

## People in rural villages to be allowed to build on green belt without planning permission

People living in rural communities will be able to give themselves the right to build on local green belt land without planning permission, under plans to be unveiled today.

By [Christopher Hope](#), Whitehall Editor  
Published: 7:00AM BST 23 Jul 2010

Grant Shapps, the Housing Minister, wants to breath life into remote villages by making it easier to win permission to build more homes and shops.

The Community Right to Build programme will allow people to build any type of property on Green Belt land, if enough locals are in favour.

Currently, planning permission to build on green belt is only granted in exceptional circumstances for affordable homes.

Local people will be able to grant themselves planning permission, avoid the need to ask the council for the green light, if a large majority vote in favour in a special local referendum.

The proposals will be contained in a new Localism Bill which will be published later this year.

Mr Shapps said he hoped the new plans would help local GP surgeries, school and post offices survive if they are under threat because of a falling local population.



Grant Shapps, the Housing Minister, wants to breath life into remote villages by making it easier to win permission to build more homes and shops.

Mr Shapps said: "Up and down the country there are entire communities willing and eager to give the go-ahead for new developments in their area.

"The countryside must be a vibrant place to live, and cannot be allowed to become a museum.

"I want to give communities the power to preserve their villages, which are currently struggling to survive because of a shortage of affordable homes."

In a bid to stop the system being abused, communities will not be allowed to increase a village's size by more than 10 per cent over a 10 year period.

Under the plans, local people would be able to group together to buy land through a community land trust, with support from banks.