year strategy period, unless Planning Aid Wales were to decide to set up a lower-cost commercial consultancy arm similar to that established by Planning Aid London.

3.19 Publication sales are likely to provide the main trading fundraising possibility in 2009/12. Potential exists to sell the two existing handbook publications, which provide an introduction to the statutory planning system for the general public and for community and town councils. Considerable stocks exist of both handbooks, but ongoing changes in planning law will serve to diminish their value over time.

3.20 Other publication opportunities may arise which result in sales, including publications produced in conjunction with project work. However, it is considered that the income likely to be produced from such sources is unlikely to exceed several thousand pounds per year and therefore will not be of great significance in meeting Planning Aid Wales's overall fundraising requirements.

4.0 Programme for Years 1, 2 and 3

Year 1:

April 2009 to March 2010

Over Year 1, the following fundraising activities are anticipated:

- i) Obtain year 1 funding for a dedicated Training Officer.
- ii) Review donations procedures.
- iii) Discuss with officials and lobby Assembly Members for a stepped increase in core grant from the Welsh Assembly Government, commencing April 2010.
- iv) Request / justify increased core funding from RTPI Cymru, following recent funding increases for Planning Aid England.
- v) Develop a funding proposal to RTPI Cymru for the allocated £5,000 project monies.
- vi) Develop a 'Corporate Friends' package and encourage Welsh local planning authorities to sign up.
- vii) Identify a new project for Welsh Assembly Government grant support.
- viii) Obtain funding for a new project from a local planning authority.
- ix) Identify possible funding routes for employing a year-out student from summer 2010 onwards.
- x) Maximise sales of the Public and CTC handbook guides.

Year 2:

April 2010 to March 2011

Over Year 2, the following fundraising activities are anticipated:

- Secure a first step £50,000 core grant funding increase (to £150,000 per annum) to start building the envisaged staff team structure.
- Obtain grant for a volunteer network development project.
- Obtain funding for a research / policy development project.
- Recruit 'Corporate Friends'.

Year 3:

April 2011 to March 2012

Over Year 3, the following fundraising activities are anticipated:

- Secure a second step £50,000 core grant funding increase (to £200,000 per annum) to consolidate the envisaged staff team structure.
- Consolidate the Corporate Friends programme to develop new sources of income.
- Develop project funding initiatives with partners.

Annex 2: Forecast additional staffing costs, 2009 to 2012

Year 1: April 2009 to March 2010

Post: Training Officer - full time

Recruit by: September 2009

Additional cost: £18,000

Year 1 additional staffing costs: £18,000

Total Year 1 staff costs (current prices): £128,000

Commentary: Recruit full-time Training Officer by September 2009.

Covering the cost: Additional Year 1 staff costs to be covered by funding contributions to the first year costs of employing the Training Officer and, if necessary, net project income generated over the year.

Year 2: April 2010 to March 2011

Post: South Wales Development Worker - half-time

Recruit by: April 2010

Additional cost: £15,000

Post: Training Officer - full-time

Recruit by: (n/a - continued from Year 1)

Additional cost: £30,000

Post: Administrator and Finance Officer - upgrade to full-time

Recruit by: October 2010

Additional cost: £5,000

Post: Planning Assistant - full-time

Recruit by: October 2010

Additional cost: £10,000

Post: Dedicated Outreach Project Officer - half-time

Recruit by: April 2010

Additional cost: (£14,000 - to be paid out of income from a dedicated project)

Year 2 additional staffing costs: £60,000

Total Year 2 staff costs (current prices): £170,000

Commentary: Recruit half-time S.W. Development Worker, April 2010.

Recruit half-time Outreach Project Officer, April 2010.

Upgrade Administrator post to full-time, October 2009.

Recruit full-time Planning Assistant, October 2009.

Covering the cost: £50,000 of the additional £60,000 staff costs is sought from the Welsh Assembly Government as a first stage increase in core grant, giving a total core grant of £150,000 from April 2010. The remaining £10,000 to be covered by net project income, training fees and other income generated over the year.

Year 3: April 2011 to March 2012

Post: Training Officer - full-time

Recruit by: (n/a - continued from Year 2)

Additional cost: £30,000

Post: S.W. Development Worker - upgrade to full-time

Recruit by: April 2011

Additional cost: £30,000

Planning Aid Wales Business Plan 2009 to 2012

Post: N.W. Development Worker - upgrade to full-time

Recruit by: April 2011

Additional cost: £15,000

Post: Dedicated Outreach Project Officer - upgrade to full-time

Recruit by: April 2011

Additional cost: (£28,000 - to be paid out of income from a dedicated project)

Post: Administrator and Finance Officer - full-time

Recruit by: (n/a - continued from Year 2)

Additional cost: £12,500

Post: Planning Assistant - full-time

Recruit by: (n/a - continued from Year 2)

Additional cost: £20,000

Year 3 additional staffing costs: £107,500

Total Year 3 staff costs at current prices: £217,500

Commentary: Upgrade S.W. Development Worker post to full-time, April 2011

Upgrade N.W. Development Worker post to full-time, April 2011

Upgrade dedicated Outreach Project Officer post to full-time, April 2010 (to be paid out of income from a dedicated project)

Covering the cost: £100,000 of the additional £107,500 staff costs is sought from Welsh Assembly Government as a second stage increase in core grant, giving a total core grant of £200,000 from April 2011 onwards. The remaining £17,500 to be covered by net project income, training fees and other income generated over the year.

Annex 3: Eligibility criteria

Planning Aid Wales operates eligibility criteria to ensure that our services are provided to those most in need. Depending on the circumstances of the person or group seeking assistance, we can offer three levels of service: information; advice; and support

Information

- An outline of the relevant area of the planning process (such as planning applications, development or appeals procedures).
- Referral to guidance literature which explain procedures in greater detail.
- Outline of rights within the planning system.
- Referral to organisations which may be able to provide further assistance.
- Referral to a list of consultants certified by the Royal Town Planning Institute.

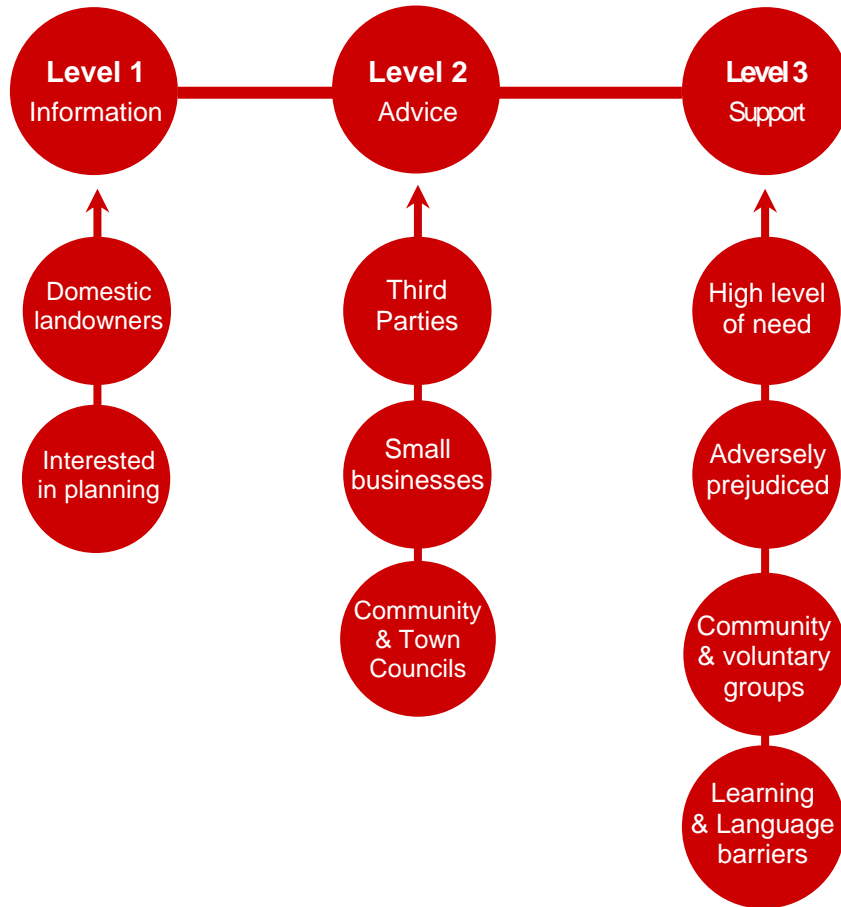
Advice

- Appropriate basic information.
- Detailed information on specific aspects of the planning system.
- Helping clients develop strategies to address planning issues and navigate the planning system.
- Assistance in the development of arguments to support a client's case.
- Basic research and referral to relevant policies or cases, including direction on how they can be used most effectively

Support

- Ongoing information and advice.
- Delivery of information in different formats.
- Client representation and liaison with associated parties, including advocacy.
- Site visits as appropriate.
- Preparation and completion of correspondence and forms as appropriate.
- Assistance in the preparation of consultation responses, planning applications or the preparation of feasibility studies / other research as appropriate.

Eligibility Levels



Level 1: *Information*

- Domestic landowners who wish to carry out a development.
- People who are unaware of the planning system and would like to participate.

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Level 2: *Advice*

- Third parties wishing to express their views on a planning application or development plan issue.
- Businesses with five employees or less.
- Community and Town Councils.

Level 3: *Support*

- Community and voluntary groups.
- People wishing to engage with the planning system who may be adversely prejudiced due to age, race, nationality, language or literacy issues, disability, gender, sexuality or social background.
- Groups wishing to promote inclusive design within the planning process.
- Anyone unable to engage with the planning system due to learning or language barriers.

Who we can't help

- Planning consultants, architects, surveyors, agents, etc.
- Medium to large commercial businesses.
- Individuals or groups who stand to make a profit from anything other than a minor householder development.
- Those with sufficient disposable income to engage a planning consultant.

Anyone not eligible for Planning Aid Wales services will be referred to a list of planning consultants certified by the Royal Town Planning Institute, or to relevant guidance literature for further help.

Additional information

- The current eligibility criteria were adopted in January 2008 and replace previous eligibility criteria.
- Planning Aid Wales reserves the right to vary the level of support offered according to our assessment of a client's individual circumstances.
- In some cases, Planning Aid Wales may ask the client to provide evidence of their financial circumstances in order to determine their eligibility.
- Clients who feel Planning Aid Wales staff or volunteers have misjudged their eligibility may appeal to the Chief Executive in the first instance.