

Conservatives 2015: Housebuilder warns over neighbourhood plans

5 October 2015 by Jamie Carpenter, [1 comment](#)

A senior figure at a major house builder has warned that some communities are using neighbourhood plans to constrain the scale and location of development.

Neighbourhood planning: 'hugely powerful tool'

Speaking at a Conservative Party conference fringe session, organised by the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA), Chris Tinker, regeneration chairman at Crest Nicholson, said that localism will only work "where there is a desire to enable development rather than stifle development", and questioned whether neighbourhood plans would deliver the breadth of sites required by small and medium-sized builders.

He told the fringe session: "I still remain to be persuaded that the intent of many of the neighbourhood plans that are going through at the moment is to facilitate development. I think it is still on balance, to constrain the scale and location of development."

However, speaking at an earlier fringe session organised by the ConservativeHome website, planning minister Brandon Lewis said that neighbourhood planning "is a hugely powerful tool".

He said: "I've met a lot of areas who have done neighbourhood planning, who in the privacy of a meeting, will admit they start off making sure that nobody will build anything anywhere near them again.

"But somebody round the table at some stage says, 'Actually, I've got two kids, can we build a couple of houses?' Then the publican might say, 'Well, actually, Friday night, I've got four customers, I need some custom.

"They end up making very sensible decisions," Lewis said. He said that, in some instances, neighbourhood plans included more homes than local plans had stipulated.