

# understanding garden villages

## an introductory guide





**tcpa**

### **Understanding Garden Villages: An Introductory Guide**

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**The Lady Margaret  
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The views expressed in this document are based on policy analysis, case studies and information gathered on a TCPA study tour in 2017.

Cover photograph: Shops at Bournville

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# Introduction



In recent years there has been a renewed interest in the idea of the Garden City, and how the principles that underpin that idea (set out in Box 1 on the next page) can be used to inform the delivery of new communities today. When planning for the supply of new homes local authorities are required by national policy<sup>1</sup> to consider the Garden City approach, and many local authorities, developers and housing associations are exploring opportunities to address housing and growth needs through new communities at a range of scales. The TCPA has produced a suite of guidance documents on planning for, designing, and delivering new communities at a range of scales.<sup>2</sup> These documents should be read alongside this guide.

The Garden City approach provides an opportunity to create innovative, resilient and inclusive places that will stand the test of time. Planning at scale offers the chance to think holistically about how a place will work, and to understand what mechanisms need to be put in place to help turn an ambitious vision into a real place. The term ‘Garden City’ carries with it not just an opportunity but also a responsibility to create exemplar world-class new communities.

## Why garden villages?

In January 2017 the government announced its support for 14 new ‘garden villages’ – new communities of 1,500-10,000 homes which meet criteria set out in the 2016 *Locally-Led Garden Villages, Towns and Cities* prospectus.<sup>3</sup> These projects are to be supported alongside ten larger ‘garden towns’.

Like the idea of the Garden City, the garden village concept is not new. Garden villages form an important part of Britain’s urban development history, and have been used to describe a

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1 *National Planning Policy Framework*. Department for Communities and Local Government, Mar. 2012, para. 52. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

2 The TCPA’s suite of guidance and research on delivering new communities following Garden City principles is available from the TCPA website, at <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/Pages/Category/garden-cities>

3 *Locally-Led Garden Villages, Towns and Cities*. Department for Communities and Local Government, Mar. 2016. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/locally-led-garden-villages-towns-and-cities>

range of smaller new communities built in various forms in a period stretching from the Industrial Revolution to beyond the creation of the second and last Garden City at Welwyn in the 1920s. Many places that may be called the 'original garden villages' still thrive today, and provide an important source of learning for the development of new garden villages.

The original garden villages were based on a strong foundation of industry and employment, with their developers seeking to create well designed, healthy places and affordable homes. Garden villages built today should apply the same principles, but in a 21st century context, to create vibrant, diverse and affordable communities. Without providing the right employment, community facilities and range of housing, new garden villages risk becoming dormitory commuter suburbs – the antithesis of the Garden City idea.

## The purpose of this publication

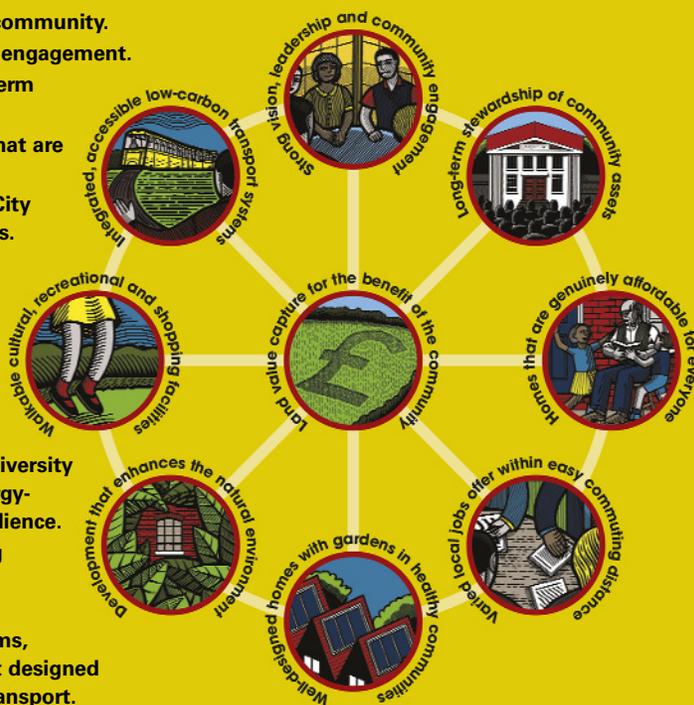
*Understanding Garden Villages* highlights the key characteristics of historical 'model' and garden villages, to help inform the design and delivery of new garden villages today. It is designed to provide inspiration for the planning, design and long-term management of new places, and to help local authorities and private sector delivery partners to understand what makes a successful garden village and what distinguishes it from a larger new community.

### Box 1

## The Garden City principles

A Garden City is a holistically planned new settlement that enhances the natural environment and offers high-quality affordable housing and locally accessible work in beautiful, healthy and sociable communities. The Garden City principles are an indivisible and interlocking framework for delivery, and include:

- Land value capture for the benefit of the community.
- Strong vision, leadership and community engagement.
- Community ownership of land and long-term stewardship of assets.
- Mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are genuinely affordable.
- A wide range of local jobs in the Garden City within easy commuting distance of homes.
- Beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with gardens, combining the best of town and country to create healthy communities, and including opportunities to grow food.
- Development that enhances the natural environment, providing a comprehensive green infrastructure network and net biodiversity gains, and that uses zero-carbon and energy-positive technology to ensure climate resilience.
- Strong cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable, vibrant, sociable neighbourhoods.
- Integrated and accessible transport systems, with walking, cycling and public transport designed to be the most attractive forms of local transport.



Further information and an extensive set of policy and practical resources on Garden Cities can be found at <http://www.tcpa.org.uk/Pages/Category/garden-cities>



# What is a garden village?

Like the term 'Garden City', defining the term 'garden village' is complex because it has been used over time to describe many developments which, to varying degrees, aspire to the principles of Garden Cities,<sup>4</sup> albeit at a smaller scale.

## Britain's heritage of model and garden villages

Britain has a long history of smaller planned communities which may be associated with the term 'garden village'. Emerging from a long-standing utopian tradition,<sup>5</sup> the earliest significantly relevant examples are the 'model villages' developed by philanthropic industrialists and social reformers in the 19th century, when the rapid expansion of Britain's towns and cities caused severe housing, health and social problems.

Enlightened employers such as Robert Owen (who managed New Lanark from 1800), Titus Salt (who founded Saltaire in 1851), George Cadbury (who founded Bournville in 1879), the Lever brothers (who founded Port Sunlight in 1888) and Joseph Rowntree (who developed New Earswick from 1902) built carefully planned new villages, providing homes for not only their workers, but also for poverty-stricken families in nearby towns and cities. These developments were all small, self-contained new communities that were linked to, but separate

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4 The Garden City principles are a distillation of the key elements that have made the Garden City model of development so successful, articulated for a 21st century context. Taken together, the principles form an indivisible and interlocking framework for the delivery of high-quality places – see <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/garden-city-principles>

5 For a comprehensive history of utopian villages, see G Darley: *Villages of Vision: A Study of Strange Utopias*. Architectural Press, 1975 (reprinted in 2007 by Five Leaves Publications)

from, a larger town or city – New Lanark was near Glasgow, Port Sunlight near Liverpool, Bournville near Birmingham, and New Earswick near York. The developers of these model villages aimed to alleviate poverty through the provision of good-quality housing, access to green space and fresh air, and the provision of community activities and facilities. Some also recognised the commercial benefits of a happier, healthier workforce. At New Earswick and Bournville, the Joseph Rowntree Trust and Bournville Village Trust, respectively, were formed to manage the land and homes and invest in the community development of the villages.

These social reformers had an important influence on Ebenezer Howard and his book *To-Morrow – A Peaceful Path to Real Reform*,<sup>6</sup> published in 1898, which presented the Garden City model, drawing on some of the ideas underpinning the industrial model villages but envisaging a much more radical approach and a much more ambitious scale. Not only did the approach of these social reformers to delivery and management influence the Garden Cities, but their designers did too. Garden City pioneers Barry Parker and Raymond Unwin went directly from designing New Earswick in 1902 to the masterplanning the first Garden City at Letchworth in 1903.

Howard's book had a rapid, direct and profound impact on urban development. Not only did the Garden City Association (founded to promote Howard's ideas) begin the development at Letchworth Garden City just four years after *To-Morrow's* publication, but countless developments across the world were created that borrowed from the Garden City ideals. By the end of the First World War, when work on the the second Garden City at Welwyn was about to begin, some of the Garden City pioneers were arguing for 'garden suburbs' – smaller developments, directly linked to larger towns, which applied the Garden City principles. The idea had been explored in several places, notably the co-partnership suburb at Brentham in Ealing in 1901<sup>7</sup> and by Henrietta Barnett at Hampstead in 1906,<sup>8</sup> for whom Raymond Unwin designed Hampstead Garden Suburb. But despite these projects, the garden suburb idea alarmed some Garden City purists, who felt that there needed to be a minimum size to meet key principles such as long-term stewardship and local employment. Meanwhile, the Housing, Town Planning, &c. Act 1919 introduced the first wave of council housebuilding in Britain, with many sprawling estates being given the name 'garden'. This was accompanied by a wave of private sector developers promoting small housing developments across the country that adopted the term due to its popularity, with developments of all shapes and sizes termed 'garden villages' or 'garden suburbs', whether or not they applied the principles on which the Garden City movement was founded. The majority of these developments were suburbs or extensions to existing towns or cities.

In the 1990s, the Urban Villages Forum promoted the idea of 'urban villages',<sup>9</sup> highlighted earlier in the 1980s by Leon Krier, as a mean to renew Britain's existing towns and cities. This movement drew on the village characteristics of 'security, sociability and economic purpose', to promote the renewal of towns and cities through the creation of thriving and attractive urban districts. More recently, terms such as 'sustainable urban neighbourhoods'<sup>10</sup> have been used to describe new communities. These terms describe smaller new communities, which are usually within or extensions to existing settlements. They are different from larger-scale new communities such as New Towns, eco-towns and Garden Cities, which have a parallel but distinctive history of their own.

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6 E Howard: *To-Morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform*. Swann Sonnenschein, 1898. Reprinted (with commentary by Peter Hall, Dennis Hardy and Colin Ward) by Routledge, 2003

7 For further information on Brentham, see the Brentham Garden Suburb website, at <https://brentham.com/brentham-garden-suburb/history/>

8 For further information on Hampstead see the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust website, at <http://www.hgstrust.org/the-suburb/history-of-the-suburb.shtml>

9 P Neal (Ed.): *Urban Villages and the Making of Communities*. Taylor & Francis, 2003

10 *Sustainable Urban Neighbourhoods*. Sustainable Urban Neighbourhoods Network, for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Jun. 2011. <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/sustainable-urban-neighbourhoods>



## Bournville

***Founded: 1879, by George Cadbury***

***Location: South-West Birmingham***

***Current population: 25,462***

Greatly influenced by his Quaker beliefs, George Cadbury had a deep-seated social concern for the way that people were forced to live in the overcrowded back streets of Birmingham. Conditions were so poor that healthy living was almost impossible, and at the end of the 19th century life expectancy was about 40 years. He and his older brother, Richard, had made a success of their father's chocolate business, moving from Birmingham city centre to its present site (which was then in the country) in 1879. The area around the new 'factory in a garden' was named Bournville. 'Bourn' was the name of the local stream, and 'ville' was apt because of the French rivalry in chocolate-making at the time.

Richard never lived to see Bournville fully develop as he died from diphtheria in 1899. This was to have a profound effect on George, leading him to create Bournville Village Trust (BVT) on 14 December 1900, with a gift that included 313 houses on 330 acres of land. The Trust deed was a far-sighted document, setting out the objectives of the founder, but allowing today's trustees effective control of the village.

George Cadbury's vision was of a mixed community: Bournville was conceived for people from a wide range of backgrounds, not only for the workers at the chocolate factory. Today, the Bournville estate, situated four miles south-west of Birmingham, covers over 1,000 acres, 10% of which is parkland and open space. There are almost 8,000 houses, of mixed tenure, on the estate, which is home to about 25,000 people. Many have credited the model village with laying the foundations for the development of Garden Cities and introducing the benefits of open space into modern town planning. Further detail on the operation of Bournville Village Trust today is provided on pages 18 and 19.

For further information on the history of Bournville, see *The Bournville Story*. Bournville Village Trust, 2010. <https://www.bvt.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/The-Bournville-Story.pdf>



## Port Sunlight

***Founded: 1888, by William Hesketh Lever***

***Location: Bebington, Wirral***

***Current population: 2,065***

Having expanded his family grocery business into an industrial empire based upon his successful 'Sunlight' soap, William Hesketh Lever purchased a site on the Wirral with good transport connections to be the location of a new and larger factory, taking the opportunity to build a workers' village at the same time.

Lever aimed to develop high-quality housing at Port Sunlight, believing that this was the right approach for an employer to take, while also ensuring that he had a healthy and efficient workforce. Port Sunlight had allotments and public buildings, including an art gallery, a cottage hospital, a school, a concert hall, an open-air swimming pool, a church, and a temperance hotel. Between 1889 and 1914, 800 houses were built to house 3,500 people.

The village also gave Lever the chance to express his interest in architecture, and over 30 architects were involved in the creation of the village. A wide variety of styles were used, giving the impression that the village had developed over four centuries, rather than within 25 years. Contrasting styles were often placed alongside each other to create interest, and no two cottages are identical. Roads were made wide enough for the architecture to be enjoyed from the front elevation rather than from an oblique view as in many towns.

Lever introduced welfare schemes and provided for the education and entertainment of his workforce, encouraging recreation and organisations which promoted art, literature, science and music. He claimed that Port Sunlight was an exercise in prosperity-sharing, but rather than share profits directly he invested them in the village.

In 1930 Lever Brothers merged with the Dutch Margarine Union Ltd to form Unilever, and from the 1960s onwards the company carried out a modernisation programme on Port Sunlight's cottages. Originally, occupancy of the houses was restricted to employees of Lever Brothers,

but in the early 1980s residents were given the option to buy the properties they rented. Port Sunlight became a designated conservation area in 1978, with nearly every building Grade II listed, and two sections of the landscape are included in Historic England's Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest. It welcomes more than 300,000 visitors a year.

In 1999, Unilever created Port Sunlight Village Trust (PSVT) to take on responsibility for the preservation and promotion of the conservation area. All parks, gardens, monuments and memorials were transferred over to PSVT, along with the majority of public buildings and nearly a third (just under 300) of the houses. PSVT continues to care for this internationally significant heritage site today, supporting 2,000 residents and welcoming over 300,000 visitors annually.

For further information on Port Sunlight, see the Port Sunlight Village Trust website, at <http://portsunlightvillage.com/>



## New Earswick

**Founded: 1902, by Sir Joseph Rowntree and family**

**Location: York**

**Current population: 2,737**

New Earswick was developed by Joseph Rowntree, a local cocoa manufacturer, grocer and philanthropist, who purchased the land for the village in his own name rather than that of his firm. He was committed to understanding the causes of poverty in order to create a



better society. The garden village on the outskirts of York was revolutionary at the time of its building; Rowntree had the advantage of learning from earlier experiences, such as Cadbury's at Bournville. The village was designed by Raymond Unwin, a pioneer of the Garden City movement.

The village was not intended to be exclusively populated by Rowntree's employees but to provide high-quality and healthy housing conditions for working-class families in a green setting. Each home would have its own garden and fruit tree. The first 28 houses were built between 1902 and 1904, when the the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust was established to continue building and manage the new village.

New Earswick was intended to be a self-governing village following the formation of a democratically elected village council in 1907 – a clear indication of Rowntree's commitment to local democracy and to residents' control of their own environment. An abundance of green space, schools, churches and recreational facilities were provided within the village. The Folk Hall was built in 1907 and became the social hub. An extension to the hall had to be built in 1935 to allow it to accommodate larger groups and many societies and gatherings for the villagers. It remains a social hub today, offering a range of community activities, such as a junior youth club and keep-fit classes.

The Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust continues to manage New Earswick, which today hosts a thriving mixed-income community and a wide range of community facilities. Its broad mix of housing tenures suits all circumstances, and includes specially designed homes for the elderly and adults with physical and learning difficulties, plus six eco-homes. It aims to maintain an inclusive neighbourhood that addresses loneliness, dementia, poverty and digital exclusion, and involves people of all ages. Research conducted by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in 2003 found that two-thirds of New Earswick respondents thought the village was a very good place to in which to live. The research also commented on the high levels of trust and a sense of community within the village.

For further information on New Earswick, see the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust 'New Earswick' webpage, at: <https://www.jrht.org.uk/community/new-earswick-york>

# Characteristics of historic model and garden villages

Historic garden villages span a range of developments, from industrial model villages and co-partnership suburbs, to villages designed by the Garden City pioneers themselves. Although each is unique, there are common characteristics that made historic garden villages successful.

## **They were holistically planned**

- Historic garden villages were holistically planned; i.e. through a masterplan that included jobs, community facilities and local services alongside homes.

## **They were small in scale**

- Historic garden villages were small in size, usually no more than a few hundred homes. When they were built, many more people lived within a single household, so a few hundred homes accommodated more people than they would today.

## **They were planned for healthy living**

- Residents were provided with access to green space, nature, fresh air, walking and cycling, sports and outdoor leisure activities, and opportunities to grow local food.

## **They provided for a vibrant social life**

- Historic garden villages featured active community societies, and their stewardship organisation would organise local sports, arts and community events.

## **They were designed with high-quality materials and attention to detail**

- Historic garden villages placed a huge emphasis on the use of high-quality and often local materials. Attention to detail and the use of architects resulted in homes and communities that remain desirable today.

## **They were designed to provide affordable homes close to employment**

- Homes were designed to be genuinely affordable for the local workforce, and close to employment. Garden villages supported their residents through employment offered from a large industrial base.

## **They provided services for day-to-day needs within walking distance of homes**

- Historic garden villages provided not just homes and jobs but a wide range of amenities and community facilities, meeting day-to-day needs without requiring frequent travel to the surrounding or larger towns or cities.

## **They were in single land-ownership, with a long-term stewardship organisation**

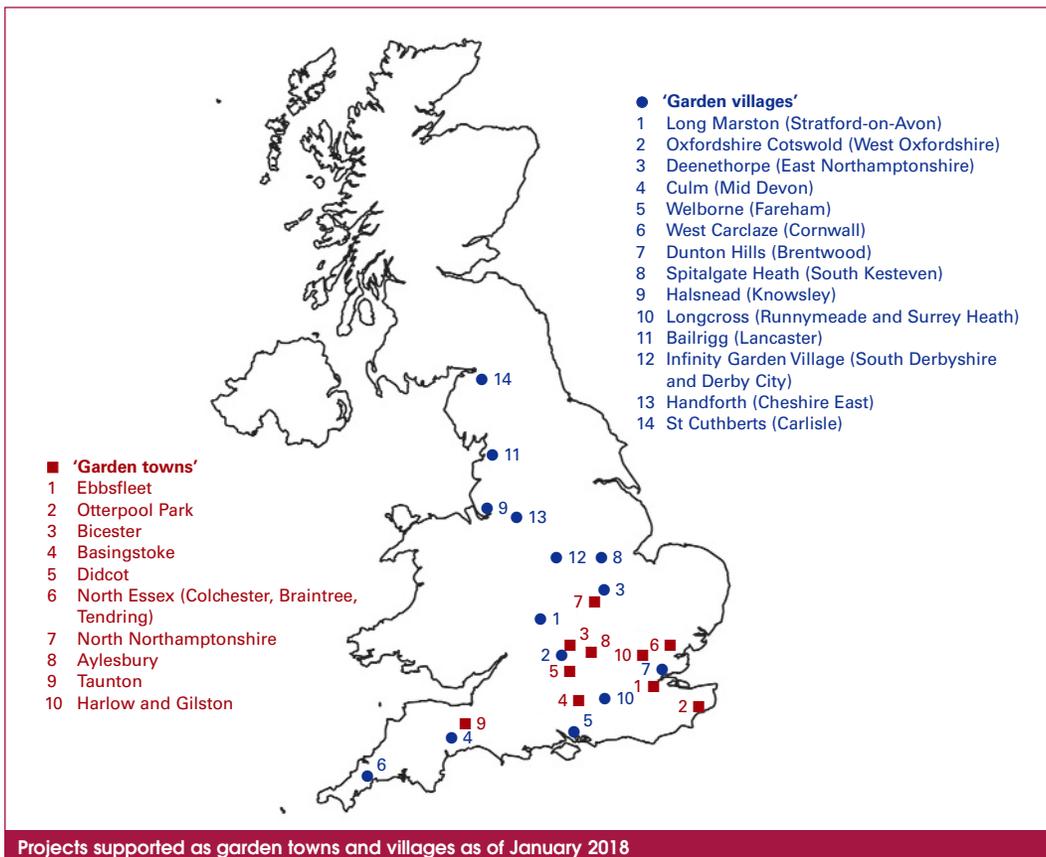
- Land remained in single ownership, and a charitable trust or organisation was established to look after the development and its residents, funded through a service charge or income from leaseholds. Stewardship may include physical maintenance and improvement of the public realm, managing the public realm, and organising community activities.

# New garden villages

The latest chapter in the garden village story is the result of the government's policy interest in the role of new communities in tackling the nation's housing shortage. Emerging from the Wolfson Economics Prize 2014 (on how best to deliver a new Garden City which is visionary, economically viable and popular), the renewed interest in smaller 'garden community' developments, in the form of garden villages, has become part of a wider government programme of support for garden communities in sizes ranging from 1,500 to 10,000+ homes.

## Government policy on new garden villages

In 2016 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) published a prospectus for new 'locally-led garden villages, towns and cities'. As well as continuing the package of support for new 'garden towns' of 10,000 homes or more, which has been offered since



2014, the prospectus also invited local authorities to bid for support for new garden villages, which it defined as:

- 1,500-10,000 homes in size;
- a 'new discrete settlement, and not an extension of an existing town or village. This does not exclude proposals where there are already a few existing homes';
- local authority led, with support from the community and the Local Enterprise Partnership;
- 'well designed', 'high-quality' and 'attractive'; and
- embedding key Garden City principles to develop communities that 'stand out from the ordinary' and do not 'use 'garden' as a convenient label'.

Over 50 local authorities submitted proposals, and in January 2017 14 projects were announced as receiving support under the policy<sup>11</sup> (see Fig. 1).

### **The government definition of garden villages**

The 2016 *Locally-Led Garden Villages, Towns and Cities* prospectus<sup>12</sup> suggests that local authorities should decide themselves how to define what a garden village is:

*'We do not consider that there is a single template for a garden village, town or city. It will be important for the new community to establish a clear and distinct sense of identity. We want to see local areas adopt innovative approaches and solutions to creating great places, rather than following a set of rules.'*

But it also encourages local authorities to be ambitious:

*'Equally, we are clear that this prospectus is not looking to support places which merely use 'garden' as a convenient label. Rather, we will support local areas that embed key garden city principles to develop communities that stand out from the ordinary. We do not want to impose a set of development principles on local areas, and will support local areas in developing their own vision for their communities. But, we will want to see evidence of attractive, well-designed places with local support.'*

## **New garden villages and the Garden City principles**

The TCPA has promoted the use of the Garden City principles as a framework for good place-making and the delivery of high-quality places which provide good outcomes for people and the environment and are underpinned by a financial model that pays for these positive outcomes in the long term. What these principles mean, and how they can be achieved in new developments at a range of scales, and in the current policy environment, is set out in the TCPA's series of Practical Guides, which should be read alongside this publication.<sup>13</sup>

The Garden City principles are not a blueprint or rigid set of rules for creating new places. They are simply a framework for good place-making, delivery and management, within which innovation and imagination should be applied to the specific context of individual projects and locations. The *Locally-Led Garden Villages, Towns and Cities* prospectus encourages local authorities applying for funding to embed the Garden City principles within their proposals. However, demonstrating that all the principles will be applied is not a pre-requisite of receiving support through the programme. Without standards or policy

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11 'First ever garden villages named with government support'. Press Release. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Jan. 2017. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/first-ever-garden-villages-named-with-government-support>

12 *Locally-Led Garden Villages, Towns and Cities*. Department for Communities and Local Government, Mar. 2016. [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/508205/Locally-led\\_garden\\_villages\\_towns\\_and\\_cities.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/508205/Locally-led_garden_villages_towns_and_cities.pdf)

13 The full set of the TCPA's Garden City Standards for the 21st Century: Practical Guides for Creating Successful New Communities are available at <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/guidance-for-delivering-new-garden-cities>



requirements in place, it is up to those delivering the developments to commit to these principles in practice and ensure that they meet the commitment to quality, affordability and sustainability that their name implies.

This is challenging for local authorities who are under pressure to deliver at speed and who are faced with challenges such as the viability test in the National Planning Policy Framework. The viability test makes it hard to uphold high standards and often results in developments with lower levels of key Garden City requirements, such as genuinely affordable housing and early provision of high-quality community facilities.

As a result, while many places are being ambitious in their intentions and innovative in their approaches, some are finding it difficult to commit to delivering even the key Garden City principles. Meanwhile – as occurred in the 1920s – many developers are adopting the term ‘garden village’ in the branding of their developments, regardless of the extent to which there is a commitment to deliver in line with the Garden City principles. This is a disappointment to those – such as local residents and other stakeholders – who have an expectation that certain standards will be met.

### ***An opportunity for ambitious councils and delivery partners***

The application of key Garden City principles to new garden villages, as encouraged by the prospectus, should be used by local authorities as a baseline from which to create ambitious policies and influence decisions that will lead to better places. The viability test presents a challenge, but there is clear evidence of the value of good place-making (such as how designing for healthy living environments can reduce the costs of social care). There is also no doubt that a combination of robust development plan policy and skilled officers is crucial to ensuring that good decisions are made. Councils should not be deterred by the fragmented policy environment in relation to place-making and should instead seek to establish policy to provide an opportunity so as to once again create a legacy of world-leading new communities.

## Creating new garden villages

The TCPA has written extensively on how to deliver new communities at a range of scales. There are specific opportunities and challenges when planning and delivering at scale. While the government's programme has identified garden villages as being between 1,500 and 10,000 homes in size, this guide focuses on the smaller scale, of around 5,000 homes or less,<sup>14</sup> although many of the principles apply at all scales of development. Drawing on learning from the original model and garden villages, this section sets out some key principles for success for the creation of new garden villages.

### *The TCPA definition of a new garden village*

The TCPA defines a garden village as a new community that is designed, delivered and managed in accordance with the Garden City principles, but tailored for a smaller scale than new Garden Cities (which are likely to be more than 10,000 homes in size). It may be developed within existing settlements (as an urban village or suburb) or as a sustainable urban extension. New garden villages may be developed as 'distinct settlements' only where there are sufficient employment and community facilities provided within the development to support the population and where there is an affordable and easily accessible public transport system linking the new garden village with its 'parent' town or city. In addition, identification of new garden villages should be undertaken through a planned approach that considers development at a range of scales. For further information on planning for growth, see the TCPA's *Guide 1: Locating and Consenting New Garden Cities*.<sup>15</sup>

### *Principles for success*

The world is very different from that of George Cadbury, Joseph Rowntree and Ebenezer Howard, but the principles of the movements they headed are now more relevant than ever. Today, application of the Garden City principles can help to address climate change and tackle challenges such as obesity. Drawing on learning from the original garden villages, and from the TCPA's work on delivering new Garden Cities at a range of scales, key principles for success are set out here.

### *Planning for new garden villages*

The identification of the need for, and locations of, new garden villages should be undertaken as part of a strategic consideration of growth options and location assessment.

### *Designing new garden villages*

The Garden City principles provide the best framework for designing new garden villages. It is also worth reflecting on the characteristics of historic model and garden villages outlined on page 10 of this guide, and what they might mean for garden villages today:

- **Holistically planned:** New garden villages should be holistically planned, with a strategic framework (masterplan) which is comprehensive enough to guide investment but flexible enough to evolve over time. For further information on design and masterplanning, see the TCPA's *Guide 3: Design and Masterplanning*.<sup>16</sup>

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14 This has been identified as the threshold at which a secondary school should be provided, and was the minimum size of the 2007 Labour government's 'eco-towns'

15 *Guide 1: Locating and Consenting New Garden Cities*. Garden City Standards for the 21st Century: Practical Guide for Creating Successful New Communities. TCPA, Nov. 2017. <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/guide-1-locating-and-consenting-new-garden-cities>

16 *Guide 3: Design and Masterplanning*. Garden City Standards for the 21st Century: Practical Guide for Creating Successful New Communities. TCPA, Dec. 2017. <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=79f031bb-14de-496c-b8dd-0ce34c4801f9>



- **Small in scale:** The government is supporting a broad range of development scales under the umbrella term ‘garden village’. There is no ‘one size fits all’ approach to managing growth, and the right approach will be different in each area. What is important is that the whole range of scales and options for accommodating growth is considered, alongside a long-term view of what is the right option.

It is impossible for a new community of a smaller scale to be a distinct and separate settlement: it will always be part of a hierarchy of settlements. When considering a new community at a small scale, the right location is essential to avoid unsustainable commuting patterns.

Whatever scenario authorities are planning for growth within, the process must be underpinned by: a strong evidence base, compiled using a range of assessments and capacity studies and using tools such as sustainability appraisal, incorporating the requirements of strategic environmental assessment at an early stage of plan preparation; an organisational approach that includes strong local leadership, thinking beyond the Local Plan boundary, and taking a long-term view of growth requirements; and a set of locational criteria covering the scale and spatial options for growth, good connectivity, and the maximisation of opportunities to deliver sustainable development and bridge regional inequalities. For further information on scale and location, see the TCPA’s *Guide 1: Locating and Consenting New Garden Cities*.<sup>17</sup>

- **Planned for healthy living:** Planning for healthy communities is integral to the creation of new places today. New garden villages should foster healthy and active communities by encouraging walking and cycling and by providing a comfortable, stimulating and therapeutic environment, bringing together the best of the urban and natural environments, for people of all ages. Key considerations for active design and a more detailed examination of how to plan for healthy communities in new Garden Cities are set out in the TCPA’s *Guide 8: Creating Health-Promoting Environments*.<sup>18</sup>

17 *Guide 1: Locating and Consenting New Garden Cities*. Garden City Standards for the 21st Century: Practical Guide for Creating Successful New Communities. TCPA, Nov. 2017. <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/guide-1-locating-and-consenting-new-garden-cities>

18 *Guide 8: Creating Healthy-Promoting Environments*. Garden City Standards for the 21st Century: Practical Guide for Creating Successful New Communities. TCPA, Dec. 2017. <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/tcpa-practical-guides-guide-8-health>

New garden villages should be characterised by their social and cultural vibrancy



- **Provision for a vibrant social life:** New garden villages should be characterised by their social and cultural vibrancy. This calls for a clear and long-term artistic and cultural strategy and a flexible approach to design and delivery, to accommodate changing needs. Other key principles related to planning for culture and the arts in new Garden Cities can be found in the TCPA's *Guide 6: Planning for Culture and the Arts*.<sup>19</sup>
- **Designed with high-quality materials and attention to detail:** The creation of a new garden village provides an opportunity to set a framework for design and development that is both sensitive to local character and creates distinctive neighbourhoods. This means that a garden village designed for Cornwall is likely to look and feel very different from one designed for Norfolk. Both will reflect the unique materials, designs and landscape of their locality. Garden villages must be exemplary in high-quality and innovative design, featuring the application of the highest sustainability standards, innovative use of local and sustainable new materials, and high-quality imaginative architecture, making use of expert craftsmanship. They should have 'postcardability' – a distinct and recognisable character, with imaginative and varied architecture forming part of a collective and harmonious 'whole'.
- **Designed to provide affordable homes close to employment:** New garden villages should meet the full range of housing needs and aspirations through a diversity of housing opportunities, having particular regard to the needs of older people and the provision of plots for self-/custom-building. Homes in new Garden Cities must be accessible, flexible and sustainable to meet demographic realities. There must be decent minimum space standards applicable across all tenures. Self-/custom-build homes are an important part of the housing mix in Garden Cities and should be made affordable for people on middle and low incomes: land should be made available for this purpose, potentially provided as serviced plots. Homes should be designed for flexible working, as well as being located a short distance from a range of employment opportunities and local facilities.
- **Provision of services for day-to-day needs within walking distance of homes:** New garden villages should provide a sustainable urban structure of walkable neighbourhoods

19 *Guide 6: 'I'd Love to Live There!' Planning for Culture and the Arts*. Garden City Standards for the 21st Century: Practical Guide for Creating Successful New Communities. TCPA, Feb. 2016.  
<https://www.tcpa.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=d8948067-d1e2-44ea-8227-687609c0bdc5>



based around a network of mixed-use town and local centres in which residents can meet most of their day-to-day needs.

- **Land ownership and long-term stewardship:** Unless the new community is being delivered by a New Town Development Corporation, which is unlikely for smaller-scale new communities (see below), the land for a new garden village will probably not be in single ownership. However, delivering a successful new community requires a clear understanding of how assets generated by the development process will be managed in perpetuity. New garden villages must demonstrate how such management will be undertaken on behalf of the community. The stewardship task goes beyond the management of green space to cover the broadest range of community assets, including the active and positive management of everything from arts provision to commercial estates and utility companies. Putting local people at the heart of this process can generate increased local support, creativity, and entrepreneurialism. For new garden villages of a smaller scale, approaches to stewardship may differ from that taken for a much larger community, and the economics make matters more challenging. However, a range of opportunities remain, including models specifically designed for smaller-scale development, such as community land trusts or housing co-operatives. For further information on land ownership and long-term stewardship, see the TCPA's *Guide 9: Long-Term Stewardship*.<sup>20</sup>

### **Delivering new garden villages**

Successful new community-building requires the right delivery body, with a skilled and dedicated team. The ability to work to key Garden City principles such as land value capture and long-term stewardship is directly linked to the form of delivery body used. Modernised New Town Development Corporations can be the most effective vehicle for larger-scale development, but they may not be the right model for smaller garden villages. However, there are a range of models and partnerships available. These are set out in the TCPA's *Guide 2: Finance and Delivery*.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> *Guide 9: Long-Term Stewardship*. Garden City Standards for the 21st Century: Practical Guide for Creating Successful New Communities. TCPA, Dec. 2017. <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/tcpa-pgs-guide-9-stewardship>

<sup>21</sup> *Guide 2: Finance and Delivery*. Garden City Standards for the 21st Century: Practical Guide for Creating Successful New Communities. TCPA, Nov. 2017. <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/guide-2-finance-and-delivery>

## Applying Garden City principles at a smaller scale

There are specific opportunities to apply the Garden City principles to larger-scale developments, but there are also a wealth of contemporary examples of projects that have applied key principles at the smaller scale. The examples below demonstrate how some of the organisations that delivered the original garden villages are applying the principles to new communities today.

### *Garden village stewardship in the 21st century – Bournville Village Trust*

Bournville Village Trust (BVT) is one of the longest-established housing associations in the country. Founded in 1900 by the chocolate manufacturer George Cadbury, BVT now looks after some 8,000 mixed-tenure properties in Bournville, in inner-city Birmingham, and in Shropshire at the new communities of Lightmoor and Lawley. As well as being a not-for-profit housing association providing rented housing, BVT manages supported housing, community facilities and landscaped areas on the Bournville estate, and an agricultural estate. Stewardship across its estates can be defined by a number of key objectives:

- Manage communal areas and open spaces to a high standard.
- Protect the visual amenity of the estates.
- Promote and foster a sustainable community spirit.
- Operate a development control function.
- Provide and develop affordable, sustainable housing.
- Promote and encourage resident involvement in BVT's decision-making processes.

BVT's estate management and stewardship services cost around £850,000 per year (based on 2016 figures). Services are funded through an annual management charge applied to each household (freehold titles include a covenant to pay the charge). Annual management charges are set at approximately £250-£300 per household per annum. The maintenance charge to residents has been in operation for some time and also allows for the development of a sinking fund for future capital repairs and replacements. BVT also helps to maintain a high-quality public realm through design covenants. Any alterations which significantly alter the external appearance of a home must comply with BVT's design guide.

BVT retains accountability through involving residents through its Estates Committee, meetings of village councils and resident associations, the Bournville Freeholders and



Leaseholders Association, and a 'village voices' scrutiny panel. Each year it sends a 'what your charge pays for' document to each household.

**Further information:** <http://www.bvt.org.uk/>

### ***Long-term stewardship at Lightmoor, Telford – Bournville Village Trust, with Homes England***

Today, Bournville Village Trust is using its experience to create, in partnership with Homes England, a thriving new 21st-century garden village in Telford, modelled on Bournville. Once complete, Lightmoor Village will feature 1,000 homes, including a quarter for affordable rent 'pepper-potted' across the development. As at Bournville itself, a strong emphasis is placed on providing the infrastructure needed to promote health and wellbeing and create a flourishing mixed community. It has a school, shops, parks, and a community centre – essential ingredients in developing a sustainable and successful garden suburb. Dwellings must reach EcoHomes 'Excellent' standard, and all homes owned and managed by the Trust are being built to Lifetime Homes standards. BVT's commitment to community development and management sets it apart from the mainstream, and its stewardship model is the vehicle used to meet this commitment.

BVT owns the land, and properties are being sold freehold and leasehold, with covenants in place. These covenants include a maintenance charge (that goes towards delivering community services as well as a 'wear and tear' fund), obligations to maintain the properties, and a requirement to seek permission from the Trust for certain alterations. Stewardship is a long-term commitment to the management and maintenance of a place, to ensure that it continues to flourish in 100 years' time and beyond. It forms an integral part of how Lightmoor is managed, and characteristics of the model include a design guide to control building alterations, a commitment to public and open space, and resident involvement and empowerment in decision-making – including through the Lightmoor Village Estate Management Committee.

In 2015, BVT held over 100 community events, and it plants a tree in the community orchard every time a child is born in the village – a nod to George Cadbury's original initiative at Bournville, where every garden was provided with a fruit tree.

**Further information:** <http://www.bvt.org.uk/our-business/lightmoor/>

*Bournville Village Trust*



Public space and the primary school at Lightmoor Village



***Applying garden city principles to a small urban extension at Derwenthorpe, York – Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust, with David Wilson Homes***

Built in partnership by the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust and David Wilson Homes, Derwenthorpe is a 540-home development on the outskirts of York. It continues the theme of sustainable mixed communities which was one of the main drivers for the development of New Earswick, a garden village in York designed by Raymond Unwin and Barry Parker for Joseph Rowntree. At Derwenthorpe the properties are much larger than average, feeding into Rowntree's original aim of everyone having a good-quality home to live in, regardless of their wealth. Social housing is 'pepper-potted' throughout the development – resulting in every street containing people of mixed financial circumstances. The properties are well insulated, and so more affordable to heat, and benefit from large windows – maximising natural light and reducing the reliance on electricity for lighting. Each property has been designed with eco-friendly features, including communal heating from a central biomass boiler and a drainage system that prevents flooding.

In 2013, Derwenthorpe won the 'completed' category at the Housing Design Awards. The homes are surrounded by mature landscaping, including a large public pond and play areas. White-painted brickwork and rubble walls echo the Arts and Crafts style of nearby New Earswick. Some include enclosed balconies or 'winter-gardens' which provide light, amenity and privacy. A connection to a Sustrans cycle route minimises the need for short car journeys.

Derwenthorpe has attracted a high proportion of residents who have one or more family members with a disability. Each house is built to Lifetime Homes standards, and so can be more easily and cheaply adapted for people in a wide variety of circumstances. The Super Sustainable Centre (SSC) at Derwenthorpe supplies energy to surrounding homes and is also taking a role at the heart of the community, hosting regular resident events such as art classes, children's groups, yoga classes and coffee mornings, making it a hub of social activity.

**Further information:** <http://www.jrht.org.uk/communities/derwenthorpe>

# Further information

## The history of garden villages

- Bournville Village Trust  
<https://www.bvt.org.uk/>
- Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust  
<https://www.jrht.org.uk/>  
Research on the experience of early communities at Derwenthorpe is available at [https://www.york.ac.uk/media/yesi/researchoutputs/life\\_at\\_derwenthorpe\\_full\\_report\\_Jan2016.pdf](https://www.york.ac.uk/media/yesi/researchoutputs/life_at_derwenthorpe_full_report_Jan2016.pdf)
- Port Sunlight Village Trust  
<http://portsunlightvillage.com/>
- Brentham Garden Suburb  
<https://brentham.com/>
- Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust  
<http://www.hgstrust.org/>
- Martin Crookston: *Garden Suburbs of Tomorrow? A New Future for the Cottage Estates*. Routledge, 2014
- Gillian Darley: *Villages of Vision: A Study of Strange Utopias*. Architectural Press, 1975 (reprinted in 2007 by Five Leaves Publications)
- Robert AM Stern, David Fishman and Jacob Tilove: *Paradise Planned: The Garden Suburb and the Modern City*. Monacelli Press, 2013

## Creating new Garden Cities

The TCPA has produced a suite of guidance outlining practical steps for all those interested in making 21st-century Garden Cities a reality. Guidance provides detail and case studies on a wide range of key issues, including planning, investment, land assembly, delivery, and long-term stewardship:

### ***Garden City Standards for the 21st Century: Practical Guides for Creating Successful New Communities***

- *Guide 1: Locating and Consenting New Garden Cities* (2017)
- *Guide 2: Finance and Delivery* (2017)
- *Guide 3: Design and Masterplanning* (2017)
- *Guide 4: Planning for Energy and Climate Change* (2016)
- *Guide 5: Homes for All* (2016)
- *Guide 6: I'd Love to Live There! Planning for Culture and the Arts* (2016)
- *Guide 7: Planning for Green and Prosperous Places* (2017)
- *Guide 8: Creating Health-Promoting Environments* (2017)
- *Guide 9: Long-Term Stewardship* (2017)

All available at <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/guidance-for-delivering-new-garden-cities>

## Other resources

- Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation  
<http://www.leitchworth.com/>
- Homes England  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/homes-england>  
Homes England (formerly the Homes and Communities Agency) can provide specific advice on large-scale development and the government's Locally-Led Garden Villages, Towns and Cities programme. For further details on the programme, contact Fionnuala Lennon at [Fionnuala.Lennon@homesengland.gov.uk](mailto:Fionnuala.Lennon@homesengland.gov.uk)
- National Community Land Trust Network  
<http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk/home>
- National Custom and Self Build Association  
<http://www.nacsba.org.uk/>
- Planning Advisory Service  
<https://www.local.gov.uk/pas>
- TCPA New Communities Group (NCG)  
<https://www.tcpa.org.uk/new-communities-group>



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### **Understanding Garden Villages: An Introductory Guide**

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