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6. How do I get involved in Development Plans?

Development plans are important documents as they set out the long term plans for an area, including how it can change and develop and are also used to determine planning applications. It is therefore important to be involved and comment on Development Plans as this will enable you to make your planning authority (your local Council or National Park Authority) more aware of the issues in your area and have more of an influence on what happens.

How do I find out about the plan for my area?

This depends on where you live. Each council area in Scotland is covered by a "Local Development Plan", which sets out detailed policies and allocations for the use of land.

The four city regions of Aberdeen, Dundee, Glasgow and Edinburgh are also covered by "Strategic Development Plans", which covers region-wide topics such as transport, economy, retail, housing and greenspace strategies.

How do I know if my area is also covered by a Strategic Development Plan?

In addition to the above city regions, you will be covered by a Strategic Development Plan if you live in any of the following areas local authority: Aberdeenshire, Angus, East Dunbartonshire, East Lothian, East Renfrewshire, Fife, Inverclyde, Midlothian, North Lanarkshire, Perth and Kinross, Renfrewshire, Scottish Borders, South Lanarkshire, West Dunbartonshire and West Lothian. More information on the strategic development plan areas can be viewed [here](#).

Where do I find out more information on my area's current Development Plan?

Your planning authority must keep a register of all the development plans that affect your area and provide copies of these plans for you to inspect. You may also buy copies of development plans from your planning authority or view them online and download them for free via the planning authority's website.

How do I find out about new Development Plans in my area?

You should refer to the "**Development Plan Scheme**" to find out more information on the status of a development plan. The Development Plan Scheme is an important document as it sets out to raise awareness of the development plan and how people can become involved. It is produced annually for both local development plans and strategic development plans and includes the following:

- A programme and timetable for the preparation of the development plan
- What is involved at each stage of preparing the plan
- A Participation Statement, which covers how the public will be involved with the plan i.e. when, how and with whom consultation will take place.

The Development Plan Scheme can be obtained from your planning authority or online via their website.

A new Development Plan is being prepared – will I be notified?

If you are an owner, lessee or occupier of a site which the proposed plan specifically proposes to be developed, you will be notified by the planning authority. This also applies to people who own, lease or occupy neighbouring land (land that lies within 20 meters of a site). Be aware that notification is only required where there are premises on the site or neighbouring land.

At what stage should I get involved in Development Plans?

Development plans must be reviewed every five years, and planning authorities are required to involve people by undertaking consultation. Development plans go through a number of important stages before they are finalised and adopted. Whilst all the stages are important, the two which provide the opportunity for public consultation to allow people to make comments and influence the plan are the **Main Issues Report** and the **Proposed Plan** stages. For more information, refer to separate information sheet: Development Plans.

Involvement in the Main Issues Report

In terms of early involvement in the development plan the **most important** stage is the Main Issues Report. Prior to the Main Issues Report being published the planning authority will consult with the public and other groups to gain an understanding of the main planning issues in the plan area. The Main Issues Report is then published and will include choices and options for land use allocations and the policies that will be used to determine planning applications. A minimum period of six weeks is provided for people to make comments. Copies of the Main Issues Report can be obtained from the planning authority or their website.

Involvement in the Proposed Plan

Once the Main Issues period finishes, the planning authority will consider the responses which are received and produce a Proposed Plan. The Proposed Plan will then be published and provides a further period of consultation for people to make representations (comments, objections or support). It is important to be aware that if you intend make representations you do it at this stage as you won't have another opportunity to do so.

Copies of the Proposed Plan can be obtained from the planning authority or online via their website.

Development Plan Examinations

Refer to our information sheet on Development Plans for more information.

More information can also be obtained from the [Scottish Government's website](#).

Involvement in Supplementary Guidance

Supplementary guidance is used by planning authorities to provide extra information and guidance on topics, policies or proposals which are set out in Development Plans.

Planning authorities must publicise all new supplementary guidance and provide a period for people and organisations to comment. You should refer to the Development Plan Scheme as this may indicate what supplementary guidance is to be reviewed or produced, and when consultation will take place. Your planning authority will be able to let you know what supplementary guidance they have available and what they intend to produce in the future. Supplementary guidance should also be made available online.

Where can I obtain more information and advice?

Your planning authority office should be your first stop if you have any queries or need to obtain information on development plans and supplementary guidance.

Also:

- The Scottish Government's [planning website](#) - of particular relevance are the links to the publications library which contains Scottish Planning Policy, Planning Advice Notes, Circulars and legislation.
- Scottish Government – [A Guide to the Planning System in Scotland](#)
- Scottish Government – [The National Planning Framework](#). This sets out the long term spatial strategy for Scotland's development. Planning authorities are required to take this into account when preparing their development plans.
- Scottish Government [ePlanning website](#) allows you to submit, comment and view applications online.
- [Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals](#) (DPEA) – information about planning appeals.

How can Planning Aid for Scotland help?

If you are still unsure or need independent advice, then Planning Aid for Scotland may be able to help. Contact our **Advice Service**, which is **free of charge** to individuals and community groups, on **0845 603 7602**, or refer to our information leaflet which is available on our website at www.planningaidscotland.org.uk.