

# WHAT IS PLANNING?



**RTPI**

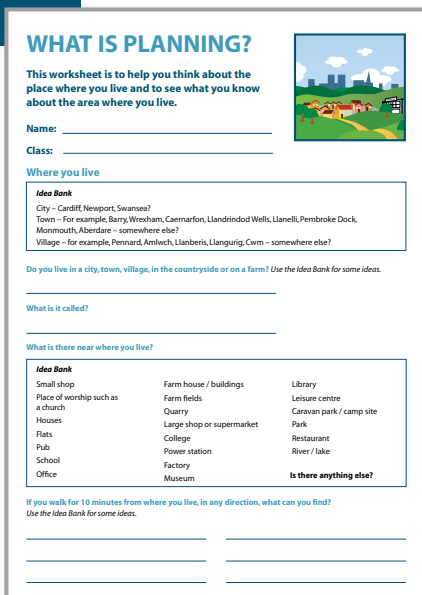
mediation of space • making of place  
cyd drefnu gofod • creu cynefin

**These notes provide support to the What is Planning? leaflet and activity worksheet for KS1 and 2 pupils, produced by the Royal Town Planning Institute in Wales (RTPI Cymru).**

The materials open up the world of town and country planning and support geography activity in schools.

Planning is a field which is of general interest to the public; it touches everyone in some way or another.

The **What is Planning?** leaflet is a handout to explain the role of planning in our urban and rural areas. It demonstrates the complexity that is involved in planning.



The **Worksheet** is intended as an activity sheet to be completed in the classroom to support the content of KS 1 and 2 Geography in the National Curriculum. It encourages the children to think about their physical surroundings. What are they like? How do they function? And to think about changes in an area they are familiar with and critically assess these changes.

At the end of this note is a list of questions which can be used in a classroom discussion.

The worksheet can be extended to compare other areas, including comparing rural and urban areas.

## The Royal Town Planning Institute

The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) is a dynamic organisation leading the way in the creation of places that work now and in the future. The RTPI is the professional membership organisation for town and country planners in the UK and overseas. RTPI Cymru is the Welsh arm of the RTPI.

The RTPI understands that just as people develop places, places develop people. We are committed to the enhancement of our natural and human environment. Through its membership, the RTPI constantly seeks to create areas and places in which people want to live and work.

Good planning combines an awareness of the competing pressures on our built environment with an ability to manage the very real effects on our space.

## What is Planning?

Planning involves twin activities - the management of the competing uses for space, and the making of places that are valued and have identity. These activities focus on the location and quality of social, economic and environmental change.

Planning operates at all the different possible scales of activity, from large-scale national or regional strategies to the more localised design and organisation of towns, villages and neighbourhoods.

It affects everyone, making policies setting out visions for places and decisions about matters ranging from the location of major new transport or energy facilities and employment development, through to the development of new shops, schools, dwellings or parks needed by local communities.

Planning considers the things that we value and supports our ongoing use of the environment to maintain or enhance these; from the integrity of the atmosphere to limit climate change, to the provision of habitat for individual species; from the identification of global cultural heritage to locally valued townscapes.

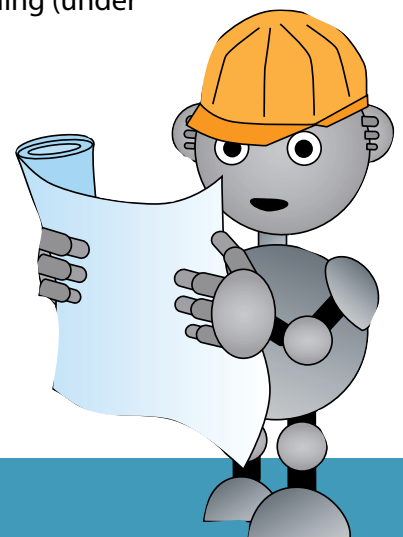
Planning maintains the best of the past, whilst encouraging innovation in the design and development of future buildings and neighbourhoods to meet our future needs.

## Further Information

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The Design Commission for Wales publishes the My Square Mile resource pack for primary schools which provides a longer term study. This is available from the National Grid for Learning (under KS1) or from DCfW's website: [www.dcfw.org](http://www.dcfw.org)



We hope this proves to be a useful tool for you and your students.

## Discussion questions for the class

A good place to see what planning does, is in an area where there are lots of buildings, such as a town centre where there are offices, shops, houses and flats, areas to play and restaurants, as well as public buildings like libraries.

Think about the town centre closest to where you live and discuss what it is like, what is good or bad, how it has changed, what could be changed for the better.

Here are some questions to use for the discussion. Prompts are included to assist you in the discussion.

- **Is there much traffic?**

Does this create problems in crossing streets? Is there congestion so that the traffic doesn't move very quickly? Is it noisy or smelly? Are there many bicycles?

- **Are there any areas where only pedestrians can go?**

Is it easier for walking around? Is this better for shopping? Does it make it difficult to pick big things up from shops?

- **How do you go to the town?**

Do you live close enough to walk? If you go by car, is it difficult to park, and is the parking expensive? Is it easy to use buses or trains? What is it like using buses or trains? Is it better to drive, walk or go by public transport?

- **Do you think the area looks nice?**

Why do you think it looks nice or horrible / run down? Is it the state of the buildings – are they good or bad – trees, litter, or public art.

- **Are there many trees or plants?**

Do they make the area look nice? Do you think they are important to have in towns? Is it good for the environment? Do they cause problems – such as falling leaves in autumn, or break up the pavements?

- **Are there many old buildings?**

Do these look good? – Or are they falling down? Is it good to keep old historic buildings?

- **Are the streets tidy or is there lots of litter?**

What do you think about litter? Do you think you should always put your litter in bins? Do you think places look nicer if there is no rubbish?

- **Do you think the town is safe?**

What makes a town safe? This could be issues like traffic or street lighting, are there lots of dark alley ways for people to hide?

- **How does it compare to other towns you may have visited?**

Have you been to a town outside Britain – how does this compare to a British town?

- **What are the main differences between big towns and small towns?**

