



# Creating Britain's new communities

2017

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## Foreword

“Community” is a term so frequently used in conversation day-to-day and by political and UK society commentators, that it is easy to lose sight of its meaning. However making sure that we have strong communities that promote social well-being is extremely important, not only for the individual but for society as a whole. The importance and positive outcomes of communities are clear – they are key to alleviating loneliness and depression, while also helping to promote relationships and general well-being. The Government and the homebuilding industry must therefore think very carefully about how their actions and policies contribute toward building communities – and indeed what people want from their community, now and in the future.

2016 will be looked upon as significant for many reasons, not least the UK’s decision to leave the EU. With so much change, now is a particularly important point in time to be looking at how to strengthen our ties, not just globally, but with one another on UK soil. There is a pressing need to build strong, vibrant communities for a strong and vibrant United Kingdom.

I am hopeful this can be achieved. February 2017 saw the publication of the long-awaited Housing White Paper and, while this is a consultation document, it contains some ideas and concepts that do work towards greater cohesion.

For example, ensuring new infrastructure is in place to support new communities and greater collaboration between developers and local authorities to meet local need – in other words, strengthening neighbourhood planning.

The start of this year also saw the Government turn its attention to the Garden Village concept; new, discrete communities with green spaces at their heart and supporting amenities.

Of the 2,000 people we questioned for this report, 81% do not think the Government is currently doing enough to build communities as part of its homebuilding plans. This suggests more needs to be done – or that our leaders need to be more vocal about how they are supporting communities.

Our inaugural annual report not only looks at the essence of community today, and in the future, but outlines a framework for homebuilders and government to follow to help foster new communities. The intention of this research is to raise awareness of the importance of creating sustainable and thriving communities to consumers, the wider industry and Government. Ultimately, we believe that the creation of communities rests on four core concepts that we would encourage the wider industry to apply when considering the development of new areas to live:

- Providing a safe and secure environment
- Enabling access to information and education
- Providing surroundings and a local environment which can be enjoyed
- Ensuring the health and well-being of residents

Building beautiful homes is a great place to start, but it’s just the beginning.

**John Tutte,**  
Group Chief Executive, Redrow

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# Creating Communities:

## Enabling social well-being and cohesion

### Introduction:

The UK has undergone two referendums in three years which have tested the social fabric of communities and, in some cases, “laid bare some further divisions in our country”<sup>1</sup>.

Building communities which foster social interaction is more important than ever, and the homebuilding industry has a duty to ensure the communities it builds meet this challenge head on.

A community is defined in two ways;

- a) A group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common (physical)
- b) The condition of sharing or having certain attitudes and interests in common (psychological).

This report examines both the physical and psychological definitions and seeks to understand:

- Does Government policy prioritise the creation of communities?
- What do people want from their communities and how this will change in the future?
- Do the communities of today really differ from those 50-100 years ago?
- How can we ensure that we build socially sustainable and cohesive communities in the future?

Social sustainability does not just involve environmentally friendly living; it is about health, well-being and creating places people want to live, work and socialise in.

The World Health Organisation utilises a broad definition of ‘health’ as follows: “Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” Social well-being therefore makes up one of the core facets of health at a globally defined level, which further elevates the importance of creating socially sustainable communities: these promote well-being and they promote health.

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<sup>1</sup> Prime Minister Theresa May in her New Year address 2016

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## Is enough being done to create communities?

Last year presented significant change for the UK. Decisions like Brexit divided families and friends, so ensuring that socially dynamic and cohesive communities continue to be created as a matter of utmost importance in the UK is essential.

The Autumn Statement confirmed additional investment of £5.3 billion to support the building of homes across a range of tenures and Sajid Javid, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, has acknowledged that the UK needs on average 250,000 new homes a year for the rest of the decade.<sup>2</sup>

However, despite this emphasis on new home delivery from government, the public does not feel the government is emphasising creating communities sufficiently alongside this.

In a national consumer survey of house buyers which we commissioned, 81% of people said they do not think the government is doing enough to prioritise creating communities as part of its homebuilding plans.

Ensuring the development and growth of an area requires more than just bricks and mortar; but also the infrastructure, jobs and economic stimulus to create communities.

The new government has matched its commitments to housing with a commitment to infrastructure.

For example the Housing Infrastructure Fund of £2.3 billion by 2020-2021, will provide infrastructure targeted at unlocking new private homebuilding in the areas where housing need is greatest.

In addition, £1.8 billion has been earmarked for Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) which will help improve transport connections, unlock unviable sites, boost skills and enhance digital connectivity.

The National Infrastructure Commission (announced in October 2016) is the new independent organisation offering advice on the country's infrastructure needs and how to meet them.

This organisation will prioritise the physical elements which underpin successful communities, such as communications, but will not touch on the psychological aspects. In fact, 'community' and 'community creation' were not touched upon in any meaningful way in the Autumn Statement.

The disconnect between the physical and psychological components of community creation is a concern and something which must be addressed.

Government needs to think carefully about how to join up new housing provision outlined in the White Paper and new infrastructure and how this contributes toward creating and strengthening communities – which, according to the findings of this report, is what people want.

**81%**

of people don't think the government is doing enough to prioritise creating communities

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<sup>2</sup><http://news.sky.com/story/tens-of-thousands-of-quick-build-homes-set-to-tackle-housing-crisis-10719122>

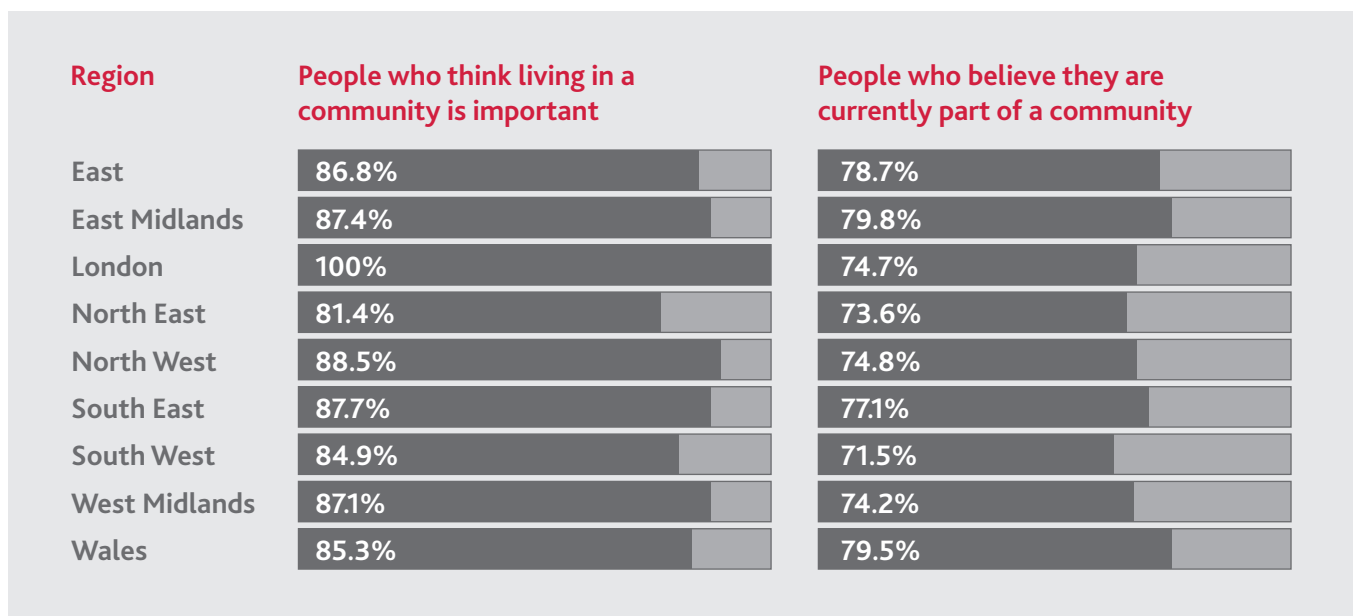
## What people want

In order to understand how Redrow can build better communities, the company spoke to over 2,000 consumers to find out what features they value most in their local communities. It's the most extensive research Redrow has ever undertaken on this subject and apart from helping them to better understand their customers, the findings will help to shape their future communities.

The findings show that community isn't dead – in fact it's far from it. 87% of the 2,000 consumers questioned as part of Redrow's survey said that being part of a community is important to them. However, at odds with this, a significant minority (one quarter) of respondents said they don't currently live as part of a community.

Living as part of a community was important to both countryside (88%) and city dwellers (86%) and there was no significant variation in sentiment levels here. However, the reality did indicate a disjoint between country and city dwellers in terms of whether they feel they are part of a community. Of the respondents, 71% of city dwellers said they currently live in a community but in rural areas this increased to 85%.

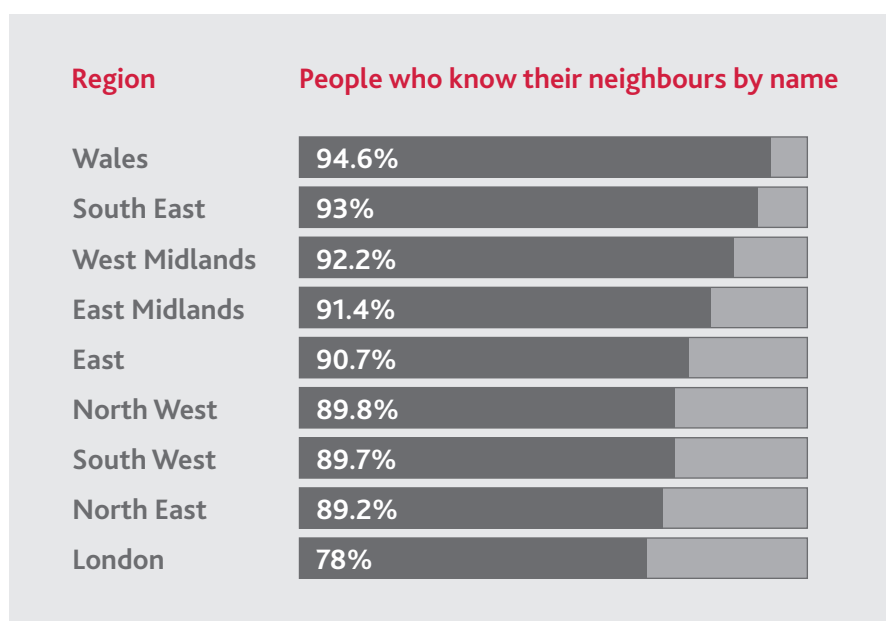
There is some regional fluctuation in this data too, as shown in the table below.



All the people surveyed who live in London said they think living in a community is important, but less than three quarters (74.7%) currently live in a community – one of the lowest levels of all the regions. People in the East Midlands are most likely to say they currently live as part of a community (79.8% of people indicated this) whereas South Westerners are least likely to feel part of a community (71.5%). The region where the fewest people think living in part of a community is important is the North East (81.4%).

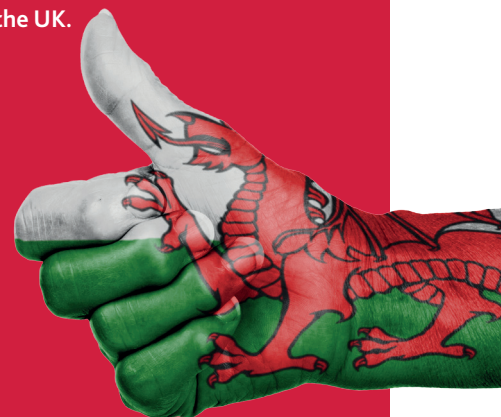
## Love thy neighbour

Living as part of a community implies at least a minimal level of interaction with those around you, so as a further gauge of whether people currently live in a community Redrow asked people whether they know their neighbours by name.



**95%**

of Welsh respondents know their neighbour by name making them the friendliest bunch in the UK.



In each region, more than three quarters of people are able to name their neighbours but there is notable regional variation in terms of how 'friendly' we are.

The friendliest region is Wales, where 94.6% of people know their neighbour by name, closely followed by the South East (93%) and the West Midlands (92.2%).

The proportion of people on first-name terms with their neighbours falls significantly to 78% in London, which has the lowest level of people who know their neighbours by name, despite London being more densely populated than Wales.

In contrast to this finding, Londoners were most likely to feel that being part of a community is important, with 100% of people indicating this – so there is a real disjoint in our Capital between the ambition and the reality.

## What do you want from your community?

We know people aspire to live in communities, but what are the most important factors in creating communities which promote social well-being? We asked 2,000 consumers to indicate the importance of various features and amenities which might be found in a community. The top 10 were as follows:

Rank	Community feature	Indicated as being important		
		National	City/Town	Hamlet/Village
1	Doctor's surgery	99.5%	99.4%	99.9%
2	High speed broadband	98.1%	97.9%	98.3%
3	Open space / Recreation ground	97.6%	97.7%	97.4%
4	Local shops (Butcher etc)	97.2%	97.7%	96.2%
5	Bus route	95.7%	96.6%	93.9%
6	Hospital	95.1%	95.3%	94.7%
7	Park / Village green	94.7%	94.8%	94.6%
8	Post office	94.2%	94.4%	93.8%
9	Coffee shop / Tea room	91.3%	92.6%	88.7%
10	Health visitor / District nurse	90.3%	90.5%	89.9%

The most important factor which goes toward creating a community is access to a local doctor's surgery – 99.5% of respondents considered this to be important in terms of community creation and 81% thought this was absolutely essential. Within the top 10 important community features there are a total of three health-related amenities or services - easy access to a doctor's surgery (1), hospital (6) and health visitor (10).

This reinforces the belief successful and happy communities are centred on the social well-being and health of the inhabitants; and something which consumers feel is very important.

The second most important factor is high-speed broadband with 98.1% of respondents indicating that this is important for creating a community and was deemed more important than having access to a village green, a recreation ground or even local shops such as butchers and fishmongers.

The above list reveals that a modern community in 2017 needs to offer its inhabitants a blend of traditional amenities that have been the centre of communities for decades with 21st Century communications; for example the top 10 not only includes access to ultrafast broadband but also the traditional post office and village green. Both virtual and physical meeting spaces are now important for sustainable community creation.



# The connectivity conundrum

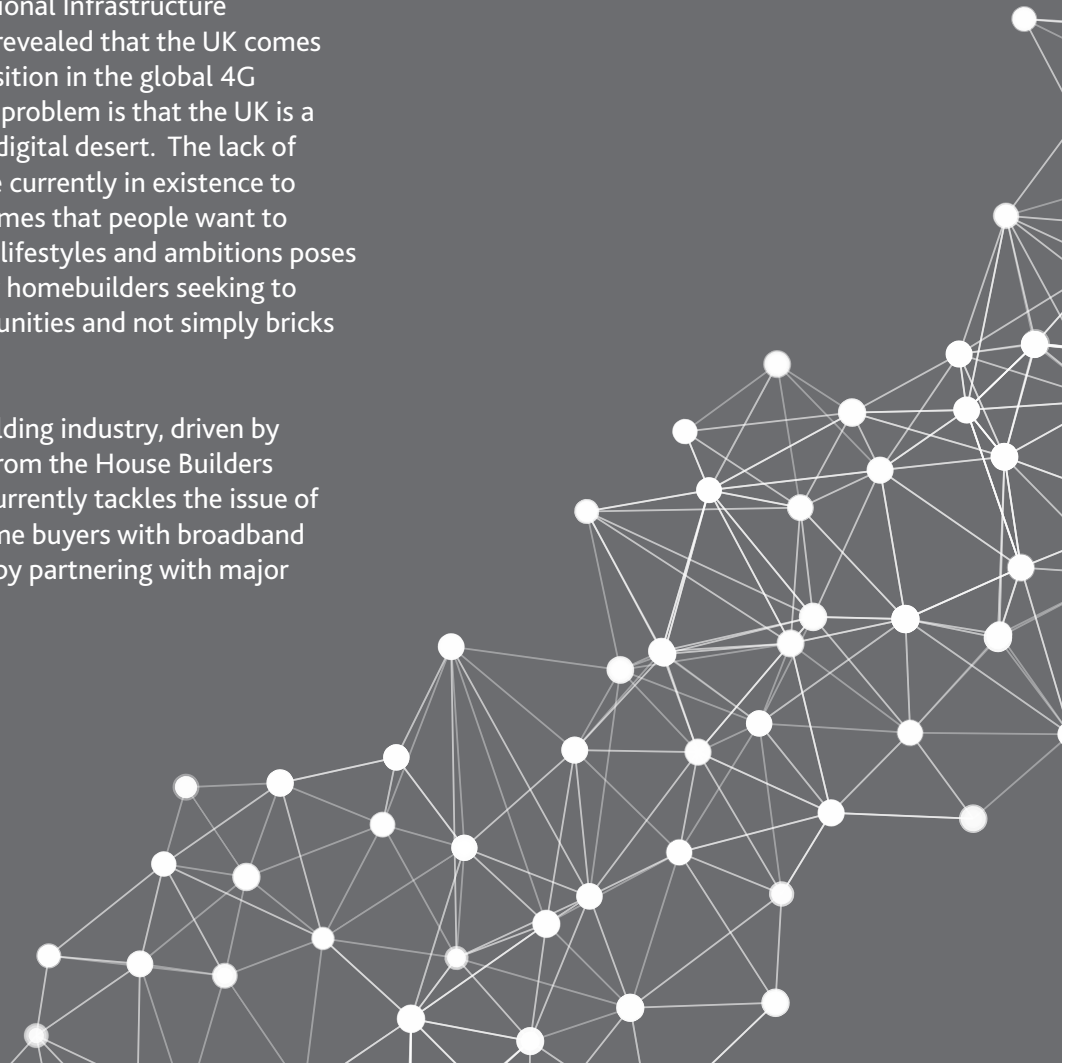
**This report shows the importance of access to high-speed broadband for creating communities.**

The Chancellor's Autumn Statement confirmed a £1 billion investment into 'full-fibre' and 5G broadband, which is extremely positive news – and it couldn't have come at a better time. In December 2016 the National Infrastructure Commission revealed that the UK comes in at 54th position in the global 4G rankings. The problem is that the UK is a comparative digital desert. The lack of infrastructure currently in existence to create the homes that people want to support their lifestyles and ambitions poses a problem for homebuilders seeking to create communities and not simply bricks and mortar.

The homebuilding industry, driven by an initiative from the House Builders Federation, currently tackles the issue of providing home buyers with broadband on new sites by partnering with major providers.

However the solution to the UK's patchy coverage will only be solved through holistic government action targeted at encouraging collaboration and infrastructure sharing between the major providers.

We hope that the government uses some of the funding announced in the Autumn Statement to pursue this solution.



# Healthy communities

## Health and social well-being is increasingly used as a measure of the nation's success.

For example Grant Thornton's Vibrant Economy Index released in November 2016 highlights health and well-being as a key measurement tool and includes factors such as levels of adult / childhood obesity, anxiety and participation in sports.

Access to recreation grounds and village greens falls within the top 10 community features, but also access to healthcare: doctor's surgeries, hospitals and healthcare visitors.

The mix of these factors suggests that people not only want the opportunity to be fit and healthy within their communities but that they also want access to facilities and healthcare professionals to address problems when their health goes off track.

The government's report 'Future of health and healthcare provision in cities' indicates that people are now demanding more high quality care; people are better educated on medical issues than they once were and are becoming more used to choice in healthcare.

The proportion of elderly people in the UK population is also increasing as people live for longer, which in turn increases demand for healthcare services.

Homebuilders and Local Authorities therefore need to consider how they can better incorporate assisted living facilities into communities.

Away from the home itself, it is about giving closer consideration to how healthcare can be more closely integrated with the built environment, which is reflected in NHS England's Healthy New Towns initiative.

Greater collaboration between health care providers and the companies that build homes is a key part of this solution.



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## Start as you mean to go on: embedding social value in the homebuilding process

The public sector is governed by principles of economic, social and environmental well-being in the procurement of built environment projects.

This ensures that the focus is not only on the immediate project at hand in terms of timely and cost-efficient delivery, but that there is an emphasis on wider socio-economic key performance indicators (KPIs). Whether it is a school, a leisure centre or a community hall, projects must reach a certain standard on KPI's including factors such as local job and work experience placement creation; use of small and medium-sized enterprises and sustainable materials and set levels of local spend. These all ensure that the creation of a building does not happen in isolation but has a wider ripple effect of benefits for the local area.

The Public Services (Social Value) Act of 2012 requires 'public authorities to have regard to economic, social and environmental well-being in connection with public services contracts; and for connected purposes.' This means that all public bodies must consider how the services they commission and procure might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the surrounding community.

But why stop here? It's not only the public sector that is creating crucial housing and infrastructure for UK PLC.

Private homebuilders perform a similar role and given that providing homes is a fundamental function, the right to housing is enshrined in multiple international human rights instruments, these considerations ought also apply to any body, public or private, that provides housing.

It is a logical extension that new housing developments should also be built to safeguard the economic, social and environmental well-being of the communities in which they sit.

This will not only engrain the new homes within the existing community and go some way in quashing any potential opposition, but it will also place the welfare of the community at the heart of any planning decisions.

These considerations should not just form soft guidance, but should be agreed between Local Authorities and developers and written into planning permissions. This is similar to the model adopted in central Bedfordshire whereby build-out rates are agreed between the council and developers and written into planning permissions.



# Redrow Placemaking Design Principles

Redrow has engaged their design and planning teams across the business in a series of placemaking workshops. The purpose of these workshops was to strengthen and further embed their placemaking design ethos.

The key outcome of the workshops was the proposal to establish a placemaking framework aligned around the following 6 principles:-

Placemaking principles	Application
1. <b>Listen</b> to learn	Connecting with local communities and stakeholders at an early stage to identify local concerns that may inform the development proposals.
2. <b>Places</b> to go and things to do	Creating locally tailored, interconnected community infrastructure, providing opportunities for people to interact and socialise.
3. <b>Dovetail</b> to fit	Working to value and design around what is important locally, dovetailing developments to sensitively fit into the area.
4. <b>Nature</b> for people	Creating new or enhancing existing wildlife habitats and better connecting people to them through the thoughtful design of public spaces.
5. <b>Streets</b> for life	Recognising the street as an essential part of creating safe, attractive and friendly places to live, where neighbours can meet each other.
6. <b>Easy</b> to get around	Creating new or improved connections between developments and the existing community by stitching streets and routes into the neighbourhood.

Further work is being done following the workshops, to refine these principles and weave them into a Group wide approach where they can be systematically applied on all future developments.

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## Community – Past, Present and Future

'Community' is a fluid concept. The features and amenities that go toward making a community today are not the same as those that existed 20 years ago and will not be the same as those that exist in 20 years' time. This means that homebuilders need to be cognisant of the changes society is undergoing, in terms of the way people choose to live their lives, changing demographics and pressures on various services and infrastructure.

As well as changing over time, communities consist of both physical and psychological aspects.

There is a physical aspect to a community in terms of living in close proximity to others and an element of sharing facilities and amenities. But there is also a psychological element, the social fabric, without which the community concept begins to crumble.

Creating a sense of pride in an area's inhabitants generates an attachment to a community and a drive to contribute to the local area both economically and socially. Communities not only benefit the individuals they serve but they also benefit wider society, given that our society is comprised of communities across the UK. Economic and social investment by the inhabitants of discrete communities are part of the wider patchwork which makes up the UK economy; the small building blocks come together to make a whole and healthy, thriving communities make for a healthy, thriving UK.

This means homebuilders must consider how physical features can be used to bring people together in a positive way, not only for the benefit of people and their communities but UK plc.

The fact is that the physical and physiological dimensions of community are inevitably intertwined.

“ This timely report provides valuable evidence about the importance of hearing and acting on people's views in designing places and building strong communities.

Its findings on what makes healthy and happy communities, what people want from them and its proposed Place Making Design Principles put people's wellbeing at the heart of the house building process.

We believe the process of asking and actively listening to people, rather than assuming what they want for where and how they live is vital.

We are therefore excited to see how Redrow will be putting their findings and recommendations into action to create the resilient communities of the future. ”

*Glenys Thornton*  
CEO, The Young Foundation

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## Past: The evolution of Garden Cities

The early twentieth century was one of the most turbulent and dynamic times in our country's history. With the number of people living in cities booming, modernity had firmly taken hold, but it left an important question unanswered of where to house the growing population – and how to better some of the unsanitary and cramped conditions people were living in.

The Garden City movement emerged from this conundrum.

In the Homeland Handbook on Letchworth and Hitchin in 1913 Ebenezer Howard wrote:



### **A Garden City is:**

**A city planned with a view to its being a healthy, beautiful and pleasant place in which to work, to play, and rest and to bring up families.**

**A city with a belt of open fields around it, so as to secure for all time the combined advantages of town and country life.**

**The houses in such a city must have good gardens, be not built too closely together, nor must there be overcrowding in the houses themselves.**



Health was a pervading principle in Howard's doctrine and the merging of the best parts of city and country life also featured heavily. 'Health' in the sense that Howard used the term was a countermeasure to the unhealthy conditions seen in cities, but of course today we now to take this in its broadest sense to also encompass well-being.

However, in the 1960s and 1970s a new utopian vision came to the fore and to tackle the housing shortage local authorities right across the UK constructed futuristic looking tower blocks. This emphasis on high-rise led to more homes being constructed than at any other time – 425,830 homes were built in 1968<sup>3</sup>.

The apartment blocks were often not of high quality and were sometimes worse than the slums they were intended to replace. In 1968 a gas explosion accident within Ronan Point, a newly constructed apartment block in London's East End, which killed four people, cast serious doubt on this movement in home creation.

Within the twentieth century there were changing views of what constituted the ideal community: as seen in the dichotomy between the Garden City movement and the utopian vision surrounding tower blocks. However health, in some form, has been an important element of the discourse around new communities since the 1848 Health Act which was triggered by Edwin Chadwick, the English social reformer, when he made the link between poverty and poor health.

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<sup>3</sup><http://www.nhbc.co.uk/NewsandComment/Documents/filedownload,59849,en.pdf>

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## Present:

### How the principles of Garden Cities endure today



Today there is a recognition that the communities we live in have a profound impact, not only on individual health, but individual well-being as a key aspect of this. The government has recently proposed 17 new garden towns and villages across the UK, in a firm nod to Howard's aspirational Garden City movement, which will incorporate crucial community infrastructure such as schools, GP's surgeries and transportation links, as well as green open spaces. At Redrow, we currently have four garden villages in various stages of being delivered and these developments are very well received by potential buyers who appreciate the mix of infrastructure, housing, greenery and amenities on offer.

Newly established community, Asquith Park in Sutton Courtenay in Oxfordshire, demonstrates how features and amenities within a community and design can have a profound impact on an individual's well-being and their sense of attachment to an area.



## Case study:

Dr Richard Law and Oksana Zhuravel, both in their late thirties, moved into a home in Asquith Park in Sutton Courtenay, Oxfordshire in February 2016. The family relocated from California for Richard's job and initially focused their property search on the features available in a particular home. Their initial check-list included a garage and a large enough kitchen for family time. 'Community' meant accessibility to the local preschool for now four year old son David.

However, the couple has since discovered a wider definition of community at Asquith Park.

Oksana said:

"Our home is certainly well-designed but it is by no means the biggest thing which contributes to our enjoyment of living here. It is the community that makes the home special. Asquith Park is a village within a village. We have really enjoyed making new friends and developing new relationships."

The streetscape, with several cul-de-sacs, allows children to play outside on their bikes safely and the couple also enjoy the easy walk to essential facilities such as the local pre-school. The interaction with neighbours enabled by these meeting places has brought Richard and Oksana closer to their neighbours.

Oksana said:

"If we take David out on the bike, we feel very comfortable knocking on a neighbour's door to ask if William, or whoever, would like to join us. The answer is inevitably 'yes', but usually not before we are invited in for a cup of tea.

The walk to nursery with David has provided an opportunity to meet other parents with young children, which has not only been good for Richard and I, but has allowed David to make new friends at a very important age. In this sense I would say that living at Asquith Park has enhanced our well-being as a family and we are also more active.

"When you have a young child it can be difficult to find time to integrate with the local community, but it has been really easy here. Richard and I have lived internationally and in the UK and I have never experienced this sense of community in England before now. We even have Whatsapp groups which have been set up by our neighbours to organise trips to the pub and jogging sessions."

**The family's top features that have contributed to creating the local community are:**

- The close proximity of the local preschool
- Everyone is new, so people are willing to get to know one another
- The ability of the children to play safely in the streets

The family describe how the community spirit has constantly evolved as more people have moved in to the homes and they believe when the local play park is completed there will be another key place for people to meet each other.

Social capital, which is loosely defined as the value obtained from social relations, underpins the family's sense of being part of a community which has been facilitated by the mindful design of Asquith Park.





**Key features and amenities available at Asquith Park:**

- The village is home to Sutton Courtenay Church of England Primary, just a few minutes' walk away
- There are local cricket, football and angling clubs
- Sutton Courtenay Village Hall hosts regular events and shows
- Sutton Courtenay has a post office, two local stores, pubs and a restaurant
- A play park and open space
- Nearby Didcot Parkway station offers journey times to London Paddington of around 40 minutes

**Contributing to the sustainability of Asquith Park is an investment of around £764,000 in the local community by Redrow. Beneficiaries include:**

- Schools and health care - £367,000
- Sports and games facilities - £87,000 (including £30,000 toward a sports hall and just over £23,000 for swimming)
- Public art - £17,000
- Libraries, a museum resource centre, highways and policing will also receive contributions



## What is Redrow's current strategy for community creation?

"It can be very difficult to articulate or pinpoint what gives an area a 'community -feel'. This essence is what we are trying to articulate through our framework of placemaking principles, with the intention to further embed our placemaking ethos right across the business."

In 2016 Redrow committed £142 million to funding improvements to communities local to its developments, representing an 11% increase over the past year.

"When we create new communities some of the top features we are currently integrating include good access to key local amenities, the ability to walk to schools, shops and social meeting places, such as pubs. This not only comes from picking a suitable location for a development in the first place but also adding infrastructure to create easily walkable communities. Open spaces including recreation grounds and parks are also crucial and there is an increased awareness of the need to be fit and active to safeguard both future physical and mental health.

Twenty years ago homebuilders tended to think about green areas last, but now these are the very first and central consideration on an upcoming development.

As an industry we are also now thinking about how to encourage community integration. New people need to feel welcome for a community to continue to grow, so we are helping residents at new housing developments in small ways that we are told are really helpful, such as setting up WhatsApp groups for social gatherings, like jogging or trips to the pub, and welcome packs which inform people about the facilities available to them in the locality. By being made to feel welcome and facilitating social interaction people can start the process of social attachment.

"The way we work is changing with people increasingly needing, and preferring, to work remotely outside of the traditional office. Working at home requires high quality digital infrastructure to be in place and we are finding the integration of high-speed broadband into new communities is becoming increasingly important."

**Rob Macdiarmid**  
Group Sustainability Director at Redrow

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## Regeneration

Building new communities is not always the answer to the UK's housing supply problem. Swathes of already developed parcels of land exist which are ripe for regeneration and improvement. Given the UK is a small island and our need to protect the green belt, solutions which utilise land in the most efficient manner need to be part and parcel of our housing planning strategy.

Regeneration ensures that the infrastructure which supports thriving communities is fit for purpose and future-proofed for generations to come.

For this reason, identifying the triggers that point towards a need for regeneration are crucial. At present, no set criteria exists to identify an area in need of being improved. It is difficult to be too prescriptive in outlining criteria; a regeneration project could involve updating a community playground with the latest equipment; making a civic space fit for public use again or, at the other end of the spectrum, the large scale revamp of a mixed use area including commercial units, retail and homes.

No project is too big or too small and a small regenerative change can have a significant impact on a wider area - one improvement can pave the way for a ripple effect of benefits and inward investment.

There are two clear factors which, if absent from an area, signal that it is ripe for regeneration. These are:

- 1) Safety of the users
- 2) Enjoyment of the area by the users

If people do not feel safe and / or do not enjoy being in an area they will lack an emotional attachment to it and lack the desire to invest socially and economically.

The Government has indicated that they believe that:

"It is for local people, not central Government, to identify which areas need regeneration, define what it should look like, and what measures should be used to drive it."<sup>4</sup>

This is correct; knowledge of whether an area is no longer safe and is no longer enjoyed by residents can only be discovered through community consultation.

Mixed use areas are most successful when they lend themselves to 24 hour / seven day a week operation and the people in the area utilise different parts of the area at different times to fulfil the need for work, rest and play. For example a mixed use area providing office spaces, retail units and homes provides places for local people to work and buy goods, which in turn benefits business and pumps money back into the local economy.

The Olympic Park site at Stratford in London is a prime example as it provides both homes and state of the art sporting and leisure facilities, alongside a comprehensive retail mix for residents to enjoy.

Regeneration is an unavoidably fluid concept, but by being able to identify when an area needs regenerating, and what success looks like, we can ensure that established areas of the UK are changed and updated.

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<sup>4</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/5983/2064899.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/5983/2064899.pdf)

## Regeneration areas – how can we define them?



Bringing underutilised land or buildings back into viable use in a way that benefits the local community, stimulating investment and jobs. ”

Giles Martin, Planning Director,  
Redrow, London division

Giles feels that the criteria which define success when communities are regenerated include:

- The physical: increased footfall and traffic to a local area with users frequenting the regenerated area for its intended use.
- The psychological: Success in this case means delivering a place which individuals enjoy spending time and in which they feel safe.
- The commercial: This improvement could be achieved in any number of ways including increased local spend, attracting new improved retail and business to the area and attracting private investment to the area.
- Community: Stimulate the delivery of new homes to expand and grow the local population.

According to Raconteur there are around 200 regeneration projects ongoing in the UK to the value of £123 billion. As a result there are plenty of examples which together highlight the variety of projects which can constitute a regeneration and a number of best practice case studies which are generating stellar results for local communities.

For example regeneration at the Brunswick Estate in Manchester has breathed new life into local homes, as well as delivering hundreds of additional residential properties, with supporting community infrastructure. The work being undertaken at the Green Man Lane Estate in Ealing, London, is rejuvenating the community with new homes alongside an improved and enlarged primary school.

Our own work at Colindale Gardens in North London is a £1 billion community project which will provide 2,900 homes for more than 6,000 people, while the Olympic Park Site at Stratford is a continuation of the Olympic legacy in the form of a vibrant community.

For more information on these regeneration projects, and what the aims and ambitions are, please see Appendix 2.

## Future: How will communities change going forward?

The three factors that will have the greatest impact on the way we live our lives and the subsequent design of our homes over the next 20 years are as follows:

**The way we live and work:** increasingly online and digital leading to increased numbers of community based shared work spaces

As greater pressure is exerted on the country's transportation network due to population growth, there will be increasing demand for people to be able to work remotely and from home and this requires world class digital infrastructure to be in place at all new communities. As a country we have a poor track record at a global level of achieving excellent levels of broadband coverage. This will not only require improvements at a national level but efforts from the homebuilding industry to partner with broadband providers on provision for new communities at the earliest possible opportunity. The popularity of communal working spaces within new communities will increase in response to the societal shift toward the family unit continuing two working parents – nearly one in three UK families now have two full time working parents.<sup>14</sup>

**Health and well-being:** greater emphasis on sport and recreation

People are also becoming more educated on the benefits of undertaking exercise and being active, which means that these factors need to be incorporated into the places where they live. Walkable communities with walkways linking key amenities to homes are a significant part of promoting this and integrating health into everyday life and having amenities within walking distance will also help alleviate the need to use cars as often.

The Government's move towards Garden Villages fits perfectly with this move towards well-being with parks, running tracks, allotments and communal spaces which are designed to benefit the lives of residents being central to this type of development.

**Ageing population:** a need for more supported living

The UK is currently faced with the challenge of an ageing population<sup>15</sup>. Between 2015 and 2020, over a period when the general population is expected to rise 3%, the numbers aged over 65 are expected to increase by 12%. This clearly presents a challenge for the NHS, but it also represents a challenge for homebuilders who will need to think about how to integrate more assisted living facilities into communities. It is telling that in the consumer survey, three of the top 10 features that people find important in terms of creating a community are healthcare focused – this emphasis will become greater over the next 20 years.

The maintenance free lock up and go nature of new build homes lend themselves perfectly to this demographic but a greater focus towards services and amenities to support an aging population will need to be considered as standard in coming years.



<sup>14</sup> <http://www.natcen.ac.uk/news-media/press-releases/2016/march/uk-parents-no-longer-work-the-longest-hours-in-eu/>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/research/key-issues-parliament-2015/social-change/ageing-population/>

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## Summary and recommendations

“Our recommendations are a blueprint for government and the homebuilding industry to follow when delivering the bricks and mortar which form our new communities. It is an important task that starts with building beautiful homes that people feel proud of, but there is an opportunity to go further and really help people to develop a sense of social connection, and eventually, attachment to an area. The key to this is placemaking: focusing on the supporting infrastructure and amenities that link together a collection of homes in the same geographic location.

It’s also about creating an environment and developing the tools to welcome new people to a community. Forward thinking homebuilders are in an ideal position to take the process to the next level, working with local authorities and gathering evidence on what works from current and past communities.”

**John Tutte,**  
Group Chief Executive, Redrow

### Give the community choice

1. Identify and work with people who have a strong sense of citizenship and desire to improve and regenerate their communities. These people can provide leadership and imagination which can galvanise the community to collectively work towards achieving positive social, economic and environmental outcomes.

### Set local social value goals and report on progress

2. Local government should set specific social value objectives and work with homebuilders to establish processes for their achievement. Mechanisms should be established to measure and report on the progress being made towards achieving these objectives.

3. Homebuilders should collaborate with industry bodies like the HBF to create a social value calculator that can be used to measure and report on the agreed social value goals, performance and outcomes (Example - <http://socialvaluebank.org>)

4. We should look to develop an industry wide approach to structuring and undertaking post occupancy evaluation studies. These studies should be more consistently used to better understand the social value outcomes being achieved.

### Create attractive, social and healthy places to live

5. The planning system needs to be reformed to promote transparency, brings sites to market more quickly and to enable much needed communities to prosper and grow.

6. Pride in place begins with building beautiful homes and creating attractive street scenes.

7. Interconnect homes with places and spaces where people and families can play, exercise, interact with nature and socialise.

### Welcome and orientate new people to the community

8. Make people feel welcome by providing guidance and support when they move into their new homes so that they appreciate all that the community has to offer. This could include the use of social media platforms such as Facebook, Nextdoor.com and WhatsApp.

9. Social interaction is important in the context of feeling attached to a place. We should look to establish a process where community events can be run on a regular basis. These events, supported by local businesses and charity groups, would serve to strengthen community cohesion and wellbeing.

### Collaborate to achieve cohesion

10. Placekeeping is just as important as Placemaking. Partnerships and collaborative relationships should be developed so communal places and facilities can continue to be enjoyed now and in the future.

## Appendix 1: Redrow consumer survey outcomes

Broad facility / amenity types ranked by proportion of people who ranked them as 'important' for creating a sustainable community.

### Recreational facilities

Facility	Importance		
	National	City/Town	Hamlet/Village
Open space or recreation ground	97.6%	97.7%	97.4%
Park/village green	94.7%	94.8%	94.6%
Running track/foot or bridal paths	75.1%	73.6%	77.9%
Local authority gym	71%	73.4%	66.2%
Swimming pool (communal)	69.2%	73%	61.3%
Allotments	57.1%	55.8%	59.5%
Tennis courts	43.8%	45.6%	39.9%
Golf course (public)	27.2%	27.5%	26.4%

### Social spaces

Facility	Importance		
	National	City/Town	Hamlet/Village
Coffee Shops/tea rooms	91.3%	92.6%	88.6%
Restaurants	90.1%	91.9%	86.3%
Village/Town hall	85.6%	83.7%	89.4%
Pubs/bars	81.1%	80.3%	82.9%
Church (or equivalent) hall	70.3%	68.8%	73.4%
Clubs (e.g. a book club)	64.5%	63.1%	67.4%
Facebook group	33%	32.1%	34.7%

### Local Amenities

Facility	Importance		
	National	City/Town	Hamlet/Village
High-speed broadband	98.1%	97.9%	98.3%
Local shops (butcher, fishmonger etc.)	97.2%	97.7%	96.2%
Post office	94.2%	94.4%	93.8%
Cinema	60.7%	66.2%	49.7%
Theatre	53.1%	56.6%	46%

## Transport

Facility	Importance		
	National	City/Town	Hamlet/Village
Bus routes	95.7%	96.6%	93.9%
Local taxi service	88.2%	89.1%	86.4%
Train station (close proximity)	83.8%	86.7%	78%
Community car (for hospital visits etc)	75.7%	75.8%	75.6%
Tube/metro	45%	50.5%	33.5%

## Health Facilities

Facility	Importance		
	National	City/Town	Hamlet/Village
Doctor's surgery	99.5%	99.4%	99.9%
Hospital (with A&E)	95.1%	95.3%	94.7%
Health visitor / district nurse	90.3%	90.5%	89.9%
Cottage hospital (minor injuries)	79.8%	80.8%	77.5%
Care home	73.4%	75.5%	69.7%

## Education

Facility	Importance		
	National	City/Town	Hamlet/Village
Primary school	90.3%	91.2%	89.7%
Nursery	83.6%	84.7%	81.3%
Academy (comprehensive)	83.3%	83.5%	83%
Grammar School	67.5%	68%	66.7%
University/vocational training college	60.5%	63%	55.6%
Independent school (prep/public school)	47.3%	48%	45.8%



## Appendix 2: Industry best practice regeneration examples

### Brunswick Estate (Manchester)

#### Initial Challenges/Goals:

- Building work began in 2014 on a £113 million regeneration project (proposed and funded by the S4B Consortium) in Brunswick, one of Manchester's most-deprived inner city areas. The regeneration proposals for the area included 500 new homes, the refurbishment of 650 council homes, a retail area and new road layouts.<sup>5</sup>

#### What has been delivered so far?

- The iconic Lockton Court (at the heart of the Brunswick estate) has been transformed with 65 of the tower block's homes converted or refurbished with new kitchens, bathrooms, windows and balconies installed. The complex has also benefited from refurbished lifts, car parks and communal areas. Similar improvements to the other tower blocks (Lamport Court, Silkin Court and Artillery Court) are due for completion by the end of 2017.
- Refurbishment of 448 other homes, with installations ranging from new bathrooms and kitchens to heating, windows and external doors.
- 66 new properties built for sale and 68 for rent.
- Construction of a brand new, multi-use games area in Gartside Gardens and a purpose-built play area for the under-10s at Glenbarry Close.
- Rehomed 250 households, the majority of which chose to stay living in Brunswick.
- Ensured Brunswick residents are over £109,000 better off thanks to financial advice.
- Supported 146 local people into work and 55 people into trainee roles.

#### What is to come?

- By January 2020, 200 new-build homes for rent will be complete. By April 2023, 300 new-build homes for sale will also have been completed. The new homes will help to deliver Manchester's residential growth strategy, providing much-needed quality housing in the city.
- Alongside property development and refurbishment, the regeneration plans also include new road links, a new community allotment area with orchard, new local shops and amenities as well as a new neighbourhood office.



<sup>5</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-20933318>

<sup>6</sup> <http://s4bmanchester.co.uk/2016/01/transformation-of-brunswick-estate-celebrates-two-year-milestone/>

# Green Man Lane Estate (Ealing, London)

## Initial Challenges/Goals:

This £155 million project is to regenerate the Green Man Lane estate in Ealing, creating a vibrant new community.

The existing local authority housing estate, comprising 464 flats, is being demolished to make way for 770 new homes. Over 400 of these will provide affordable rent and shared ownership homes.<sup>7</sup>

In addition to residential accommodation, the regeneration plans include:

- A multi-use games area
- Community facilities including a café and arts centre
- CCTV coverage to monitor the public areas on the estate
- Facilities for young people and children's play spaces.
- On-street parking
- A quiet block for residents aged over 55 with outside spaces
- A community link with landscaped squares, courtyards and allotments
- A new, improved and enlarged primary school for 630 pupils

## What has been delivered so far?

Green Man Lane's regeneration is being delivered in four phases over a nine-year period with a programme of phased decant, demolition and construction undertaken ensuring the majority of residents can remain within their neighbourhood throughout the redevelopment process.

- Phase 1: The demolition of the existing six-storey pre-stressed concrete car park and the construction of 176 houses and apartments for affordable rent, shared ownership and private sale. This was completed in 2014.
- Phase 2: Due for completion in 2017, 187 new homes are currently under construction with 126 for private sale and 61 affordable homes, including over 20 homes for wheelchair users.
- Phase 3-4: Construction work on the rest of the developments/refurbishments is expected to commence in 2016 with project completion anticipated for 2022.

## What is to come?

- Alongside the continued residential development, Ealing council have approved plans to completely rebuild St. John's Primary School with completion expected in time for the start of the 2017/2018 academic year.<sup>8</sup>



Image courtesy of Rydon  
rydon.co.uk

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.rydon.co.uk/what-we-do/regeneration/case-studies/regeneration-case-studies/green-man-lane>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.24housing.co.uk/news/green-light-for-new-school-at-west-ealings-155m-green-man-lane-regeneration/>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.getwestlondon.co.uk/news/local-news/celebrations-mark-major-milestone-155m-7987895>

# Olympic Park Site (Stratford, London)

## Initial Challenges/Goals:

The East London boroughs that were chosen to host London's Olympic Games contained some of London's most deprived neighbourhoods and communities. Alongside the sports programme, an inspirational and transformational programme was announced for the direct benefit of everyone who lives there.

The programme of change centred on Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, promising new homes and jobs, attractive parkland, world-class sporting facilities (including a Premier League stadium), a thriving business community, a dazzling new arts centre and a forward-looking education and innovation presence.<sup>10</sup> In addition to the Olympic Park, the development of Westfield Stratford City has been key to the area's changing fortune.

## What has been delivered so far?

- The conversion of the Athletes' Village into East Village, a development that was converted for sales/lettings with 49% affordable housing. This new development in total created 2,818 new homes, including 1,379 affordable homes, for sale and rent. The wider community has been filled with gardens, parks and communal areas, within which there is a school, a health clinic and shops.<sup>11</sup>
- The Park has seen more than 4 million visits since July 2013. The Park covers 560 acres, has 6.5km of waterways, 15 acres of woods, hedgerow and wildlife habitat and 4,300 new trees.
- The sporting facilities have been successfully converted for public use and West Ham United Football Club making the Olympic Stadium its home.
- The opening of Westfield Stratford City as a retail destination was pivotal for the area with more than 250 shops and 65 restaurants.

## What is to come?

- Alongside further residential developments, work on the Cultural and Education district is still to come, positioned around the iconic Stadium, ArcelorMittal Orbit and London Aquatics Centre. A number of world-class institutions have already made plans to set up a permanent presence on these two sites. UCL East will be the site of a new university campus for University College London (UCL), while Stratford Waterfront features a new campus for the University of the Arts London, along with major new spaces for the Victoria and Albert Museum and Sadler's Wells.<sup>12</sup>



<sup>10</sup> <http://www.queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk/our-story/the-legacy-corporation/our-committees/regeneration-and-communities-committee>

<sup>11</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East\\_Village,\\_London#Planning\\_and\\_construction](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East_Village,_London#Planning_and_construction)

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk/the-park/attractions/cultural-and-education-district>

# Colindale Gardens (London)

## Initial Challenges/Goals:

Colindale Gardens in London, W9, is a 48 acre site formerly owned by the Metropolitan Police. This £1 billion community project will take 12 years to complete (preparatory works began in January 2016 and construction commenced in March 2016) and eventually more than 6,000 people will live at Colindale, part of a wider regeneration area that includes an upgrade to Colindale Underground station.

Used by the Metropolitan Police for around 80 years, the site was previously inaccessible and has always been closed off to the public. By opening up the site, transforming it into a new neighbourhood and connecting it to the rest of Colindale, the aim is to unite the area as a thriving and growing part of London.

## What has been delivered so far?

The first legal completions of homes are expected in January 2018. Strong sales have been achieved since the Colindale Gardens sales launch.

## What's to come?

In addition to the 2,900 new homes planned for the development, across 24 blocks of apartments and

townhouses with a residents' gym and concierge service, there will be 100,000 sq. ft. of commercial and retail space.

Around £143 million of community benefits are being provided as a result of the development. These include 580 social housing apartments, a primary school, a health centre, a new neighbourhood centre, a nursery, investment in transport improvements, nine acres of public open space and community financial contributions.

Colindale Gardens will benefit from a range of outside spaces including walkways, cycle paths, large open green spaces and the central four acre park – effectively a modern village green for the new community.

Colindale is served by the Northern line of the London Underground in Zone 4 and, as such, benefits from the Night Tube – so the area has real potential to become a hotspot for first-time buyers and young professionals. Many of the homes at Colindale Gardens will be available under the Government's Help to Buy scheme.

## What's to come?

The first legal completions of homes are expected in January 2018. Strong sales have been achieved since the Colindale Gardens sales launch.



<sup>10</sup> <http://www.queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk/our-story/the-legacy-corporation/our-committees/regeneration-and-communities-committee>

<sup>11</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East\\_Village,\\_London#Planning\\_and\\_construction](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East_Village,_London#Planning_and_construction)

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk/the-park/attractions/cultural-and-education-district>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/east-village-opens-doors-and-says-welcome-home>



Redrow was established in 1974. Today, it is one of the most successful and acclaimed property developers in the UK, building around 5,000 premium quality family homes a year in prime locations across England and Wales. Over Redrow's history spanning more than 40 years, it has earned a unique reputation for quality and building beautiful homes, which people love to live in. To help achieve this it also focusses on two other key areas: valuing people and creating outstanding locations

Implementing its strategy whilst engaging with colleagues and stakeholders helps Redrow deliver significant value to investors and the wider community. Redrow is listed on the London Stock Exchange and is a constituent of the FTSE 250 index. For the year ended 30th June 2016, the Group reported record revenues of £1.38 billion. Redrow has been awarded the 'Best Large Housebuilder' title twice in the last three years at the What House? Awards. This year, Redrow was named as a UK Top 100 Apprenticeship Employer for the fourth consecutive year.

Visit [redrow.co.uk](http://redrow.co.uk) for more details.

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