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The Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP
Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Our Ref: MP05426

18 August 2025

Re: Support for parish and town council Neighbourhood Development Plans

Dear Secretary of State,

I am writing to express my deep concern at the Government's decision to withdraw funding for the Neighbourhood Planning Support Programme, which has been an essential resource for many parish and town councils across the country and in my constituency of Stratford-on-Avon.

Neighbourhood Development Plans are a vital tool that allow our towns and villages to take greater control over the future of their communities. They play a key role in the planning system and help to prevent inappropriate development where national and local policies fall short, while also guiding development towards more suitable and sustainable outcomes.

The withdrawal of funding risks undermining confidence in the neighbourhood planning process and could result in fewer communities engaging in shaping their areas. This comes at a time when local input is more important than ever. As the Government presses ahead with ambitious housing targets, I believe it is vital that local communities retain a strong voice in how and where development takes place.

If the Government is not willing to reinstate the funding in full, will you consider maintaining support for parish and town councils that have already begun the neighbourhood planning process? In addition, will you consider extending support to those areas currently developing a new Local Plan, where neighbourhood plans will be key in ensuring joined-up planning and meaningful public engagement?

Neighbourhood planning empowers communities like mine in Stratford-on-Avon to take responsibility for development in their area. I urge you to look again at this decision and ensure that local voices are not sidelined at such a critical time for planning reform.

Best wishes,
Manuela

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