

Planning Policy Unit

Customer Charter



THE SERVICE

The Planning Policy Unit delivers the following services focusing on the whole of North Devon District outside the Exmoor National Park boundary:

- Preparing and monitoring the North Devon Local Plan which sets out the land use policies and proposals to guide development throughout the District for a ten year period;
- The preparation of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) to complement the policies and proposals contained in the Local Plan;
- Providing planning policy advice to the Planning Unit, members of the public and developers;
- Assisting in the preparation of various strategies proposed by the Council; and
- Responding to statutory and non-statutory documents prepared by the Government, other Local Authorities and organisations, including the Structure Plan and Regional Planning Guidance.

CONTACTING US

When you contact us we will:

- Be approachable, helpful and considerate
- treat you with courtesy and politeness
- listen and understand customer needs
- treat all customers equally

You can contact us in any of the following ways:



By **telephone** on 01271 388392 / 388409 / 388302

- We aim to answer 95% of all telephone calls within 6 rings (20 seconds)
- When we speak to you we will say good morning or afternoon, give the name of the service or person you are speaking to and ask how we can help you
- If we cannot help you immediately we will let you know to whom you have been speaking and when we will contact you
- If your call needs to be transferred to another section, the details of your enquiry will be passed on
- We aim to answer all messages left on answer machines within 24 hours (Monday to Friday)
- If you leave a message on an answer machine and it is

likely to take more than 24 hours, the message will tell you when we will contact you.



In **person** in the Planning Reception on the 4th floor of the Civic Centre, Barnstaple between 9am and 1pm or between 1.30pm and 4.30pm

- Officers will be available to see casual callers when someone is available, but it is recommended that an appointment is made for a mutually convenient time
- We aim to see 80% of casual callers within 15 minutes of visiting our reception area
- All staff will wear name badges
- You will be seen in a private place if you want to.



In **writing** to the Planning Policy Unit, Room 411, Civic Centre, Barnstaple, EX31 1EA

- We aim to reply to 95% of letters within 10 working days
- Where we are unable to respond in the above time, we will advise when a response can be expected and who is dealing with the matter
- Responses will be typed and easy to understand.



By **computer** by sending us an e-mail to localplan@northdevon.gov.uk

- Contact through e-mail will be subject to the same standards as contacting us in writing.

STANDARDS OF SERVICE

We will tell you when we are reaching our standards through the local press, on the Council's website at www.northdevon.gov.uk and in the Council newspaper.

In addition to the above standards, the following are specific to this service :

- The Local Plan should be reviewed at least once every 5 years

LEGISLATION

The Local Plan is prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and the Town and Country Planning (Development Plan) (England) Regulations 1999.

NEW IDEAS AND IMPROVEMENTS

We will undertake surveys following the adoption of each Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Guidance to help to improve our services. We would appreciate your help and welcome any comments you wish to make.

We will take into account your views and give feedback through the local press, Council's newspaper and Council's website.

All new documents can be viewed on the Council's website.

PUTTING THINGS RIGHT

We intend to get things right first time, but if things do go wrong we want you to feel comfortable about challenging us and making a complaint.

You can make a complaint by contacting the service direct by any of the methods previously listed, or you can ring the Complaints Line on 01271 388260.

We will acknowledge all complaints received within 3 working days and send a full response within 10 working days.

Should the response be longer than 10 working days we will contact you and let you know when we will be able to reply.

If you are unhappy with the response, you can ask for your complaint to be reviewed. This will normally be undertaken by Customer Services.

SPECIAL NEEDS

If you would like this information or any information we produce to be provided in alternative languages, in braille or on audio tape, please contact Customer Services on 388240 or e-mail us on customer_services@northdevon.gov.uk.

We aim to provide this information within 15 working days of any request. We will let you know if it is likely to take longer.

REVIEW

It is intended to review this Charter every 2 years, or as required by changing circumstances.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you would like further information on any of the services we provide or have any comments about how this Charter could be improved, please contact us on 01271 388392.

This Charter was produced on 25 March 2003