

An aerial photograph of a residential area, likely a town or city, showing a dense cluster of houses, a river with several boats, and green parks and fields. The sky is overcast.

Local Plan Inspector careers

Q&A Session



1. About the Planning Inspectorate
2. About the opportunity
3. What our inspectors say
4. Application tips
5. Q&A

Questions?

- Ask us a question via the Q&A panel in Microsoft Teams.
- Upvote the questions you'd most like answered
- You can opt to keep your question anonymous via the checkbox.
- We will respond to questions during the Q&A session.



About the Planning Inspectorate

- Executive agency of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
- Shaping the planning system for over 100 years
- Around 900 staff, headquarters in Bristol
- Around 450 inspectors based across England
- Five service areas

Values:

Open | Fair | Impartial | Customer Focused





The role of local plans inspectors

Examining local plans across England

Local plans set out how communities will develop over the next 10 to 15 years, covering housing, employment, infrastructure and environmental protection.

Local plans inspectors:

- examine plans submitted by local planning authorities
- assess whether plans meet legal requirements and the tests of soundness
- consider evidence from councils, communities and other interested parties
- lead public hearing sessions
- make independent recommendations that shape strategic development

Decisions directly influence where and how communities grow.





About the opportunity



Salary at Band 2: £63,859 **Salary at Band 3: £77,741**

Benefits: civil service pension, flexible working, professional membership fee and much more



Varied career backgrounds

We recruit from a range of backgrounds





- ✓ Able to plan, manage and lead a project with a high level of public interest or engagement, keeping the momentum going over a period of time
- ✓ Confident at being able to run a range of public events, building and maintaining effective relationships, and ensuring fairness
- ✓ Able to analyse complex information, draw out the main issues quickly, and interpret and apply policies
- ✓ Ability to write clearly, accurately, concisely and authoritatively to reach well-reasoned conclusions
- ✓ Confident taking a high level of personal responsibility for your decision making
- ✓ Must have a full or chartered membership of a professional body relevant to the role and be willing to travel within England for events (travel is covered by the employer)



See the job pack
for a full list



- Service specific training in local plans and inspector skills
- Comprehensive induction – 2-3 weeks with your cohort followed by a structured training plan
- Mentoring and peer support from experienced inspectors including part of dedicated inspector group
- Regular learning opportunities and support for CPD



Views from our inspectors



Tips for success in
your application

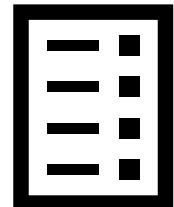


- Chartered professional and member of a recognised body
- Strong analytical skills and evidence-based reasoning
- Clear, structured written communication
- Confidence managing public events
- Sound professional judgment



Your CV should:

- Link experience directly to essential criteria
- Use active verbs: e.g. “analysed”, “evaluated”, “led”, “assessed”
- Focus on outcomes and impact, not just responsibilities



Your 1,000-word personal statement is your biggest opportunity:

- Address each essential criterion with evidence
- Use the STAR approach (Situation, Task, Action, Result)
- Be specific: what you did, how you did it, what changed





- Describing your role instead of your impact
- Providing opinion instead of evidence
- Writing too broadly: "I am a good communicator"
- Repeating the same example for different criteria
- Long blocks of unstructured text
- Not addressing the criteria directly





The assessment process

What happens after you apply



Application & Verbal reasoning test

- Online test assessing interpretation of written information
- Practice tests available at: [Civil Service practice tests](#)



Sift stage (results by 6 March)

- Panel assesses your Test, CV and personal statement against essential criteria



Interview stage (16-31 March)

- Microsoft Teams interview
- Behaviour questions using STAR approach
- Experience questions on planning and evidence analysis
- Short presentation
- Written assessment (instructions provided if shortlisted)



Before you start:

- Read the essential criteria repeatedly
- Map your experience against each criterion

While writing:

- Start early – good examples take time
- Make evidence measurable where possible
- Ask yourself: "Have I proved this?"

Before submitting:

- Get someone to review your statement
- Check spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Keep everything clear, concise and evidence-led

Questions?

Contact:

PINS.Recruitment@planninginspectorate.gov.uk



Applications close:
**22nd
February 2026**

Shortlisting:
**w/c 23rd
February 2026**

**Results
released w/c
9th March 2026**

Interviews:
**16th March –
31st March
26**

Job offers:
**Early April
2026**

Start date:
**Early September
2026 (TBC)**

Questions



Thank you for attending!

Feedback and further information



Please complete the evaluation form

Further information:

- Apply at Civil Service Jobs
- Planning Inspectorate careers page

See the links in the Q&A

