



Resourcing the Planning Service: Key Findings Summary 2021



In 2020 local authorities only spent 0.38% of their total net revenue budgets on planning services ^[1]



Gross expenditure to planning authorities has diminished in real terms by 42% since 2009 ^[2]



There have been 32% staffing cuts in planning departments since 2009 ^[3]



Planning application fees only cover 66% of their processing costs ^[4]



There are 91 new and unfunded duties in the Planning (Scotland) Act, which could cost between £12.1m and £59.1m over 10 years ^[5]



Only around 9% of staff in planning authorities are under 30. An estimated replacement demand of around 500 planners over the next 15 years is required ^[6]



Implementation of new digital planning initiatives could result in £20.4m in savings on costs of implementing the Planning Act ^[7]

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[1] Scottish Local Government Financial Statistics 2019/20 workbooks 00 & 07

[2] Scottish Local Government Financial Statistics 2009/10 and 2019/20.

[3] Comparison between Planning Workforce Survey 2010 and Planning Performance Framework 2018/19.

[4] Heads of Planning (HOPS), Costing the Planning Service Project Input to the Workstream on Planning Fees and Planning Performance (2017)

[5] RTPI Scotland (2019) Cost of Implementing the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019

[6] Partners in Planning, Skills Development Scotland and EKOS research report - Skills in Planning & Planning Performance Framework 2019

[7] RTPI Scotland (2020) Transforming Planning, Places and Scotland - The benefits of investing in a digital planning service