

A Non-Planner's Guide to the Planning System

Wednesday 10th – Friday 12th November 2010

Who is this course for?

This course will suit anyone who wants a better understanding of the spatial planning system. The course starts from first principles, assuming some participants have little or no background knowledge.

Former participants have included those who monitor and comment on planning applications, those who wish to influence policy, and people who are working with community groups who want to use the system to protect or improve their local environment.

Course objectives

By the end of the course you should:

- Have a clear picture of the way the planning system works
- Understand the nature and role of different planning documents including those found in Local Development Frameworks
- Be able to contribute to local development plans, and be clear about the way in which development plan policies are central to any planning issue.
- Have up to date knowledge of the most recent planning legislation and the changes being implemented by the new government.
- Understand key planning terms and their uses, and be able to fight your way through planning jargon and acronyms
- Be able to use the planning system to optimise opportunities for environmental protection and enhancement and to defend sensitive sites
- Be in a position to participate in the planning system, and to help the communities and other groups you work with to understand how the system operates and how they can use it
- Feel more confident the next time you have dealings with planning professionals

The course will provide a rounded and balanced introduction to the whole planning system, and will not – for example - focus specifically on wildlife or landscape conservation.

Course tutors: Charlie Falzon, Environmental Trainer, ICPL
David Mount, Countryside Training Partnership

Provisional programme

Wednesday 10th November – *the current system – in theory*

- 10.00 a.m. Arrive and coffee / tea
- 10.30 a.m. **Welcome and introductions**
- 11.00 a.m. **An overview of the planning system**
- 11.30 a.m. **Policy Planning: Local Development Frameworks**
- 1.00 p.m. Lunch
- 2.00 p.m. ***Exercise: Writing policies***
- 2.40 p.m. **The Government's agenda: Planning Policy Statements**
- 3.30 p.m. Tea / coffee break
- 4.00 p.m. **Development Control**
- 5.00 p.m. **Planning obligations and planning conditions**
- 5.30 p.m. Finish
- 7.00 p.m. Dinner

Tuesday 11th November *The system in practice – now and in the future*

- 9.15 a.m. **Revision session: acronyms and jargon**
- 10.00 a.m. **Topical Case Study: Tesco in Machynlleth**
- 10.45 a.m. Coffee / tea break
- 11.00 a.m. ***Exercise: What is a sustainable community? A sustainable development? A sustainable building?***
- 11.15 a.m. **Assessment of Plans:** Sustainability Appraisal, Strategic Environmental Assessment, and Appropriate Assessment
- 11.45 a.m. ***Appraisal Exercise***
- 12.15 p.m. **Biodiversity and the planning system**
- 1.00 p.m. Lunch
- 2.00 p.m. ***GDO exercise***
- 2.30 p.m. **Briefing and discussion: recent developments in the planning system**

- 3.30 p.m. Tea / coffee break
4.00 p.m. **Development control exercise – briefing**
4.30 p.m. **Group work:** review of background papers
5.30 p.m. Finish
7.00 p.m. Dinner

Wednesday 12th November ***Development control case study***

- 9.15 a.m. Depart for White Edge Lodge by minibus
9.40 a.m. **Site visit – meet Carl Bradford, National Trust Building Surveyor**
11.00 a.m. Coffee and group work
12.30 p.m. Lunch
1.30 p.m. **Report back and discussion**
2.30 p.m. **Unfinished business and learning points**
3.00 p.m. Tea, course summary, course assessment
3.20 p.m. Finish

We will finish in time for participants travelling by train to catch the 15.34 departure from Hope railway station for Sheffield