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Change is in the air, as local communities take more control over their own future. Local people know their area best. The civic movement is part of this. We want to play a revitalised role in promoting civic pride and making the places where everyone lives more attractive, enjoyable and distinctive

proposition of an overhaul of planning. 'This is completely untested. Not one small locality or community has had this new system tested on it. We are being asked to do something that has no evidence base. The Conservatives claimed that the short-term decline in housing proved the planning system was bust, said Raynsford. 'This apocalyptic critique frankly doesn't stack up.' Only time will tell.

## COMMUNITY-BASED BUDGETS

Proposals for community-based budgets will also be outlined in the localism bill, Lord Wei, the coalition's 'Big Society' advisor, has suggested. Four councils have so far been testing the potential of so-called community-based budgets as part of a pilot programme that could lead to radical changes to the way funding is devolved. Many placemakers look forward to the moves: freeing local authorities from ring-fenced grants and centrally-imposed regimes. However, the benefit of community-based budgets would seem to be restricted to the fact that councils can have more control over local government monies and limited sums from other public sector budgets in order to address the challenges of communities with complex needs. Proposals for community-based budgets will be outlined in the forthcoming Localism Bill, Lord Wei has suggested. Again, only time will tell.

Borneo Sporenburg, Holland, has been masterplanned as a sustainable and affordable urban extension with good transport links and people-friendly streets. Residents frequently bring tables and chairs into the street for parties

