

## LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

### JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>Designation:</b>	Planner (Career Grade)	<b>Grade:</b>	SC4 SC6 SO1 SO2
<b>Reports to (Designation):</b>	Team Leader	<b>Grade:</b>	PO8
<b>Directorate:</b>	Place	<b>Department:</b>	Planning

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#### Main Purpose of the job:

Planning officer within Development Management for a caseload of householder, prior-approval and other minor planning applications. Deliver timely, policy-compliant decisions that advance local growth and regeneration objectives.

Work under the guidance of senior colleagues to handle more complex proposals, provide clear, timely planning advice to internal and external stakeholders, contribute to committee and appeal processes where required while ensuring performance standards are met

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#### Summary of Responsibilities and Personal Duties:

##### SC4

##### Case, time and project management

Responsible for effectively managing a caseload of straightforward Development Management matters, including lawful development certificates, straightforward building extensions and alterations appeal casework and duty planner advice on simple planning matters, working to standardised processes either independently or with considerable support if necessary, while ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and meeting statutory and corporate targets and deadlines.

Manage low-risk, small-scale projects, applying approved checklists and template reports, preserving the Council's reputational and political integrity and promptly escalating any emerging complexities for senior review and direction.

Produce clear, accurate reports that set out the reasons for recommendations and evidence that all relevant matters have been considered.

Validate cases, ensure consultations are accurate and comply with statutory and Lewisham requirements, and carry out quality-control checks on cases validated by others.

##### Appeals

Collate evidence and documentation on behalf of senior colleagues for straightforward written representation appeals and, with significant support, complete questionnaires and prepare clear, policy-based appeal statements, ensuring that all case records remain complete and up to date.

Observe Hearings for professional development.

##### Decision-making

Apply ongoing creative thinking to assess issues, consider alternatives, and develop solutions, interpreting procedures as needed and supporting colleagues.

<b>Representing</b>	Provide responsive and professional customer service through prompt and clear written and verbal communication.
<b>Negotiation</b>	Persuade and influence applicants and their representatives through clear guidance and positive rapport, encouraging appropriate actions that support sound planning outcomes.
<b>Advice</b>	Provide frequent, on-going technical advice, guidance and solutions to customers by applying planning policy to straightforward cases, identifying relevant issues, and supporting sound decision-making through accurate analysis and clear advice.
<b>Complaints and enquiries</b>	Contribute to preparing timely, professional responses to complaints and Member enquiries relating to allocated casework by taking part in investigations and gathering relevant information.
<b>Service improvement</b>	Keep up to date with the latest process notes
<b>Resources</b>	Promote paid planning services and deliver exceptional customer service to boost income; ensure planning fees are accurately calculated.
<b>Training</b>	Attend internal and external training sessions and stay up to date with the latest planning laws, policies, methods, and technology.
<b>Policy</b>	Undertake straightforward statutory monitoring tasks, including carrying out aspects of the starts and completions survey.
<b>Work conditions</b>	Undertake frequent year-round unaccompanied site visits including to building sites requiring some physical effort and the wearing of PPE.

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## SC6

All of the above and in addition:

<b>Case, time and project management</b>	Responsible for a varied workload that exceeds that typical of the SC4 level, including minor householder applications, adapting to regular changes in the work programme and conflicting deadlines, either independently or with moderate support.
<b>Appeals</b>	Collate evidence and documentation on behalf of senior colleagues for more complex appeals that exceed those typical of the SC4 level and manage minor householder written representation appeals with moderate support.  Shadow more experienced officers in appeal preparation and observe Public Inquiries.
<b>Representing</b>	Provide excellent customer service.
<b>Advice</b>	Provide advice, guidance and solutions for more complex applications than those typical of the SC4 level.
<b>Policy</b>	Undertake statutory monitoring tasks, including carrying out aspects of the starts and completions survey and contributing to data collection and analysis on policy outcomes such as housing delivery and town centre performance..
<b>Work conditions</b>	Support others representing the council at meetings and site visits, including, when needed, outside normal officer hours and away from the usual office location, handling contentious issues with professionalism, tact, and resilience, working alone where necessary and mitigating emotional or physical risk

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## SO1

All of the above and in addition:

<b>Case, time and project management</b>	Responsible for a varied and complex workload that exceeds that typical of the SC6 level, including pre-application advice, all small minor applications, adapting to frequent changes in the work programme and conflicting deadlines, either independently or with minimal support.
<b>Appeals</b>	Research and collate evidence and documentation on behalf of senior colleagues on more complex appeals that exceed those typical of the SC6 level and manage small minor written representation appeals with minimal support and Hearings with considerable support.
<b>Representing</b>	Build and maintain one-to-one client relationships over time, using a professional and attentive approach to foster rapport and aid productive ways of working.
<b>Negotiation</b>	Negotiate and secure relevant S106 planning obligations for small minor cases with considerable support from senior officers.
<b>Advice</b>	Provide advice, guidance and solutions to Councillors, staff, developers, and other stakeholders for more complex applications than those typical of the SC6 level.
<b>Service improvement</b>	Proactively propose ideas for projects that enhance services and boost revenue to managers and keep up to date with the latest process notes.
<b>Training</b>	Undertake independent learning proactively.
<b>Work conditions</b>	Attend meetings and site visits to provide information, explain planning procedures, and observe or report on planning matters.

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## SO2

All of the above and in addition:

<b>Case, time and project management</b>	Responsible for a varied and complex workload that exceeds that typical of the SO1 level, including pre-application advice, all minor applications, adapting to frequent changes in the work programme and conflicting deadlines, either independently or with minimal support.
<b>Appeals</b>	Research and collate evidence and documentation on behalf of senior colleagues on more complex appeals that exceed those typical of the SO1 level including Public Inquiries and manage all minor written representation and Hearings appeals with minimal support.
<b>Management</b>	Supervise and support individual junior officers on simple diverse or project tasks, offering procedural guidance and coaching to secure high-quality outcomes.
<b>Negotiation</b>	Negotiate and secure relevant unilateral undertaking and S106 planning obligations for all minor cases with minimal support.
<b>Advice</b>	Provide advice, guidance and solutions for more complex applications than those typical of the SO1 level.

Internal Contacts: These include:

- Planning Service colleagues such as Enforcement, Conservation and Urban Design
- Legal Services

- Other specialists such as Highways, Environmental Health, Local Lead Flood Authority, Sustainability and Biodiversity
- Elected Members including Ward Members

External Contacts: This will include:

- Applicants, agents, architects, planning consultants and developers
- Local residents and amenity and community groups
- Neighbourhood Forums
- Statutory consultees such as the Environment Agency, Historic England, TfL, and Network Rail
- Planning Inspectorate
- External consultants
- MPs
- External solicitors

To carry out the duties of the post with due regard to the Council's relevant policies, codes and procedures.

To carry out duties with due regard to the Council's values and behaviours

All employees are required to participate in Appraisal and Performance Management processes and to undertake appropriate training and development, including mandatory induction training, identified to enhance their work.

Undertake other duties, commensurate with the grade, as may reasonably be required.

Consideration will be given to restructuring the duties of this post for a disabled postholder.

**THIS JOB DESCRIPTION MAY NEED TO BE AMENDED BY THE DIRECTORATE TO MEET THE CHANGING NEEDS OF THE SERVICE.**

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

**Job Title:** Planner (Career Grade)

**Grade:** SC4, SC6, SO1, SO2

**Department:** Planning Service

### Note to Candidates

The Person Specification is a picture of the skills, knowledge and experience needed to carry out the job. It has been used to draw up the advert and will also be used in the shortlisting and interview process for this post.

Those categories marked 'S' will be used especially for the purpose of shortlisting.

Please ensure that Equality and Diversity issues are addressed specifically in relation to the role for which you are applying when addressing the requirements of this person specification where appropriate.

If you are a disabled person and are unable to meet some of the job requirements specifically because of your disability, please address this in your application. If you meet all the other criteria you will be shortlisted and we will explore jointly with you if there are ways in which the job can be changed to enable you to meet the requirements.

### SC4

Equality & Diversity	
Awareness of and a commitment to Equality of Access and Opportunity in a diverse community	<b>S</b>
Understanding of how equality and diversity relates to this post	<b>S</b>
Knowledge	
No prior Town Planning experience needed. Entry-level role for those pursuing a Town Planning qualification and career	
A general appreciation of Town Planning issues	<b>S</b>
Aptitude	
Capable of prioritising work to maintain performance	
Sound numerical literacy, able to accurately calculate volumes, areas, percentages and other basic measurements	
Willing and able to learn new procedures and basic planning policy quickly with guidance, applying them accurately to simple tasks.	
Skills	
Skills can only be used as shortlisting criteria if the skill is to be tested	
Demonstrates sound spatial awareness and visual comprehension for interpreting technical drawings and plans, and assessing associated planning issues	<b>T</b>
Ability to accurately measure from digital plans using PDF measuring tools (e.g. Adobe Acrobat), and to extract and use spatial information with GIS software at a basic user level.	<b>T</b>
Sound verbal communication skills, including explaining basic planning matters in plain language to customers.	
Sound writing skills for clear, accurate written communication on straightforward matters	
Capable of drafting clear, evidence-based reports, following a standard template, on straightforward matters that are defensible at appeal.	
Able to negotiate modest improvements on straightforward matters.	
Basic ability to interpret unambiguous procedures and policy and give courteous, factual advice to customers.	
Applies clear, logical thinking to straightforward tasks, suggesting practical fixes and simple alternative approaches	
Experience	
Basic experience showing transferable skills, teamwork, meeting competing deadlines and	<b>S</b>

confident use of common ICT, that can be gained through study, part-time or voluntary work and formal office or customer-facing employment.	
<b>General Education</b>	
Strong literacy and numeracy skills enabling entry into higher education for Town Planning qualification	<b>S</b>
<b>Personal Qualities</b>	
Shows tact in routine interactions and seeks guidance when situations become more challenging	
Self-motivated with a drive to expand knowledge.	
Acts with honesty and openness, and treats others consistently, fairly and with respect	
Calm and polite demeanour, remaining courteous when challenged or provoked on straightforward matters; seeks guidance when situations escalate.	
Sound attention to detail to check forms, documents and manage records for straightforward matters.	
Willing and able to learn new procedures quickly with guidance, applying them accurately to simple tasks.	
<b>Circumstances</b>	
Able to attend off-site events outside normal office hours	
<b>Physical</b>	
Generally candidates must meet the standard Lewisham requirements for the post	

## SC6

<b>Equality &amp; Diversity</b>	
Awareness of and a commitment to Equality of Access and Opportunity in a diverse community	<b>S</b>
Understanding of how equality and diversity relates to this post	<b>S</b>
<b>Knowledge</b>	
Graduates with a Town Planning or related degree or those with Town Planning experience	<b>S</b>
Conversant with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National legislation and regulations (e.g. Town &amp; Country Planning Acts, General Permitted Development Order)</li> <li>- National policies and guidance (e.g. NPPF and NPPG)</li> <li>- Regional plans (e.g. The London Plan)</li> <li>- Local plans (e.g. The Local Plan)</li> </ul>	<b>S</b>
<b>Aptitude</b>	
Capable of prioritising work to respond successfully to regular changes while maintaining performance	
Good numerical literacy, able to accurately calculate volumes, percentages and other basic measurements	
Learns routine policy updates and software tools promptly, using new knowledge in day-to-day work with minimal prompting	<b>S</b>
<b>Skills</b>	
<b>Skills can only be used as shortlisting criteria if the skill is to be tested</b>	<b>(To Be Tested – T)</b>
Demonstrates strong spatial awareness and visual comprehension for interpreting technical drawings, plans and 3-D models, and assessing associated planning issues	<b>T</b>
Ability to accurately measure from digital plans using PDF measuring tools (e.g., Adobe Acrobat), and to extract and use spatial information with GIS software at a basic user level.	<b>T</b>
Good verbal communication skills, including explaining straightforward matters in plain language to customers, staying calm and courteous when questions are challenging or views differ	
Good writing skills for clear, accurate written communication on straightforward matters	
Capable of drafting clear, evidence-based committee and delegated reports, mostly following a standard template, on straightforward matters that are defensible at appeal.	
Good negotiation skills to independently secure improvements to straightforward schemes, offering constructive pre-application advice	
Competent skill in applying straightforward procedural and local and national policy and guidance to advise customers, delivering clear guidance in a positive, proactive style that identified risks, and sign-posting chargeable services where appropriate.	
Represent the Council at meetings and site visits, engaging effectively with residents and Councillors, working collaboratively while mitigating emotional and physical risks with professionalism.	
<b>Experience</b>	
Basic experience showing transferable skills, teamwork, meeting competing deadlines and confident use of common ICT, that can be gained through study, part-time or voluntary work and formal office or customer-facing employment	<b>S</b>
Exercises sound judgement when assessing straightforward applications against clear policies, recognising basic risk factors and relevant material planning considerations.	
Regularly applies analytical thinking to routine planning problems, offering practical improvements and occasional creative alternatives.	
Demonstrates sound persuasive reasoning on straightforward matters, articulating planning positions to customers with logical clarity.	
<b>General Education</b>	
Town Planning or recognised related undergraduate degree (e.g. Geography, Economics) or equivalent experience, qualifying for RTP1 membership.	<b>S</b>
<b>Personal Qualities</b>	
Shows tact in routine and moderately contentious interactions and seeks guidance when situations become more challenging	

Self-motivated with a strong drive to deepen planning knowledge.	
Exhibits Lewisham's inclusive, trustworthy and accountable values by acting with honesty and openness, and by treating residents and colleagues consistently, fairly and with respect	
Calm and polite demeanour, remaining courteous when challenged or provoked on straightforward matters; seeks guidance when situations escalate.	
Good attention to detail to consistently produce accurate validation, consultation and case handling on straightforward matters, spotting and correcting errors in own work.	
<b>Circumstances</b>	
Able to attend off-site events outside normal office hours	
<b>Physical</b>	
Generally candidates must meet the standard Lewisham requirements for the post	



<b>Equality &amp; Diversity</b>	
Awareness of and a commitment to Equality of Access and Opportunity in a diverse community	<b>S</b>
Understanding of how equality and diversity relates to this post	<b>S</b>
<b>Knowledge</b>	
Recently qualified Town Planner	<b>S</b>
Working knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National legislation and regulations (e.g. Town &amp; Country Planning Acts, Development Management Procedure Order, General Permitted Development Order, Fee Regulations, Community Infrastructure Levy)</li> <li>- National policies and guidance (e.g. NPPF and NPPG)</li> <li>- Regional plans and guidance (e.g. The London Plan, London Plan Guidance)</li> <li>- Local plans and guidance (e.g. The Local Plan, SPDs)</li> <li>- Neighbourhood plans</li> </ul>	<b>S</b>
Evidence of continuing professional development	
Aware of commercial aspects of, and key pressures for, SME house builders	
<b>Aptitude</b>	
Capable of prioritising work to respond successfully to regular changes while maintaining performance	
Good numerical literacy, able to interpret and manipulate simple datasets such as tenure splits, spot errors, and present clear numeric summaries	
Absorbs minorly complex policy changes and system improvements at pace and applies learning	
<b>Skills</b>	<b>(To Be Tested – T)</b>
<b>Skills can only be used as shortlisting criteria if the skill is to be tested</b>	
Very good verbal communication skills, including explaining simple matters in plain language to customers, staying calm and courteous when questions are challenging or views differ	<b>T</b>
Very good writing skills for clear, accurate written communication on simple matters	
Consistently drafts clear, evidence-based committee and delegated reports on simple matters that are defensible at appeal and resistant to judicial review with moderate senior officer revisions	
Good negotiation skills to independently secure improvements to simple schemes, offering constructive pre-application advice and securing S106 agreements.	
Developing skill in applying procedural and local and national policy and guidance on a wide range of simple matters to advise customers, delivering clear guidance in a positive, proactive style that identifies and measures risks, and promoting chargeable services where appropriate.	
Represent the Council at meetings and site visits, engaging effectively with residents and Councillors, working collaboratively while mitigating emotional and physical risks with professionalism.	
<b>Experience</b>	
Sound experience of independently processing a varied caseload of straightforward cases from validation to decision, with basic experience of pre-application advice and exposure to appeal work.	<b>S</b>
Experience in dealing with minorly sensitive issues of concern to elected Members and the public.	<b>S</b>
Exercises very good professional judgement when balancing policy and relevant material planning considerations on simple matters	
Regularly devises creative and analytical solutions to simple planning challenges, applying some innovative thinking and considering alternative approaches to produce deliverable actions.	
Demonstrates good persuasive reasoning on simple complex matters, providing compelling arguments at forums such as stakeholder meetings and committee, and securing favourable outcomes.	
<b>General Education</b>	
Town Planning or recognised related undergraduate degree (e.g. Geography, Economics) or equivalent experience, qualifying for RTP1 membership.	<b>S</b>
<b>Personal Qualities</b>	
Demonstrates tact and developing diplomacy, sustaining constructive relationships in routine and	

moderately contentious situations, and escalating complex issues when needed.	
Self-motivated with a strong drive to deepen planning knowledge and explore continuing professional development.	
Strongly exhibits Lewisham's inclusive, trustworthy and accountable values by acting with honesty and openness, and by treating residents and colleagues consistently, fairly and with respect	
Sound resilience, remaining composed and tactful when routine enquiries or site visits become tense, defusing tension and keeping discussions constructive.	
Very good attention to detail to consistently produce accurate validation, consultation, quality assurance and case handling on simple matters, spotting and correcting errors in own work.	
Shows basic political awareness, being conversant with member priorities and reputational implications on the occasional contentious case, and seeking guidance when sensitivities arise	
<b>Circumstances</b>	
Able to attend off-site events outside normal office hours	
<b>Physical</b>	
Generally candidates must meet the standard Lewisham requirements for the post	

<b>Equality &amp; Diversity</b>	
Awareness of and a commitment to Equality of Access and Opportunity in a diverse community	<b>S</b>
Understanding of how equality and diversity relates to this post	<b>S</b>
<b>Knowledge</b>	
Qualified and developing Town Planner	<b>S</b>
Sound knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National legislation and regulations (e.g. Town &amp; Country Planning Acts, Development Management Procedure Order, General Permitted Development Order, Fee Regulations, Community Infrastructure Levy)</li> <li>- National policies and guidance (e.g. NPPF and NPPG)</li> <li>- Regional plans and guidance (e.g. The London Plan, London Plan Guidance)</li> <li>- Local plans and guidance (e.g. The Local Plan, SPDs)</li> <li>- Neighbourhood plans</li> </ul>	<b>S</b>
Evidence of continuing professional development	
Aware of commercial aspects of, and key pressures for, SME house builders	
<b>Aptitude</b>	
Capable of prioritising work to respond successfully to regular changes while maintaining performance	
Very good numerical literacy, able to interpret and manipulate minorly complex datasets such as tenure splits, spot errors, and present clear numeric summaries	
Quickly absorbs moderately complex policy, legislative and process changes and applies learning	
<b>Skills</b>	<b>(To Be Tested – T)</b>
<b>Skills can only be used as shortlisting criteria if the skill is to be tested</b>	
Very good verbal communication skills, including explaining moderately complex matters in plain language to customers, staying calm and courteous when questions are challenging or views differ	<b>T</b>
Very good writing skills for clear, accurate written communication on minorly complex matters	
Consistently drafts clear, evidence-based committee and delegated reports minorly complex matters that are defensible at appeal and resistant to judicial review with limited senior officer revisions	
Good negotiation skills to independently secure improvements to minorly complex schemes, offering constructive pre-application advice and securing S106 agreements.	
Skilled in applying procedural and local and national policy and guidance on a wide range of minorly complex matters to advise customers, delivering clear guidance in a positive, proactive style that identifies and measures risks, and promoting chargeable services where appropriate.	
Represent the Council at meetings and site visits, engaging effectively with residents and Councillors, working collaboratively while mitigating emotional and physical risks with professionalism.	
<b>Experience</b>	
Developing experience of independently processing a highly varied caseload of simple cases from validation to decision, with sound experience of pre-application advice and appeal work, with exposure to PPAs.	<b>S</b>
Experience in dealing with moderately sensitive issues of concern to elected Members and the public.	<b>S</b>
Basic experience of supporting and motivating individual junior staff on straightforward tasks, giving guidance and informal coaching.	
Exercises very good professional judgement when balancing policy and relevant material planning considerations on minorly complex matters	
Regularly devises creative and analytical solutions to minorly complex planning challenges, applying some innovative thinking and considering alternative approaches to produce deliverable actions	
Demonstrates good persuasive reasoning on minorly complex matters, providing compelling arguments at forums such as stakeholder meetings and committee, and securing favourable outcomes.	

<b>General Education</b>	
Town Planning or recognised related undergraduate degree (e.g. Geography, Economics) or equivalent experience, qualifying for RTPI membership.	<b>S</b>
<b>Personal Qualities</b>	
Demonstrates tact and developing diplomacy, sustaining constructive relationships in routine and moderately contentious situations, and escalating complex issues when needed.	
Self-motivated with a strong drive to deepen planning knowledge and committed to continuing professional development.	
Strongly exhibits Lewisham's inclusive, trustworthy and accountable values by acting with honesty and openness, and by treating residents and colleagues consistently, fairly and with respect	
Good resilience, remaining composed and tactful when minorly complex enquiries, site visits or other meetings become tense, defusing tension and keeping discussions constructive.	
Very good attention to detail to consistently produce accurate validation, consultation, quality assurance and case handling on minorly complex matters, spotting and correcting errors in own work.	
Shows capable political awareness, being conversant with member priorities and reputational implications on the occasional contentious case, and seeking guidance when sensitivities arise	
<b>Circumstances</b>	
Able to attend off-site events outside normal office hours	
<b>Physical</b>	
Generally candidates must meet the standard Lewisham requirements for the post	

**DBS Disclosure Required**      **Basic** ☐      **Standard** ☐      **Enhanced** ☐

(Tick as appropriate – guidance available from your HR Advisor, if a DBS is not required please leave boxes blank)