

# Planning Pre-App Officer Survey Jan 2023




1. Page 1

1. What is your name?			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00%	25
1	05/01/2023 14:31 PM ID: 207764398	██████████		
2	05/01/2023 14:35 PM ID: 207764912	██████████		
3	05/01/2023 15:09 PM ID: 207768537	██████████		
4	05/01/2023 15:59 PM ID: 207774303	██████████████		
5	09/01/2023 10:24 AM ID: 208000860	██████████		
6	09/01/2023 13:41 PM ID: 208020120	██████████		
7	09/01/2023 19:04 PM ID: 208052887	██████████		
8	11/01/2023 15:34 PM ID: 208217625	██████████		
9	13/01/2023 13:07 PM ID: 208387482	██████████		
10	13/01/2023 16:36 PM ID: 208405742	██████████		
11	13/01/2023 17:51 PM ID: 208411273	██████████		
12	17/01/2023 18:51 PM ID: 208733449	██████████		
13	17/01/2023 19:58 PM ID: 208737400	██████████		
14	18/01/2023 08:54 AM ID: 208758804	██████████		
15	18/01/2023 09:38 AM ID: 208763169	██████████		
16	18/01/2023 14:13 PM ID: 208794105	██████████		
17	18/01/2023 19:19 PM ID: 208827159	██████████		
18	19/01/2023 08:47 AM ID: 208857453	██████████		
19	19/01/2023 09:14 AM ID: 208859604	██████████		

### 1. What is your name?

20	19/01/2023 09:24 AM ID: 208860493	██████████	
21	19/01/2023 09:32 AM ID: 208861240	██████████	
22	19/01/2023 10:08 AM ID: 208865061	██████████	
23	19/01/2023 10:10 AM ID: 208865179	██████	
24	19/01/2023 10:25 AM ID: 208866607	██████████	
25	20/01/2023 12:05 PM ID: 208978589	██████████	
		answered	25
		skipped	2

### 2. What Grade are you?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total	
1	Grade 7/6		44.44% 12	
2	Grade 5		25.93% 7	
3	Grade 4		29.63% 8	
			answered	27
			skipped	0

### 3. Thinking about pre-apps that you have been involved with recently: Does pre-app help lead to a better quality of subsequent formal application? If not, what reasoning appears to drive this?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	27
1	05/01/2023 14:31 PM ID: 207764398	Yes - it allows for discussion with the applicant/agent to make the proposal much more acceptable.	
2	05/01/2023 14:35 PM ID: 207764912	Yes	
3	05/01/2023 14:48 PM ID: 207766382	Pre-app advice I think irons out major major issues with applications but a lot of people will stick with their idea on a whole and do not listen to the advice given. Issues still arise at application stage and the quality of the pre-app depends on the number of consultees paid for.	
4	05/01/2023 15:09 PM ID: 207768537	Generally speaking yes.	

**3. Thinking about pre-apps that you have been involved with recently: Does pre-app help lead to a better quality of subsequent formal application? If not, what reasoning appears to drive this?**

5	05/01/2023 15:55 PM ID: 207773931	No- either agents ignore the advice given (because they can get more money by taking it to appeal anyway) or the advice given by officers is not strong/ accurate enough. It is very difficult for officers to go back on any advice given regardless of its age, it seems to have caused more arguments with agents than in instances where no pre-application advice was sought which makes it easier for officers to be firm on.  Very key things repeatedly get missed i.e. ecology and flood risk.
6	05/01/2023 15:59 PM ID: 207774303	I find that having a meeting at pre-application can be very helpful in explaining what might be expected as part of an application submission. If the applicant is informed of what is expected, and a discussion can take place, particularly with statutory consultees, it makes everything more simple and the submission tends to contain the relevant documentation, which means that the validation process is much quicker and we can just get on with it.
7	09/01/2023 10:24 AM ID: 208000860	It works well with individuals but with the agents it often feels like they are just going through the process and don't follow the advice just cherry pick bits out to make it sound positive
8	09/01/2023 13:41 PM ID: 208020120	Yes
9	09/01/2023 19:04 PM ID: 208052887	I consider Pre-app. helps with quality of submission but perhaps does not go far enough. Problems persist with validation and consultee responses following formal submission. Reason appears that insufficient consultees are consulted at pre-app. and less than adequate validation advice is given at pre-app. stage.  Often applicants receive negative pre-app. and submit applications regardless.
10	11/01/2023 15:34 PM ID: 208217625	In my view, the pre-application stage can assist in identifying issues at an earlier point in the overall process. This has benefits for the quality the submission and avoids significant delay due to missing information etc.
11	13/01/2023 13:07 PM ID: 208387482	Not sure - applications aren't allocated to me. Also, better than what ? There are cases where an amendment is made in accordance with pre-app advice, or where the suite of application docs is complete in accordance with advice. But pre-app customers are self-selecting to a degree, and we shouldn't assume that the application quality results from the pre-app. In one recent instance the applicant seems to have fundamentally misunderstood, or possibly ignored, the pre-app advice. There were cost restraints to the proposal.
12	13/01/2023 16:36 PM ID: 208405742	In general, yes, as long as the applicant has an open mind and is not already fixed on doing something in one way only and are not willing to compromise, before they even get to pre-app. But that's more common where they don't do pre-app
13	13/01/2023 17:51 PM ID: 208411273	Usually, better or more complete information is provided in an application, following pre-app. However, this is not always the case. Often homeowners who deal with their own applications do not provide sufficient or quality information, regardless of pre-app advice. This is probably due to inexperience of the Planning system and cost. I spend quite a lot of time informally advising homeowners of the process they need to follow, or the detail of the information needed in an application, following advice already provided in a pre-app.
14	17/01/2023 18:51 PM ID: 208733449	It is hard to tell as I am not involved with the applications that result from the pre-app advice I give.
15	17/01/2023 19:58 PM ID: 208737400	In my view, pre-app improves quality of formal submission in terms of highlighting validation requirements, and early engagement by all parties encourages mutual respect and compromise, which is usually carried forward to application stage.
16	18/01/2023 08:54 AM ID: 208758804	Most of the time. Sometimes the agent/applicant dismisses our advice and submits details contrary to advice given. However when it works its really rewarding for all concerned.

**3. Thinking about pre-apps that you have been involved with recently: Does pre-app help lead to a better quality of subsequent formal application? If not, what reasoning appears to drive this?**

17	18/01/2023 09:38 AM ID: 208763169	Yes
18	18/01/2023 14:13 PM ID: 208794105	Generally; however some applicants do balk at the submission of extra documents.
19	18/01/2023 19:19 PM ID: 208827159	It can lead to better applications if the guidance is clear, and has been properly assessed, thinking ahead to what documentation etc might need to be submitted.
20	19/01/2023 08:47 AM ID: 208857453	Yes, and NPPF 43 is clear that the right information is crucial to making good decisions. If applicants do not follow advice I surmise this is due to client direction.
21	19/01/2023 09:14 AM ID: 208859604	Whilst pre-app does lead to amendments to the proposal that leads it to being more acceptable than previous versions, there does seem to be an assumption that if pre-app is conducted, then the app WILL be approved. But this is an evolving process, and I feel pre-app would be more useful if it was more of a dialogue, where applicants could revise plans a few times within the scope of the pre-app.
22	19/01/2023 09:24 AM ID: 208860493	I think that in general the pre-app provides an improved quality of application. If this is not the case, it often seems that the pre-application comments have not been read in full by the applicant.
23	19/01/2023 09:32 AM ID: 208861240	It depends on the applicant. Often, it does lead to positive changes where the LPA and consultees can agree that development could be supported on a site. Where we give negative advice it often only entrenches position of the applicant, or they consider that planning by appeal or winning round planning committee might offer an alternate route to planning permission.  On the whole, with willing applicants and agents, even negative advice can be well received and bring about constructive improvement at application stage.
24	19/01/2023 10:08 AM ID: 208865061	Yes in my opinion the advice given does help guide and form a better quality subsequent application.
25	19/01/2023 10:10 AM ID: 208865179	I think it can, but often pre-application submissions lack information to allow Officers to give detailed advice. Agents don't always listen to the advice given. The time pressure on Officers can lead to rushed vague advice which offers the applicant no real guidance on improving their submission.
26	19/01/2023 10:25 AM ID: 208866607	Yes
27	20/01/2023 12:05 PM ID: 208978589	It absolutely makes a real difference with major proposals because it starts a meaningful dialogue that can result in further paid meetings or even a PPA.  The pre-app that involves just a red line is less valuable other than it can at least help to rule out devt that is clearly unacceptable in principle.  In terms of major pre-apps the first response/meeting is a springboard towards a collaborative approach. You can introduce significant changes prior to an application to enhance quality, encourage the applicant to go further in terms of green elements highlight the need for additional supporting documentation and highlight likely S106. The aim is to improve certainty for the applicant who in turn tends to be more open to enhancing quality in response as it enhances certainty if yo can say I will support the proposal of you do x, y and z
		answered 27
		skipped 0

#### 4. What could be done around validation to improve the response/quality of application?

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00%	27
1	05/01/2023 14:31 PM ID: 207764398	N/A		
2	05/01/2023 14:35 PM ID: 207764912	Things that seem to be missed often are FRAs and ecology so validation could check the validation items in the pre-app to check we have all the officer asked for.		
3	05/01/2023 14:48 PM ID: 207766382	Validation should be more strict on what they let through as valid applications. Specifically regarding ecology surveys and FRAs, apps are constantly let through without the right stuff for officers to then deal with.		
4	05/01/2023 15:09 PM ID: 207768537	<p>A lot.</p> <p>I have dealt with numerous pre-apps where the details provided are limited/poor quality, which therefore either results in the advice given being more limited or means more time spent having to do own research to provide a response which is 'value for money'. Also noted numerous typo's/errors with pre-app descriptions, poorly labelled documents in IDOX and the plans tab.</p> <p>I have also dealt with numerous pre-apps which I would not consider 'pre-apps', i.e. "do I need permission for an extension?" vs "what are the LPA's thoughts on an extension?" Customers (and Officers) understanding of 'what is pre-app' is important to ensure there is a level of expectation.</p> <p>Also had a few examples where a pre-app meeting has been arranged for a date I cannot make and therefore has to be re-scheduled, which I would consider unprofessional and wastes time. Communication between Officers when setting up meetings is key and would improve the service for all parties.</p>		
5	05/01/2023 15:55 PM ID: 207773931	<p>appropriate internal consultees consulted at time of validated- always miss Environmental Health colleagues, David Pizzey, Economic Development</p> <p>if only a red line is received our advice should be very basic and not attempt to make recommendations in other areas without seeing formal plans- would be better to heavily caveat the pre-app advice</p>		
6	05/01/2023 15:59 PM ID: 207774303	All pre-application enquiries should be accompanied with a red line site plan showing the location of the site in question and also some details of what the applicant is asking about. Sketches and photographs are very helpful, especially if it is a written response only.		
7	09/01/2023 10:24 AM ID: 208000860	Refuse to validate a pre-app for 1 dwelling + without a proposed layout plan, require any application which is in curtilage of a listed building to have heritage advice and any application 4+ dwellings to have highways advice and heritage advice if within setting of a listed building/con area. Without heritage/highways advice pre-app is generally difficult for this size of development.		
8	09/01/2023 13:41 PM ID: 208020120	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- updated local validation list</li> <li>- planning application checklist for different application types</li> <li>- frequent correspondence between validation officer and Planning case officer</li> <li>- application check to be completed by the case officer within the timeframe - tracked by an expiry list (similar to the application expiry list produced by John Mawdsley)</li> <li>- example of plans that are acceptable (to be used as examples for agents/applicants)</li> <li>- applicants/agents will have one 'free go' to submit revise/additional plans at validation stage. If they are still unacceptable, the application would be withdrawn</li> </ul>		
9	09/01/2023 19:04 PM ID: 208052887	<p>Input from validation team at pre-app. stage.</p> <p>Chargeable validation check prior to formal submission of application.</p>		

#### 4. What could be done around validation to improve the response/quality of application?

10	11/01/2023 15:34 PM ID: 208217625	The validation of applications should be linked closely to the LVL (updated as necessary) as well as the nationally requirements.
11	13/01/2023 13:07 PM ID: 208387482	In a perfect world, pre-app should simplify validation of a subsequent application. In responses I try to give specific advice on application documents, ie. on content as well as what documents.
12	13/01/2023 16:36 PM ID: 208405742	I can't think of anything
13	13/01/2023 17:51 PM ID: 208411273	I wonder if validation / officers could collate examples of 'good' applications, in terms of the information provided, which can be offered to applicants when they receive an invalid letter. I direct some people to the application search pages of the LPAs website to find previous examples of applications which reflect their proposals as a way of demonstrating what is needed, and finding agents who may be able to help, without recommending anyone.
14	17/01/2023 18:51 PM ID: 208733449	I am also an agent outside of my BMSDC work. Striking the balance between submitting enough information to enable officers to understand the proposal and limiting the amount of time (and client money) on preparation of the information is tricky. Pre-app should be just that; it is unreasonable to expect the same amount of information as would be required for a full application submission. It could be made clear that the detail of the advice given will depend on the amount of detail provided at pre-app stage.
15	17/01/2023 19:58 PM ID: 208737400	Validation could check the formal submission against the list of submission requirements given in the office pre-app response.
16	18/01/2023 08:54 AM ID: 208758804	More detail from the applicant/agent around exactly what they are asking us to advise on. Also a constraints map would be really useful.
17	18/01/2023 09:38 AM ID: 208763169	Request more information.
18	18/01/2023 14:13 PM ID: 208794105	With the new (upcoming) LVL, more will be required of the validation team. Therefore it is essential that the team is trained, informed and ready for this, including dispute resolution - too many agents do not respect and do not accept the judgement of the Validation team. This should ensure that applications are dealt with more smoothly.
19	18/01/2023 19:19 PM ID: 208827159	The description of the proposal should be recorded clearly and not necessarily as the application has submitted. Constraints maps could be provided for Case Officer.
20	19/01/2023 08:47 AM ID: 208857453	Engaging with the key issues rather than highlighting relevant policies. Being clear on the level of information required to support the particular proposal rather than just point to LVL; sometimes a degree of substance is needed to explain (which might overcome the client concern highlighted above).
21	19/01/2023 09:14 AM ID: 208859604	Some pre-apps come with no plans or questions, which can lead to a quite generalised report, which is less informative than a more specific pre-app that includes drawings, plans and elevations etc
22	19/01/2023 09:24 AM ID: 208860493	I am unsure.
23	19/01/2023 09:32 AM ID: 208861240	I am generally very happy with the validation work around pre-app submissions. There still seems to be a lack of understanding from applicants that a lack of information in their submission leads to a more restricted response, but agents tend to have a firm grasp on this and supply enough information to allow us to answer their main queries with regards to a site.
24	19/01/2023 10:08 AM ID: 208865061	The more information input on an application and documents received at outset would mean we can give better advice, important this is highlighted to the applicant. This would improve the quality and manage the expectation on a subsequent application.

#### 4. What could be done around validation to improve the response/quality of application?

25	19/01/2023 10:10 AM ID: 208865179	An advisory note stating that the quality of advice will depend on the quality of the submission and more detailed plans leads to more detailed advice would be useful and would help manage customer expectations.	
26	19/01/2023 10:25 AM ID: 208866607	If the agent could submit photos - as we aren't required to make a site visit it is difficult to assess residential amenity without photos showing the site/ surrounding area	
27	20/01/2023 12:05 PM ID: 208978589	major pre-apps tend to be well supported	
		answered	27
		skipped	0

#### 5. What could be done around the planning advice to improve the submission?

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00%	26
1	05/01/2023 14:31 PM ID: 207764398	Open a conversation with other departments to make it easier for consultees when the submission comes in.		
2	05/01/2023 14:35 PM ID: 207764912	Perhaps signposting good examples or better highlighting the risk of poor submission?		
3	05/01/2023 14:48 PM ID: 207766382	I think the advice given is enough, what they choose to do with it is their choice		
4	05/01/2023 15:09 PM ID: 207768537	Better understanding as to whether the proposal should be treated as a formal pre-application. If so, then sufficient information in order for the Officer to fully assess and consider the proposal in order to provide a clear, informed response.		
5	05/01/2023 15:55 PM ID: 207773931	All applications where pre-app has been had should go back to the person that gave the pre-app- this is where a lot of issues creep in because you are unfamiliar with discussions that have been had and how people approach things. If an officer messed the pre-app up they should have to sort it out.  Better standard text included i.e. around ecology and flood risk.  More general updates being sent to agents/ applicants on planning policy position changes would be helpful- if they've had pre-app but we then changed how we approach matters they ought to be told.		
6	05/01/2023 15:59 PM ID: 207774303	A clear list of what should be submitted with a pre-application enquiry could be displayed on our website but also a checklist added to the application form for the applicant to check off. We need to make sure that the applicant is doing the work in explaining what they, rather than us trying to interrogate them. It means that we can prepare for a meeting properly, especially if Neighbourhood Plans are involved, where we may not be completely up to speed with each policy.		
7	09/01/2023 10:24 AM ID: 208000860	Validation team to check what reports required within pre-application advice and ensure that these are included within the submission. Require submissions to include a report detailing the pre-app advice and if they have gone against this provide reasoning.		
8	09/01/2023 13:41 PM ID: 208020120	- specifically state which report/plan/detail is needed in an application - applicant to have informal discussion with the validation team/planning officer prior to submitting an application - training for validation and planning officers on what is needed for each type of application and how much detail		

## 5. What could be done around the planning advice to improve the submission?



9	09/01/2023 19:04 PM ID: 208052887	Greater input from consultees.  Alternatives suggested should pre-app submission be unacceptable.
10	11/01/2023 15:34 PM ID: 208217625	Not sure what this question means. The pre-app report should provide a clear officer opinion on the success or otherwise of an application. It also contains a section that flags required submission information that may not be immediately apparent.
11	13/01/2023 13:07 PM ID: 208387482	We still get too many pre-apps accepted with minimal documents and drawings. We should be stricter about the content. People are trying to get a firm commitment without telling us what we are supposed to commit to. We could post examples on the website as minimum requirements.
12	13/01/2023 16:36 PM ID: 208405742	I can't think of anything
13	13/01/2023 17:51 PM ID: 208411273	The pre-app document could have links to examples or guidance documents - this could be our own on our website if we have them, or to external sources such as Historic England, SCC Archaeology, Natural England, SCC Highways, Building Control, etc. in order that they can self serve and find good resources, without our pre-app letter becoming ungainly.
14	17/01/2023 18:51 PM ID: 208733449	I do think continuity of officer between the pre-app and the application would help as the officer will have an understanding of the proposals from their previous involvement
15	17/01/2023 19:58 PM ID: 208737400	Pre-app advice could be more succinct and bespoke and also include a validation checklist for officers to tick those items that will be required for validation.
16	18/01/2023 09:38 AM ID: 208763169	More generalised advice to start with and then caveat that to receive more information,
17	18/01/2023 14:13 PM ID: 208794105	As per the above response, pre-application advice should be comprehensive in terms of instructing applicants of validation requirements.
18	18/01/2023 19:19 PM ID: 208827159	The response should be better geared to the applicant. Many Pre-apps are submitted without assistance from a Planning Agent. In such cases our response should not be overly technical or bogged down with details of housing land supply or whether policies are out of date etc. The response to a member of the public, who may not have planning experience, probably needs to be worded more simply than if to an agent.
19	19/01/2023 08:47 AM ID: 208857453	See above.
20	19/01/2023 09:14 AM ID: 208859604	I think perhaps, a lower level of pre-app that does not require a report, that invites officers out to site would be welcomed by some. If someone applies for a full pre-app advice, then a minimum of site photos and plans should be required to be submitted
21	19/01/2023 09:24 AM ID: 208860493	I am unsure.
22	19/01/2023 09:32 AM ID: 208861240	Not something regarding planning advice, but often officers give a list of items required at application validation which then doesn't translate into the supporting documents that come in with the application. It then creates a delay in the application and consultee response while we wait for those to be brought forward.
23	19/01/2023 10:08 AM ID: 208865061	Highlight concerns in our advice and explain why. If it is policy or another reason, if the applicant is aware, the majority of the time it should improve the subsequent submission.
24	19/01/2023 10:10 AM ID: 208865179	Not sure if this is aimed at pre-app or application submission. If Officers had more time they could offer better advice and improve application submissions all round.
25	19/01/2023 10:25 AM ID: 208866607	If we had more time to submit a report - if we have a high case load it can be difficult to find the time to assess the plans and draft a report.



## 5. What could be done around the planning advice to improve the submission?

26	20/01/2023 12:05 PM ID: 208978589	<p>training I have seen and been asked to sign off pre-apps of varying quality in terms of their use to the enquirer.</p> <p>The worst tend to just provide a screed of policy references and almost say work it out for yourself.</p> <p>The best provide a detailed analysis of the strengths of the proposal and the weaknesses and then go on to offer alternative solutions to mitigate adverse impacts. All too often we say "no! we don't like it" but do not say why and cannot offer solutions. A developer will usually respond well to constructive guidance.</p>
		answered 26
		skipped 1

## 6. Do you think the customer actually listens to the advice given? If not, what could be done to improve that communication with the customer? (Please comment below)

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		88.00%	22
2	No		12.00%	3
			answered	25
			skipped	2

### Comments: (23)

1	05/01/2023 14:31 PM ID: 207764398	Sometimes they do. I think it would be helpful to always ensure that there is a way forward in the pre-app so they know exactly how to make it better, where applicable.
2	05/01/2023 14:35 PM ID: 207764912	Offer follow up call / email for any queries.
3	05/01/2023 15:09 PM ID: 207768537	Very dependent on the customer. Perhaps some standard text or emphasis within the Officers report if amendments are required for the proposal to be supported.
4	05/01/2023 15:55 PM ID: 207773931	<p>Far stronger messages need to be sent about following the advice.</p> <p>However equally officers then need to be able to follow the advice given earlier when determining the applications (for us to say it is not binding of the council's decision is a poor excuse to suddenly go against the advice given)- in these instances offering refunds would offer good customer service.</p>
5	05/01/2023 15:59 PM ID: 207774303	I think that being totally honest with applicants at pre-application is essential. Its important to say if you think a scheme is going to be acceptable or not. There may be ways of making it more acceptable and these should be explained at the early stages of pre-application. I often keep a pre-app open (with agreement to an extension of time) to allow for applicants to come back with further amendments - especially if there is an issue of Heritage harm that can be reduced. This works really well and negotiation at this stage often results in a much better application submission that will not raise objections from the consultees. Members of the Babergh Planning Committee always ask if an applicant has had pre-application advice and encourage that type of engagement with the planning team.
6	09/01/2023 10:24 AM ID: 208000860	See comments above. It would be useful if we could require a phone number for all enquiries as sometimes I find it necessary to speak to someone to explain what I've written or to give more informal advice.

**6. Do you think the customer actually listens to the advice given? If not, what could be done to improve that communication with the customer? (Please comment below)**

7	09/01/2023 19:04 PM ID: 208052887	Mostly yes but often: no.  Every pre-app. should include some form of verbal discussion. Perhaps a 15 minute phone call to the applicant before submission of written response, if no meeting requested.
8	11/01/2023 15:34 PM ID: 208217625	I have chosen yes as, in the majority of instances, I'm sure that an applicant takes the advice into account if deciding whether to pursue an application submission. However, notwithstanding a negative pre-app response I have no doubt that a formal application will be submitted by some enquirers regardless.
9	13/01/2023 13:07 PM ID: 208387482	Instance referred to in 3 above where the agent / owner seemed to have fundamentally misunderstood the advice.
10	13/01/2023 16:36 PM ID: 208405742	On the whole yes, there are a few occasions where they do not (possibly because it was negative but they decide to try anyway), or they have not understood it. I think the main thing is to make it clear that once they receive the formal response this does not mean they have to now submit the application, they can come back for further advice first. And that this might not actually add time, over the alternative that the first full application has to be refused because it was not appropriate yet.
11	13/01/2023 17:51 PM ID: 208411273	Largely, advice is listened to, even if it's negative and the intention is to submit an Appeal later. But there are always circumstances when it is not, either because the applicant disagrees, or a pre-app is submitted too late in the process so that plans are not altered. Sometimes, pre-app feels like a tick box exercise before an application is submitted. I think our advice is clear and we explain where more information is needed to inform a decision. However, it could be made more explicit, in regard to 'in principle' advice, where no information is given at pre-app, that the thoroughness of advice is going to be limited. Sometimes the applicant is surprised when negative comments are returned on an application. This is because insufficient information was provided at pre-app to give clear or definitive advice. So it could be made clearer that the more information at pre-app that's given, the clearer the advice is likely to be. Also, reinforce the service of 'follow-up' advice as often plans change from pre-app, so the advice is likely to change, but no feedback has been sought before the application.
12	17/01/2023 18:51 PM ID: 208733449	I do not know - refer to answer to question 1
13	17/01/2023 19:58 PM ID: 208737400	Most listen but we could stress that if formal submission fails to take full account of pre-app advice the application is likely to fail. (as per website info).
14	18/01/2023 08:54 AM ID: 208758804	Most of the time I believe they do.
15	18/01/2023 09:38 AM ID: 208763169	To add the Planning Risk section right at the end of the pre-app, and emphasis that planning permission is unlikely if the officer's advice is not followed.
16	18/01/2023 14:13 PM ID: 208794105	Usually, but not always. Failure to provide background documents such as an Ecology survey (or a required secondary survey), does occur. In addition, advice that a house/houses will not be supported invariably leads to an application notwithstanding that advice.
17	18/01/2023 19:19 PM ID: 208827159	If it is clear. I have had to explain on some occasions what the advice is actually saying, in plain English. Our response needs to make sense.
18	19/01/2023 08:47 AM ID: 208857453	Agents listen, clients/applicants might not. This comes down to relationship with agents but they play their own role - some will manage clients appropriately, others will have a fight simply because they are instructed to.
19	19/01/2023 09:14 AM ID: 208859604	Whilst they do take on board the comments, most try to alter the scheme as little as possible, and may only implement one or two items. This also does not stop them applying in future to vary the plans, and then get an approval for the original scheme.

**6. Do you think the customer actually listens to the advice given? If not, what could be done to improve that communication with the customer? (Please comment below)**

20	19/01/2023 09:24 AM ID: 208860493	Generally, applicants pay attention to the pre-application advice.
21	19/01/2023 10:08 AM ID: 208865061	I haven't had a situation where this hasn't happened and do think they listen to the advice given.
22	19/01/2023 10:10 AM ID: 208865179	I think they often do and it puts a lot of pressure on Officers to follow that advice even where different Officers have different views (consistency of Officers can be an issue). They almost use the pre-app response as leverage, despite the fact the advice stipulates that it doesn't prejudice an application. Where they don't listen it is usually because they disagree with our advice or they are getting pressure from their clients.
23	20/01/2023 12:05 PM ID: 208978589	If the advice is well considered and comprehensive and includes constructive feedback and advice on way forward.

**7. Where pre-app advice has been provided do you find that helps reduce the need for negotiation or post-submission amendments?**

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00%	27
1	05/01/2023 14:31 PM ID: 207764398	Yes		
2	05/01/2023 14:35 PM ID: 207764912	Yes		
3	05/01/2023 14:48 PM ID: 207766382	No, I think pre-app is purely a means to be able to extend an application if needed. If pre-app was sought, amendments that differ from that of the pre-app are often disputed referring to the previous advice given.		
4	05/01/2023 15:09 PM ID: 207768537	Often yes, however this again falls back to the level of advice provided at pre-app. If limited advice is given (due to the lack of information) then it's likely there may be some amendments required when considering the detail of the application. In addition, the consultation period often throws a few amendments.		
5	05/01/2023 15:55 PM ID: 207773931	No if anything it increases it- pre-app is just a way for agents to now ask for negotiations. The pre-app process seems to come somewhat too early for some applications so when they get submitted the final scheme includes far more information		
6	05/01/2023 15:59 PM ID: 207774303	Some details may still need to be ironed out during the application period but most of the main issues will have been dealt with prior to the application being submitted. Although this does depend on who the applicant paid for advice from during the pre-app. For example Heritage and Highways are the big ones that people do not want to pay for pre-app advice and then during the application run up against problems. Planning Officers need to make it clear in their responses that other consultees should also be involved if they feel there may be a problem.		
7	09/01/2023 10:24 AM ID: 208000860	No because if there has been pre-app then generally we try to negotiate whereas if there hasn't been we can refuse.		
8	09/01/2023 13:41 PM ID: 208020120	yes		
9	09/01/2023 19:04 PM ID: 208052887	Often not - due to lack of specialist consultation at pre-app. stage.		
10	11/01/2023 15:34 PM ID: 208217625	In the case of major proposals, pre-app generally reduces the need for amendments and negotiation. That said, it is not unknown for pre-app advice to be given and, for the most part, ignored at the submission stage - in which case you are virtually back to square one.		

## 7. Where pre-app advice has been provided do you find that helps reduce the need for negotiation or post-submission amendments?

11	13/01/2023 13:07 PM ID: 208387482	Difficult to say because the question is comparing people who submit pre-apps and people who don't. In my experience people who do are a self-selecting sample and would probably need less negotiation etc anyway. If there is a difficulty with pre-app it is that the people who most ought to do it choose not to, and do not see enough incentive or deterrent to make them. In terms of resources I sometimes feel frustrated that we spend time on proposals that don't need so much input, while ones that do don't get enough.
12	13/01/2023 16:36 PM ID: 208405742	On the whole yes, but it depends. Sometimes a proposal is not progressed far enough at pre-application stage before the full application is submitted, which means there can still be a long way to go before it is acceptable. E.g. they propose the principle of an extension at pre-application, and based on initial 'potentially acceptable in principal' comments, do not submit a design until the full application, which turns out to have many issues. Occasionally a pre-application does not involve a consultee who then requests amendments/further information at full application stage. Again, Ecology being an example (but I am not sure they do pre-app). We can raise the potential for this issue at pre-application, but some people won't do a report unless Ecology (for example) themselves confirm it is needed.
13	13/01/2023 17:51 PM ID: 208411273	Generally, there are smaller amendments needed in an application following pre-app. However, I do find that often the applicant requires lots of small discussions throughout the application in order to get it to an acceptable position, or to avoid conditions. They tend to expect a continuous dialogue throughout the process. This can take a lot of time, rather than simply refusing a scheme on clear grounds because of fundamental concerns.
14	17/01/2023 18:51 PM ID: 208733449	I refer to the answer to question 1
15	17/01/2023 19:58 PM ID: 208737400	Usually, yes.
16	18/01/2023 08:54 AM ID: 208758804	That depends on how much detail has been provided, sometimes all you get is a red line. I believe that it definitely helps reduce the need for further amendments however sometimes they are necessary to improve the submission, even simply a change to the materials etc.
17	18/01/2023 09:38 AM ID: 208763169	In some cases
18	18/01/2023 14:13 PM ID: 208794105	Overall yes. However, there are occasions where (due to the fact of pre-application) the applicant is given more chance to amend if the scheme is not quite right; so this does, perhaps, have the opposite effect to what was intended.
19	18/01/2023 19:19 PM ID: 208827159	Yes, if our advice has been given following a considered assessment.
20	19/01/2023 08:47 AM ID: 208857453	Yes, insofar as PPA experience.
21	19/01/2023 09:14 AM ID: 208859604	It depends on the level of information in the report, and whether the applicant has altered the scheme accordingly. Some instead provide justification for why they cannot complete the suggested changes.
22	19/01/2023 09:24 AM ID: 208860493	There is nearly always the need for some level of negotiation, however I think that the pre-app advice does reduce this substantially.
23	19/01/2023 09:32 AM ID: 208861240	It can do. Often there is still negotiation around other items which applicants/agents haven't had consultee advice on as part of the pre-application response. It would be useful if we could highlight these requirements early and bring them into the conversation, otherwise Officers are left to guess at our consultees requirements.
24	19/01/2023 10:08 AM ID: 208865061	In my opinion it does reduce the need for negotiation or post-submission amendments as any concerns on the initial scheme would be covered at the pre-app stage, the applicant would then be aware and familiar with key policy which

### 7. Where pre-app advice has been provided do you find that helps reduce the need for negotiation or post-submission amendments?

		relates to their application and can act upon that advice on the subsequent application.	
25	19/01/2023 10:10 AM ID: 208865179	Not necessarily. It depends how closely they've followed your advice. Likewise, I find it very difficult to predict/advise what consultees might request (i.e. a noise assessment) and this often trips up applications and results in delays.	
26	19/01/2023 10:25 AM ID: 208866607	Most of the time	
27	20/01/2023 12:05 PM ID: 208978589	yes if you take your time to do a thorough job	
		answered	27
		skipped	0





### 8. Where post-submission amendments are needed were these foreseeable when pre-app advice was given?

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00%	26
1	05/01/2023 14:31 PM ID: 207764398	No - a lot of the time its consultee objections and these are sometimes not something we can advise on.		
2	05/01/2023 14:35 PM ID: 207764912	Sometimes		
3	05/01/2023 14:48 PM ID: 207766382	Not all the time, no		
4	05/01/2023 15:09 PM ID: 207768537	Again depends on the level of advice given at pre-app as well as anything that may arise during the consultation period.		
5	05/01/2023 15:55 PM ID: 207773931	Not all of the time but sometimes (i.e. ecology)- most of the issues are however where plans were not provided at pre-app.		
6	05/01/2023 15:59 PM ID: 207774303	With my own pre-apps - not very often. When picking up other officer's work - yes.		
7	09/01/2023 10:24 AM ID: 208000860	Generally the issue is that the submission changes from pre-app or they don't listen to the advice or no heritage/highways advice is provided at pre-app once heritage/highways are consulted changes are usually required.		
8	09/01/2023 13:41 PM ID: 208020120	yes		
9	09/01/2023 19:04 PM ID: 208052887	I would say usually not.		
10	11/01/2023 15:34 PM ID: 208217625	Usually if amendments are sought, these were raised at the pre-app stage. If further amendments are sought by officers post-submission this may affect the enquirer's perception of pre-app engagement, unless the particular issue(s) were unforeseen at the time the pre-app response was provided.		
11	13/01/2023 13:07 PM ID: 208387482	Can't think of relevant instances, but then I don't get allocated applications or consultations. Pre-apps vary as to the level of detail offered for comment - generally owners don't like to commit resources to preparation of the detailed scheme till they have some reassurance around our overall position, so almost inevitably there will be points of detail that were not foreseeable at pre-app stage because the scheme didn't get to that level.		

## 8. Where post-submission amendments are needed were these foreseeable when pre-app advice was given?

12	13/01/2023 16:36 PM ID: 208405742	As above, if a proposal is not progressed far enough at pre-application before the full application is submitted, it may not yet be clear whether the/a full proposal is going to be acceptable. Also this is somewhat difficult to judge when so many apps end up being dealt with by a different officer to the pre-application at the moment And sometimes yes they are foreseeable and this was stated in the pre-app, but they just ignored this.	
13	13/01/2023 17:51 PM ID: 208411273	No necessarily. Often, tweaks occur following pre-app and before an application, so these are often new when the application is assessed. However, sometimes it is clear that an applicant wants something a particular way despite advice, and I think they try submitting it as part of the application to see if someone else picks it up and lets it through, or if we bother to argue the detail.	
14	17/01/2023 18:51 PM ID: 208733449	I suspect this may not always be the case, as the pre-app advice could result in a completely different proposal being submitted at application stage, which may require further negotiation	
15	17/01/2023 19:58 PM ID: 208737400	Probably not because post-submission amendments are likely to stem from public consultations that wouldn't have been known at pre-app stage.	
16	18/01/2023 09:38 AM ID: 208763169	Sometimes	
17	18/01/2023 14:13 PM ID: 208794105	On occasions, yes. Particularly in terms of required background documents which were not flagged up. Also, the lack of consultation of a certain consultee (typically heritage, highways, ecology) makes it apparent that we cannot be certain in our pre-application response and, instead of rushing out a response, we need a dialogue with the enquirer to ensure the correct consultations (with the requisite fee) occur.	
18	18/01/2023 19:19 PM ID: 208827159	Sometimes, but see above.	
19	19/01/2023 08:47 AM ID: 208857453	Sometimes this is unavoidable.	
20	19/01/2023 09:14 AM ID: 208859604	sometimes, the alterations can have an unforeseen impact in other areas, that had not been considered as part of the pre-app as the altered scheme was not presented.	
21	19/01/2023 09:24 AM ID: 208860493	Often such amendments are the result of changes to the proposal, following pre-app advice. Therefore I do not think that they were foreseeable.	
22	19/01/2023 09:32 AM ID: 208861240	Not always. Sometimes applicants will chance their arm and submit the same drawings, hoping we're too busy to notice.	
23	19/01/2023 10:08 AM ID: 208865061	It depends if the applicant acted upon the pre-app advice, but also if something was missed by the officer. I cannot speak from experience on this one but would imagine they were not easily foreseeable.	
24	19/01/2023 10:10 AM ID: 208865179	Not where consultees are concerned because it is difficult to forecast what they might want, I have this problem with Environmental Health a lot.	
25	19/01/2023 10:25 AM ID: 208866607	Most of the time	
26	20/01/2023 12:05 PM ID: 208978589	not always but the pre-app will have reduced the risk of such events from happening especially if the pre-app was given with multi-disciplinary input	
		answered	26
		skipped	1

## 9. Does providing pre-app help you do your job more effectively or efficiently?

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly agree		15.38%	4
2	Agree		57.69%	15
3	Neither agree nor disagree		19.23%	5
4	Disagree		7.69%	2
5	Strongly disagree		0.00%	0
			answered	26
			skipped	1

### Please Provide Any Comments: (19)

1	05/01/2023 14:31 PM ID: 207764398	It definitely helps when assessing the application when it comes in with an application as it takes the time away from assessing the site as it's already been done at pre-app stage.
2	05/01/2023 14:35 PM ID: 207764912	It depends on the quality of the pre-app submission and the parties involved. A 'good' pre-app would highlight key issues, enable negotiation and as clean an application as possible which is usually more efficient.  Pre-app is part of the job so doing it or not doing it doesn't impact effectiveness
3	05/01/2023 14:48 PM ID: 207766382	All the service does is try to iron out the awful applications from being applied for
4	05/01/2023 15:09 PM ID: 207768537	Allows for more of an informal, discussion based approach to a proposal, hopefully securing any amendments upfront for the proposal to be supported. This in turn may save time during the applications determination period. However, in instances where pre-app advice has been given and such advice has either changed due to circumstances or was not accurate, it can lead to more work/complication at application stage. I.e. supporting pre-app for dwellings during >5 year housing land support vs not supporting a subsequent application made during <5 year housing land supply.
5	05/01/2023 15:59 PM ID: 207774303	It gives a good background to a complicated application. It also opens up a dialogue between the Council and applicant which builds really good relationships. Honesty and goodwill is key to getting satisfactory application through the system and this really does start with pre-application advice.
6	09/01/2023 10:24 AM ID: 208000860	It probably removes some applications which have no chance of approval and means that already know the site and potential issues but it's frustrating when you go to a lot of effort to provide good quality advice which is then completely ignored.
7	09/01/2023 19:04 PM ID: 208052887	Pre-app provides the case officer with a good understanding of the site and proposal prior to receiving the formal application.
8	11/01/2023 15:34 PM ID: 208217625	The pre-app function does allow the opportunity for officers to influence a formal submission and makes the application process easier. I would anticipate that if all applications came in 'cold' there would be a significant increase in refusals.
9	13/01/2023 13:07 PM ID: 208387482	As I don't get allocated applications or consultations, pre-apps is my job.
10	13/01/2023 16:36 PM ID: 208405742	The most difficult cases are often those where there was no pre-app, and it really needed it, or they did not go far enough with the pre-app, because once the full application is in, there is much less room for informal negotiation, instead you may have to go straight to formal negative comments (where relevant) and the whole experience is more negative (on both sides).

### 9. Does providing pre-app help you do your job more effectively or efficiently?

11	13/01/2023 17:51 PM ID: 208411273	I think the pros can be balanced out by the cons. Pre-app takes a long time when you add up the preparation, the travel and site visit time, the drafting of the formal advice and any other following correspondence. However, it does help that I am familiar with a building or site prior to the application submission, as it helps the 'initial check' of the scheme as I am often able to do this much more quickly. Also, I think that building a good rapport with an agent during pre-app can be helpful to progress an application smoothly, regardless of outcome.
12	17/01/2023 18:51 PM ID: 208733449	It should help, but I refer to the answers to question 1 above
13	17/01/2023 19:58 PM ID: 208737400	Encourages a smoother formal application however, the whole pre-app process can be time consuming and inefficient.
14	18/01/2023 09:38 AM ID: 208763169	It helps to know what's coming and what to expect
15	18/01/2023 14:13 PM ID: 208794105	Yes, but.....where the system falls down is where a pre-application response has not been properly thought through and a positive steer is given. This can be difficult to recover from and create precedents which weaken our general stance.
16	18/01/2023 19:19 PM ID: 208827159	A subsequent case is not always allocated to the Officer who dealt with re-app, for various reasons. Officers should probably speak to each other. A clear Pre-app report is helpful and can speed up any subsequent assessment.
17	19/01/2023 08:47 AM ID: 208857453	This is tricky because I observe that a good pre-app takes a considerable amount of capacity to deal.
18	19/01/2023 10:08 AM ID: 208865061	Yes it should make the subsequent application a better scheme and the pre-app officers report can be used as a tool to make the decision making process more efficient.
19	19/01/2023 10:10 AM ID: 208865179	I would say yes - where positive pre-app has been given and the application follows the advice, dealing with the application is a lot quicker and more straightforward. Both because you have familiarity with the proposal and you have your pre-app advice to help write the delegated report. However, I find writing pre-apps (and detailed, quality advice) to be very time consuming and I don't think this is recognised or appreciated by management. They can be more time consuming than drafting applications.

### 10. Does pre-app lead to an improved outcome in planning terms compared with cases without pre-app?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	27
1	05/01/2023 14:31 PM ID: 207764398	Sometimes Yes	
2	05/01/2023 14:35 PM ID: 207764912	Generally, yes.	
3	05/01/2023 14:48 PM ID: 207766382	I wouldn't say so, no. Pre-app just gives us the opportunity to make our assessment before the application comes in but the assessment would have been done at some point anyways.	
4	05/01/2023 15:09 PM ID: 207768537	I think it can, however often improvements can be secured during negotiations during the application period.	
5	05/01/2023 15:55 PM ID: 207773931	Not really it just puts officers in a more difficult position when dealing with agents.	



## 10. Does pre-app lead to an improved outcome in planning terms compared with cases without pre-app?

6	05/01/2023 15:59 PM ID: 207774303	Yes - it normally results in good relationship building and a trust bond between the two parties.
7	09/01/2023 10:24 AM ID: 208000860	Probably for householder applications and smaller developments but not always for the larger applications.
8	09/01/2023 13:41 PM ID: 208020120	yes
9	09/01/2023 19:04 PM ID: 208052887	I would say this depends on complexity and the number of planning issues and constraints present.
10	11/01/2023 15:34 PM ID: 208217625	Please see the answer above. Pre-app engagement is encouraged in the NPPF.
11	13/01/2023 13:07 PM ID: 208387482	I think this is probably clearer in the larger schemes led by DM officers where Heritage is one of numerous in-house and external consultees. Usually the heritage component of these is fairly straight forward, but from observing contributions from others there must be clear gains in terms of the completeness of the application package, and how near it is to an approvable scheme. There may also be cases where a negative response prevents a pointless application - surely a win-win, and preferable to a less harmful but still doomed application ?
12	13/01/2023 16:36 PM ID: 208405742	Yes It generally seems easier to convince people to amend a scheme to something more appropriate at pre-application than at full application. Although there may be an element of this relating to the type of people who do and don't submit pre-apps. I.e. those people who do pre-app are those most interested in achieving the best scheme. Other people may think that if they are stubborn and refuse to engage in pre-application/negotiation, the Council may still approve their imperfect scheme rather than have no scheme approved.
13	13/01/2023 17:51 PM ID: 208411273	Generally, yes. Although, as above, some will deliberately ignore advice or try it on when they submit the application.
14	17/01/2023 18:51 PM ID: 208733449	It should do yes, but I refer to answer to question 1 above
15	17/01/2023 19:58 PM ID: 208737400	Usually, as we can offer alternative design suggestions at an earlier stage before plans become fixed.
16	18/01/2023 08:54 AM ID: 208758804	Sometimes, however there are times when agents still expect a dialogue and the opportunity to make changes even though no pre-app was sought.
17	18/01/2023 09:38 AM ID: 208763169	Often not always
18	18/01/2023 14:13 PM ID: 208794105	Yes, overall - but only when good quality advice is given.
19	18/01/2023 19:19 PM ID: 208827159	Not necessarily.
20	19/01/2023 08:47 AM ID: 208857453	Yes.
21	19/01/2023 09:14 AM ID: 208859604	yes
22	19/01/2023 09:24 AM ID: 208860493	I am unsure.
23	19/01/2023 09:32 AM ID: 208861240	Again, not always, willing applicants and agents who want to work collaboratively with us can and will make alteration to applications to ultimately be successful at application. Generally though, my experience is that pre-application does lead to a more thorough application and a more robust platform for Officers to negotiate from during application.

### 10. Does pre-app lead to an improved outcome in planning terms compared with cases without pre-app?

24	19/01/2023 10:08 AM ID: 208865061	Yes for reasons stated above.	
25	19/01/2023 10:10 AM ID: 208865179	I don't tend to see it with the applications I deal with, I can imagine it would with more complex, larger developments. Again, it depends if they follow our advice when we recommend amendments etc.	
26	19/01/2023 10:25 AM ID: 208866607	Yes - except when pre-app was done by a different officer/ a long time ago, sometimes can disagree with the previous advice given	
27	20/01/2023 12:05 PM ID: 208978589	YES	
		answered	27
		skipped	0

### 11. Do you believe that our pre-app service is a valuable service for our customers?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Extremely valuable	0.00%	0
2	Very valuable	66.67%	18
3	Somewhat valuable	25.93%	7
4	Not so valuable	7.41%	2
5	Not at all valuable	0.00%	0
		answered	27
		skipped	0





#### Comments: (18)

1	05/01/2023 14:31 PM ID: 207764398	I think it does help people when deciding whether they should spend loads of money on surveys for a full application or whether its not worth it.
2	05/01/2023 14:48 PM ID: 207766382	Advice changes from officer to officer
3	05/01/2023 15:09 PM ID: 207768537	I think the service can be very valuable. However, customer expectation is key. Customers should be clear what the pre-app service provides and understand the level of details provided is reflected in the response. Emphasis should be placed on the customer at validation stage to submit sufficient amount and quality details.
4	05/01/2023 15:59 PM ID: 207774303	I think it is very useful for applicants to understand what goes into an assessment of a planning application and gives them the opportunity to try and address issues at an early stage which means that their applications can be dealt with in a timely way.
5	09/01/2023 19:04 PM ID: 208052887	I believe it benefits all in terms of a longer conversation, from pre-app., through the initial 8 week period, and enables EOTs and tweaks at the end, usually resulting in better quality developments.
6	13/01/2023 13:07 PM ID: 208387482	see 7 above. Any reassurance should be valuable. In most cases we also get to talk or at least write to them in a less adversarial set-up than an application, and we can be more informal and discursive with explanations of our position, which I think improves the application experience all round.

## 11. Do you believe that our pre-app service is a valuable service for our customers?

7	13/01/2023 16:36 PM ID: 208405742	Generally yes, though also the more they put in to it the more they get out
8	13/01/2023 17:51 PM ID: 208411273	Whilst the Heritage pre-app fee for a site visit and written response seems expensive to a homeowner, this is very cheap compared to private sector costs. The agent is often charging considerably more for their time. If our advice is taken on board, more often than not, a scheme can reach a positive outcome through negotiation and understanding of a building. I think it's a really important and positive service we provide, and prevents customers thinking we're just having a personal opinion by explaining all the policy, guidance and experience we use to make decisions.
9	17/01/2023 18:51 PM ID: 208733449	I have had no feed back from agents so it is difficult to assess this. Having submitted pre-app to other authorities, the approach appears to be consistent with BMSDC, but it is sometimes difficult to find the "meat in the sandwich" as the letters of advice are often generated automatically ( at least in part) and read like a delegated report on an application. It is necessary to wade through a lot of information, when realistically what you want is a short summary of whether the proposal is likely to be supported and what the issues are.
10	18/01/2023 09:38 AM ID: 208763169	Policies change, NPPF changes, so in some cases, pre-app outcomes don't match the application outcome
11	18/01/2023 14:13 PM ID: 208794105	The quality of pre-application advice varies and can lead to problems down the line. It gives customers a general idea about whether a scheme is likely to succeed - but we need to be consistent.
12	18/01/2023 19:19 PM ID: 208827159	A lot of applicants are disgruntled if a planning decision differs from Pre-app advice. A poorly thought out, standardised or badly presented Pre-app report might not be considered to be value for money. If it leads to a clear run for a planning application then it can be valuable.
13	19/01/2023 08:47 AM ID: 208857453	I'm not well placed to answer as I'm not familiar with Dee structure.
14	19/01/2023 09:14 AM ID: 208859604	some applicants prefer to speed the process up by not using pre-app and simply resubmitting plans, or withdrawing their application to avoid refusal, and allow them time to amend their plans. These people see pre app as a waste of time, not money.
15	19/01/2023 09:32 AM ID: 208861240	Even negative pre-application responses are valuable if they dissuade an applicant from making an application that would be refused. If they consider the saved planning fee and fees from the professionals who would provide
16	19/01/2023 10:08 AM ID: 208865061	It is valuable as if the advice is taken it should lead to an improved outcome.
17	19/01/2023 10:10 AM ID: 208865179	I think pre-app is used by different agents in different ways - I know several that won't use it and other agents you see regularly. It depends on the nature of the scheme and whether the principle of development is uncertain. I think agents might say it would depend on the Officer; the quality of advice is not consistent.
18	20/01/2023 12:05 PM ID: 208978589	I believe that at present the quality and value is patchy. I see some outstanding pre-app advice and some that is of little or no value. Clearly there is a range of devt types and as such not every response needs to be as detailed depending on size and scale but it should always give the enquirer a useful guide as to the way forward.  I sometimes wonder if pre apps are seen as a chore and something to deal with quickly just to get them off the workload. I cannot see that a response that says these are the policies and we will take them into account is of much use at all if the advice doesn't then put the development into that policy context. All to often planners are unwilling to comment on the design within a pre-app. That seems a fundamental weakness and gives the impression that what is proposed is ok when it might not be so.



## 12. Do you believe that our pre-app service is valuable for the Councils?

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Extremely valuable		18.52%	5
2	Very valuable		51.85%	14
3	Somewhat valuable		22.22%	6
4	Not so valuable		7.41%	2
5	Not at all valuable		0.00%	0
			answered	27
			skipped	0

### Comments: (12)

1	05/01/2023 15:09 PM ID: 207768537	Provides a good indication of our views to proposed developments prior to formal submission. Can allow input from Officers/consultees which could in turn result in a better application.
2	05/01/2023 15:59 PM ID: 207774303	It is a great revenue stream and it also gives a good indication of what is likely to come in, especially with the major developments. This enables staff to be ready with the validation so that the application can be processed quickly.
3	09/01/2023 19:04 PM ID: 208052887	For the additional income generation and for enabling officers to become familiar with the proposal prior to formal submission.
4	13/01/2023 13:07 PM ID: 208387482	Different question but same answer: In most cases we also get to talk or at least write to enquirers in a less adversarial set-up than an application, and we can be more informal and discursive with explanations of our position, which I think improves the application experience all round. We also get insights into the owner perspective that don't translate into application documents.
5	13/01/2023 16:36 PM ID: 208405742	Yes - I think it creates a better relationship with customers, reducing complaints, and makes the subsequent parts of the process easier for us
6	13/01/2023 17:51 PM ID: 208411273	Some of the survey results from the pre-app service have been quite negative and may reflect badly on the Councils. However, I think the service is really important and more often than not, the negative response on heritage advice is probably due to not supporting a particular scheme.
7	17/01/2023 18:51 PM ID: 208733449	In that they set out the considerations from the start it should make applications run smoother.
8	18/01/2023 09:38 AM ID: 208763169	Generates income but equally time-consuming for officers, sometimes it takes a lot longer to produce a pre-app response than it is to process and application.
9	18/01/2023 14:13 PM ID: 208794105	Unfortunately, the service has grown from a general idea of whether permission is likely to be forthcoming to, effectively, a "dry run" for the application itself. Some enquirers, and in particular some agents, are somewhat unrealistic in their expectations, especially given the moderate expenditure for the service (when compared with their own fees) and the relatively swift turnaround. It is not always possible to cover off every possible consultee - especially when they are external.
10	18/01/2023 19:19 PM ID: 208827159	If done well it presents a good face for the public. Meetings on site can be particularly useful to introduce Officers to the public.
11	19/01/2023 10:10 AM ID: 208865179	I do think a review of fees is needed - £89 for a written householder pre-app doesn't always account for the time taken by Officers. Clearly it makes the Councils significant revenue and it is a fairly well used service.
12	20/01/2023 12:05 PM ID: 208978589	yes if operated to produce a quality output

### 13. Would removing pre-app give you more time to do other tasks?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		70.37%
2	No		29.63%
		answered	27
		skipped	0

#### Comments: (21)

1	05/01/2023 14:31 PM ID: 207764398	Pre-app takes a long time due to how much detail is required, it takes much longer than a full application as pre-apps discuss all possibilities whereas the application just focuses on what they have submitted. Therefore, not having pre-apps would save a lot of time.
2	05/01/2023 14:48 PM ID: 207766382	So much time is spent writing pre-app reports and doing the assessments and the bad applications still come in regardless.
3	05/01/2023 15:09 PM ID: 207768537	Whilst valuable, pre-apps are often time consuming. If amendments are required at application stage, often they can be secured during this time.
4	05/01/2023 15:55 PM ID: 207773931	We end up negotiating on so many applications regardless of whether pre-app's been had or not- in most cases where pre-app has been had it prolongs applications far longer to allow for these negotiations thus stalls things.
5	05/01/2023 15:59 PM ID: 207774303	Of course the simple answer is yes because pre-apps form quite a large part of our work. However, I am sure we would be refusing a lot more applications without pre-app advice that would likely result in more appeals. So you wouldn't have as much work in front of the application, but you would have more work after the decision has been made.
6	09/01/2023 19:04 PM ID: 208052887	A large amount of the 'leg work' is already done for an application, if pre-app. has been carried out first.
7	11/01/2023 15:34 PM ID: 208217625	The production of a pre-app response can take a significant amount of time, depending on the type of development proposed.
8	13/01/2023 13:07 PM ID: 208387482	As I say, the question is probably not applicable because I don't get allocated other cases that would compete.
9	13/01/2023 16:36 PM ID: 208405742	Well yes, and occasionally someone submits a pre-app with site visit request that I can assess from my desk as being fine, and having to then spend time travelling is a bit tedious. but there may still be a positive customer relations element to this. Also without pre-app there would probably be more applications in our workload, because there would be more applications with issues or missing things, that could not be ironed out within the first go so would come in multiple times, rather than just once. Also, there might end up being more complaints and appeals to deal with instead. I.e. the amount of other tasks to do would just go up.
10	13/01/2023 17:51 PM ID: 208411273	As above, pre-app does take a long time, but generally, I think it is easier to go through an application following pre-app. However, when you pick up an application following another officer's advice, this can slow the process down. And if we weren't providing pre-app, we could pick up other proactive tasks, but perhaps to the detriment of application results.
11	17/01/2023 18:51 PM ID: 208733449	As it is forms 70% of my workload - yes
12	17/01/2023 19:58 PM ID: 208737400	Production of the pre-app response itself is time consuming in terms of inserting plans, photo's, re-formatting consultee responses etc and the response could be more stream-lined to allow us more time to focus on meaningful advice and other tasks.

### 13. Would removing pre-app give you more time to do other tasks?

13	18/01/2023 08:54 AM ID: 208758804	Not necessarily. Pre-app helps in the long run, better to give advise at the start of the process rather than trying to sort issues out during, or issuing refusals then dealing with appeals. Better to do the work at the start
14	18/01/2023 09:38 AM ID: 208763169	As noted above
15	18/01/2023 14:13 PM ID: 208794105	In the short term this would free up time (some days, half as many or just as many pre-application responses as Planning application decisions are issued). However, it is acknowledged that this would lead to a build-up of issues down the line and there does have to be some form of dialogue at some point.
16	18/01/2023 19:19 PM ID: 208827159	It would give time to concentrate on planning applications, but having said that useful Pre-apps can help to smooth the way for the subsequent application.
17	19/01/2023 08:47 AM ID: 208857453	It would be pre app is vital. Perhaps fees should be reviewed.
18	19/01/2023 09:14 AM ID: 208859604	where pre-app is given, the response on the application is guided by this, meaning a faster response can be given, and a site visit can usually be avoided.
19	19/01/2023 09:24 AM ID: 208860493	I think that its removal would mean that other applications take up greater time than that which was saved.
20	19/01/2023 10:08 AM ID: 208865061	Not necessarily in my opinion, as if an application was submitted without pre-app instead , it could take more negotiation or waiting on post-submission amendments. In addition, the applicant could have less of an understanding of the relevant planning policies and the overall decision making process. Therefore, we can manage the expectation of the applicant better with pre-app and save time on a subsequent application. The written pre-app report as a guide also saves time as can be used on the subsequent application.
21	19/01/2023 10:10 AM ID: 208865179	Inevitably yes. But application where pre-app has been sought are more streamlined so quicker to deal with.

### 14. What improvements to our pre-application advice service would you recommend?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	22
1	05/01/2023 14:31 PM ID: 207764398	N/a	
2	05/01/2023 14:35 PM ID: 207764912	Follow up. Better support for junior officers.	
3	05/01/2023 15:09 PM ID: 207768537	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Customers, Admin and Officers should have a clear understanding of what the pre-app service is and a level of expectation.</li> <li>- There is a difference between a duty query and pre-app.</li> <li>- More and better quality information should be provided at validation stage. Pre-apps with poor information should not be processed/the customer should understand the quality of response will be less due to lack of sufficient information.</li> <li>- Engagement between Admin and Officer prior to validation. Has enough information been provided? Is the proposal clear? Is this considered a pre-app or a duty query? What date/times work for a meeting?</li> <li>- More care should be taken setting up pre-apps in Uniform/IDOX, i.e. plans labelled correctly, drawing nos. proper grammar, spelling mistakes etc.</li> <li>- Formatting of pre-app responses should be consistent. Address issue with pictures stretching.</li> <li>- Feedback from signing Officers re. quality and content of advice given. Allows Officers to learn, especially newer G4's.</li> </ul>	

#### 14. What improvements to our pre-application advice service would you recommend?

		- Applications submitted following pre-app should be allocated to the Officer who dealt with the pre-app (have had a few instances of different Officers dealing with an application someone else gave pre-app on).
4	05/01/2023 15:55 PM ID: 207773931	Get rid of the option for householder pre-apps.
5	05/01/2023 15:59 PM ID: 207774303	I think more advice could be offered at pre-application in terms of design and materials and even layout. They should be treated as a mini-application and we should offer more advice on making the schemes better at an early stage. We want quality development in the two districts. We shouldn't be afraid to say that.
6	09/01/2023 10:24 AM ID: 208000860	Require more at submission of pre-app - proposed layout plan, contact phone number and clear description of development, don't allow the option for site visits for non listed extensions or single dwellings, require heritage/highways advice for certain sizes of development.
7	09/01/2023 19:04 PM ID: 208052887	At least a short conversation with all pre-app. applicants prior to forwarding final pre-app. comments.  Validation checks.  More engagement with consultees.
8	11/01/2023 15:34 PM ID: 208217625	Generally I consider that the process runs reasonably well.
9	13/01/2023 13:07 PM ID: 208387482	I think there are quite a lot of internal improvements needed. There is a lot of confusion over 'site meetings' which is not a phrase used on the website. I don't like turning up at site and being expected to pronounce finally on the scheme. It's a site inspection. the meeting should always be separate. I don't understand why meetings and inspections are arranged by email rather than invites. If I have more than one case, they will be competing for time but none will appear in my calendar, so admin don't know whether they are double-booking. I end up having to put them all in myself. When it's busy I sometimes spend nearly all my time sorting out meetings and inspections. If it takes a long time, as it can with multiple participants, the pre-app can show as overdue simply because a meeting / inspection hasn't been fixed. Uniform doesn't help me prioritise what to do next, and doesn't tell me whether a case is for inspection and/or meeting, or just report.
10	13/01/2023 16:36 PM ID: 208405742	The same officer (where possible) deals with the subsequent applications, to stop the scope for accusations I haven't read the pre-app response, or inconsistencies in views (intentional or not), or having to spend additional time checking with the first officer you are on the same lines (but this applies to everything). Ensure there is a consistent approach to follow-ups, including fees (or lack of), and that this is made obvious to customers.
11	13/01/2023 17:51 PM ID: 208411273	Consistency of advice through the application stage. Whoever gives the pre-app advice should deal with the application or consultation. I think this would be beneficial to both customers and agents.
12	17/01/2023 18:51 PM ID: 208733449	Enable the officer to tailor the advice and advise the enquirer whether they need to include certain consultants advice. I often comment at pre-app stage on proposals that would not need a heritage consultation if they were submitted as an application.  Is it possible to reduce the administrative burden on the officer, and make the letters of advice more concise?
13	17/01/2023 19:58 PM ID: 208737400	More info could be required to be submitted upfront (basic layout/illustrative design), as some agents use pre-app to simply start a discussion. Maybe Admin Teams could generate the basic template for officers to complete. Some consultee responses (Heritage) can take time to re-format for use in the response and could be provided in simple word form. Shorter meeting slots could be offered (30 mins) for more straight forward

#### 14. What improvements to our pre-application advice service would you recommend?

		enquiries as sometimes people feel they need to get their money's worth and use the full hour.	
14	18/01/2023 08:54 AM ID: 208758804	I have a few agents asking about a two stage pre-app, where stage one is a meeting on site or via teams to discuss the concept and advice from other consultees. Second stage would be a follow up at a reduced price as the officers concerned are already familiar with the scheme. This would allow the officer to close off part one and the agent to know that stage two was paid for, and could be dealt with quicker.	
15	18/01/2023 09:38 AM ID: 208763169	put a time constraint on future submissions for the results to become more accurate, i.e. if there is a pre-app, they should make a submission within 3-6 months of that pre-app, maybe add a standard note at the bottom of the template, but again there is a risk with that too, as our policy position can change	
16	18/01/2023 14:13 PM ID: 208794105	A shorter pre-application template. A clear message of there being a shelf-life and not being tied to the advice A longer time to respond The capacity to not respond to a pre-application (potentially closing the case down and giving a partial refund to allow for admin costs) if a consultee vital to the consideration of the enquiry has not been requested/paid for.	
17	18/01/2023 19:19 PM ID: 208827159	A simpler response for those who are not so familiar with the planning process.	
18	19/01/2023 09:14 AM ID: 208859604	an option for a site visit without a report, to open up dialogue with the council.	
19	19/01/2023 10:08 AM ID: 208865061	To make sure we manage the applicants expectation by making them aware of what shall be required/expected on a subsequent application.	
20	19/01/2023 10:10 AM ID: 208865179	Make applicants aware that the quality of our advice is dependent on the quality of their submission. An increase in fees to account for the significant time spent on drafting advice. Guidance notes from consultees about circumstance when they might want additional reports so we can feed this better into responses (Sue Lennard from EH had previously said they could do this because this issue arises regularly).	
21	19/01/2023 10:25 AM ID: 208866607	More time to assess plans/ draft a report to better manage the workload for planning applications	
22	20/01/2023 12:05 PM ID: 208978589	sharing best practice and looking at what makes a pre-app response helpful and vfm	
		answered	22
		skipped	5