



Homes &  
Communities  
ATLAS

# Planning Performance Agreements: Inception Service

ATLAS



# Planning Performance Agreements

Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) have been introduced by Communities and Local Government in response to the challenges of delivering high-quality outcomes for large, complex development proposals through the planning system. They are a collaborative project management process and tool that provide greater certainty and transparency to planning application assessment and decision making.

The *PPA Guidance Note* (ATLAS and Communities and Local Government, 2008) aims to provide local planning authorities, developers and other key agencies with the policy framework and a recommended process for developing and delivering individual PPAs for complex development projects.

## Background to PPA inception

The inception stage is a key component of any PPA.

The PPA concept was piloted in 2006 and all projects were provided with independently facilitated inception days. It was concluded that inception was one of the most beneficial parts of the process and that the earlier in the project it took place, the better. Consequently, Communities and Local Government recommend an inception day process and have asked ATLAS to offer a free facilitation service.

## Purpose of an inception day

The purpose of the inception day is to critically and openly consider the fundamental issues affecting the development project. Key decision makers and others (including third parties) that will have a stake in the outcome of the project should attend.

Participants will need to provide a certain amount of information prior to a facilitated inception day and these requirements are set out in the *PPA Guidance Note*. ATLAS will need a summary of this information submitted on the *PPA Inception ATLAS Scale Validation Form (V1)*.

## The ATLAS PPA service

To support the successful implementation of PPAs, Communities and Local Government has allocated funding for the provision of inception days, free of charge, as follows:

- ◆ ATLAS will directly provide inception days for schemes with a minimum of 500 dwellings or important regeneration, town centre or mixed-use schemes with a minimum of 200 dwellings. ATLAS staff are trained facilitators and experienced professionals with an in depth knowledge of the planning process and successful place-making.
- ◆ For projects below the ATLAS thresholds a specially appointed panel of consultants, trained and managed by ATLAS, has been assembled. Due to the limitations of funding, local authorities/applicants wishing to receive support should complete the *PPA Inception Consultants' Panel Validation Form (V2)*. ATLAS will assess proposals and confirm whether they are appropriate within ten working days of receipt.



## Case Study: Newington Triangle, Southwark

In December 2008 ATLAS facilitated a PPA inception day for this key development site at Elephant and Castle, Southwark, involving the local planning authority, the applicants and their consultants. Feedback from the day was overwhelmingly positive and participants felt that the process provided more certainty.

**“It created a collaborative working atmosphere and therefore a positive start to the process, but also helped to identify the areas of both common ground and those where there will be a need for further work and negotiation.”**

London Borough of Southwark

**“[The most beneficial part of the day was] the open forum to freely discuss issues without prejudice – a more formal and relaxed atmosphere than usual planning meetings!”**

Hollybrook

## About ATLAS

ATLAS provides independent and impartial advice to local authorities for large, complex residential development projects. The aim is to improve the quality of management processes and development outcomes whilst building capacity, skills and improving relationships.

## Further information

PPA Inception ATLAS Scale Validation Form (V1) and PPA Inception Consultants' Panel Validation Form (V2), along with more information about PPAs and the ATLAS approach, can be found in the *ATLAS Guide: Planning for Large Scale Development* at [atlasplanning.com](http://atlasplanning.com)



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ATLAS is part of the Homes and Communities Agency and is sponsored by Communities and Local Government.

ATLAS helps secure the timely delivery of high-quality sustainable development through effective planning processes, collaborative working and the promotion of good practice.

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