DESIGN SKILLS AND RESOURCES IN LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITIES - 2021

100%

With changes to national policy ushering in a more design-led planning system, this Freedom of Information request aims to understand the capacity within local planning authorities in England to address these concerns.

The data will be used to update the national picture since the last analysis was conducted in 2017 and will be made publicly available, including to Government.

Thank you for taking the time to respond. We understand that surveys can be an imposition on valuable time, but robust data on this crucial subject is otherwise impossible to gauge.

If you would like to receive a summary of the results, please provide a suitable e-mail address in the box below.

PRIVACY NOTE: Your e-mail address will only be used for this purpose and will not be shared with any third parties. The data gathered will be aggregated and individual responses will remain confidential.

1. Contact email:

* 2. The following information will only be used to better analyse the results. Please indicate:

Your Region

South East

Your Local Authority

Wokingham

Your Department

Development Management &Enforcement

Your Role

Servie manager

* 3. What in-house Urban Design skills do you currently have? Please specify the number of:

	0	1	2	3	4	5+
Those with an Urban Design qualification	●	○	○	○	○	○
Landscape Architect(s)	○	○	○	○	○	●
Architect(s)	●	○	○	○	○	○

	0	1	2	3	4	5+
Other	○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

[   ]

* 4. If you don't have any in-house Urban Design skills, how do you cover these skills requirements? Please select as many as apply.

☐ Non-specialist planning staff

☐ Conservation officer

☐ Highway or Traffic engineer

☐ External consultants

☐ Agency staff

☐ Shared resources with another Local Authority

☑ Design review panel

☑ Other (please specify)

Our planners have lots of experience and training in urban design

* 5. What has been the change in your in-house design capacity in the last 5 years (since January 2016)? Please select one.

100% reduction	75% reduction	50% reduction	25% reduction	0 – No change	25% increase	50 % increase	75% increase	100% increase	N/A
○	○	○	○	⦿	○	○	○	○	○

Comments

[   ]

* 6. How do you deal with design issues relating to (please select as many as apply):

	Internal staff	External consultants	Agency staff	Shared resources with another Local Authority	Another Local Authority	Rely on developers	Temporary staff	Other (if possible specify below)
Major planning applications	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Minor planning applications	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Development of your own schemes e.g. social housing	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Highway concerns	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Public realm projects	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Preparation of design guidance and frameworks	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Preparation of Design Codes	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Landscape Concerns, including trees and SUDs	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

If you have selected "Other" please specify:

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* 7. How easy do you find it to recruit and retain design specialist staff? Please select one

◯ Easy

⦿ Challenging

◯ Impossible

What are the challenges (if any) you face?

High cost of housing in Wokingham deters job applicants

* 8. Do you favour the use of temporary placement/ secondment/ enabling/ schemes to bolster your internal design resources?

◯ Yes

◯ No

⦿ Don't Know

Please explain why

<div style="border:1px solid #000;padding:20px;"> </div>

* 9. Does your Local Authority make use of a Design Review panel of any kind in assessing the design quality of planning applications?

⦿ Yes

◯ No

* 10. How often does your Local Authority make use of a Design Review Panel? Please select one.

◯ Yes - Monthly

◯ Yes - Quarterly

⦿ Yes - Occasionally (when needed)

◯ Yes - Very rarely

◯ No - Never

* 11. Who manages the design review service that you use? Please select as many as apply:

☐ Your own in-house panel

☐ Another public sector panel (please specify below)

☑ A third party panel (please specify)

☐ You use more than one panel (please specify below)

☐ None (we do not use Design Review)

☐ Other (please specify)

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* 12. Does your authority uses design codes? Please select one.

◯ Yes - We produce them in-house

◉ Yes - We require developers to produce them for appropriate schemes

○ No - We encourage their production but don't require it

○ No - We never use them

* 13. How will you respond to the new national requirement to produce design codes? Please select one.

○ We will produce them in-house

○ We will hire external consultants to produce them

○ We will require developers to produce them for appropriate schemes

◉ Other (please specify)

Dont know yet, might be inhouse or consultants

* 14. At what scale will you use design codes? Please select one.

◉ Authority-wide

○ For specific areas

○ For specific sites

* 15. How does your local authority engage communities on the design of major new developments? Please select as many as apply.

☑ Statutory consultation processes

☐ Public consultation events

☐ Opinion surveys

☐ Technological means e.g. social media

☐ Hands on design engagement exercise e.g. charrettes or enquiry by design

☐ Community panel

☐ Other (please specify)

* 16. What are the limitations you face in doing more to engage communities on design? Please select as many as apply.

☐ None

☐ Lack of resources

☐ Lack of knowhow

☐ Unwillingness of developers or landowners

☑ Other (please specify)

We would expect developers to carry out community engagment before submitting planning applicatic

* 17. Other than policies in your local plan, what other design guidance does your authority regularly use? Please select as many as apply.

☑ National Planning Practice Guidance

☑ National design guide 2019

- ☐ Building for Life 12 / Building for a Healthy Life
- ☐ Councillor's Companion for Design in Planning
- ☐ Design Companion for Planning & Placemaking
- ☐ Urban Design Compendium
- ☐ By Design
- ☐ Manual for Streets
- ☑ Local design guides
- ☐ Other (please specify)

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* 18. Do your non-design officers and councillors receive any design training?

	Yes	No
a) Officers	●	○

If you answered yes, can you please specify what is the nature of this training?

we have procured training courses for staff

	Yes	No
b) Councillors	○	●

If you answered yes, can you please specify what is the nature of this training?

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19. Do you have a Local Authority Design / Place Champion?

- ● No
- ○ Yes. Please explain the nature of this appointment in the text box below