



# Join Greater Cambridge Shared Planning

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Recruitment Brochure 2024



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# Welcome

We are the largest planning service in the East of England, operating in one of the fastest-growing economies in the UK. We formed the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service in 2018 with Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council. We are now one of the busiest planning teams in the country, processing over 7,000 applications annually across a vast range of different sites and projects and with a team of over 150 officers.

**Joining the Greater Cambridge Planning Service provides you with an unparalleled opportunity to develop your career working on some of the most innovative developments in the UK.**

**Stephen Kelly**  
Director of Planning



# What sets us apart?

What sets Greater Cambridge Shared Planning apart is our range of casework and projects, including meeting the national ambition to grow Cambridge into a world-renowned science capital, whilst conserving and enhancing Greater Cambridgeshire's unique character, heritage and landscape.

One of the major initiatives on the horizon is the 'Case for Cambridge,' a government directive outlining aspirations for the growth of Cambridge. This is an ambitious plan which focuses on employment in the Research and Development sector and the associated requirement for new homes. Our overarching aim is to ensure this results in a shared vision that resonates with the needs and aspirations of both the partner councils and residents, making sure that they are closely involved and can have their say.

Central to our growth strategy are 13 strategic growth sites, which include the development of new towns in South Cambridgeshire and significant urban extensions in Cambridge. Notably, Greater Cambridge boasts over 3,500 Listed Buildings and encompasses more than 100 conservation areas.

We are proud to have worked a number of world-leading developments and some have gone on to win prestigious awards. The New Library at Magdalene College, and Accordia housing scheme have each won the RIBA Stirling Prize for Architecture.

Our teams have also achieved numerous accolades, most notably the RTPJ Jubilee Cup for Planning Excellence (2020) and several awards from the Thornton Education Trust (2023) for inspiring future generations.



Magdalene  
College  
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In 2023, Greater Cambridge Shared Planning gained accreditation from the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) for the Quality Management System we introduced within Development Management and Compliance, demonstrating our efforts to improve our processes, systems and customer service.

We continue to innovate, develop best practice, lead and learn from others. Recently, we have been successful in our bids for Department of Levelling Up, Homes and Communities Prop Tech and Digital Planning funding (DLUHC), enabling us to further our innovative work on the first joint Local Plan for the area and for delivering Biodiversity Net Gain. Additionally, we are part of the DLUHC Design Code Pathfinder programme.

In addition to celebrating our achievements, we champion best practices in design and construction and honour the skilled professionals making it happen through our annual Greater Cambridge Design and Construction Awards.

Fostering learning and development within our teams remains a priority. In recent years we have facilitated secondment opportunities and in 2023 we launched a 'grow our own planners' Apprenticeship Academy, which allows team members to move in an agile way across functions to expand their expertise and develop their careers.





# Our Teams



# Development Management Team

Development Management (DM) is the heartbeat of the planning service, providing quality and timely decisions on all types of planning application work across the Greater Cambridge Area. We are a team of 30 professionals, split into two teams, East and West. There is ample opportunity to develop your skills and progress your career as a planner in DM in a supportive and forward-thinking team.

Apart from the Strategic Sites, we deal with all development proposals, including large scale city urban regeneration projects, cutting edge city and rural life-science and office schemes, highly sustainable and award-winning housing, education and commercial proposals to householder extensions. Many of our applications involve Green Belt, heritage and sustainability considerations.

We want to be at the forefront of digital change as the DM service develops whilst maintaining an open approach to planning in the way we interact with our valued communities.

The DM team is a great place to start a planning career but also to continue one, with a varied urban and rural work-stream, the opportunity for personal development is abundant.



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## Strategic Sites Team

Strategic Sites is a dedicated and supportive team of approximately 20 experienced professionals, who are responsible for ensuring the delivery of a sustainable future for the City of Cambridge and the rural areas of South Cambridgeshire. Officers oversee the management and delivery of large-scale projects relating to growth sites allocated in Local Plans. This includes sites on the Cambridge City fringes (such as Eddington, Darwin Green, Marleigh and Springstead Village), and the District's new settlements at Bourn, Cambourne, Northstowe and Waterbeach. The team also leads on the delivery of the new strategic growth sites of Cambridge Biomedical Campus, North-East Cambridge and Cambridge East, which are coming forward as part of the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

The delivery of major development projects and large-scale infrastructure projects including Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) and Transport and Works Acts Orders (TWAOs) through the co-ordination and management of corporate responses in line with both Councils' policies, procedures and corporate plans, is also an important part of the Strategic Sites workload.

If you have the ambition to embrace the exciting challenges of this busy team, there is no better place to develop your career!

# Planning Policy Strategy and Economy Team

We are preparing a groundbreaking joint Local Plan for Greater Cambridge. This innovative plan will not only support continued economic and housing growth, but also set industry-leading standards for climate, energy, water, and biodiversity in new developments.

Our team of approximately 20 policy officers and technicians tackle a diverse range of projects. We work on projects including supporting community-led neighbourhood plans, preparing evidence studies, and implementing digital tools to enhance community participation in the planning process.

This is your chance to join a team that is actively addressing critical regional issues – from water scarcity and rapid economic growth to major infrastructure projects like East West Rail. We are dedicated to reducing inequality, mitigating climate change impacts, preserving our region's unique character, and fostering a thriving natural environment.



## Design & Environment Advisory Service

We are a dynamic multi-disciplinary consultancy team, dedicated to shaping the future of Greater Cambridge through providing specialist expertise in design, landscape architecture, ecology, tree management, historic preservation, disability access and environmental sustainability.

In Greater Cambridge, where ambitions for quality of life and vibrant places are high, our team plays a pivotal role. We recognise the pressing importance of climate change and the need for biodiversity, green space, and social inclusion in enhancing the region's vitality.

Embedded within the shared planning service, our expertise guides residents and businesses through the planning process, shaping policies and determining planning applications. Beyond this core function, we extend our reach, offering invaluable insights and support to various council services and partner organisations, including Cambridgeshire County Council, other local authorities and the Greater Cambridge Partnership. Moreover, our influence extends nationally, collaborating with esteemed organisations like the UK Green Building Council, the Good Homes Alliance, and government departments.

If you are passionate about creating sustainable, inclusive, and thriving communities, join us in making a tangible difference in the Greater Cambridge region and beyond.



# Technical Support and Continuous Improvement Team

Are you ready to embark on a journey where innovation meets community support, and every detail counts towards shaping the future of Greater Cambridge? Then consider our dynamic Technical Support Team, the foundation of our planning process.

With an average of 140 applications submitted each week, our team excels at handling all types of submissions from major strategic sites to household projects. We are not just about the processing paperwork, we are about engaging with the community, supporting and guiding them through the planning process.

But that is not all! Our team is pushing the boundaries, exploring new ways to enhance our service delivery. Whether it is revamping processes, embracing new technology or effective project delivery, we are committed to improve and embrace change to better the service and be a leader in Planning within local authorities.

If you are someone who thrives on attention to detail, driven by a passion for innovation, and dedicated to driving continuous improvement, then it is time to join and be part of the team shaping the future for Greater Cambridge.

## Section 106 Team

The Section 106 team is responsible for assessing the impact of development. We work with stakeholders to identify the necessary mitigation and make representations to the planning officers. Mitigation typically takes the form of financial contributions but Section 106 agreements will also secure onsite infrastructure such as affordable housing and public open space. The obligations contained in a Section 106 agreement are monitored and administered by our team to ensure all necessary details have been submitted by the developer.

In 2022-23, Section 106 agreements signed by Greater Cambridge Shared Planning secured over £18.6 million for Cambridgeshire County Council and around another £5.58 million for Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council. Meanwhile, during 2022-23, the Shared Planning Service received £10.4 million of Section 106 funds for the district councils in Greater Cambridge relating to existing Section 106 agreements.

## Planning Compliance Team

The Planning Compliance Team checks that developments have any permissions required to proceed with their build.

We are dedicated to ensuring fairness and stopping unacceptable/unauthorised development, giving communities confidence in the system by delivering an effective and efficient planning compliance service.

# Employee Insights

Sponsoring my Masters back in 2008 and providing a stimulating working environment, working on exciting and challenging projects with great support has provided me with confidence in my role as a Senior Planner.

**Sumaya Nakamya**  
Senior Planning Officer

In the Strategic Sites team I get to work on exciting developments. Working mostly on large sites, it's an interesting challenge to ensure new neighbourhoods create spaces which positively impact both the environment and the people who will work, live and play in them.

As a planner, I've gained knowledge and skills in a supportive and fun environment, increasing my confidence exponentially.

**Julia Briggs**  
Senior Planning Officer

After a long career break, the apprenticeship scheme has provided a fantastic opportunity to gain not just the post-graduate qualification but invaluable current and practical workplace experience to get back on my career path.

One of the reasons I was interested in joining the Greater Cambridgeshire Planning Services as an apprentice was the level of expertise within the service as well as the flexibility and support available within the apprenticeship scheme.

**Shaheeda Montgomery**  
Tranee Planner (Apprentice)

As a Senior Planner in the Development Management team, I work on a range of exciting and innovative projects in both urban and rural environments to deliver enhanced places for people.

Working with knowledgeable, approachable and friendly colleagues has fostered my personal development and expanded my expertise over the years allowing me to progress.

**Alice Young**  
Senior Planning Officer

With so much development activity in and around Cambridge and an evolving Planning service this is a lively place to work that provides interest and learning for any stage in a career.

**Christian Brady**  
Historic Environment Team  
Leader

My role as a Senior Planner in the Strategic Sites Team sees me working on a wide range of projects in both Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire.

I have had the opportunity to work with excellent and knowledgeable colleagues, which has helped me to expand my knowledge of planning and provided some excellent experiences.

**James Truett**  
Senior Planning Officer

# Pathways into planning

Our colleagues have come from various backgrounds, including conventional paths like regional planning, geography, and urban design, as well as alternative routes, with some transitioning from other careers.

**Mark studied history, politics, and teaching, and went on to work for a disability charity and in education administration with Cambridgeshire County Council.**

“The Access Officer post at GCSP required knowledge of the Disability Discrimination Act, which I had gained writing publications for the charity, and knowledge of buildings, which I acquired as a labourer working on building sites during summer breaks.”

Upon joining GCSP, I received valuable support, including opportunities to engage in enriching professional development courses focused on planning and access, which helped enhance my skill set and expertise.”

**Charlotte previously taught primary school for 15 years, joined our Development Management Team as a Planning Officer.**

“I was drawn to the idea that the job in planning at GCSP involved time in the office, time working from home and the benefits of being outdoors on-site visits. I also knew that I wanted a job which enabled me to feel like I was making a difference as this was something I felt strongly about.

I’ve been able to transfer many of my skills from my former teaching career, such as report writing, working in a team with colleagues or with the public.”





As an Urban Designer in Greater Cambridge, I am able to work on an incredible range of projects. I have also been able to develop my career by completing a fully funded MA in Urban Design.

**Sarah Chubb**  
Principal Urban Designer

# Professional development

We have a strong culture of nurturing and growing talent through providing formal and informal training and development opportunities. Many of our senior positions are a result of internal promotion.

As part of our team, you will find a wealth of opportunities to meet the exciting challenges of delivering an extraordinary range of innovative and rewarding projects and also shape how the service develops. Examples include the creation of a new low carbon district on the edge of the city, a new town (Northstowe) conceived around the health and wellbeing of its residents and helping the Cambridge colleges with their decarbonisation projects.

## Apprenticeships

Our Apprenticeship programme combines studying alongside a paid role, providing invaluable practical experience in the workplace.

We extend Apprenticeships not only to new hires but also to current employees, regardless of their career stage. With opportunities to study for qualifications at various levels, including supervisor, department manager and senior leader levels, as well as the Chartered Town Planner Degree.

In 2023, we launched our 'Grow your own' Apprenticeship Academy which offers the opportunity to study for fully-funded Degree Apprenticeships in Chartered Town Planning at either Level 4 or Level 7, in partnership with London South Bank University. The role allows apprentices to move in an agile way across our different teams to expand their expertise and develop their careers.

Several of our apprentices have received nominations in the Cambridgeshire Apprenticeship Awards. Technical Support Team Manager, Charlene Harper was a finalist for the 'Personal Achievement' award and Senior Planning Officer, Tom Chenery won the 'Working with People' award.



**The Apprenticeship has provided me best of both the worlds, both gaining knowledge at university and practical experience within the workplace and has also enabled me to gain a promotion to Senior Planner.**

**Tom Chenery**  
Senior Planner

## The Royal Town Planning Institute

We currently sponsor graduates on RTPI-accredited planning courses, and the service is clear in its aspiration to provide the finest opportunities for personal master planning development in the country.



**An  
unparalleled  
opportunity  
to develop  
your career**

# Employee benefits

As an organisation we believe that our people are our greatest assets. We know how important it is to find a job where you feel valued but also have the flexibility to allow you to balance your work/family commitments.

We offer a competitive benefits package including:



- Four day working week
- Secure, generous pension
- Truly flexible hours and locations (including home working)
- 25 days' annual leave (plus Bank Holidays), rising to 30 after 5 years' Local Government service
- Structured pay scales ensure fairness and transparency
- Employee Benefits Portal
- Cycle to work scheme.

## Four day week

We are taking part in a four-day working week trial. A four-day week is when full-time staff work one less day per week (four days instead of five) but still get paid the same salary. It is not the same as compressed hours, which is working the traditional 37-hour week over four long days. A four-day week for a full-time employee at the Council will consist of 32 hours. For part time staff, the amount of hours reduced would be calculated via a pro-rata reduction. A helpful way of explaining this arrangement is that staff will need to get 100% of their work done, in 80% of the time, for 100% of their salary. The purpose of this trial is to better support the health and wellbeing of our colleagues, while still delivering an excellent service to our residents.

## Hybrid working

We are committed to providing a flexible, adaptive, and agile working environment for our employees. This includes the way we work, where we work, and what tools we need to utilise to support our hybrid approach. Our "hybrid" approach means that work is an activity we do rather than a place we go; "work is what you do – not where you do it".

It places an emphasis on an activity-based culture, using new tools, new processes, increased flexible working opportunities and new approaches to management and teamwork.



[greatercambridgeplanning.org](http://greatercambridgeplanning.org)

**Making  
Greater  
Cambridge  
better,  
for future  
generations**

