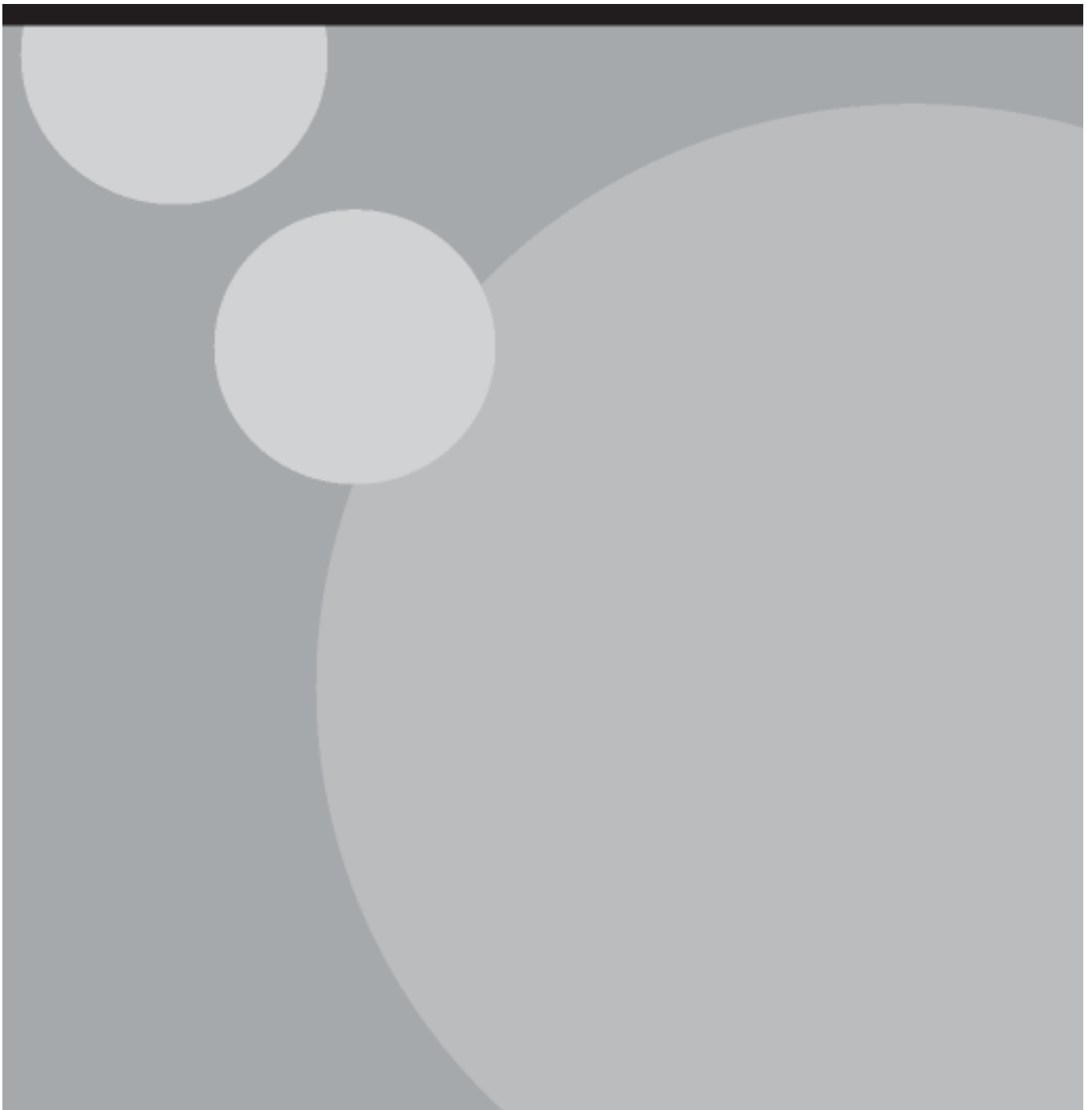




# Supporting Communities and Neighbourhoods in Planning

## Prospectus



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Any enquiries regarding this document/publication should be sent to us at:

Department for Communities and Local Government  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London  
SW1E 5DU  
Telephone: 030 3444 0000

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# Supporting Communities and Neighbourhoods in Planning

## Prospectus

January 2011

Department for Communities and Local Government

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## SECTION 1

# Supporting Communities and Neighbourhoods in Planning

- 1.1 This prospectus invites applications by **21 February 2011** from eligible organisations for grant funding under the Department for Communities and Local Government's (DCLG) Supporting Communities and Neighbourhoods in Planning scheme.
- 1.2 A small number of grants (probably three to five at any one time) will be awarded to provide advice, guidance and assistance to communities and community organisations to engage with the planning system in their local area. The advice and guidance will be free at the point of delivery and will be made available throughout England from 1 April 2011.
- 1.3 A total fund of approximately £3m per annum is available over each of the two years from 2011/12 to 2012/13. Individual grants are therefore likely to have a value in the order of £500,000 to £1m per year. Grants will be awarded on the basis of best fit with the selection criteria. Grant agreements will cover a period of one year only and the grant programme will be reviewed after two years.
- 1.4 Appendix 2 presents a summary of the Government's proposals for neighbourhood planning which are contained in the Localism Bill. In the event that these proposals are enacted, much greater opportunities will be provided to community organisations to pro-actively take forward proposals to local planning authorities for the planning of their neighbourhoods. If the provisions in the Localism Bill on neighbourhood planning are enacted, the focus of this Scheme in its second year may change.
- 1.5 In the meantime, local communities may in any event want to participate in the production of development plan documents and other development proposals that affect them. DCLG is intending to provide financial assistance to a number of local planning authorities through the neighbourhood planning vanguards project to more fully engage with local communities in, for example, the production of development plans. The broad purpose of the grant funding under this Scheme is to promote greater community involvement in the planning process.

## Advice and assistance to be provided

- 1.6 Under the Supporting Communities and Neighbourhoods in Planning project, the grant recipients would provide advice, guidance and assistance to local community groups in relation to the current planning system. The advice and assistance offered might relate to some or all of the following:

- organising a community-based group
- effective community engagement
- developing or providing input into proposals for local development documents
- developing or providing input into proposals for the development of any area, such as proposals leading to planning applications or local development orders
- accessing specialist advice if required
- finding potential sources of additional funding.

## The rationale for the Scheme

- 1.7 The Government wishes to empower local communities to take a more active role in the development of planning policies at a local level and the preparation of development proposals. In this way, development that takes place will better reflect local needs and aspirations and is therefore less likely to be met with resistance from the community. As a result of greater community engagement, communities will therefore be able to develop and exercise a greater sense of control and civic responsibility and a greater quantum of the housing and economic development that the country needs will be forthcoming.
- 1.8 It is intended that the advice, assistance and guidance being offered through this scheme will encourage more people than is currently the case to step forward to participate in the planning process. We want to provide opportunities to groups who may be entirely new to working within the land use planning system or, indeed, participating in any form of organised community activity. The Scheme also allows for a choice as to who provides the advice, assistance and guidance.

## SECTION 2

# The operation of the Scheme

### Grant awards

- 2.1 Grants will be awarded under section 304A of the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990*. Grant agreements will relate to expenditure over a single financial year only. A small number of grants (probably three to five at any one time) will be awarded.

### Aggregate amount of available funds

- 2.2 A total fund of approximately £3m is available over each of the four years from 2011/12. Individual grants are therefore likely to have a value in the order of £750,000 to £1m per year. The fund is subject to confirmation following the Comprehensive Spending Review allocation process.

### Eligibility

- 2.3 As a matter of policy, DCLG will only offer grants to incorporated bodies. This is to provide for effective accountability. Applications will only be considered from organisations which have a demonstrable recent history of engaging with community groups which are:
- working with their local planning authority in preparing development plan documents or supplementary planning documents
  - making representations to, or participating with, local planning authorities on proposals for planning permission – for example, those relating to a planning application or a local development order ; or
  - working with developers in preparing development proposals.
- 2.4 Applications can only be for grant funding relating to activities of the kind referred to in paragraph 1.6 in Section 1.
- 2.5 Applications will be required to demonstrate that they would intend to remain engaged in the work described here were they not to be awarded a grant under this Scheme.

## SECTION 3

### The application process

#### How to apply

- 3.1 We have sought to make the application process as simple as possible, whilst equally ensuring that decisions on any applications will be fair, transparent, and soundly based, having regard to the information and any other relevant matters supplied by the applicant.
- 3.2 All such applications must be received **on or before 21 February 2011** and must conform to the requirements set out below.

#### Information required

- 3.3 The information we ask for is necessary to ensure that we have accurate contact details, understand the nature of the organisation including any partnership structure, the level of funding sought, plus the mission and goals of the organisation applying and why it is relevant to the specific theme or themes concerned. We also ask for information about economic activities of the organisation so we can be confident that a grant would not be an unlawful state aid.
- 3.4 Applicants need to provide the information necessary to demonstrate both the eligibility of their organisation, and how receiving the financial assistance for which they are applying for would enable them to achieve to a greater extent their own goals in relation to a relevant theme or themes. **It is particularly important that applicants provide sufficient information to enable the proposals to be readily assessed against the selection criteria set out in below.**
- 3.5 Applicants will also need to complete the **application form** at Appendix 1, which ensures that we are able to understand:
  - how your organisation proposes to use the grant
  - your organisation's plans for the next financial year in the absence of any financial assistance under this Scheme to carry out the type of work which it is envisaged would be funded through the Scheme
  - what difference receiving financial assistance under this Scheme would make to the scale and range of activities your organisation would undertake in relation to those specified theme or themes; and
  - what indicators you would use to report to the Department on a six-monthly basis your progress on those activities and on how they are being enhanced?

- 3.6 In addition, we will need to receive copies of:
- your current strategy or business plan, setting out plans over the next three years; and
  - your organisation's annual report and accounts for the accounting years ended in 2008-09, and 2009-10 (if these are not available your organisation will need to provide a statement, agreed with its auditor, explaining the situation).
- 3.7 Applicants may also provide such other information as they consider appropriate, and, at any time during the selection process, we may request further information to clarify material previously submitted. Any such further information must be provided in accordance with any timetable included in our request.
- 3.8 **Partnership applications**  
We will consider applications from organisations working in partnerships where a lead partner organisation is identified and is eligible its own right on the basis that the level of funding applied for were to be provided to that partner alone. Any funding provided will be paid to the lead partner (which must be incorporated) and that funding may be provided with conditions about how that lead partner shares the funding with other partners.
- 3.9 Applications from partnerships will need to explain the basis of the partnership and provide the information set out above both in relation to the partnership and in relation to the lead partner who must be clearly identified as such. Information should be provided to demonstrate that the partnership is robust and sustainable.

## How your application will be handled

- 3.10 Once your application is received, you will receive an email notification with a reference number within five working days. This will be to confirm receipt and to facilitate future correspondence. Once received, applications will be subject to a three stage internal assessment process which is designed to be fair and transparent. The process will be:

### **Stage 1 will assess completeness of the application**

In this stage, the project team will log all applications and ensure they are complete. Applicants will receive an email confirmation that their application was complete and is proceeding to Stage 2. If there are any elements missing applicants will be notified and given 48 hours to provide the necessary information. If this is not received within the deadline then the application will be rejected.

**Stage 2 will assess compliance with the eligibility criteria** as set out in section two. Applicants will be notified of the results of this assessment, which we envisage being made by mid-March 2010.

### **Stage 3 will assess the eligible applications against the selection criteria**

We will make the selection on the basis of the available information and having regard to all of the selection criteria set out below.

3.11 Once selected organisations have accepted the terms and conditions on which the financial assistance is to be provided, we will confirm the selection and begin to make the assistance available.

3.12 All applications should be sent to:

**Nigel Kersey**

Planning Development Plans Division  
Department for Communities & Local Government  
1/J1 Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London SW1E 5DU

Tel: 0303 444 4276

**[Nigel.Kersey@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Nigel.Kersey@communities.gsi.gov.uk)**

### **Selection criteria**

3.13 Section 6.1 of the application form asks you to describe how you would use the grant. The key considerations for DCLG are that:

- advice, assistance and guidance should be made available in respect of as many areas in England as practical; and
- communities should have a choice of provider of advice, assistance and guidance funded under this Scheme.

3.14 In the context of these two key considerations, applications will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- the track record of the organisation (or the individuals it proposes to deploy) in providing the advice, assistance and guidance offered
- the breadth of the advice, assistance and guidance being proposed by the organisation (with particular reference to the list at paragraph 1.6, Section 1)
- the likely effectiveness of the proposed mechanisms for delivering the advice, assistance and guidance
- the financial viability of the organisation in the absence of continuing support through this Scheme together with plans to leverage further funding in addition to any grant; and
- value for money.

- 3.15 DCLG may seek to maximise coverage through grants to a number of organisations, with differing specialisations or areas of operation.
- 3.16 Applicants must be ready to provide the service offered from 1 April 2011.

### Annual assessment

- 3.17 For the purpose of making an annual assessment, each grant recipient will be required to submit to the DCLG project manager a satisfactory end of year report on how they have met the objectives identified in the grant award letter and should identify lessons learnt, as well as a statement of grant usage.
- 3.18 In order to help assess the quality of service provided by each grant recipient, interviews may be held with the relevant local authority and representatives of the communities.

## APPENDIX 1

# Supporting Communities and Neighbourhoods in Planning Scheme Application Form

**AN ELECTRONIC VERSION OF THIS APPLICATION FORM IS AVAILABLE IN MICROSOFT WORD FORMAT ON THE DCLG WEBSITE AT:**

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/doc/1807642.doc>.

Please ensure that you meet the criteria for this fund.

Please ensure that you fill in ALL sections of this form.

The aim of the Supporting Communities and Neighbourhoods in Planning scheme is set out in the Prospectus

**If you have any queries about completing this form, please contact Nigel Kersey on 0303 444 4276 or email: [nigel.kersey@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:nigel.kersey@communities.gsi.gov.uk)**

### For Communities and Local Government use only

<b>Date received</b>	
<b>Date acknowledged</b>	
<b>Complete application</b>	

## SECTION ONE

### Organisational details

The Department will only consider applications from either a single organisation or a consortium with a single lead bidder. This is to ensure clear lines of accountability and communication.

<b>1.1 Organisation name</b> (in whose name the application is being made – if a partnership/ consortium state the lead)		
<b>1.2 Contact name and main role</b>		
<b>1.3 Address</b>		
<b>1.4 Telephone number</b> (a) organisation (b) contact	(a)	(b)
<b>1.5 Email address of contact</b>		
<b>1.6 Website address (if any)</b>	http://	

## SECTION TWO

### Organisation information

The Department will not support expenditure on economic activity which would be unlawful state aid. We reserve the right to refer back to applicants for further information if necessary.

<b>2.1 Type of organisation –</b> as stated in your constitution/terms of reference.	<input type="checkbox"/> Registered as a charity <input type="checkbox"/> Other legal entity (please state)	
<b>2.2 If registered</b> please state who with, number and date of registration.	<b>(a) Registration number</b>	<b>(b) Registration date</b>
<b>2.3 Does your organisation carry out an economic activity,</b> by which we mean providing goods or services in competition with other providers?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes (Please go to 2.4) <input type="checkbox"/> No (Please go to 2.5)	
<b>2.4 Please describe the economic activity,</b> and tell us how you would ensure that your receipt of a grant under this Scheme is kept separate from, and has no impact on, such economic activity.		
<b>2.5 Please describe the main activities,</b> a brief history, why it is important and how your organisation operates across England. (maximum 400 words)		
<b>2.6 What was your income last year as set out in your attached accounts?</b>		
£		

**SECTION THREE**  
**Partnership/Consortium**

The Department needs to understand who the lead applicant is and relationship with its partners.

**3.1 Please indicate whether you are applying in partnership:**

No (Please go to SECTION FOUR)

Yes (Please go to 3.2)

**3.2 Who will be the lead applicant? (i.e. name of organisation)**

**3.3 Please indicate the other applicants involved in your application.**

Please add further rows if required.

Organisation name	Organisations address and contact details	Main activities and role
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**3.4 Please give a brief description (maximum 300 words) of your consortium agreement, memorandum of understanding or heads of agreement including, clarification on roles and responsibilities and accountability relevant to this application's organisation and the roles of each party**

**3.5 If a partnership please explain (maximum 300 words) the proposed distribution of resources between partners**

**SECTION FOUR**

What are you trying to achieve?

**4.1 Please state your vision or mission statement and strategic aims.**

**4.2 How do you reach marginalised and disadvantaged communities?**

**SECTION FIVE**

What impact do you currently make?

**The Department is interested in how you evidence your impact, and what impact you make on this basis (maximum 500 words).**

**SECTION SIX**

What difference would a grant make to your plans and expected impact?

**6.1 With reference to the selection criteria at paragraphs 26-29 of the prospectus, please describe how you would use the grant (maximum 500 words).**

**6.2 The Department is interested in the predicted additional impact including the number of communities supported, how you will measure success, and how these would be reported to the department (maximum 500 words).**

## SECTION SEVEN

### Other grants received by the organisation

**7.1 Please indicate whether you are receiving and/or due to receive funding from other grants issued by the DCLG or other central government departments**  
(e.g. Office for Civil Society, Home Office):

Organisation name and contact for funding	Amount in each year		Main activities and purpose
	2009-10		
1. (CLG assessed)	2009-10		
	2010-11		
	2011-12		
2. (OGD for info)	2009-10		
	2010-11		
	2011-12		
3.	2009-10		
	2010-11		
	2011-12		
4.	2009-10		
	2010-11		
	2011-12		
5.	2009-10		
	2010-11		
	2011-12		

**7.2 The Department is interested in any other partnerships, strategies, evaluation or end of existing funding streams and your proposed exit strategy when this funding ends plus any other organisational development. (maximum 300 words)**

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## SECTION EIGHT

### Certification

**Certification requires two different signatories. The first signature should be signed by the Chief Executive or equivalent of your organisation. The second signatory should hold a senior position e.g. Finance Director, Chair, Treasurer**

**We certify that, to the best of our knowledge and belief, the statements made in this application are true and the information provided is correct. Enclosed is a copy of our business plan for the next three years, and most recent annual report and accounts.**

	First signatory	Second signatory
Name		
Organisation		
Role	[Chief Executive or equivalent]	
Signature		
Date		

**Completed applications should be sent to:**

**Nigel Kersey  
Planning Delivery and Performance Division  
Department for Communities and Local Government  
Zone 1/J1  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London SW1E 5DU**

**Email: [nigel.kersey@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:nigel.kersey@communities.gsi.gov.uk)**

**Tel: 0303 444 4276**

## APPENDIX 2

### Neighbourhood planning – The Government's proposals in the Localism Bill

1. The Localism Bill (published in December 2010) makes new provisions for neighbourhood planning, which would create a radical new element in the planning system in England. Through these provisions, local community groups (where designated as neighbourhood forums) and parish councils will be empowered to bring forward proposals for a development plan for their neighbourhood area or for an order granting planning permission(s) in that area. They will be able to require the local planning authority (LPA) to assist them in the preparation of their proposals and require them to take the proposals to independent examination. Proposals for plans or orders which are carried in a referendum will need to be brought into force by the local planning authority. In this way, neighbourhood communities will be given real power to shape the way that the areas in which they live develop and grow. Neighbourhood planning also provides for community organisations to bring forward site specific development proposals through a Community Right to Build Order.
2. More specifically, it is envisaged that the neighbourhood planning process will be undertaken as follows:
  - Parish councils and other certain community organisation would approach the local authority with a request to define an area for the purposes of neighbourhood planning. In parished areas, the applicant would have to be a parish council and the expectation is that in considering any application is that such areas will be followed. A local planning authority will need to have clear reasons relating to the planning of its area, if it does not follow parish boundaries in approving neighbourhood areas. In non-parished areas, the applicant would need to be an organisation that is capable of being designated as a neighbourhood forum.
  - Once a neighbourhood area has been designated, a local planning authority will have to start considering applications from organisations to be designated as the neighbourhood forum for that area. Once an organisation has been designated, it will be free to bring forward proposals for neighbourhood development plans and orders. A parish council will be free to bring forward such proposals in respects of its neighbourhood area once that area has been defined, provided it has the consent of the other parish councils (if any) whose areas are wholly or partly within the neighbourhood area.
  - Local planning authorities would be subject to a duty to support the parish councils and forums in the development of their proposals. Support provided might include, for example, the provision of advice or assistance on good practice in plan-making, and alignment with national policy, EU

law and local plans. There would be no duty on the local planning authority to provide financial assistance.

- If the proposed plan or order was compliant with certain legislative requirements, it would have to be submitted to an independent examination by a qualified assessor (normally held only by written representations). The examination would lead to a report which would be given to the parish council or forum promoting the plan or order and the local planning authority. The report would not be binding except in the case of Community Right to Build Orders.
  - Following the independent examination (and following any modifications), as long as the draft plan or order meets certain tests including ones relating to national policy, EU law and the strategic elements of local plans, the local authority concerned would need to hold a local referendum on whether the draft plan or order should be brought into force.
  - Where the draft plan or order receives the support of more than 50 per cent of voters at the referendum (subject to compatibility with EU law and Convention rights), the local planning authority would be required to bring the plan or order into effect.
3. Within the neighbourhood planning process is the Community Right to Build. Under Community Right to Build, community organisations, established as a corporate body for the express purpose of furthering the economic, social and environmental well-being of an area, would be able to bring forward a proposal for a site specific development where the benefit, or receipts, from the development will be retained for the benefit of the local community. The process for applying for a Community Right to Build Order would largely follow that for a neighbourhood development order, but has been adapted so it is proportionate to the types of schemes envisaged. A Community Right to Build Order could be instigated independently of a plan or order being promoted by a neighbourhood forum or parish council.
  4. Neighbourhood planning will be additional to – and not a replacement for – the existing planning system in England. However, following enactment of the Localism Bill, we anticipate that development plan documents prepared by local authorities will be strongly informed by neighbourhood planning initiatives within their areas.
  5. The contents of a neighbourhood plan or order under the Localism Bill is very flexible and they could be more or less detailed prescriptive. It may contain the following:

**A Neighbourhood Development Plan** – Generic or specific neighbourhood policies against which traditional planning applications could be judged. These policies may augment or refine or add to the policies in the local authority plan. Policies within a neighbourhood development plan could cover:

- planning objectives for the neighbourhood
- the broad planning context (e.g. transport connections), local facilities, services
- key neighbourhood projects and infrastructure priorities
- development management policies on housing, economic development, environment
- site-specific policies on housing, economic development and environmental issues
- changes in the coverage of some planning designations.

**Neighbourhood Development Orders** - A Neighbourhood Development Order which would directly grant planning permission for certain specified kinds of developments within the neighbourhood area. Permission could be full or outline, and could have conditions attached and it could be site specific or an order could grant more generalised development rights across the neighbourhood area. A **Community Right to Build Order** will be a special kind of Neighbourhood Development Order brought forward under the Community Right to Build and will be subject to similar requirements as a Neighbourhood Development Order in respect of independent examination and its requirements in respect of legal and policy provisions.