

## Responding effectively to planning applications: where to go for more help or information

### National government guidance and policies

The planning system is slightly different in each of the four UK countries. The following websites may be useful to you:

- England: [www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/planningsystem/](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/planningsystem/)
- Wales: [www.gov.wales/topics/planning/?lang=en](http://www.gov.wales/topics/planning/?lang=en)
- Scotland: [www.gov.scot/Topics/Built-Environment/planning](http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Built-Environment/planning)
- Northern Ireland: [www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/planning-system-how-decision-reached](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/planning-system-how-decision-reached)

### The local authority

Virtually all local authorities now have comprehensive and (more or less) user-friendly websites. Most such websites will include pages on:

- Planning policy, including the status and content of any proposed or adopted development plans;
- Planning applications, including facilities to view and comment on the details of any “live” applications;
- Information on committee dates and procedures, planning department contact details, etc.
- Links to other relevant policies and documents, such as the Council’s environment strategy or biodiversity strategy (if they have one).

If you have to, you can visit in person and ask to be shown copies of plans and other documents. If it might be a long or complex search be polite and phone ahead.

### The RSPB

Our website includes casework pages highlighting a few of the significant cases the RSPB has been involved in, from windfarms to ports, housing to marine casework.

[www.rspb.org.uk/whatwedo/campaigningfornature/casework/](http://www.rspb.org.uk/whatwedo/campaigningfornature/casework/)

If you are interested in hearing more about planning issues and nature, then you can download our biannual “Conservation Planner” newsletter from our website and also see content on other aspects of the RSPB’s planning work, here:

[www.rspb.org.uk/forprofessionals/policy/planning/library.aspx](http://www.rspb.org.uk/forprofessionals/policy/planning/library.aspx)

We also provide an on-line “Action for Wildlife” pack for each UK country, designed to help local people engage with the planning system to give nature a home. Please be aware that some of the content needs updating in light of changes to the planning system, but much of it remains current and useful:

[www.rspb.org.uk/joinandhelp/campaignwithus/takeaction/](http://www.rspb.org.uk/joinandhelp/campaignwithus/takeaction/)

The “useful contacts” page under each UK country section includes links to many other potentially useful websites including those for Government departments, statutory agencies like Natural England, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Environment Agency, other nature conservation charities, the Planning Inspectorate and the Royal Town Planning Institute.

Several other environmental charities have good websites offering guidance on the planning system, including (for England) the CPRE: <http://planninghelp.cpre.org.uk/>.