



Planning Aid Wales Newsletter

June 2010

Editor's farewell







This is going to be my last Planning Aid Wales newsletter. I will be leaving the organisation to take up the challenge of my own consultancy business. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those of you who have made working here a pleasure. Be it Planning Aid Wales staff, volunteers, partners, clients or totally unrelated people I rang up out of the blue to ask something from them - you know who you are. Thank you all for your support, kindness and inspiration.

Planning Aid Wales will soon be advertising for a new member of staff and will be pleased to hear from you if you are interested.


Best wishes for the future,

Marika Fusser
North Wales Development Worker

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Planning Aid Wales AGM 2010

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Planning Aid Wales will hold its Annual General Meeting 2010 at 4.30 pm on Monday 12th July at the Belle Vue Royal Hotel, Marine Terrace, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, SY23 2BA. All are welcome.

Planning Aid Wales Annual Report 2009-10

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The Planning Aid Wales Annual Report for 2009-10 will shortly be available to download from <http://planningaidwales.org.uk/about-us/annualreport>

Planning Aid Wales is the independent charity working for a fairer, more inclusive Welsh planning system. With funding from the Welsh Assembly Government and RTPI Cymru, we provide independent information, advice and support on planning matters.

We work for people and groups who cannot afford a planning consultant, or who have barriers preventing them from engaging with planning. We work with our growing network of planning and community volunteers and a variety of partner organisations to deliver a growing range of services.

Some of these are outlined in the Annual Report for the last year.

If you would like the report in a different format or as a hard copy, please contact the Planning Aid Wales head office (details below).

Updated guidance publications

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Planning Aid Wales has now published up-to-date versions of the following guidance publications:

'What to do when faced with a planning application in Wales' provides information on how to find out about planning applications, and how to make effective and relevant consultation responses to the local planning authority. The booklet is designed for people who want to support or object to a planning application in their area.

'A guide to planning enforcement in Wales' gives an overview of enforcement practices and procedures in Wales. It also advises on how to prepare for an enforcement appeal. The booklet is designed for people who want to appeal against enforcement action being taken by the local planning authority, and people who are concerned about a development that may not have the necessary planning permissions in place.

'Seeing the light: Planning and rights to light in Wales' provides an overview of the issues to do with light and overshadowing in the planning process in Wales. The booklet is designed for those people who are concerned that a new development proposal will have an unacceptable 'overshadowing' effect on their property, and for developers who want to make sure that their building will not lead to an unacceptable loss of light to neighbouring properties.

These publications are available to download free of charge from <http://planningaidwales.org.uk/how-paw-can-help/information/publications>. You can also order hard copies by contacting the Planning Aid Wales head office (details below).

Planning Aid Conference 2010 - online resource

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Planning Aid Wales hosted the 2010 National Planning Aid Conference in Cardiff on 29th and 30th April 2010. Entitled *'Planning Aid - Engaging with Communities'*, the event brought planning aid staff, volunteers and trustees together with representatives from community and voluntary groups from across the whole UK. The focus for the conference was on how UK planning aid services were already engaging with communities, and how we could do better in future.

We have now created an online resource from presentations, notes and other materials related to the workshops held at the conference. It can be accessed on <http://planningaidwales.org.uk/conference-documentation>

Case study

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Ongoing support for Caerphilly residents

Over eighteen months, three Planning Aid Wales volunteers - Katherine Hughes, Helen Ridgway and Davina Powell - have given more than three hundred hours to helping the local community address complex planning issues relating to redevelopment of the Caerphilly Miners' hospital site.

The volunteer team has assisted in a variety of ways:

- Worked with Assembly Member Jeff Cuthbert to develop a project management committee with local members and professional advisors.
- Spoken at local events to raise awareness of the opportunities and issues.
- Developed a partnership with United Welsh Housing Association, which hopes to develop affordable housing on the remainder of the site.
- Undertaken local surveys to identify local views and raise awareness.
- Secured funding from the Millennium Fund for marketing and the Key Fund for a feasibility study.
- Established a history project, which other members of the committee will develop.
- Prepared a business plan and action plans for the committee.
- Met with the relevant Minister, officials and council staff.
- Prepared representations to the Local Development Plan.
- Provided strategic planning advice to the committee.
- Attended committee meetings.
- Created a website for the management committee to engage the community.
- Advised the Management Committee on community consultation.

Volunteer Katherine Hughes said: *“Being a Planning Aid Wales volunteer has helped to provide the initial link with the community and provided indemnity insurance for the volunteer team’s planning-related activity. It has also helped to identify when the committee needed planning advice and raised awareness of Planning Aid to the wider community in Caerphilly. The committee is greatly indebted to Planning Aid Wales and is considering how it can mark its appreciation to its volunteers and such a worthwhile organisation.”*

Events

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If you would like to know more about any of the listed events, please contact us (see contact details below).

12 July, Aberystwyth

Planning Aid Wales AGM. See above for details.

14 July, Cwmbryn

Conference of the Society of Local Council Clerks. Including an information stall by Planning Aid Wales.

11 August, Rhuthin

Cymdeithas Tai Clwyd Tenants’ Day. Including an information stall by Planning Aid Wales. For details about the event contact Fred Breakell on fred.breakell@taiclwyd.com

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