



Confusion over Localism Bill due date

David Hickey, Regen.net, 8 December 2010

The Government has refused to give a date for publication of its flagship Localism Bill that had been widely expected to be published this week after an earlier delay.

A spokesman for the Department for Communities and Local Government said that he could not confirm reports that the Localism and Decentralisation Bill would not be published tomorrow, as had been widely expected.

Ministers have said that the Localism Bill will contain the legislation required to implement key elements of the Government's localism and Big Society agendas, for example by [enabling directly elected mayors](#) to be established in the ten largest cities outside London, giving communities the right to bid to take over public services and making it easier for communities to deliver affordable housing developments without requiring planning permission.

Conservative Party press headquarters admitted last month that the Localism Bill had been "delayed", [tweeting](#) that "suggestions that the localism bill [is] delayed due to parliamentary congestion [are] true".

But at the time a DCLG spokeswoman denied that the bill had been delayed, saying that a "firm publication date was never publicly announced". She said that the bill would be published "shortly".

On 19 November, decentralisation minister [Greg Clark had said the publication of the bill was "imminent"](#).

The official business plan for the DCLG, published last month, [confirmed a deadline](#) stated in the department's pre-[Comprehensive Spending Review](#) draft structural reform plan, which said that the bill would be published "by November 2010".

[Press reports](#) in recent days had widely anticipated the bill to be published this week.