

# **The People's Charter for Democracy in Planning**

Planning is vital to our lives now and in the future.

The decisions we make now on how we build will define the fate  
of future generations.

**We the undersigned recognise:**

That planning shapes the homes and neighbourhoods we live in and that these decisions directly impact on people's mental and physical health.

That many people feel angry and frustrated that they have no control over the future of their communities.

That planning is vital to tackling the future challenges of health and climate change.

That the Government's planning White Paper strips away what little control communities have by:

- removing a whole stage of the planning process so that permission will be given automatically in the plan and local communities won't get to decide planning applications in growth areas.
- removing the only legal right for people to be heard in person when plans are made. This will now be at the discretion of the planning inspectorate.
- centralising power in Whitehall by the increased use of permitted development to convert commercial and industrial buildings to residential units so that local residents have no say over what happens in their own communities.

We are therefore determined to:

- Ensure we have a planning system that puts the health and wellbeing of everyone at the heart of decision making and recognises that everyone has the right to live in a healthy environment that enhances their life chances and the well-being of future generations.
- Ensure that everyone, without exception of age, gender or race, are able to share in the wealth of their communities and have a meaningful say over the decisions that affect their lives.

## Articles

**Article 1: The right to participate.** Everyone has the right to participate in decisions that affect their lives which means a right to be informed, a right to participate and a civil right to challenge. The absolute right to be heard when plans are made must be preserved and extended to any design code which is being applied to planning decisions. Communities should have the same appeal rights as developers to challenge decisions which are not in public interest.

**Article 2: Local decisions should be made locally by democratically accountable bodies.** Government must give back the powers removed from local authorities so they can control development in their areas. All parts of the planning decision from plan making to the final approval of development must be democratically accountable.

**Article 3: A meaningful legal duty to secure sustainable development, tackling climate change, and the health and well-being of all citizens.** We need to tackle climate change in every planning decision. We must all be confident that the system is there for everyone, and not just private interests.

For rights, democracy, and the power to tackle climate change