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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. Communities here in Shropshire either have or are working towards adopting a Neighbourhood Plan.

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.

Without funding, the majority of town and parish Councils will be unable to review their existing NPs. According to para 14 of the NPPF (Dec 2024), NPs are only considered up to date when they have been adopted or reviewed within 5 years. Without the necessary funding to keep plans up to date there is a risk losing all the work and investment to date in NPs.

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)