

**LICHFIELDS**



# Planning Communities

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22<sup>nd</sup> November 2021

# Agenda

*“A zoomed-out national picture of some of the issues facing the UK housing and planning system”*

1. A plan-led system?
2. Housing need and delivery
3. Permissions and build out
4. Resources

## **The Future**

5. Planning reform
6. Levelling-up
7. Brownfield vs greenfield
8. Town Centres

## LICHFIELDS

Established 1962

225 staff

Offices in Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Edinburgh, London, Leeds, Manchester, Newcastle & Thames Valley

100% owned by an Employee Benefit Trust



**If we didn't have the planning system, we'd have to invent it. But if we invented it, we wouldn't invent it like this**

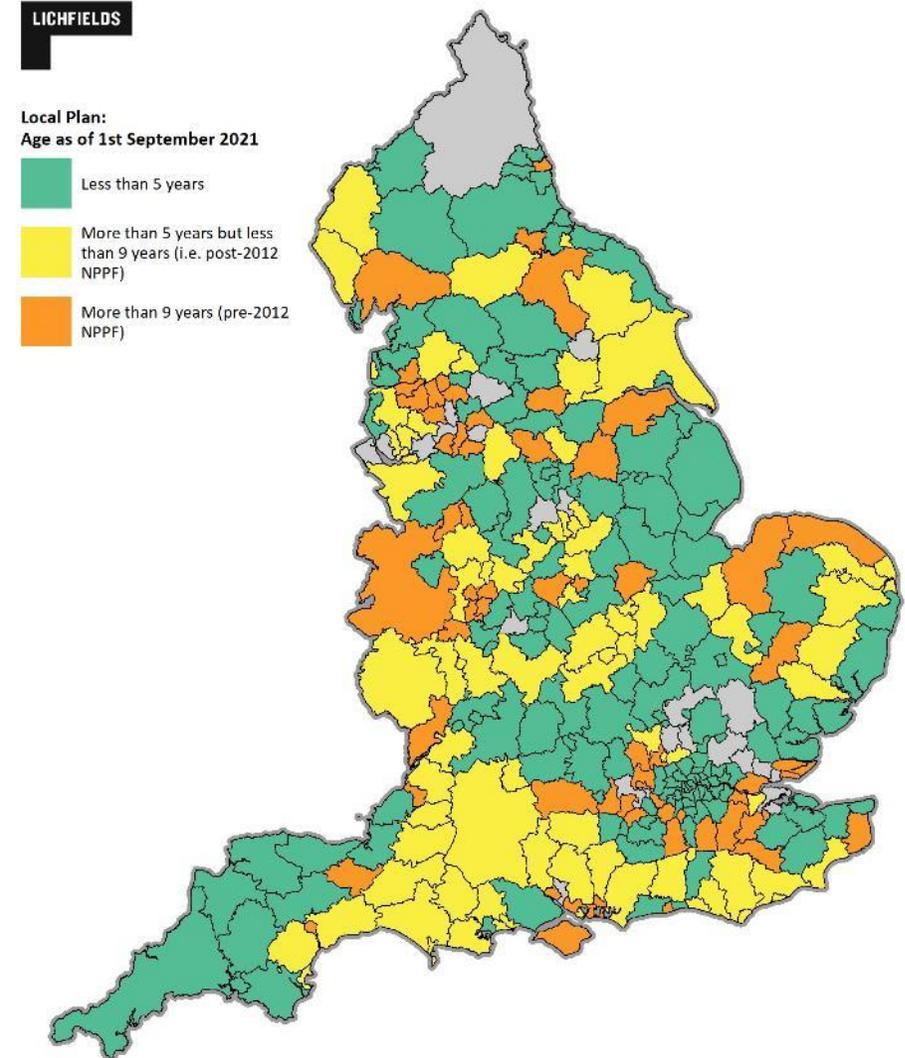
# A plan-led system?

- 1991 Planning and Compensation Act
- 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act



***We are surprised that 10 years on, some councils have not even begun to produce their plans. For a plan-led system to work, plans need to be in place. The NPPF cannot be truly successful until every local authority has an adopted, up to date local plan. Unfortunately, progress in getting local plans adopted remains far too slow***

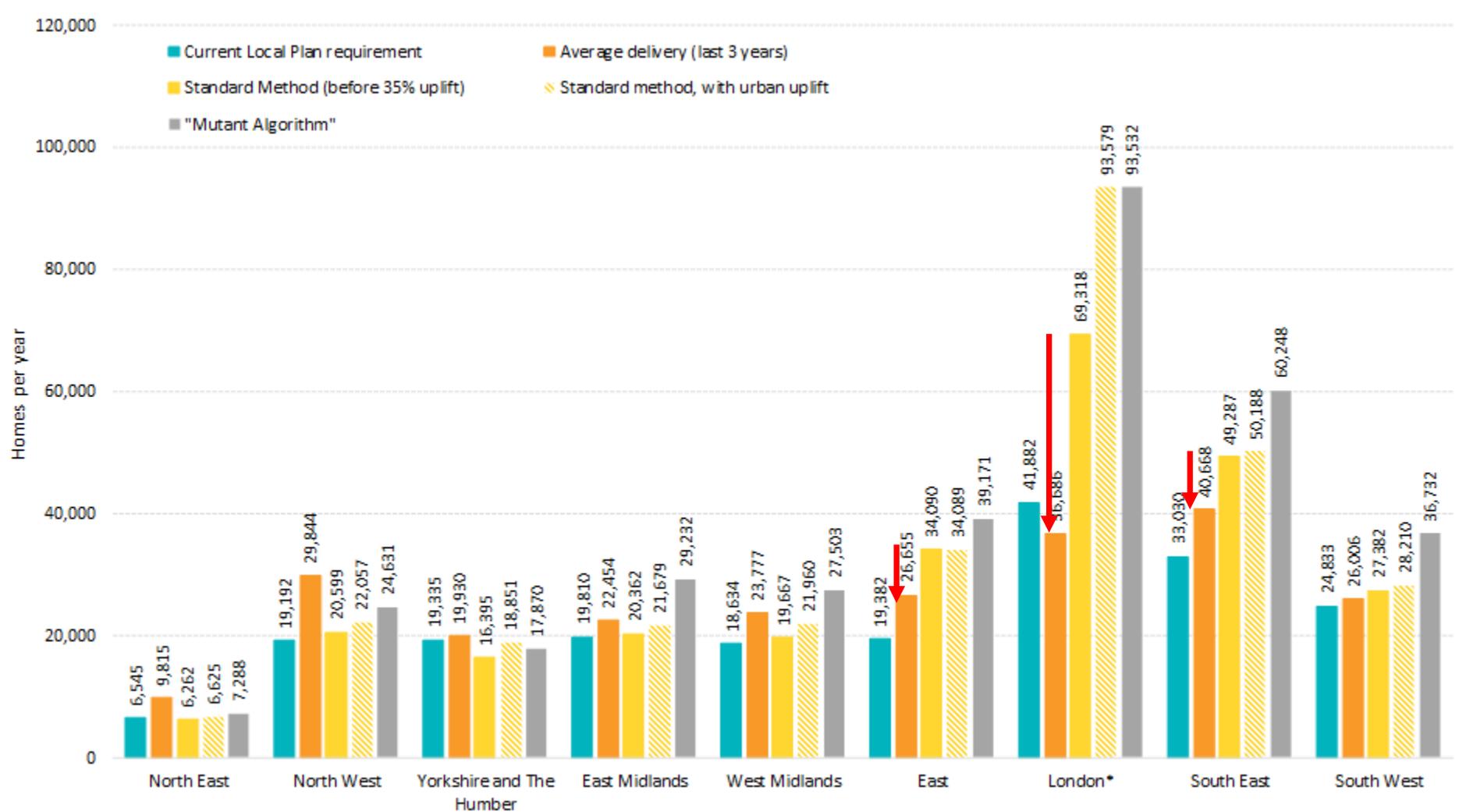
Communities and Local Government Select Committee Report of 9 December 2014



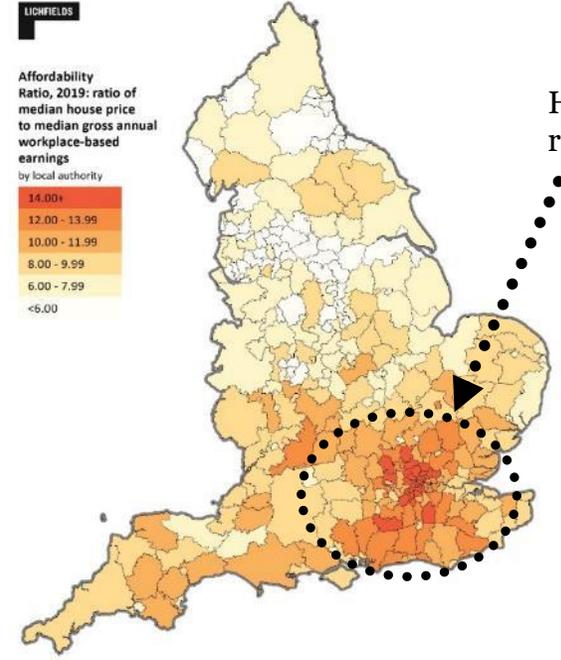
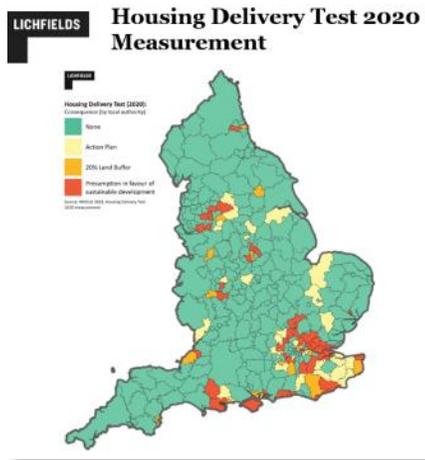
# 1. A plan-led system?

- System not completely broken
- Many local areas have prepared timely, effective local plans... but too many haven't
- Key challenges:
  - Cross-boundary issues (Duty to Cooperate)
  - Clarity of vision and leadership
  - Resilient and flexible planning strategy
  - Dealing with known unknowns (climate change, infrastructure funding)
  - Resources
- Strategic planning
  - The answer?
  - Depends on speed, clarity, governance, accountability
  - Lessons from London Plan and other previous, existing and emerging strategic planning models

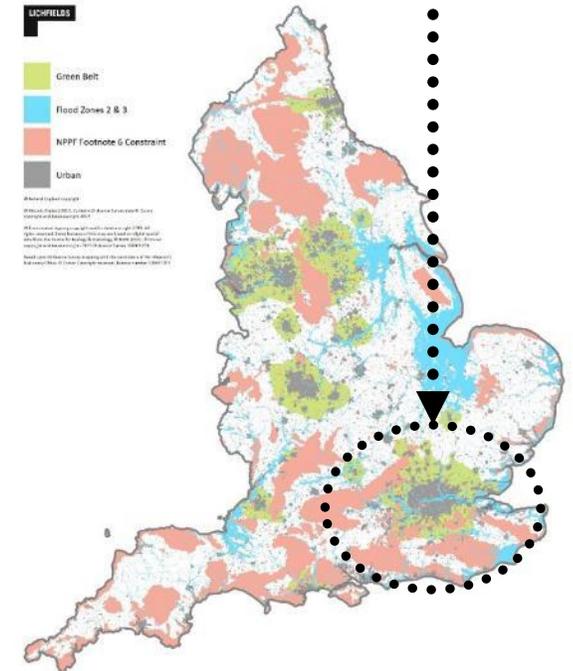
## 2. Housing need and delivery



# 2. Housing need and delivery



Highest demand in highly constrained region – how will these be balanced?



**55** authorities failed the 2020 Housing Delivery Test to the extent that the NPPF's 'Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development' now applies to planning decision-taking

**33** of these authorities have publicly accepted that they do not have a 5-Year Housing Land Supply, meaning the 'Presumption in Favour' is already in effect

**11** of the remaining 22 districts have not published an up-to-date 5YHLS position

**11** of the 55 LPAs have up-to-date evidence which suggests they do have a 5YHLS, meaning the tilted balance would theoretically be triggered as a result of the HDT failure

**29** of these LPAs have over half of their land constrained by Green Belt/footnote 6 designations

**7** of the 11 authorities with a stated 5YHLS have the majority of their land area covered by Green Belt or other Footnote 6 constraints, meaning the tilted balance is over-ridden

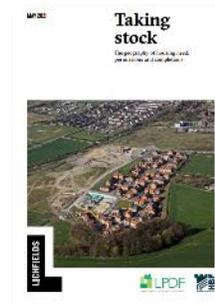
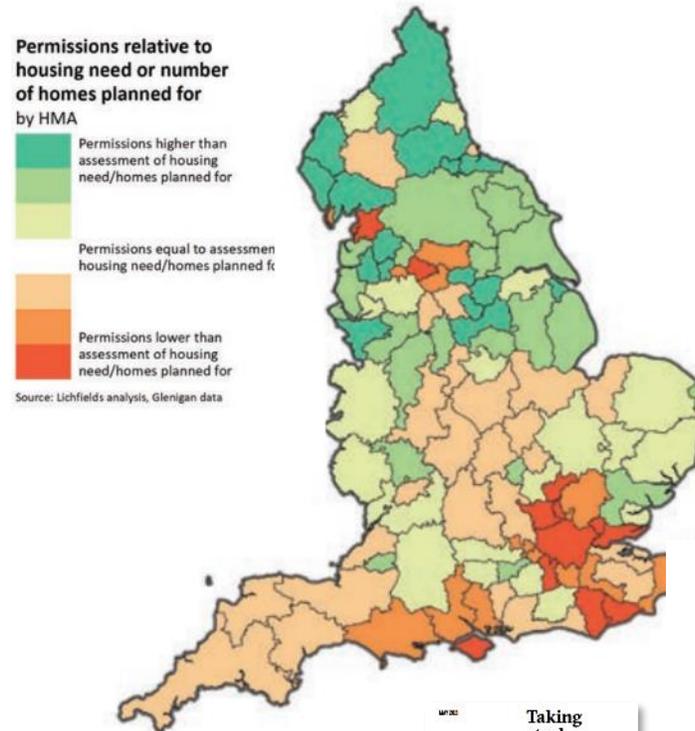
This leaves just 4 authorities nationally whereby the tilted balance would be triggered only as a result of the HDT and where the majority of the local authority area is not protected from development by footnote 6 constraints.

**URGENT**  
APRIL 2021  
**Effective or Defective:**  
The Housing Delivery Test



# 3. Permissions and build out

- A debate that would benefit from better evidence and nuance
- Build common understanding of:
  - The data
  - Geography
  - Who brings forward land and who builds homes
  - The role of land pipelines
  - How homes are delivered
  - Housing trajectories
  - The real world impact of policy ‘solutions’?



## Over 1.1 million homes with planning permission waiting to be built - new LGA analysis

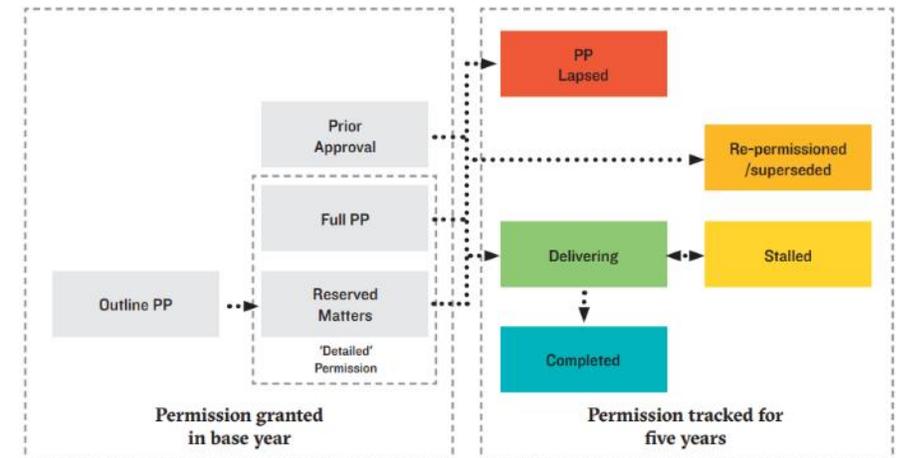
The LGA is calling for councils to be given powers in a Planning Bill in the Queen's Speech to incentivise developers to build housing more quickly.

Housing, planning and homelessness | 08 May 2021

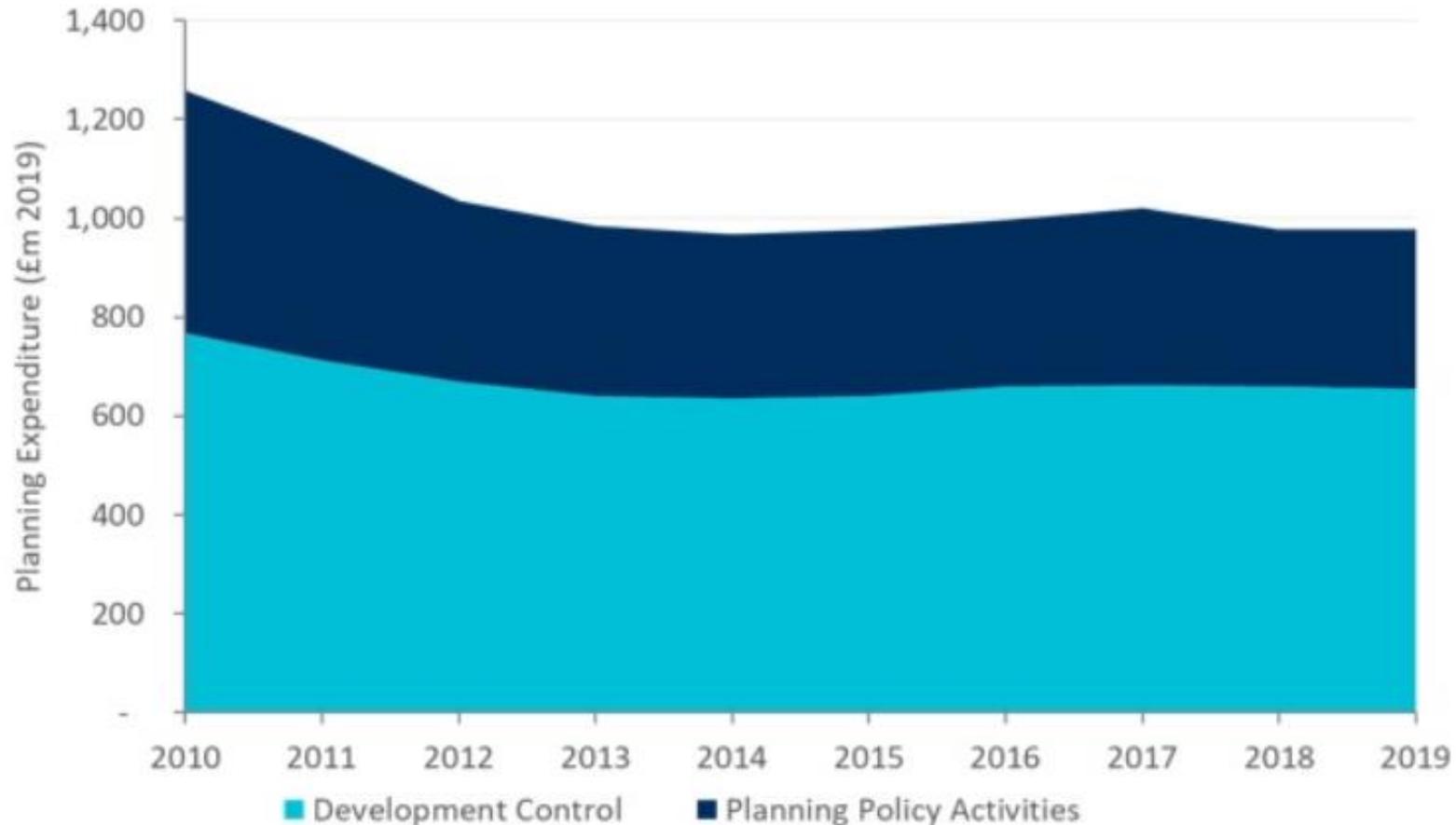
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**More news about Housing planning and homelessness**  
LGA responds to Building Back Better Commission report on housing  
LGA responds to homelessness  
LGA responds to support package  
More news in this topic



## 4. Resources



Source: RTPi

- 22% fall in Local Government funding on planning
- Shortage of trained planners
- Many Local Authorities lack specialist skills
- Focus on trying to meet statutory obligations
- The cost of appeals
- Implications for Devt Management and Plan Making

**The Future**

# 5. Planning reform



**There is a “clear need” for the planning system to become “speedier, more transparent and more predictable,” he said.**

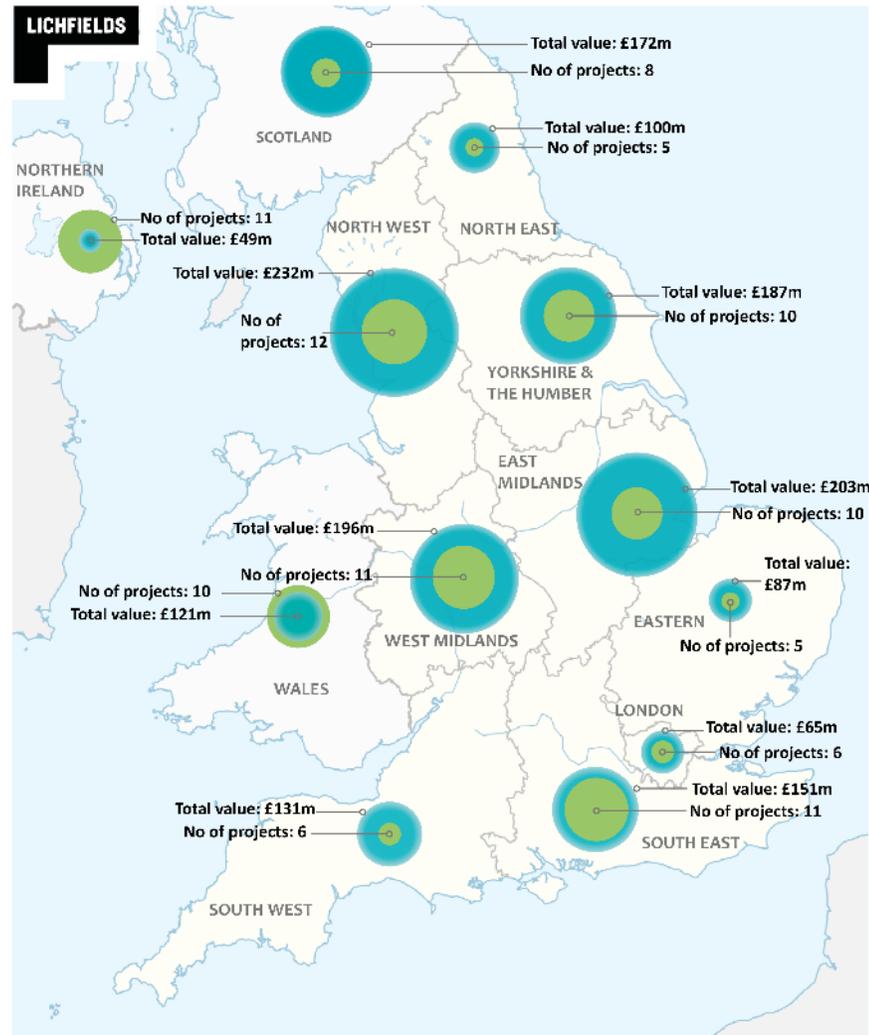
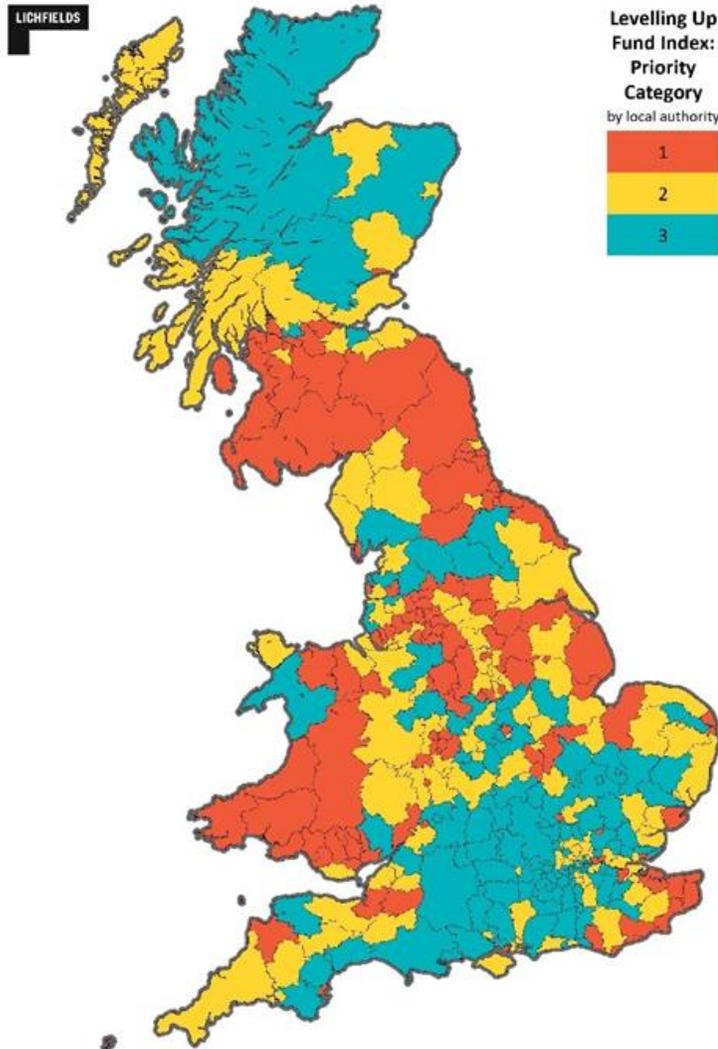
**“We want to get that right, so in order to determine the best way forward we are taking a pause – a step back if you will – to evaluate proposals in the light of the consultation that was undertaken last year, to make sure the planning proposals we have fit with our core mission to level up the country and regenerate communities.”**

**He said the department wants to “make sure” it is looking at “good regeneration aspects” of the proposals, and “channeling them through the prism of levelling up”.**

Source: Planning Magazine

- Structure and processes
  - How much of the White Paper will survive?
- Policy
  - What’s the new policy direction?

# 6. Levelling-up



- Need for clarity over what it means in planning terms

# 7. Brownfield vs Greenfield

## Boris Johnson pledges no homes will be built on green fields

Prime Minister signals softening of planning overhaul in conference speech after backlash from voters in Tory heartlands

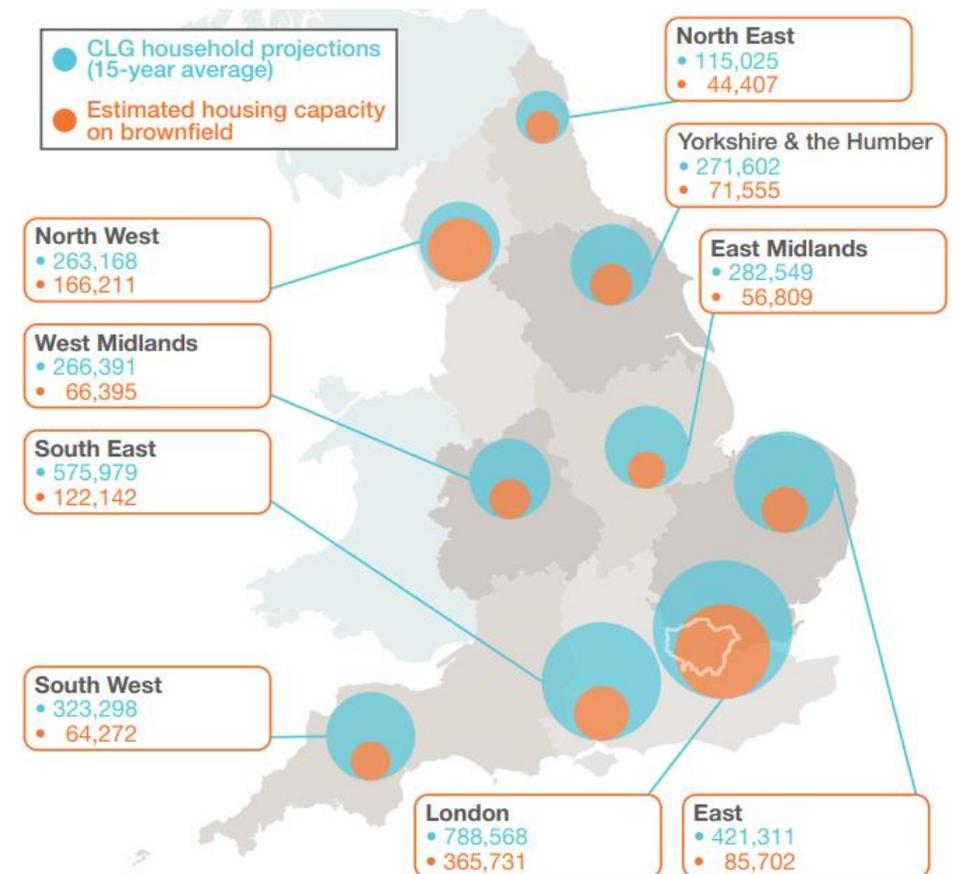
- We already have a brownfield first policy
- Lessons from the era of PPG3 in 1998-2003?

		London	South	Midlands	North	Total
Annual Net Additions (000s)	1998	15	76	29	34	156
	1999	18	71	30	31	149
	2000	15	70	32	30	148
	2001	16	64	29	25	132
	2002	20	66	29	30	147
	2003	22	71	30	38	159
Change in annual rate 1998 – 2003	000s	7	-5	1	4	3
	%	47%	-7%	3%	12%	2%
Share of Net Additions	1998	10%	49%	19%	22%	100%
	2003	14%	45%	19%	24%	100%

FIGURE 2.2

There is not enough brownfield land to meet the scale of housing demand

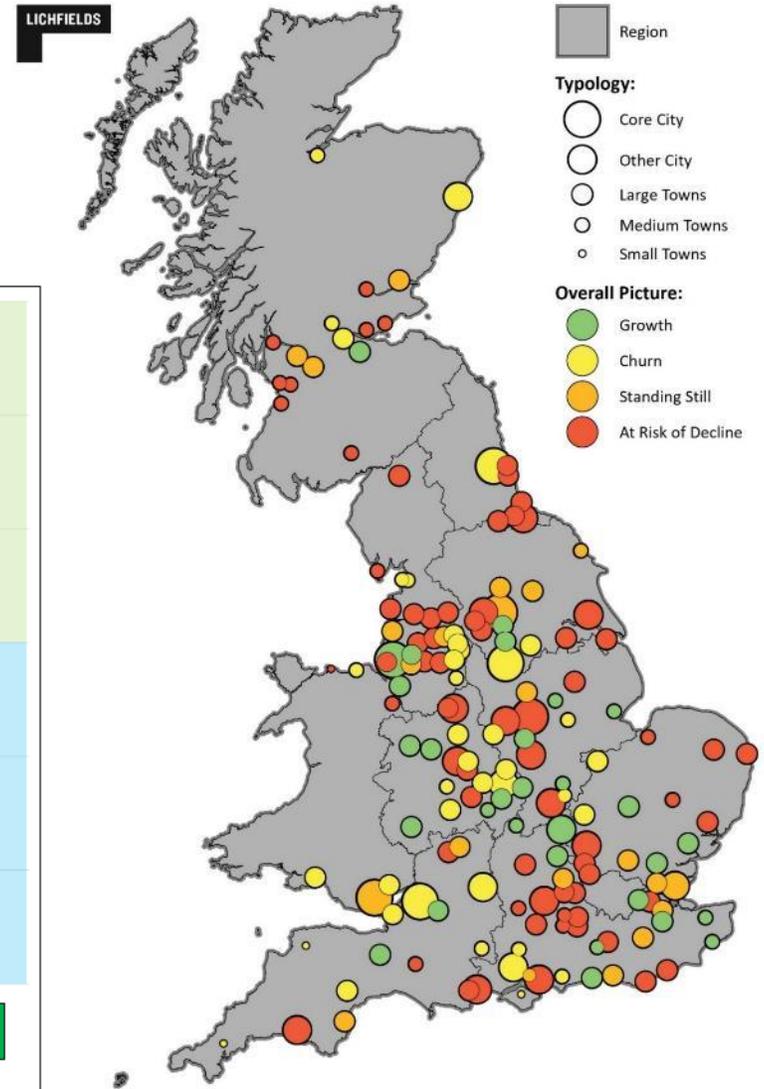
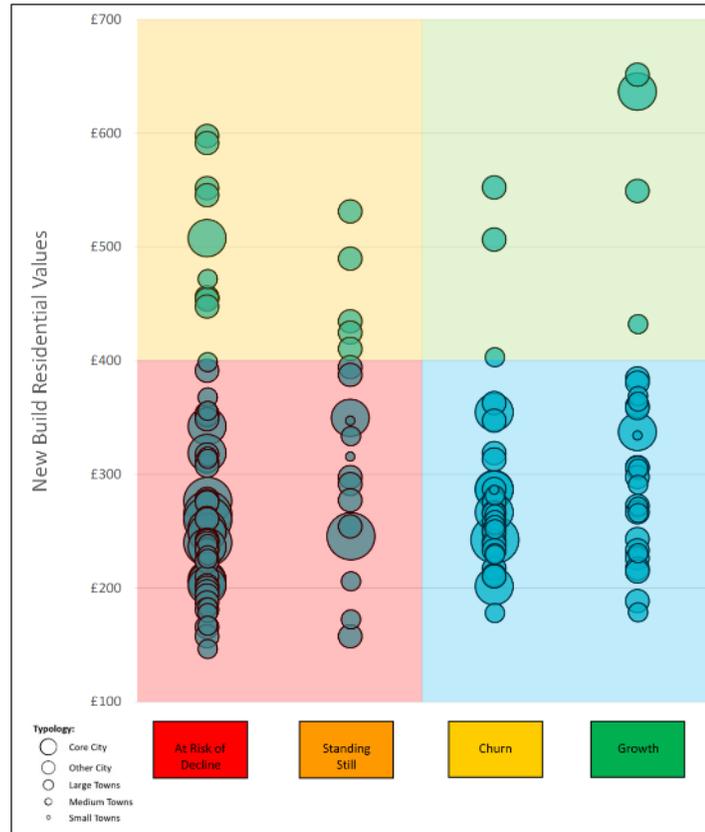
Brownfield land availability across English regions



Source: NLP, *Brownfield land solution?* (NLP 2014)

# 8. Town Centres

- Widely recognised period of change
- Not a uniform picture of decline
- Residential conversion not a panacea
- Planning system fit for purpose?



**Where next?**

# Where next?

1. Get the current system moving again
2. Resources and Digitisation
3. Effective OxCam Arc and strategic planning tiers
4. Clarity on Planning Bill reforms post-White Paper
5. A clear and coherent policy

Implementation and Transition



# Thank you

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