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## LOCAL FOCUS FOR THE 2011 PLANNING BRIEFING



From left to right: Gary Halman, HOW Planning; Andrew Whitaker, Home Builder's Federation; Paul Tucker QC, Kings Chambers; Steve Quartermain, Chief Planner at DCLG; and Nick Keable, The Saint Consulting Group

Steve Quartermain, Chief Planner at the Department for Communities and Local Government told delegates at the HOW Planning/Kings Chambers 2011 Planning Briefing that the new Localism Agenda will provide a more flexible, powerful planning system which will put neighbourhoods in control.

The Briefing, organised by Manchester based HOW Planning and Kings Chambers, was held at Lancashire Cricket Club on Friday 14th January and was attended by 270 delegates representing both the public and private sectors across the North of England. It provided a chance for developers, land owners, home builders and planning officers to hear more about planning in a local context, with Quartermain's keynote speech focussing on the proposals for Neighbourhood Plans.

Steve Quartermain, who was invited to be the keynote speaker at the half-day briefing said: "It is the Government's vision to bring about a fundamental shift in power from the top down, extending transparency to every area of public life. Part of this will be to empower



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neighbourhoods to take control of local planning issues, to determine the growth and development in their own community.

“There will no longer be a ‘plan says no’ policy, but rather a flexible, open approach which might at times go beyond a core strategy to deliver wide ranging benefits for the community.”

Nick Keable, Vice President of The Saint Consulting Group in London provided a strong argument against the new policy, suggesting it would “create a system that will seize up the planning process even more than it is already”.

Delegates also heard from Andrew Whitaker, National Planning Director at the Home Builder’s Federation, Paul Tucker QC of Kings Chambers and Gary Halman, Partner at HOW Planning who said “Delegates were definitely given both sides of the localism argument and after such strong and lively presentations I am sure they will have left with lots to think about.

“With such a busy schedule I am delighted that Steve Quartermain accepted the invitation to speak at our event and I would like to thank all of our speakers for their time and commitment and for making this year’s Planning Briefing such a lively and interesting event”

This year’s event marked the 10th anniversary of the HOW Planning/Kings Chambers’ biennial Planning Briefing and once again attracted a capacity audience.



Steve Quartermain addresses a capacity audience