



# Neighbourhood Plans Campaign Pack

## TEMPLATES TO HELP LOCAL COUNCILS

Neighbourhood Plans have been a cornerstone of localism, empowering communities to shape the development and growth of their areas. These plans play a vital role in ensuring that development in an area reflects local priorities and character.

Unfortunately, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has announced that it will cease commissioning new neighbourhood planning support services for the period beyond March 2025.

The withdrawal of funding and support services is disastrous news for Neighbourhood Plans. Without access to grants and expert guidance, many local councils will struggle to progress or initiate Neighbourhood Plans.

To this end we have produced a pack that contains a briefing note, a template motion your council can debate and a template letter that the council or individual councillors can send to their local MP.

We hope that you are able to support our efforts to ensure continued support for Neighbourhood Plans.

If you need any further helps please get in touch.

**Herefordshire Association of Local Councils**

**Shropshire Association of Local Councils**

**Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association**

**Warwickshire Association of Local Councils**

**Worcestershire Association of Local Councils**

**WORCESTERSHIRE  
CALC**





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## **Briefing Note: Future of Neighbourhood Planning Support Services**

**Subject:** Implications of MHCLG Funding Changes on Neighbourhood Planning Support

**Date:** 18 June 2025

### **Purpose:**

To provide an update on the future of neighbourhood planning support services in light of recent communication from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), and to reaffirm the importance of neighbourhood planning in shaping local development.

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### **Background**

Neighbourhood planning has been a cornerstone of localism, empowering communities to shape the development and growth of their areas. Since its inception, over 2,400 communities have initiated neighbourhood plans, with more than 1,000 plans successfully passing referendums. Many of these have been in the West Midlands Region and (insert county name / details). These plans have played a vital role in ensuring that development reflects local priorities and character.

The success of neighbourhood planning has been underpinned by a robust support system, including grants and technical assistance, which has enabled communities—often with limited resources—to engage meaningfully in the planning process.

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### **Current Situation**

MHCLG has informed us that, due to the outcomes of the recent Spending Review, they are unable to proceed with commissioning new neighbourhood planning support services for the period beyond March 2025. As a result:

- **No new applications** for grants or technical support will be accepted.
- **Existing technical support packages** will be completed by March 2025, with flexibility to extend delivery until March 2026 depending on individual timetables.

- **Support for the Champions Network and learning opportunities** will cease with immediate effect.
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## **Implications**

The withdrawal of funding and support services presents significant challenges for communities currently developing or considering neighbourhood plans. Without access to grants and expert guidance, many groups may struggle to progress or initiate plans, potentially undermining the momentum built over the past decade.

This change also impacts the broader ecosystem of neighbourhood planning, including the Champions Network, which has played a critical role in mentoring and inspiring new groups.

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## **The Importance of Continued Support**

Neighbourhood planning remains a vital tool for community empowerment and democratic engagement in planning. It contributes to:

- **Local ownership** of development decisions
- **Better quality and more sustainable outcomes**
- **Stronger community cohesion and resilience**

Ensuring continued support—whether through alternative funding mechanisms, local authority engagement, or third-sector partnerships—is essential to maintain the integrity and accessibility of the neighbourhood planning process and an essential tool to give local communities more of a say in how development affects its area.

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## **Conclusion and Next Steps**

The development and adoption of Neighbourhood Plans are still important, and the sector needs to champion their value. Funding to enable new NP's to be developed is still critical and we need to persuade MHCLG to continue with financial support to encourage other communities to adopt a similar approach.

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## **Draft Motion for Councils: Future of Neighbourhood Planning Support Services**

### **Resolution Calling on the Government to Provide Dedicated Funding for Neighbourhood Plans**

**[Insert name of Council]** acknowledges that:

- Neighbourhood planning empowers local communities to shape the development and growth of their areas through the creation of Neighbourhood Plans.
- The preparation of Neighbourhood Plans requires significant time, expertise, and financial resources, often placing a burden on parish and town councils.
- Neighbourhood Plans contribute to more democratic, locally-informed planning decisions and support the delivery of sustainable development aligned with community needs and aspirations.

Therefore it is Resolved to -

1. Call upon His Majesty's Government to provide increased and sustained funding to support the development, review, and implementation of Neighbourhood Plans.
2. Request that the Government ensures funding is accessible to all communities, to promote inclusivity and fairness in the planning process.
3. Write to **[local MP]** and the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities, and Local Government to communicate this resolution and advocate for enhanced support for neighbourhood planning



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## Draft Letter for Councils/Councillors

(INSERT COUNCIL LOGO / NAME / SENDER ADDRESS HERE)

(INSERT LOCAL MP NAME HERE)

House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

(DATE)

Dear (INSERT LOCAL MP NAME HERE),

The only formal planning power open to our council is a neighbourhood plan.

Neighbourhood Plans have been a cornerstone of localism, empowering communities to shape the development and growth of their areas. These plans play a vital role in ensuring that development in an area reflects local priorities and character.

With more than 1,000 plans successfully passing referendums, they are a valuable part of the local planning system. Many of these Neighbourhood Plans are in (INSERT COUNTY NAME).

The success of Neighbourhood Plans has been underpinned by a robust support system, including grants and technical assistance, which has enabled communities, often with limited resources, to engage meaningfully in the planning process.

However, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has announced that it will cease commissioning new

neighbourhood planning support services for the period beyond March 2025.

The withdrawal of funding and support services is disastrous news for Neighbourhood Plans. Without access to grants and expert guidance, many local councils will struggle to progress or initiate Neighbourhood Plans, potentially undermining the momentum built over the past decade.

Ensuring continued support is essential to maintain the integrity and accessibility of the neighbourhood planning process and an essential tool to give local communities more of a say in how development affects its area.

We hope that you see the value of our sector being able to continue to develop and adopt new Neighbourhood Plans.

Please raise the importance of Neighbourhood Plans in the House of Commons Chamber and write to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, calling on the continuation of funding to enable new Neighbourhood Plans to be developed.

With Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) underway across England, and the changes that will bring to local planning policies, it is critical that you persuade MHCLG to continue with financial support for Neighbourhood Plans.

Your sincerely,

(INSERT NAME HERE)