

# Learning from *Better connected surveys* Planning task

Helen Williams

*Better connected* reviewer

## New era symbolised by launch of GDS

- Focus on meeting user needs (not building websites!)
- Be obsessed with user feedback and constant user testing
- Prioritise common case (not the exception)
- Achieve consistent user experience for all parts of online government

# Highlights from *Website take-up service*

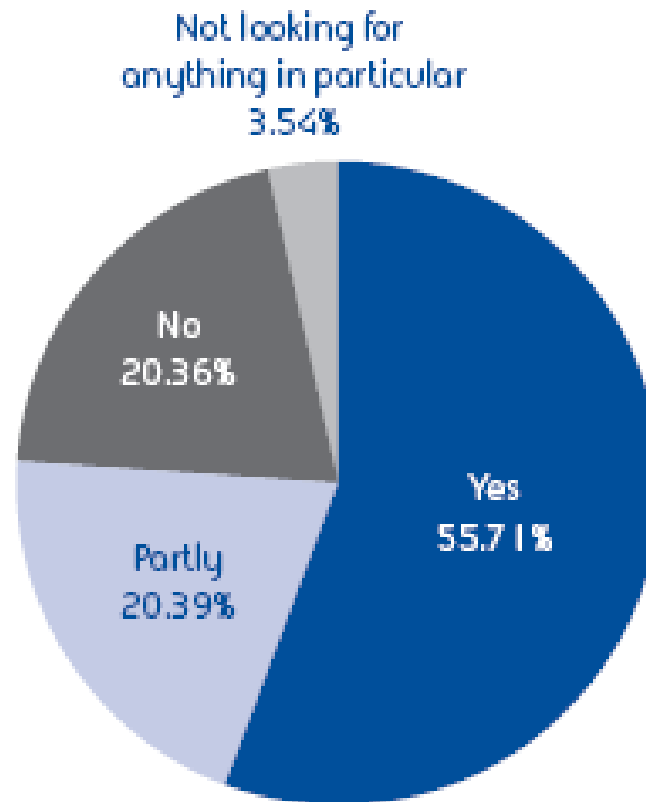
Results from 2011



## Q3 What was the main service area that you were interested in today

Main reasons to visit	% of total
1. Rubbish and recycling	10.69%
2. Libraries	8.62%
3. Job vacancies	7.48%
4. Leisure facilities	6.93%
5. Schools/youth	5.77%
6. Planning	5.44%
7. Council tax	5.19%
8. Housing	4.52%
9. Family history	4.14%
10. Transport and buses	3.72%

## Q5 Did you find what you were looking for today?



## Visit failure by service

Libraries	13.07	Social care	20.47
Events information	14.24	Health	21.56
Council tax	14.90	Adult/further education	21.73
Leisure facilities	15.13	Highways	22.11
Rubbish and recycling	16.04	Transport and buses	22.39
Schools/youth	16.37	Electoral register	23.65
Environmental health	18.97	Housing	23.93
Council business	19.44	Parking	24.29
Job vacancies	20.04	<b>Planning</b>	<b>30.40</b>
Business	20.28	Family history	32.72

## Visit failure by frequency of visit (Planning)

Daily	20.0%
Several times in month	29.2%
Monthly	26.0%
Every few months	23.9%
Very rarely	33.9%
First time visitor	<b>38.7%</b>

Source: Feb/Mar 2012

## Tasks re planning applications

- Problem lies in software that is not very usable for general public
- Or has been poorly integrated
- Or is a mixture of both



## Is poor user experience inevitable?

- No!
- Some councils scored much better than others, using same systems and software
- Why do some councils perform better?

## Why do some councils perform better?

- Getting an excellent, consistent user journey
- Getting link wording right
- Covering the topic properly
- Testing and tweaking software configurations, upgrades
- Necessary clicks - ensuring user cannot bypass key information

# Getting wording right – South Tyneside

## Planning

- › Search and comment on planning applications
- › Do I need planning permission?

## Planning



### Search planning applications

Search and comment on planning applications online.

## Search planning applications

### Search for planning applications

- ▶ [Current planning applications \(within past month\)](#)
- ▶ [Search by property/street](#)
- ▶ [Search by reference number](#)
- ▶ [Recently decided planning applications](#)
- ▶ [Advanced search](#)
- ▶ [Map of planning applications](#)



By using our online search facility you agree to our [terms and conditions](#)



### Email alerts

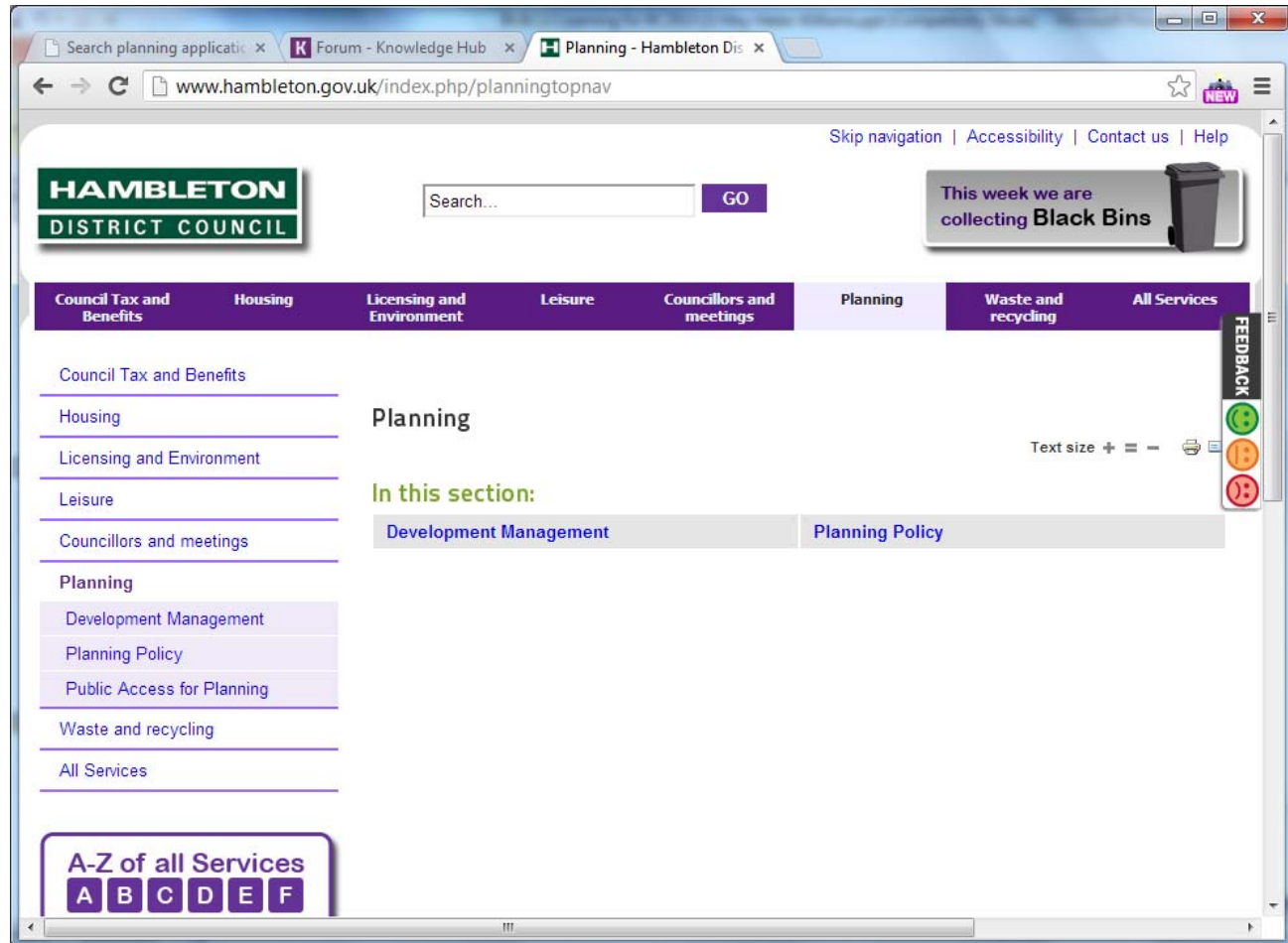
Keep up-to-date with new planning applications in your area with [email alerts](#)

## How do I comment on a planning application?

Online



# Getting wording wrong





## The planning task

- Object to a planning application: 18 questions
- Routes - can I get to the right page via Google, site search, navigational tree, A-Z etc.
- Quality of information - do I have all the relevant information to make an objection



# Planning system questions

- Q96 Is a link provided for viewing all current applications?
- Q97 When viewing a current application, am I informed that I can comment on it?
- Q98 When viewing a current application and preparing to submit comments, is guidance provided about permitted grounds for objection to an application?
- Q99 Is it clear that any comments I submit will be published, along with my name, and available for inspection by any interested party?
- Q100 Is it clear how I might obtain assistance if required
- Q102 Was a useful map presented to me during the completion of this task?
- Q103 Were all the relevant pieces of information linked together to make a smooth, coherent journey?



## Planning software performance

Product	No of customers	Market share	Ticks (average)	Rating (average)
Fastweb	12	4%	70%	2.25
ApplicationSearchServlet	11	4%	51%	2.00
Ocella	11	4%	38%	1.82
SwiftLG	16	6%	45%	1.75
Planning Explorer	21	7%	43%	1.71
PlanetApplicationEnquiry	3	1%	48%	1.67
WAM	8	3%	41%	1.63
AcolNet	25	9%	39%	1.60
Public Access	172	60%	52%	1.55
GFPlanningsearch	8	3%	29%	1.13
<b>Total</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>1.71</b>






## Councils using Fastweb

- Craven DC
- Eastleigh BC
- Eden DC
- Harlow DC
- Mansfield DC
- Neath Port Talbot CBC
- North Devon DC
- Rugby BC
- South Lakeland DC
- LB Sutton
- Welwyn Hatfield DC
- Wyre Forest DC



## Q96 Is a link provided for viewing all current applications?

Accessibility options: [Skip Navigation](#) | [Accessibility help](#)



### Planning applications register

[Contact Us](#)  
[A - Z](#)

- Home
- Planning and Development
  - Planning
    - Search for Planning Applications**
    - Applying for Planning Permission
    - Planning Control Breaches
    - Planning Application Forms
    - Contact Development Control
    - Advice before making a planning application
    - When do I need planning permission?
    - Commenting on a planning application
    - Planning Application Fees
    - Frequently Asked Questions
    - Planning Publications

#### What do you want to do?

- [View current applications](#)
- [Comment on a current application](#)
- [View applications decided](#)
- [View the progress of an application](#)
- [View current appeals](#)

#### Weekly lists

- [Weekly List of Applications received](#)
- [Weekly List of Decisions made](#)

#### Search planning applications

Planning Application Number:

Site Address (1st Line):

Post Code:

[Search](#)

More search options available in the [advanced search](#)

There are no details of applications prior to 1988 in this system. [Contact Development Control](#) if you require information on any of these.


**All data supplied within this system is taken from a live database and is current.**

Eden District Council aims to publish all planning application documentation online within five working days

<http://www.eden.gov.uk/planning-and-development/planning/search-for-pla...>  
Eden Decision Awards







## Q96 Is a link provided for viewing all current applications?

**EREWASH**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Erewash Online  
...driving for success

A-Z of council services A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Tel: 0845 907 2244 | email: [enquiries@erewash.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@erewash.gov.uk) | [Site map](#)

[Home](#) <  
[Planning and buildings](#)  
[Development control](#) >  
[Building regulations](#) >  
[Planning policy](#) >  
[Land searches](#) >  
[Search 2005-2010 applications](#) >  
[Fees](#) >  
**External services**  
  
  
  


### Search for Planning Applications

Please do not use the back or forward buttons on your browser. Instead please use any provided 'back' option within the website form(s). If there is no 'back' option available please use the 'cancel' option.

When searching on an address or description, an asterisk (\*) should be entered on either side of the search phrase, e.g. \*Nottingham Road\* or \*extension\*.

[Search](#) [Cancel](#) [Clear](#)

Application Reference  
ERE/

Application Description

House Name

House No

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

Address Line 3

Postcode

[Search](#) [Cancel](#) [Clear](#)



## Q96 Is a link provided for viewing all current applications?

**Barnsley Council online**

Home > Planning Explorer

### Application Searches - Other Criteria

Use this screen to search for planning applications using a combination of search criteria.  
To search you can enter values in more than one field if required and the search will return all records that meet the criteria set.  
None of the fields are case sensitive. Using the 'Date Search' dates can be selected by typing in the format "21-09-2005".

#### Search Criteria

Application Number	<input type="text"/>
Applicant Name	<input type="text"/>
Property Number	<input type="text"/>
Street Name	<input type="text" value=" &lt; all &gt;"/>
Proposal Key Word	<input type="text"/>
Ward	<input type="text" value=" &lt; all &gt;"/>
Parish	<input type="text" value=" &lt; all &gt;"/>
Locality	<input type="text"/>
Application Type	<input type="text" value=" &lt; all &gt;"/>
Status	<input type="text" value=" &lt; all &gt;"/>
Agent Name	<input type="text"/>

#### Date Search

Search Date Type	<input type="text" value="Date Received"/>
Search Dates by Months	<input type="radio"/>
Set Number Of Months	<input type="text" value="1"/>
Search Dates by Days	<input type="radio"/>
Set Number Of Days	<input type="text" value="1"/>
Search Between Dates	<input type="radio"/>
Set Date Range FROM	<input type="text"/>
Set Date Range TO	<input type="text"/>
Dates Not Applicable	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

**Search**

#### Planning Explorer

List of other Planning Explorer search screens

- [Planning Explorer Home](#)
- [New Applications Registered](#)
- [Application Number Search](#)
- [Recent Decisions](#)
- [By Applicant](#)
- [By Agent](#)
- [Application Search](#)
- [Undecided Applications](#)
- [Case Officer](#)
- [Planning Appeals](#)
- [Useful Links](#)
- [Keywords](#)



## Q96 Is a link provided for viewing all current applications

Skip to content | Site map | Accessibility

Events | News centre

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SEARCH

Home > Planning and Building Standards > Planning and Building Standards Online Services

Planning and Building Standards Online Services

Search My Profile Login Register

Planning » Simple Search

Search for Planning Applications, Appeals and Enforcements by keyword, application reference, postcode or by a single line of an address.

Simple Advanced Weekly / Monthly Lists Property Map

Search for:

☒ Applications ☐ Appeals ☐ Enforcements

Enter a keyword, reference number, postcode or single line of an address.

Search

an idox solution

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To the top

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## Q97 Am I informed that I can comment on an application if it is still open for consultation?

 **Planning applications register** [Contact Us](#)  
[A - Z](#)

### Planning applications - search results

The search has resulted in the following number of planning applications: 287

To see details or view the progress of a planning application or to comment on it (where applicable), please click on the appropriate button:

App. No.:	<a href="#">12/0416</a>	Site Address:	ROSE BANK GRAHAM STREET PENRITH CA11 9LB	<a href="#">View Details</a>
Description:	1. Fell 3 dead trees; 2. Prune 2 trees to reduce shading to neighbours; in Penrith New Streets Conservation Area.			<a href="#">View Progress</a>
Received Date:	10/05/2012	Decision Sent Date:		<a href="#">Comment</a>
		Decision Date:		
App. No.:	<a href="#">12/0409</a>	Site Address:	THE VICARAGE MORLAND PENRITH CA10 3AX	<a href="#">View Details</a>
Description:	Non-material amendment to application 10/0705 comprising of reduction in size and orientation of plot 2 and realignment of eastern boundary of plot 3.			<a href="#">View Progress</a>
				<a href="#">Comment</a>



## Q97 Am I informed that I can comment on an application if it is still open for consultation?

Home <

Planning and buildings

Development control >

Building regulations >

Planning policy >

Land searches >

Search 2005-2010 applications >

Fees >

External services

**Directgov**  
Public services all in one place

**PLANNING PORTAL**

online.  
planning  
offices.co.uk

**Home-Options**

**Get Safe Online**  
Expert advice for everyone

**digitaluk**

### Details of Planning Application

Please do not use the back or forward buttons on your browser. Instead please use any provided 'back' option within the website form(s). If there is no 'back' option available please use the 'cancel' option.

[Back](#) [Cancel](#) [New Search](#) [Documents](#)

Below are the application details for case 025602:

ADDRESS DETAILS	
House Name	
House No	8
Address Line 1	Grange Avenue
Address Line 2	Breaston
Address Line 3	Derbyshire
Postcode	DE72 3BX
Ward	Breaston
Parish	Breaston

[Show Postcode in Google Maps \(in New Window\)](#)

CASE DETAILS	
Web Search Reference	025602
Application Reference	0412/0040
ERE/	
Application Description	ERECTION OF A SINGLE-STOREY TIMBER ANNEX WITH STORAGE AREA
Application Type	Full Planning (Alts, exts etc)
Officer	Kenny Dhillon
Valid Date	27/04/2012
Consultee Finish Date	
8 Week Determination Date	22/06/2012



Q22 Am I informed that I can comment on an application if it is still open for consultation?

https://citydev-portal.edinburgh.gov.uk/idx 12/01938/LBC | Infill family ...

Skip to content | Site map | Accessibility Events | News centre

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Home > Planning and Building Standards > Planning and Building Standards Online Services

Planning and Building Standards Online Services

Search My Profile Login Register

Planning » Application Summary [Help with this page](#)

12/01938/LBC | Infill family room/kitchen extension to rear elevations with new rear roof dormer window. | 18 Pittville Street Edinburgh EH15 2BY

[Back to search results](#) [Track](#) [Print](#)

You must log in to make a comment.

Details Comments (0) Documents (1) Related Cases (1) Map

Summary Further Information Contacts Important Dates

Reference	12/01938/LBC
Alternative Reference	Not Available
Application Received	Thu 31 May 2012
Address	18 Pittville Street Edinburgh EH15 2BY
Proposal	Infill family room/kitchen extension to rear elevations with new rear roof dormer window.





# Make a comment

Home > Planning and Building Standards > Planning and Building Standards Online Services

Planning and Building Standards Online Services

Search My Profile Login Register

Planning » Application Comments [Help with this page](#)

12/01938/LBC | Infill family room/kitchen extension to rear elevations with new rear roof dormer window. | 18 Pittville Street Edinburgh EH15 2BY

[Back to search results](#) [Track](#) [Print](#)

You must log in to make a comment.

Details Comments (0) Documents (1) Related Cases (1) Map

Make a Comment Public Comments (0) Consultee Comments (0)

Comments may not be submitted at this time.

You must log in to make a comment.

[Login and make a comment.](#)

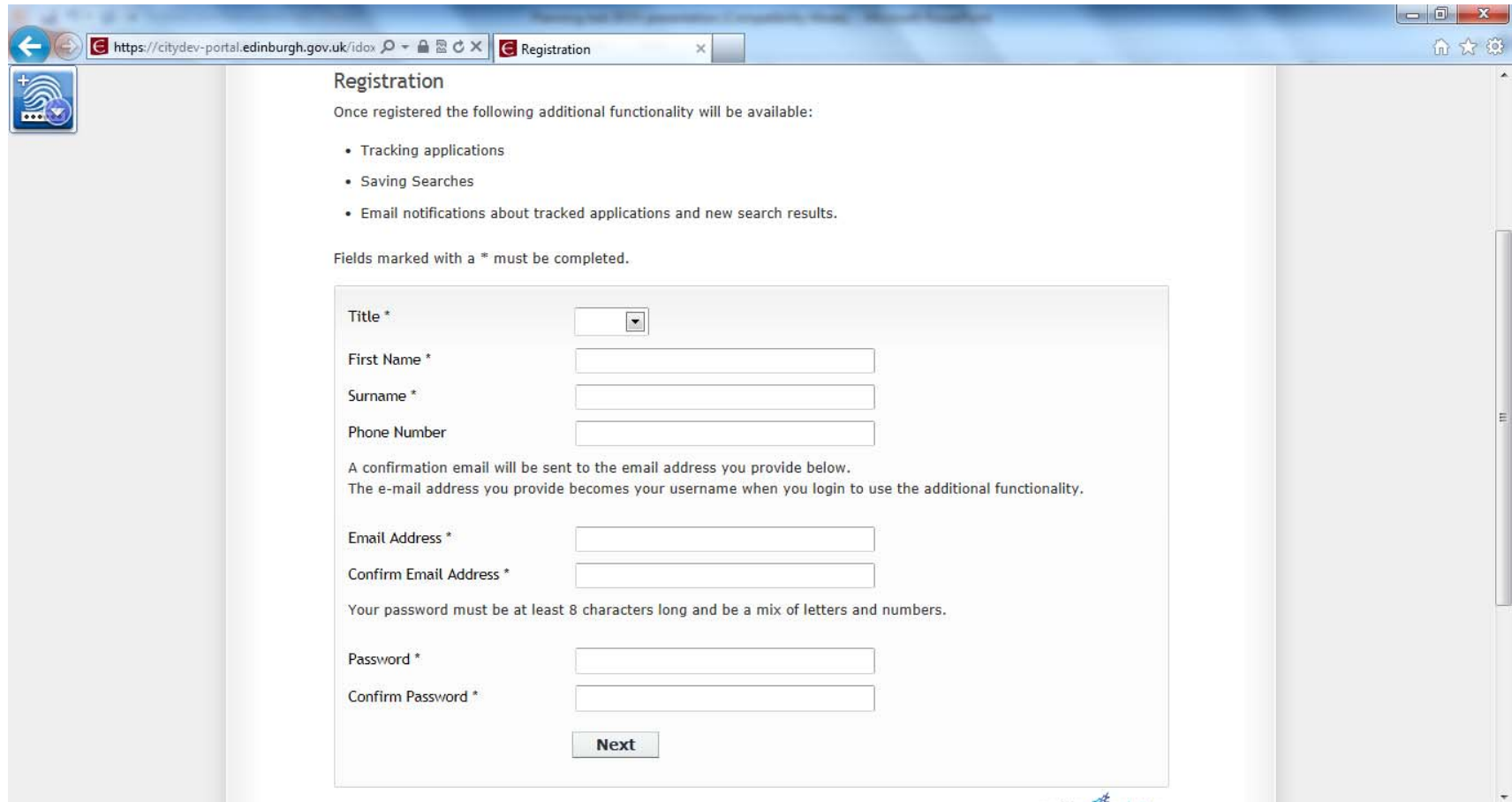
Not got a login? [Register here.](#)

[Contact Us](#)

an idox solution



## Registration page



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying <https://citydev-portal.edinburgh.gov.uk/idx>. The page title is "Registration". On the left sidebar, there is a blue icon with a fingerprint and a plus sign. The main content area is titled "Registration" and contains the following text:

Once registered the following additional functionality will be available:

- Tracking applications
- Saving Searches
- Email notifications about tracked applications and new search results.

Fields marked with a \* must be completed.

The registration form includes the following fields:

- Title \* (dropdown menu)
- First Name \* (text input)
- Surname \* (text input)
- Phone Number (text input)
- Email Address \* (text input)
- Confirm Email Address \* (text input)
- Password \* (text input)
- Confirm Password \* (text input)

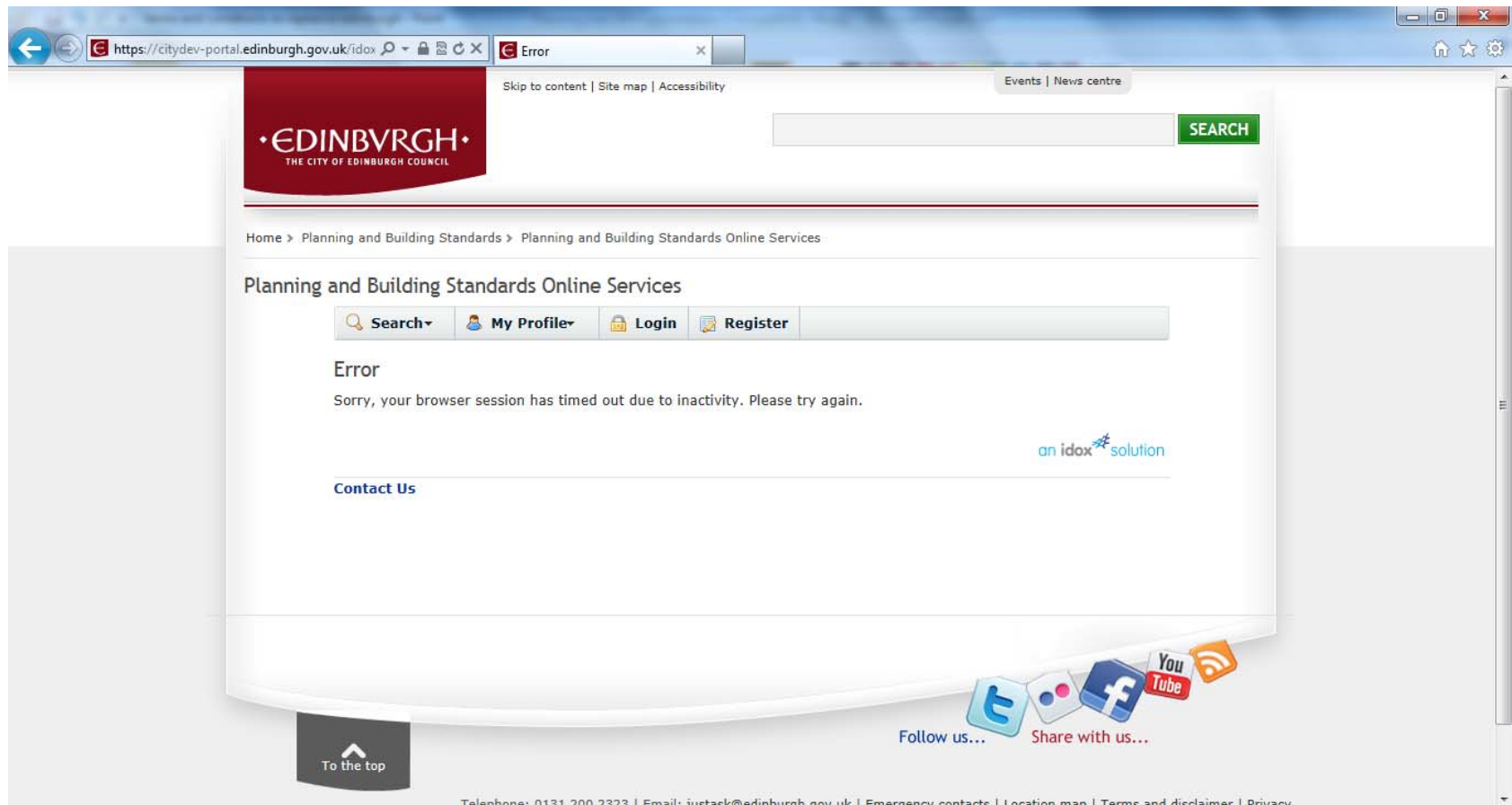
A confirmation email will be sent to the email address you provide below.  
The e-mail address you provide becomes your username when you login to use the additional functionality.

Your password must be at least 8 characters long and be a mix of letters and numbers.

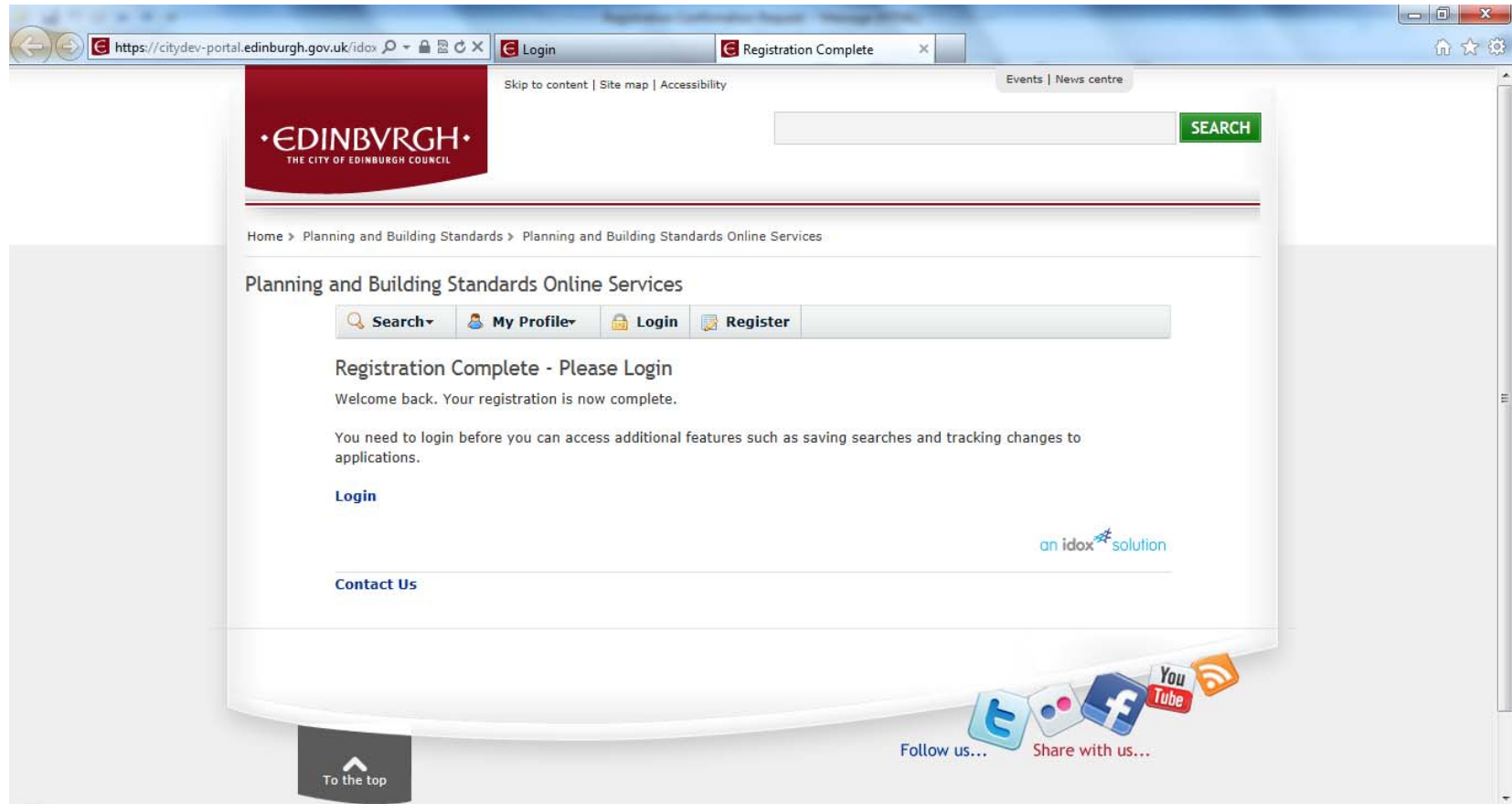
At the bottom of the form is a "Next" button.



## Time out, every time



## Registration success!





## Logged in

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://citydev-portal.edinburgh.gov.uk/idx>. The browser tabs include 'Login' and 'My Profile » Profile Details'. The page header features the Edinburgh City Council logo and a search bar. The main content area is titled 'Planning and Building Standards Online Services' and includes a navigation bar with 'Search', 'My Profile', and 'Logout (Helen Williams)'. The 'My Profile » Profile Details' section is active, showing tabs for 'Profile Details', 'Saved Searches', 'Notified Applications', and 'Tracked Applications'. The 'Profile Details' tab is selected, displaying a form with the following information:

Name	Mrs Helen Williams
Email	helen.williams@socitm.net
Phone Number	01684830095
Address	Micklefield Farm Upton-upon-Severn WR8 0RW

At the bottom of the profile section, there are links for 'Change Password', 'Update Personal Details', and 'Delete Profile'. The footer includes a 'Contact Us' link and the 'an idox solution' logo.



## Q98 Is guidance provided at the appropriate step about permitted grounds for objection to an application?

### Comment on planning applications

Planning Application Number:	12/0416
Site Address:	ROSE BANK GRAHAM STREET PENRITH CA11 9LB
Description:	1. Fell 3 dead trees; 2. Prune 2 trees to reduce shading to neighbours; in Penrith New Streets Conservation Area.

#### [More information on how to comment](#)

All the fields must be completed before your comments will be accepted.

Name:	<input type="text"/>	Address:	<input type="text"/>
Email Address:	<input type="text"/>		
Type of comment <input type="radio"/> Object <input type="radio"/> Support <input checked="" type="radio"/> Observation			

**IMPORTANT:** Any correspondence we receive about an application (or telephone conversations which are noted) are **NOT CONFIDENTIAL** and can be seen by anybody, including the applicant or other neighbours. Therefore, please avoid writing anything you do not wish to be available for public inspection. Also, if a planning application is to be considered by a Committee of the Council, any comments received will be summarised in a publicly available report submitted to that Committee.

Please write your comments in the space below:

Do you wish to submit this comment (You must write Yes into this box to continue):

[Submit](#)



## Q98 Is it clear that any comments you submit will be published, along with your name...

### Comment on planning applications

Planning Application Number:	12/0416
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Please write your comments in the space below:

Do you wish to submit this comment (You must write Yes into this box to continue):

**Submit**



## South Tyneside reviewer comment

- Could not fail to miss this signposting from the landing page; the first link presented was 'search and comment on planning applications.'
- Clear statement provided saying that if the application was open for comment I would see the 'comment on this application' link within the application itself.
- Lots of useful quick links for finding new planning applications, recently decided, even a useful map where I could click on an application number and be taken straight to the application





# South Tyneside landing page

The screenshot shows the South Tyneside Council website. At the top, there's a header with the council's name and a search bar. Below this is a navigation menu with various service categories. The 'Planning & environment' section is highlighted. The main content area is titled 'Planning' and lists several key services: 'Search planning applications', 'Planning permission', 'Appeal a planning decision', 'Breaches of planning control', and 'Local development plan'. Each service has a brief description and a corresponding icon. On the right side, there's a 'Contact us' section with the council's address and contact details, followed by an 'E-services' section with a link to report unauthorized development. At the bottom, there's a 'Useful websites' section with a link to the Planning Portal. A 'cookies' banner is visible at the very bottom.

Mobile site Listen to this website

**southtyneside.info**  
COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY WEBSITE

Search SEARCH Login or register

Bins & recycling Business Housing & council tax Jobs Leisure & libraries People & care **Planning & environment** Schools & learning Transport & streets Your council

Home Planning & environment Planning

## Planning

**Search planning applications**  
Search and comment on planning applications online.

**Planning permission**  
Find out if you need planning permission and how to apply.

**Appeal a planning decision**  
Find out how to appeal against a planning decision.

**Breaches of planning control**  
Report breaches of planning control and search enforcement notices.

**Local development plan**  
Spatial planning policy and guidance (Local Plan/LDF) and how we make decisions on planning applications and proposals.

### Contact us

**Planning Group**  
Town Hall & Civic Offices,  
Westoe Road  
South Shields  
Tyne & Wear  
NE33 2RL  
0191 424 7421  
planning.enquiries@  
southtyneside.gov.uk

Give us feedback on this service

### E-services

Report an unauthorised development  
More e-services

### Useful websites

Planning Portal

cookies



## Edinburgh landing page

The screenshot shows the Edinburgh City Council website. The header features the council's logo and a navigation menu with links like Home, Services A-Z, Contact us, Pay it, Request it, Report it, and Have your say. A search bar is located in the top right corner. The main content area is titled 'View and comment on a planning application' and includes a breadcrumb trail: Home > Planning and the environment > Planning and building standards > Planning - applications, warrants and certificates > View and comment on a planning application. A sidebar on the left lists various topics, with 'Planning and the environment' highlighted. The main text explains how to view a planning application, including a list of steps: use the application search service, enter a reference number or keyword, click search, and select the application. A green button prompts users to 'View, comment and submit planning applications online'. A 'Planning helpdesk' section provides contact information for Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh, EH8 8BG.

**EDINBURGH**  
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

Home Services A-Z Contact us Pay it Request it Report it Have your say

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Browse by Topic

- About your Council
- Business and trade
- Community life and leisure
- Education and learning
- Housing
- Jobs and employment
- Law and licensing
- Planning and the environment
- Animal welfare and pest control
- Conservation
- Countryside, farming and wildlife
- Emergencies
- Environmental education
- Environmental health
- Land and property
- Marine and waterway services
- Parks, gardens and open spaces
- ▼ Planning and building standards
- Building standards - building regulations
- Building standards -

Home > Planning and the environment > Planning and building standards > Planning - applications, warrants and certificates > View and comment on a planning application

### View and comment on a planning application

Page 1 of 2 >

#### How to view a planning application

##### Viewing an application

You can view valid planning applications and associated documents online.

- Use the [application search on the Planning and Building Standards online service](#)
- Enter your reference number or a keyword such as the street name
- Click search
- Select the application you are interested in

If your search returns a large number of results, you can use the [advanced planning application search](#) to refine your search.

You can also register to [comment online](#). It only takes a couple of minutes and will also allow you to track applications and save searches.

[Give us your feedback on our website](#)

[View, comment and submit planning applications online](#)

**Planning helpdesk**

Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh, EH8 8BG  
Tel: 0131 528 3550





# South Cambs landing page

Certificate of Appropriate Development: CD

Variation of Condition - VC

## The Queen's Diamond Jubilee - June 2012

See below for advice on the need for planning permission to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee.

## The Queen's Diamond Jubilee 2012

See below for the organisation staff charts for building control, planning and new communities.

## Organisation Charts - Building Control, Planning & New Communities

The planning service offers five main functions:



### Planning Policy

Prepares the [Local Development Framework](#) (previously the Local Plan) which sets out planning policies that guide the development and use of land in the district.

For more information, visit:

- [LDF News](#) - for the latest information on the preparation of the Local Development Framework
- [Local Development Framework \(LDF\)](#) - for information on Development Plan Documents (DPDs), Area Action Plans (AAPs) and the Proposals Map
- [Supplementary Planning Documents \(SPDs\)](#)



### Development Control

Implements planning policy through the processing of planning applications:

- [view planning applications](#) and [planning appeals](#)
- [seek general planning advice](#) and [pre-application advice](#)
- [find out if you need planning permission](#) for your development
- [submit a planning application online](#) or [download planning application forms](#)

You can also find out about:

- [making a complaint about a development](#)
- [Section 106 Contributions](#) - what are they and how do they work?

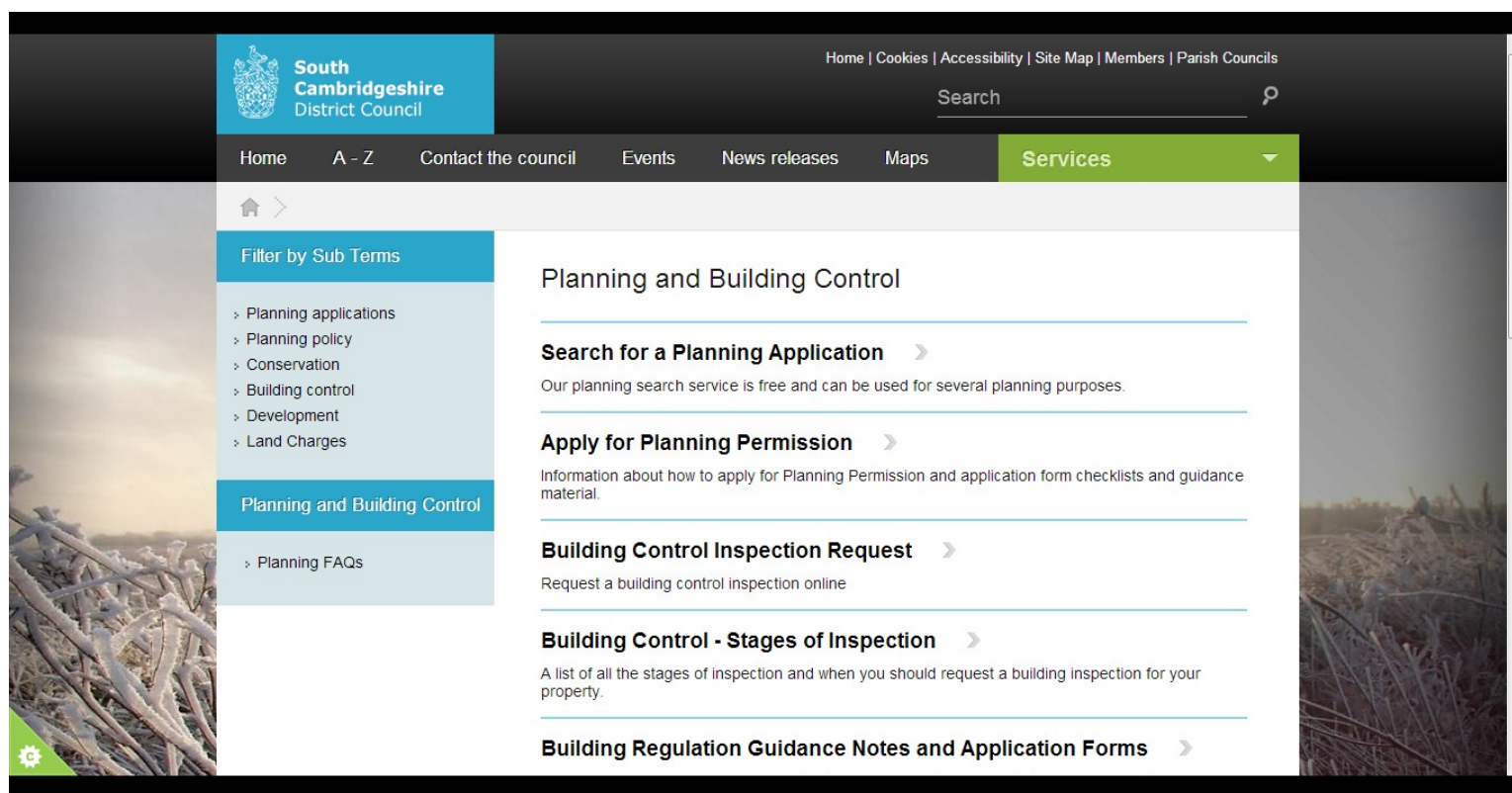
- › [How can I inspect a planning application?](#)
- › [How long does a planning application take to process?](#)
- › [More planning FAQs](#)

## EXTERNAL LINKS

- › [Planning Portal](#)
- › [Planning Aid](#)
- › [Town & Country Planning Act 1990](#)
- › [Planning Obligations Circular 2005](#)
- › [Planning Act 2008](#)
- › [Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010](#)
- › [Planning Portal advice on planning appeals](#)



# South Cambs new landing page





# South Cambs planning system

## PLANNING APPLICATIONS - LAND AND PROPERTY ADMINISTRATION

Home

Welcome to the planning search facility. The service is free and can be used to:

- Search for planning applications in your area
- Read details about applications, including descriptions
- Print or download a list of applications for an area
- View the weekly applications received and determined list

### Planning

[Search For a Planning Application](#)

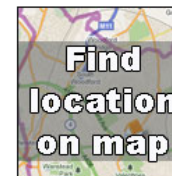
[Find location on a map](#)

[Planning Committee Agendas](#)

[Planning Weekly Lists \(Applications Determined and Applications Registered\)](#)

- **NEW!** [North-West of Cambridge Planning Application](#)

- **NEW!** [Northstowe Planning Application](#)



In order to submit a pre-application enquiry, make an enforcement complaint or receive notifications applications of interest, please register below.

### Log-in

[Log-in](#)

[Register](#)





# South Cambs new application search

The screenshot displays the South Cambridgeshire District Council website. The header includes the council's name and logo, a search bar, and navigation links: Home, Cookies, Accessibility, Site Map, Members, and Parish Councils. A secondary navigation bar contains links for Home, A-Z, Contact the council, Events, News releases, Maps, and Services (highlighted in green). The main content area is titled 'Search for a Planning Application' and includes a sub-link 'Search for a planning application using our Planning Application System'. It states that the service is free and lists five features: searching by area, reading details, printing/download lists, viewing weekly updates, and commenting on applications. A link to access the system is provided. A sidebar on the left lists various planning services under 'Planning applications' and 'More like this'.

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Home | Cookies | Accessibility | Site Map | Members | Parish Councils

Search

Home A - Z Contact the council Events News releases Maps Services

Planning and Building Control > Planning applications >

Planning applications

- > Search for a Planning Application
- > Apply for Planning Permission
- > Duty Officer System
- > Pre-application advice
- > Report a breach of planning control
- > How Planning Applications are processed

More like this

- > Submitting a Search Application & Fees
- > Local Land Charges and Searches
- > Personal Searches

### Search for a Planning Application

[Search for a planning application using our Planning Application System](#)

Our planning search service is free and can be used to:

- Search for planning applications in your area
- Read details about applications, including descriptions
- Print or download a list of applications for an area
- View the weekly applications received and determined list
- Make a comment on a current planning application

[Click here to access our Planning Application System](#)

**Service:**  
[Planning applications](#)



## *Website take-up service comments*

- Very confusing, too much text, too many links, poorly written, very difficult to find what you're looking for. I would suggest dramatically reducing the amount of text per page with clearer links to information.
- It did not accept my reference numbers being searched even though I had typed correctly. I finally got what I wanted through advanced search. It should have taken a fraction of the time.



## *Website take-up service comment*

- Tried to leave comments on a planning application - torturous process! Keep saying it had timed out despite no time lag, so I had to repeatedly re-enter comments. I'm sure many just can't be bothered and give up before submitting their thoughts. Not sure if problems are due to lack of site mobile optimisation? If so, it would be a worthwhile investment.



## *Website take-up service comments*

- ‘Details of a proposed planning development. Will try to telephone planning when the holiday is over.’
- ‘Will phone on Monday, as searches returned zero, except for one that was completely incorrect by referencing wrong information.’
- ‘We are looking for planning decisions but the information is not up to date. This results in making contact by telephone’
- ‘Wanted to know how my planning application is progressing. Will telephone instead.’

## IDOX PublicAccess meeting

- Review customer journey and terms used in new releases of PublicAccess
- Review some of product functionality (e.g. search configuration option to include recent apps, add link to guidance)
- Configuring options to improve customer experience – best practice guide, potentially reduce options available
- Ongoing dialogue with Socitm *Insight*



## How well are planning services presented? *Better connected 2013*

- ‘Generally very poor. Not helped by weak (or missing) content about how to actually comment. Given that a large percentage of commenters may be ‘first-timers’, this really isn’t acceptable.
- The application search functions ranged from average to awful, often requiring advanced knowledge of how planning works to really get anywhere.
- I simply don’t understand why councils fail to provide guidance on permitted grounds for objection a) in a logical place on a user journey and/or b) at all.
- Once again, many councils were providing very good signposting but, once you got to the task, the information was poor and you are often faced with a log-in at the last hurdle.’



## *Better connected 2014 timetable*

- Sites reviewed between 27 Oct and 7 Dec
- Report published 3 March 2014
- Mobile survey integrated into main survey (using smartphones)
- Provisional task list at [www.socitm.net](http://www.socitm.net)
- Final task list publication 30 September
- Two mystery tasks
- Planning task – find out about a planning decision

## Preparing for *Better connected 2014*

- User / usability testing
- Review software configurations
- Check and tweak search results
- Review planning landing pages
- Check signposting and info for planning decisions

Thank you

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