



**LANDMARK DAY: THAME AND EXETER ST JAMES SAY YES!**



Residents in St. James were asked to think of ten voters they could encourage to vote YES!  
**TURNOUT: 20.8% YES VOTE: 91.6%**  
[www.exeterstjamesforum.org/](http://www.exeterstjamesforum.org/)



The votes are in! Thame referendum count  
**TURNOUT: 39.8% YES VOTE: 76%**  
[www.thametowncouncil.gov.uk/](http://www.thametowncouncil.gov.uk/)

St James in Exeter and Thame, South Oxfordshire, yesterday became the second and third communities to vote yes to using neighbourhood planning to shape development, following Upper Eden.

In Thame, residents voted yes to locations for 775 new homes. The plan also has policies for new employment land, town centre improvements and more. Thame Mayor Nigel Champken-Woods said: "This is an excellent result and the networks and relationships formed throughout this process will go from strength to strength."

St James is the first urban neighbourhood plan and the first plan produced by a neighbourhood forum. The vote is a springboard for improvements to the local environment, with an emphasis on sustainable development and support for the local economy. It's a big step towards the forum's vision of a balanced, vibrant

neighbourhood. Jo Hawkins, of St James Forum said: "Great result and a strong and welcome endorsement for our plan. We've already had offers from people wanting to become involved in what we do next."

Planning Minister Nick Boles said: "This is a fantastic result for people in Thame and Exeter. These plans make bringing about the right type of housing for their communities a key priority and show how engaged people will be if given the chance to be in the driving seat for delivering new homes. Three out of three plans have now been approved with neighbourhood planning powers proving to be a hit with people and a real draw for helping boost voter turnout. Neighbourhood planning is an incredibly important new right that provides a real opportunity to deliver the homes, shops and facilities people want. I would urge others to join the hundreds of communities around the country that are already looking to reap the many benefits from having a neighbourhood plan."

## May Day: New Support Programme Goes Live

Following the announcement of the [new support programme](#), applications are now open for communities to apply for support to help with the production of neighbourhood plans. The programme being delivered by Locality and partners is in two main parts:

- Direct support – advice and support, tailored to meet the needs of supported neighbourhoods.
- Grant payments – up to £7,000 per neighbourhood area, to contribute to costs incurred by the group preparing a neighbourhood plan or order.

Full information on how to apply for direct support and grants can be found at: <http://mycommunityrights.org.uk/neighbourhood-planning/>. You can also call Locality's Community Rights general enquiries line on 0845 345 4564 (Mon-Fri 9.30am – 12.30pm), though applications themselves must be made via the 'My Community Rights' website. If you would like to receive updates direct from Locality please email [npp@locality.org.uk](mailto:npp@locality.org.uk) to be added to their distribution list.



*DCLG Minister Don Foster announced details of the new support programme in Bankside, London, where he met members of the prospective neighbourhood forum.*

## Plans, Plans, Plans

27 areas have now published plans for consultation. Recent additions include: [Cuckfield](#), [Hurstpierpoint](#) and [West Hoathly](#) (Mid Sussex); [Littlehampton](#) (Arun); and [Woodcote](#) (South Oxfordshire). Elsewhere 323 areas have designated, and a further 188 applications are being processed. Get on the bandwagon and get a neighbourhood plan!

## Networking Neighbourhoods

DCLG will be hosting further networking and learning events on 22 May, 26 June and 10 July in London. To maximise benefits for those attending, we want to ensure that everyone is at a similar stage. In May, we will focus on those who have begun to think about drafting policies. Please get in touch with [jonathan.green@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:jonathan.green@communities.gsi.gov.uk) if you are interested in attending. If you are a local authority with a number of neighbourhood planning areas: we can come to you. Members of the team have recently been to events in places such as Hereford, Leeds and Sussex and will be in Preston on June 25<sup>th</sup>.

## Business Referendums

The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 came into force on 6 April 2013. In areas designated as business neighbourhood planning areas, local businesses will be able to vote for the first time. Four such areas have been designated so far: Central Milton Keynes, Trafford Park in Manchester, and central and west Ealing.

For further information read our article in Planning Aid's Upfront bulletin:

[http://www.ourneighbourhoodplanning.org.uk/news/2013/04/29/Business\\_Referendum\\_Regulations\\_-\\_all\\_you\\_need\\_to\\_know](http://www.ourneighbourhoodplanning.org.uk/news/2013/04/29/Business_Referendum_Regulations_-_all_you_need_to_know)

## Spring is here...



...and neighbourhood planning is blossoming in all sorts of ways. Here's a sample of things happening to keep the movement growing. Don't forget Twitter #neighbourhoodplanning - a great way of keeping tabs and joining in.

\* One evening last month over 80 people involved in neighbourhood planning in and around London met up on the Tattershall Castle moored on the Thames to discuss over a drink what they were up to and share ideas. Thanks must go to [Imagine Places](#) for kickstarting the conversation in the capital. We look forward to the next gathering and similar opportunities cropping up elsewhere.

\* [www.talkaboutlocal.org.uk](http://www.talkaboutlocal.org.uk) have shared some top tips on a quick and simple approach to do a website for your neighbourhood plan.

\* The architecture firm *We Made That* ran a fantastic five week residency at the Architecture Foundation that led to a great new resource '100 Outreach Tactics for 100 Pounds':  
<http://www.wemadethat.co.uk/projects/view/the-open-office>

\* [Defra](#) has published a report on experiences from neighbourhood planning frontrunner projects in rural areas. Some great top tips.

Meanwhile, there are many other ways for neighbourhoods to take control or build community spirit that complement neighbourhood planning...

\* Seacroft in Leeds recently held a street party: <http://www.yorkshireeveningpost.co.uk/news/latest-news/top-stories/party-time-on-leeds-housing-estate-1-5563436>. Why not hold a Big Lunch? More information on these nationwide get-togethers for neighbours is online: [www.thebiglunch.com](http://www.thebiglunch.com)

\* The Ivy House Pub in Nunhead recently also became the first place to be listed and purchased as an 'asset of community value'. The London pub which has had the likes of Elvis Costello and Joe Strummer grace its stage faced last orders being rung a year ago has now used this Community Right to secure its future. Why not list your local? Find out more online:  
[www.camra.org.uk/listyourlocal](http://www.camra.org.uk/listyourlocal)

## Mapping your neighbourhood

We have recently published mapping data on OpenStreetMap.com which we hope will open the door to many more people exploring the options for neighbourhood planning data.<sup>1</sup> Tell us how it could be improved, update it, turn it into something.  
<http://www.openstreetmap.org/browse/changeset/15772466>

This could potentially be a great way to engage young people, online communities and other interested parties. We have kick-started this in beta format and produced an app which we hope gives a glimpse of what could be developed:  
[http://dclgexamples.mywebcommunity.org/npf/npanodes\\_osm.html](http://dclgexamples.mywebcommunity.org/npf/npanodes_osm.html)

<sup>1</sup> The data is collected from informal monitoring so will not be 100% accurate.

## Volunteer Spotlight

There is an incredible amount of exciting and innovative work taking place within communities producing neighbourhood plans, and there are many dedicated community members working hard to ensure that their neighbourhood plans are a success.

As part of our new initiative 'Volunteer Spotlight' we would like to:

- showcase enthusiastic and committed community members who are leading the way with the development of their neighbourhood plan
- share examples of innovative practice taking place within communities e.g. Tattenhall in Cheshire organising a "rave" for young people where the price of entry was the completion of a short questionnaire about the neighbourhood plan!

If you think you fit the bill, or know someone who does, contact [charlotte.dring@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:charlotte.dring@communities.gsi.gov.uk).

Please provide a short summary of what the volunteer has achieved (no more than 300 words) and three 'top tips' that others in the thick of preparing a neighbourhood plan might learn from.

Nominations can be for anyone at any stage of the neighbourhood planning process, from those just starting out to those approaching referendum. We will use Notes on Neighbourhood Planning and other channels to highlight the great work you tell us about.

## The DCLG team

You can contact any of us via email, following the format:

[firstname.secondname@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:firstname.secondname@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

(e.g. [mick.duggan@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:mick.duggan@communities.gsi.gov.uk)).

Or you can call us, using 0303 44 followed by the five digit extension. We also continue to get out and about to communities and their local planning authorities. Thanks to all who have hosted us so far! The assistance the team provides is to help local planning authorities and qualifying bodies through a new process. It is not meant to be a substitute for your own professional or legal advice.



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