



Planning Aid England
Engaging Communities in Planning

Neighbourhood Planning Activity in the North West

RTPI North West CPD Event
22 May 2019

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Overview

- Planning Aid England
- Original and On-going Research
- Analysis of 2018 results
- Slowing and Halting Progress
- Future Trends?



Planning Aid England

- Part of the Royal Town Planning Institute
- Regional role
- Targeted at deprived communities and those unable to pay for advice
- Broader remit of 'Engaging Communities in Planning'
- Volunteer resource
- Benefits of volunteering



Original Research

- Spring 2017
- Small RTPI grant
- Liverpool University – supervised student project
- Desktop/On-line survey but with LPA verification
- Aims
 - Identify and encourage Local Planning Authority support
 - Chart plan preparation progress
 - Identify groups in need of Planning Aid assistance



Local Planning Authority Support

- Neighbourhood planning web page?

Which offers:

- Direct/on-demand access to local authority support?
- An 'available to meet' service?
- A link to apply for designations?
- Electronic consultation handling?
- A link that points to MHCLG funding – or information about it?
- A link to local authority funding?
- Neighbourhood planning support tools?
- A link to guidance/legislation?
- Links to individual neighbourhood plans?

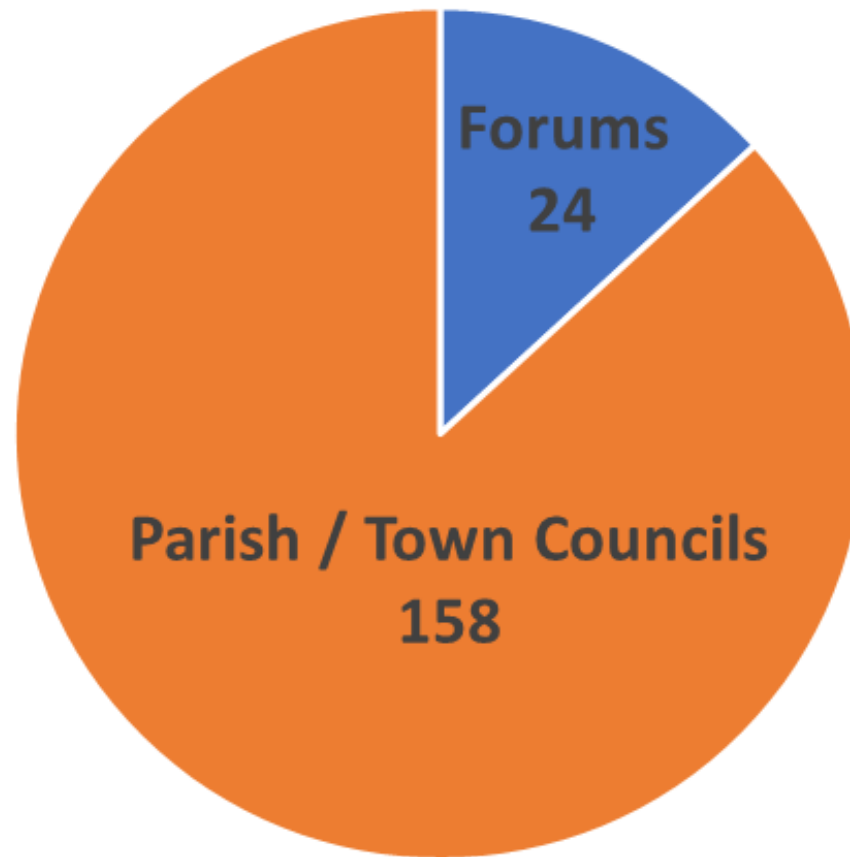


On-going Research

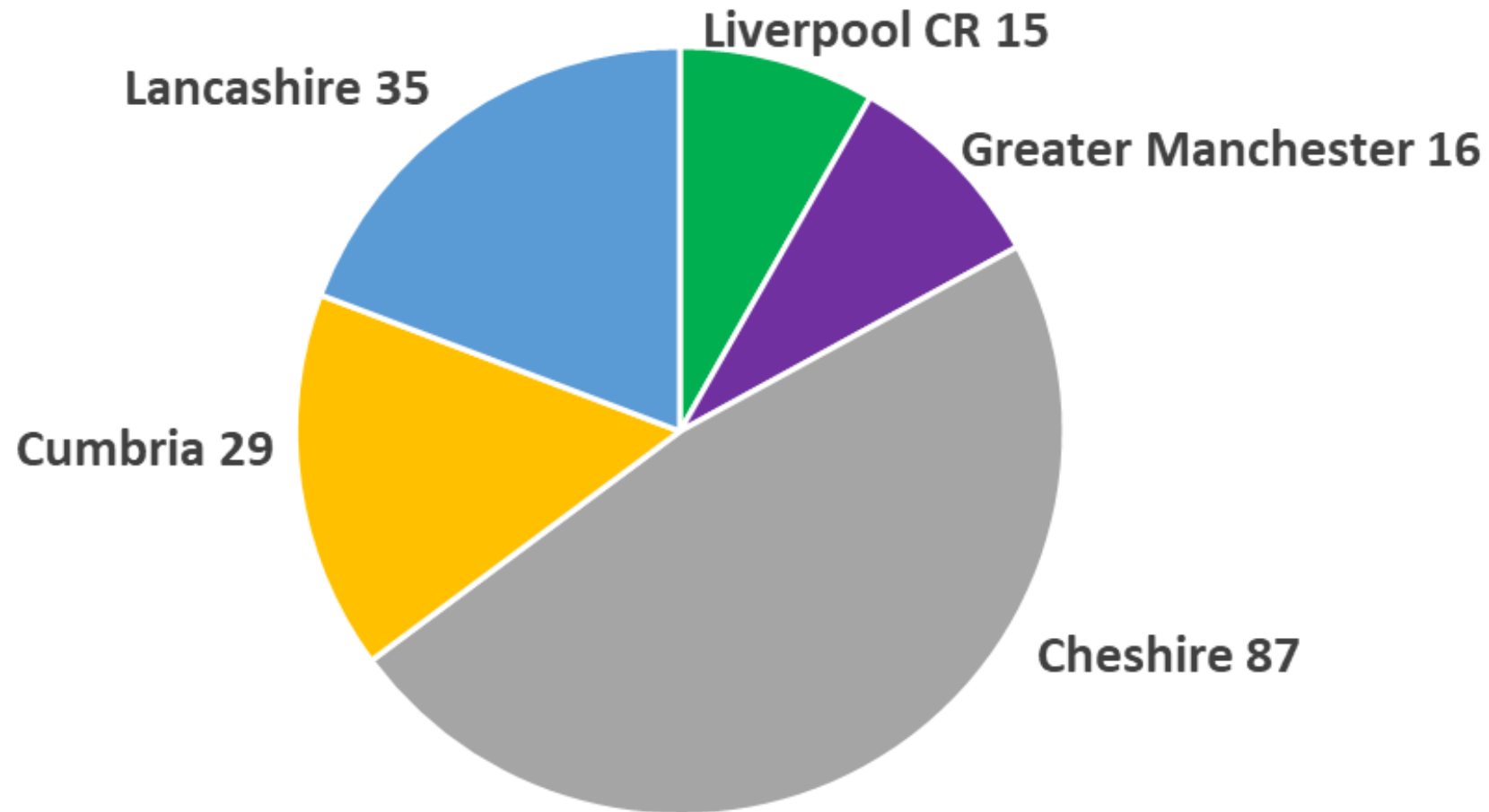
- Local Planning Authority support
- Plan preparation stages reached by:
 - deprivation
 - LPA area
 - sub-region
- Now an annual survey since autumn 2017
- Data now collected by Planning Aid volunteers
- In 2018 182 Plans recorded (up from 158 in Spring 2017)
- Includes Local Plan progress



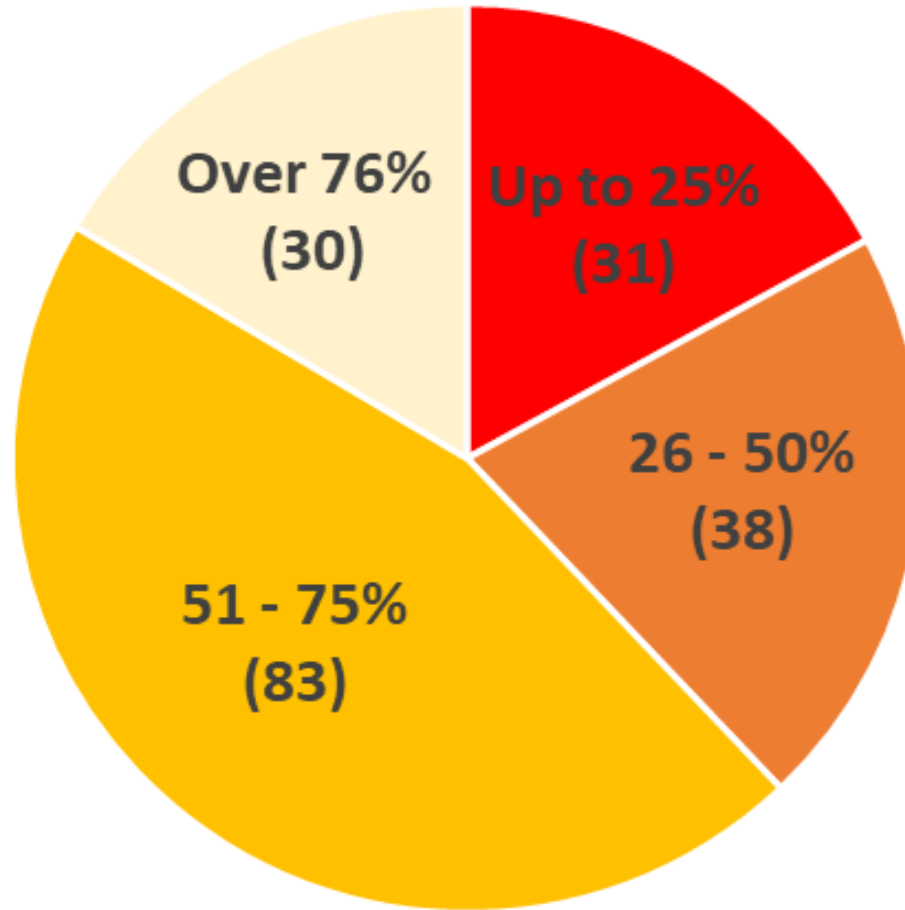
Neighbourhood Plans by Type of Group (2018)



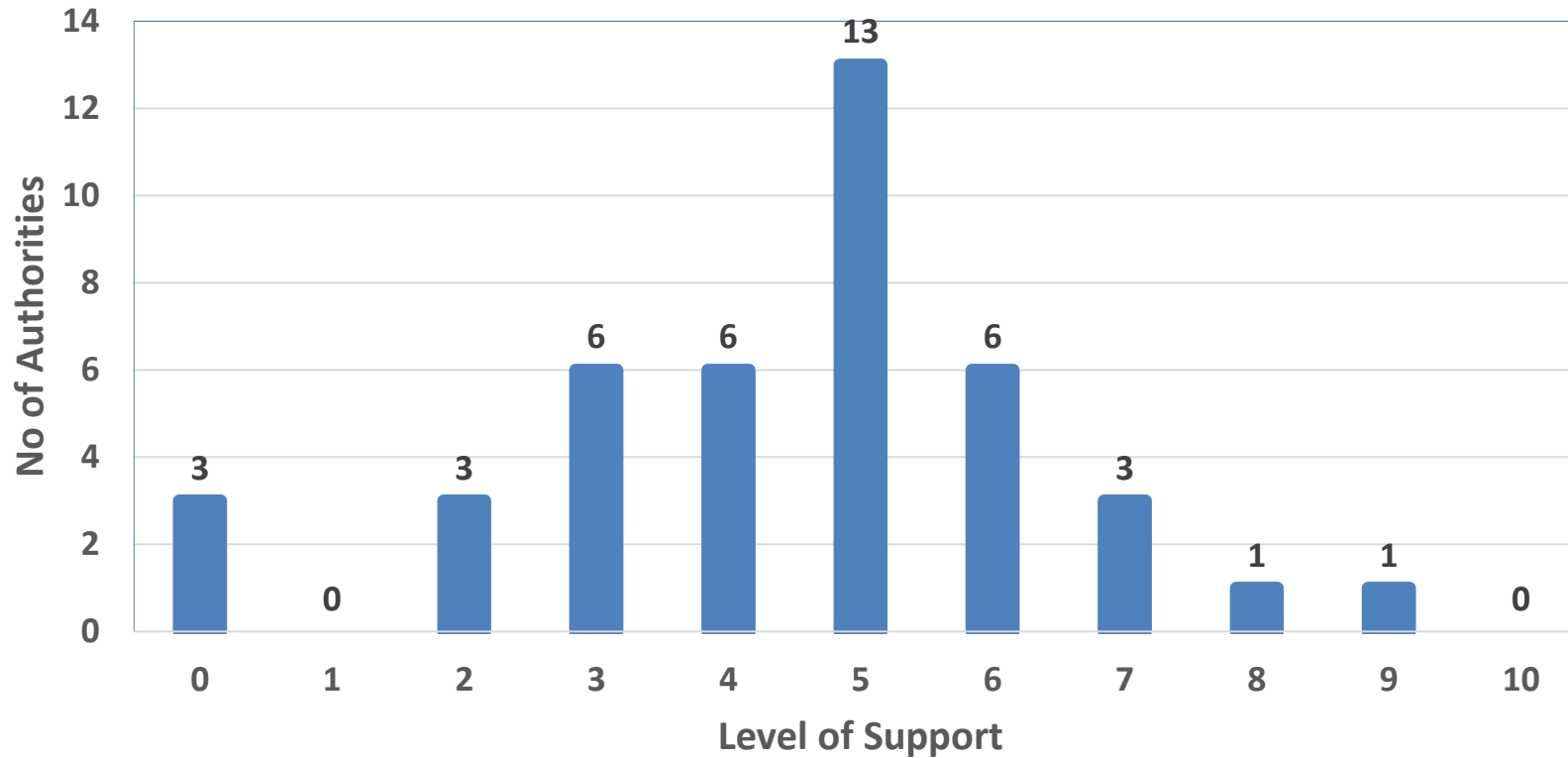
Neighbourhood Plans by Sub-region (2018)



Neighbourhood Plans by Deprivation (2018)



LPA Neighbourhood Plans Support (2018)



Slowing and Halting Progress

- New designations – 23 in both 2016 and 2017, but only 12 in 2018
- Long designated Plans - 44 designated in 2015 or earlier had not reached a later formal stage by 2018
- Only 2 (+1) Forums re-designated, 1 dissolved
- Progress of early ‘Front Runners’ (19 from 2011/12)
 - 10 made (but typically took c.5 years)
 - 6 still in ‘preparation’
 - 3 not listed – presumably abandoned



Why Can it Take So Long?

- It's not an easy task, especially for Forums
- LPA support and assistance can be lacking
- Local politics can frustrate progress
- Local Plan delays can have an impact
- Leading local drivers may move on
- Community volunteers may not remain committed
- Financial resources may be insufficient
- Other reasons?



Future Trends?

- Further fall in new designations?
- Still interest in commencing work
- Will Forums endure?
- Plan Reviews?
- Government funding, will it be further extended?
- Is more research needed to reveal impediments?
- Should more support be available?





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Thank you
