

How can Planning Aid for London help?

Planning Aid for London provides free or affordable advice about planning to individuals and community groups in London. Through our core free service, available to those who cannot afford a consultant, or through our consultancy service, we will work with you to find out what type of help you need. For example, we can help you to:

- Understand and interact with the planning system
- Take part in preparing policy plans
- Put together plans for your community
- Make comments on planning applications
- Apply for planning permission
- Appeal against a refusal of permission
- Appear with confidence at planning committees and public inquiries.

Planning Aid for London (PAL) provides free or affordable advice about planning to individuals and community groups in London. PAL is funded to outreach to communities most in need. These include:

Young people
Gypsies and Travellers
Black and ethnic minority groups
People with disabilities
Refugees, asylum seekers and homeless people

Other information sheets produced by PAL include:

Affordable housing
Jobs and Training
Crime and Disorder
Diversity and Cohesion

Planning Aid for London

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Making Places for Healthy Lives

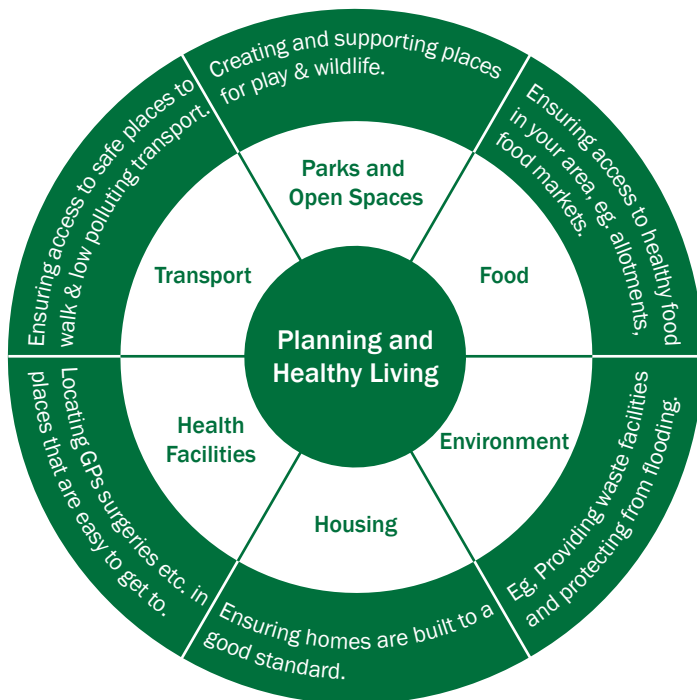


Making Places for Healthy Lives

Being able to live healthily means a whole range of different things, from being able to buy fresh food to making sure that your home is warm and dry, and having access to open spaces. Town planning has an important role in making sure that we can live healthy and active lives.

What is planning?

Planning is the system used to decide how to use existing land and buildings for development. It involves making decisions about the types of uses that are needed in certain areas, for example, housing, schools, shops, offices, airports and allotments. It also establishes what the standards should be to make sure that developments are of high-quality.



Planners make important decisions about how places should be changed to meet needs, or be preserved for future generations. Planners should respond to questions that you may have about planning in your local authority, and have a duty to involve the public.

All Local Planning Authorities must prepare plans and planning strategies to guide new building and future development in their area. These plans are known collectively as the Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF gives information about how your local authority intends to make sure your area helps people to lead healthy lives. For instance, how the local authority will improve open spaces, or how to ensure that everyone has access to public transport.

How can I get involved in planning?

There are many ways that you may be involved in planning. If you want to set up a new community garden, or start a local food market you may need planning permission. The planning officer at your local authority will be able to advise you about what you need to do. Planning Aid for London (PAL) can also provide support and advice to those who can't afford to pay a planning consultant.

It is important to get involved in the planning process as early on as possible. Being involved will allow you to hear about what the council plans to do and influence proposed changes that affect your neighbourhood. To find out more about your local authority's planning strategies for the borough you can visit their website, or contact their planning department.



Example: Allotments

Allotments can be important spaces for healthy lives. They can help us grow our own food, compost our waste, give us exercise, provide educational experiences and skills, be social spaces, and increase natural habitats for wildlife.

Around 30,000 people in London rent allotments to grow vegetables and fruit, but it was estimated that, in 2006, 4,300 people were waiting for allotments – 3,000 more people than a decade ago. There is huge demand for more spaces for allotments and opportunities for local food growing.

PAL can work with individuals and groups to help secure spaces to grow food. Past work has included assisting allotment organisations such as at Windmill Gardens, Brixton. Here PAL volunteers assisted the gardeners and campaigners to oppose a plan by Lambeth Council to buy and redevelop the allotments. In January 2008 it was confirmed that the Council had accepted the argument that allotments are a local community resource and no longer intends to buy them.