



The Planning Inspectorate
Yr Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

The Planning Inspectorate in a changing world

Sarah Richards Chief Executive



What the Planning Inspectorate does

- We examine plans, make decisions on appeals and make recommendations on applications.
- Fair open and timely is our way of working
- 800 staff and 100 contractors – now all working at home
- 350 inspectors and 80 contract inspectors
- Offices in Bristol and Cardiff
- 22,000 cases last year



How has Covid impacted?

#keepingcaseworkmoving

- The wellbeing of our staff
- Our plan had always been to explore virtual working – Covid just accelerated this
- Since March we have held over 350 virtual events – 1000 days of virtual hearings
- October – issued 1965 decisions – the most in the last 12 months
- 14,000 views of a local plan examination, 4,500 on one inquiry day



Future ways of working?

#keepingcaseworkmoving

- The wellbeing of our staff
- What will our future way of working be?
 - Virtual is here to stay
 - Possibly some face to face
 - Return to the office?
- Public interest in planning



Purpose of planning reforms

- Make the planning **system simpler, more certain, quicker** and more accessible for local people to engage with;
- Supply **more land** in the system, to enable more homes to be built in the right places and to provide businesses and communities with the space to develop;
- Encourage more **beautiful** development and places, ensuring development is in-keeping with the local aesthetic and giving local people a meaningful say;
- Ensure development comes with the **local infrastructure** needed to support people and places, in line with the Government's wider economic and social goals;
- Meet our **climate change** and **environmental** objectives, including by ensuring that new homes do not require future retrofitting; and
- Make the **housing industry more diverse and competitive** to drive delivery and higher standards.



#Planning for the Future - process change

- Fundamental change to plan making – a rules based system
- Digital embedded throughout
- Impact on decision making – future of development management?
- Universal design codes
- *Project speed* – what is this?



#Planning for the future - outcomes

- More beautiful and better-quality homes, including more affordable
- Better local amenities and infrastructure with all new developments
- A planning system that creates better environmental outcomes
- A more accessible, simple and visual system
- A faster and more certain planning system
- More and wider community engagement, with greater democracy and transparency
- More land freed up for development
- Support developers and their innovations, and those looking to enter the market



Headlines

- Fundamental change to the current system
- Faster and more certain is the ambition
- Plans in place everywhere
- Simplification



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Thank you