

Community Planning and the System

Soon after its conception, the statutory planning process began to seek ways of increasing the opportunities to ensure support for its decisions. Opposition to planning decisions has always existed, as evidenced by the need for 'planning aid' services.

But the system is notoriously complex, and pinpointing the stages when community input is most fruitful – whether in making plans or in affecting decisions – is very difficult.

Influencing planning decisions is vital for communities, not only to oppose bad developments, but also because major schemes can invariably be enhanced as a result.

Yet those who want to oppose or improve development proposals often feel powerless and disenfranchised.

This seminar gives an overview of the statutory planning system, concentrating on the rights and opportunities for communities to have an input. The implications of the Planning Green Paper will also be explored.

Those attending the day will be encouraged to discuss their experiences of taking part in, or challenging, statutory planning decisions and to consider opportunities for improving the system.

Gideon Amos is Director of the **Town & Country Planning Association** which campaigns for the reform of the planning system to make it more responsive to people's needs and aspirations and to promote sustainable development. A chartered architect and qualified urban designer, Gideon has had four years experience as a member of a local authority's Planning & Highways Committees as well as working as a planner for WS Atkins developing housing schemes. He is a nationally qualified trainer and was formerly Director of Planning Aid for London.

Programme

10.45	Registration and Coffee
11.15	Introductions
11.30	An overview of the statutory process and opportunities to participate Power point presentation followed by discussion based on participants' own experiences.
12.30	How to challenge decisions when things go wrong Presentation followed by discussion.
13.00	Lunch
14.00	Proposed reforms Presentation on the Government's proposed reform of the planning process and opportunities available to affect the outcome. Discussion.
14.15	Improvements to the process Ideas derived from the discussions before and after lunch will be arranged into themes for workshop groups to consider. The task will be to devise improvements to the process.
15.15	Tea
15.30	Presentation of workshop groups' conclusions
16.00	Closing discussion
16.30	Close

Lunch and tea will be provided.

After the seminar, participants are invited to continue discussion informally over a drink or meal in a nearby wine bar as part of **The Community Planning Club**.