



# PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **CIVIC VOICE RESPOND TO GOVERNMENT'S NPPF DOCUMENT**

**Civic Voice welcomes the new National Planning Policy Framework but remain cautious over loss of so much detail from PPS statements**

The Government yesterday published its long awaited National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Civic Voice has been pleased to have worked so closely with Government over the past six months to secure several positive improvements from the original draft document.

Paula Ridley, Chair of Civic Voice, said *“There was widespread concern about the Government’s planning reforms which, if they had been kept as in the draft it would have biased decisions and put everyday England at risk. The Government have clearly listened to the 14,000 stakeholders who responded to this consultation. We congratulate them for that.”*

In addition, Civic Voice is pleased to see the following in the NPPF:

- ☛ Enshrining high-quality design as a core planning principle
- ☛ Greater clarity over the definition of sustainable development
- ☛ The announcement of transitional arrangements to allow local authorities to develop Local Plans
- ☛ Government recognising the intrinsic value of non-designated countryside
- ☛ Strengthening of provisions to encourage the development of brownfield sites
- ☛ Strengthening of the Town Centre First Policy and placing town centres at the heart of vibrant and sustainable communities
- ☛ A strengthening of policy on design and providing greater weight for the advice of design review panels
- ☛ We also believe that the level of protection that PPS5 gave to heritage has been maintained in the NPPF.



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Nonetheless, Civic Voice still remains cautious about the final document

Civic Voice Planning Chair, Dave Chetwyn said “*The National Planning Policy Framework is a vast improvement on the draft, creating a more sensible balance between economic, social and environmental matters. However, we have some concerns that the loss of so much detail, with the Planning Policy Statements being replaced by a 50 page document. This gives more scope for interpretation and possibly legal challenge and may have the opposite effect to that intended*”

Civic Voice have said all along that there is no conclusive research that planning policy is a particular constraint on economic development and we hope the conversation can now move on from a planning v growth argument to giving the necessary support to local authorities and communities to ensure they have plans in place and up to date.

## NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. Civic Voice works to make the places where everyone lives more attractive, enjoyable and distinctive. We speak up for civic societies and local communities across England. We promote civic pride. We are the national charity for the civic movement and have a strong local presence. We believe everyone has the right to live somewhere they can be proud of. We know how people feel about places because we feel the same way. Civic societies are the most numerous participants in the planning system. Since its launch in April 2010 Civic Voice has been joined by 290 civic societies with more than 75,000 members. Further information is available at [www.civicvoice.org.uk](http://www.civicvoice.org.uk) including how to join Civic Voice (£10 individuals) and contact details for local civic societies.

More information on Civic Voice’s Planning for People campaign is available on our website here [www.civicvoice.org.uk/campaigns/planning-for-people](http://www.civicvoice.org.uk/campaigns/planning-for-people)

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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