

# Press release: Government commits to further support for neighbourhood planning

More communities across England will be able to get free access to expert advice and guidance to help make their neighbourhood vision a reality, Housing Minister Dominic Raab announced today (19 March 2018).

A £23 million fund – being delivered by Locality and Groundwork – will help local groups to develop a neighbourhood plan. These plans give local people a say in the development of their area, including where homes, schools and businesses should be built, how they should look and what infrastructure is needed to support them.

Community groups will be able to access a range of free help including financial support and latest planning expertise from trained professionals, to guide them through the process of preparing a neighbourhood plan.

Housing and Planning Minister Dominic Raab said:

Neighbourhood plans are a powerful tool to help communities shape their local area, making sure the right homes are built in the right places.

It's vital that communities have the right support and advice available to help deliver a plan that meets their own ambitious aspirations. That's why I'm making £23 million available that will help more groups to do this.

Over 2,300 communities across England have started the process of neighbourhood planning, with 530 plans approved in local referendums.

Previous government support has helped around 7 out of 10 of these communities progress their plans, with 365 neighbourhood plans finalised using support provided by the government.

The maximum grant available has also been increased by £2,000 to £17,000, helping communities to access more resources to develop a plan for their area.

Community groups can find out more information about how to apply for funding via a new website at [www.neighbourhoodplanning.org](http://www.neighbourhoodplanning.org). Applications to bid for funding will open on 3 April 2018.

Locality and Groundwork UK were appointed to oversee the fund following a full and transparent procurement process.

Locality will use its expertise, skills and track record advising on development to help communities to reach the full potential of their neighbourhood plan from start to finish.

Their dedicated website will provide clear information on neighbourhood planning and signpost to highly qualified specialists from a range of organisations, including design and engineering professionals at AECOM and the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors.

Groundwork UK has been appointed to administer application process for grant funding, ensuring finance is available for groups to cover the costs associated with producing a successful neighbourhood plan.