

Ensuring residents can walk, wheel and cycle to schools, healthcare facilities, workplaces and transport hubs requires collaboration with local authorities, infrastructure providers and community organisations. Great place-making is holistic: it interlinks homes, amenities and mobility into a single cohesive ecosystem.

Everyday access to greenery – whether through tree-lined streets, pocket parks, private balconies, or views of rivers and canals – can deliver mental and physical health benefits. Successful schemes weave nature throughout the built environment, treating it not as an optional extra but as an essential feature of urban living.

Designing health into the public realm must remain a priority. The long-term payoffs to communities and the NHS are immense.

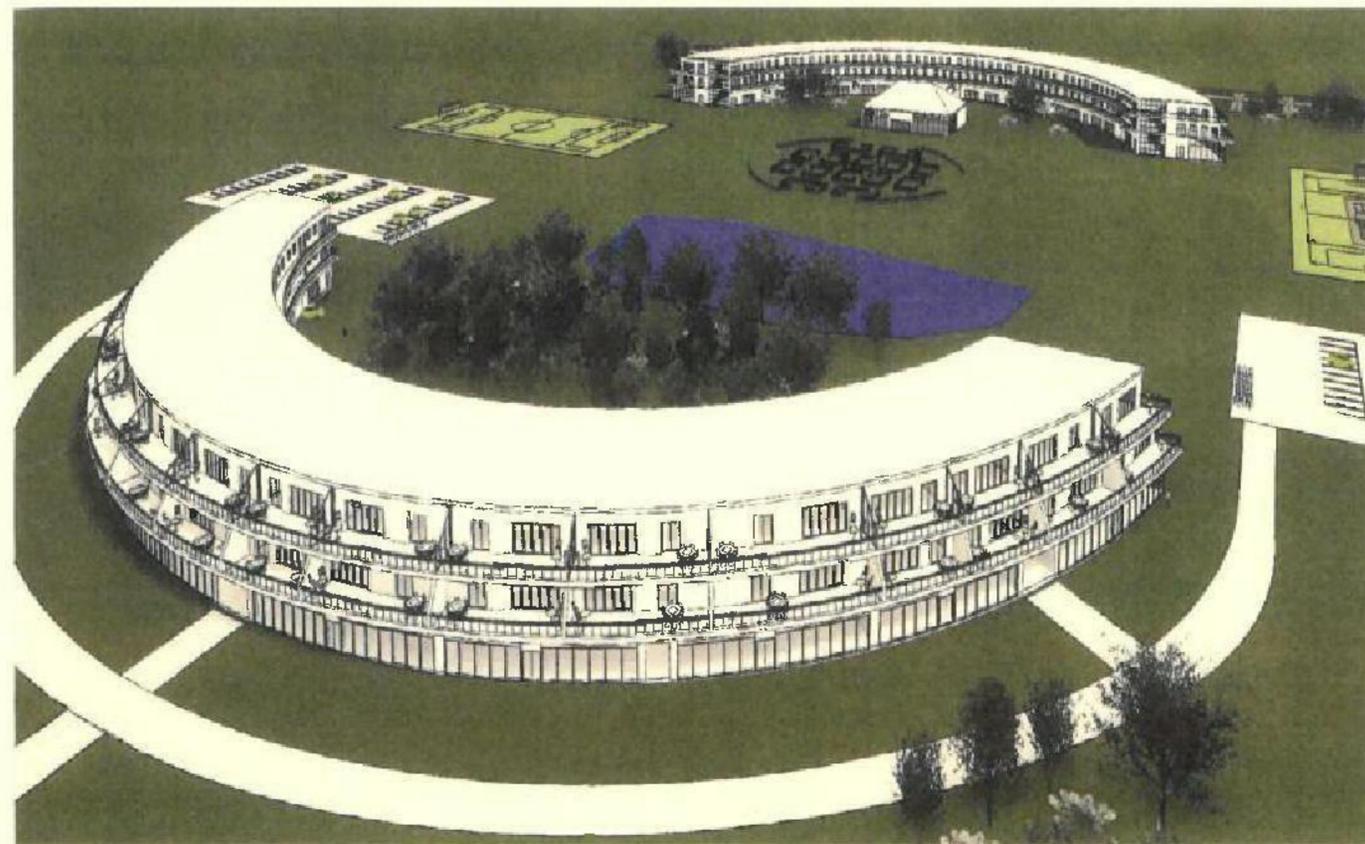
If green spaces feel unsafe, they will go unused, particularly by women, older adults and those with mobility challenges. Developers can address this by creating environments that feel welcoming and secure.



**More information on *Unity on the Community* and *Housing & Traveller Strategy* can be found at:
www.landandleisurecoop.uk**

**More information on how we can live sustainably can be found at *Think Global, Live Local* at:
www.theplanetandpeoplecoalition.co.uk**

Build Communities, not just housing estates.



I would suggest creating Community Land Trust for all new developments.

- A trust can build homes much cheaper and offer the land owner a good deal.
- The deal could be that each home nets the land owner £5,000 per home built plus ground rent of £200 per home, per annum.
- Local Councils should be finding suitable sites and inviting developers to tender for building what is needed, rather than developers submitting applications for what they want to sell.
- Currently building land can cost up to £500,000 an acre. Clearly this is far too high for low cost housing - it should be limited to £100,000 an acre.



A design as per page 1 could be build 4 or 5 floors high on new developments, housing a large number of families in one community.

New developments need to include vertical growing areas for fresh vegetables to feed the residents, utilising rainwater harvesting for their irrigation. Solar panels would help power to run the building. There should be recreation areas, sports areas and natural habitats for protecting wildlife.

This style of development encourages intergenerational living, increasing everyone's health and well-being, which in turn reduces mental health issues, obesity and diabetes. A child care facility along with an elderly care setting should be within the complex to encourage a reduction in travel needs for already busy lifestyles.

There should also be office space for suitable businesses and light industry units close to the homes but far enough away so as not to become too noisy, and saving traffic congestion.

The Government believes the way forward is more people renting homes, but, rents never end. When those paying rents retire, their pensions won't cover the rents, especially private rents. The state will be paying out billions in housing benefits. One should not have to pay a mortgage or rent after one becomes pensionable age, and that should not be beyond 66 years.

Developers have a lot to answer for regarding the issues we are now experiencing.

I would recommend cap development land equivalent to 100 years from farming each acre of land. Build homes as in the style above, using British steel as a frame off ground to save flooding, with module homes they could be sold at cost, while only being sold back to the Community Land Trust, not onto the market.

Much of our aging populations loneliness and the younger generation's antisocial behavior stems from poor housing estate design and lack of affordability.

Young people coming out of Care, often become homeless. New developments should include a place where children in the care system could be housed and brought up in family environments/assisted living

until they become adults, rather than being bounced around several different foster homes. This saves moving several times and becoming a generation of people who have no one as a real guardian. These young people would become better adults, having a sense of belonging.

The Government's 10-Year Health Plan released earlier this summer sets out an ambitious vision to bring care closer to local communities. It promises a network of integrated neighbourhood services to create an NHS fit for the future. But updating healthcare facilities alone isn't enough - a holistic approach to health must involve the private as well as the public sector.

Thoughtful housing design at an early stage can shape places that nurture health, strengthen social connection and reduce pressure on the NHS, argues Chris Scott

Chris Scott is Development Director & ESG Lead, Southern Team at Muse Developments.

Chris Scott is reported to have written:

Developers have their role to play and must now rise to the challenge of designing housing that actively promotes health and wellbeing.

Our homes are where we spend the vast majority of our time, shaping how we live, work and travel. In doing so, they profoundly influence our health. When designed thoughtfully, new homes can encourage healthier lifestyles and release pressure on the NHS. For developers, two of the biggest opportunities lie in better connectivity and access to safe, welcoming green spaces.

Health driven infrastructure

Physical inactivity costs the NHS an estimated £900 million every year. The most forward-thinking developers are already placing health at the centre of place-making, starting with infrastructure. Well-connected sites with high-quality walking and cycling routes enable seamless active travel, helping residents weave healthy habits into daily life. Providing supporting infrastructure can also boost property values and streamline the planning process, with policy frameworks favouring well-connected, sustainable sites.

Developers must look beyond their red-line boundaries. The health of a place is shaped as much by its connections to surrounding infrastructure as by what lies within its footprint.