



# **Is Neighbourhood Planning benefitting rural communities?**

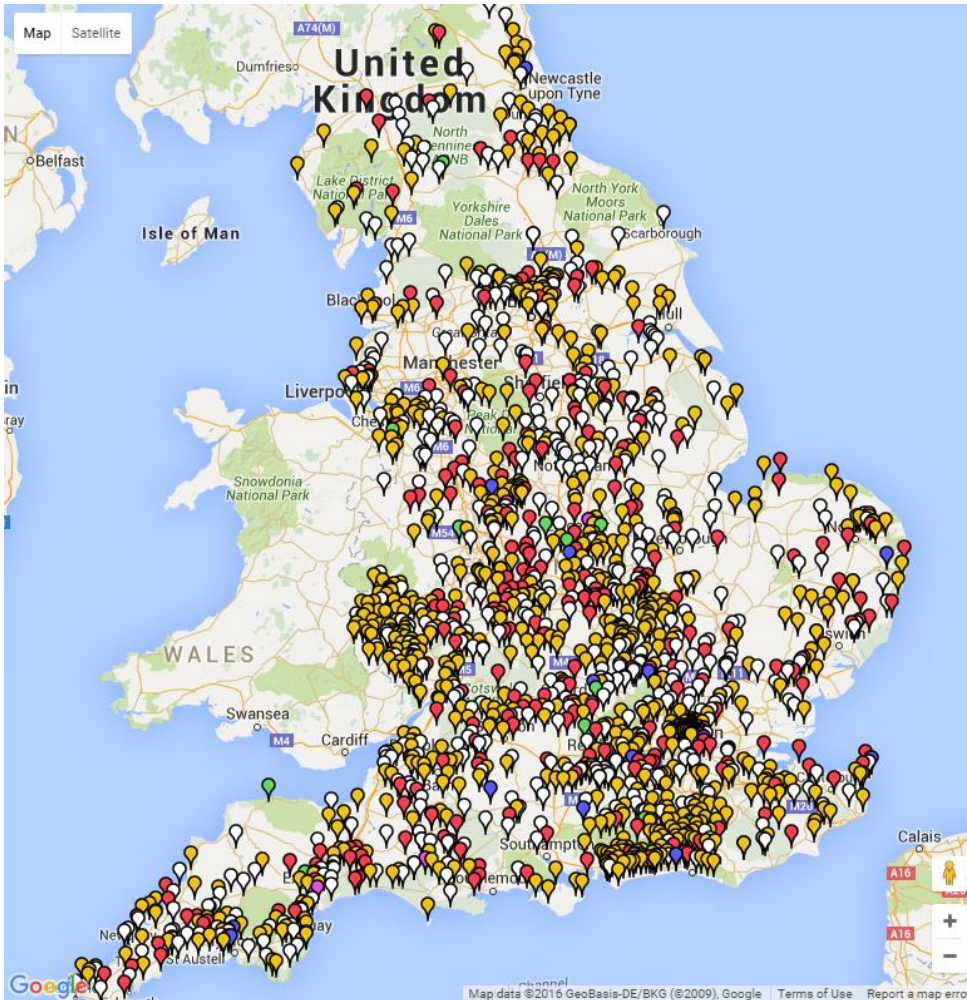
**John Heselwood**



# Neighbourhood Plans in Summary

- **Give communities the chance to decide how their local area should develop and what should be built;**
- **Are Powerful: once ‘made’ the neighbourhood plan becomes part of the development plan;**
- **Need to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the local plan**

# National Picture



Over 1700 communities  
have begun  
neighbourhood plans  
representing over 8m  
people

90+ plans passed  
referendum stage

Average turnout = 32%  
Average 'yes' vote = 88%



# Progress in Cheshire

- Nearly 60 plans either 'made' or in progress
- Cheshire West has four 'made' plans
- Cheshire East has three that have passed examination
- Cheshire East and West are the most active areas in the North West region

# Neighbourhood Plan Process





# DCLG Report

Neighbourhood Planning: progress on housing delivery

“During May and June 2015 the Department for Communities and Local Government gathered data from local authorities, qualifying bodies and other published sources on all the areas with a made neighbourhood plans that had both a) allocated housing sites and b) been in force for over six months.”

“Across the 16 areas, there is an overall additional neighbourhood plan housing allocation of 891, representing **11% more housing than allocated by the relevant Local Plans.**”

# Benefits to Winsford

- The Town knows where its going
- £300m of investment
- 35 hectares of new employment land
- 3,500 homes on a mix of allocated brown and greenfield sites
- A new heart for the town
- An enhanced network of open space, leisure and community facilities
- Helps resist speculative development
- Provides a vision of how the town can look and feel by 2030
- Ensure Developers make a contribution to the vision
- Develop a 'prospectus' to convince people, business and retail to invest in the town

# Challenges for Rural Communities

- Lack of Local Authority support
- Local Plan progress
- Inconsistency of examinations
- Ever changing case law in planning
- There is a school of thought that NP has created so much ambiguity about planning policy that it favours developers, not communities!
- May end up at inquiries and hearings – distracts from NP process
- Very demanding process involving thousands of volunteer hours



# But are they benefitting rural communities?

- Development is likely to happen – neighbourhood planning helps to shape it
- Articulate what community benefits are needed from development in an evidence based, coherent and structured way that is enshrined in land use policy
- Great way of getting the community together
- Must be considered by the Local Authority when determining planning applications
- Neighbourhood Plans are being used to fight, and win, appeals
- Greater knowledge is greater power – useful for all aspects of planning
- 25% CIL payments

# Questions



# Contact Details



**John Heselwood**

**[John.heselwood@cheshireaction.org.uk](mailto:John.heselwood@cheshireaction.org.uk)**



**Tel: 01244 305321**

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