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# COUNCIL RESOURCING FACT SHEET

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Councils have faced significant reductions in funding over the past decade. This has impacted every aspect of their operations. Services like planning have been the hardest hit, causing a significant decline in the standard of service.

## THE FACTS

- Over the past decade funding for local government has reduced by more than 30% per capita.
- Planning services have had their budgets reduced by more than more than 50% on average.
- Cuts are expected to continue into 2020.
- Local authorities have been expected to continue delivering the same services at a much lower cost, which naturally leads to a reduction in quality.
- Councils have become able to charge for some service. Many have begun charging to see planning or conservation officers, which inflates the cost of planning to residents.
- Planning officers in some councils report handling 50 or more applications at any one time.
- The number of conservation officers has reduced significantly across the UK.
- Communication is critical to the planning process, particularly for listed building consent. In the past, informal advice was essential to the system working effectively.
- Planning is a critical service. Over 500,000 applications for planning permission are made per year, with decisions impacting on millions of people.

## OUR POLICY

We are campaigning for an increase in local authority funding, with ring fenced resources for planning departments.

## WHY?

Listed building owners have to engage with their local planning authority frequently; for advice, certificates of lawfulness, building consent, and planning permission. As a result, the lack of resources available to planning departments disproportionately affects listed building owners.

Listed building owners need advice and support and planning departments need to be properly resourced to provide it. Historically, informal guidance was a major part of the process and it should be returned.

Cutting services like planning is a false economy. Much local economic growth depends on development work. When planning authorities have the resources to action applications quickly and correctly, these services pay for themselves through the creation of new houses and new businesses.